

DUNCAN AND PEGGY:

A

SCOTTISH TALE.

BY

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&c. &c. &c.

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DUNCAN and PEGGY:

A SCOTTISH TALE.

CHAP. I.

“ If this is gentry, I had rather be
What I am still; ————— ”

ALLAN RAMSAY.

THE day after Mrs. Donald's departure, Peggy attended dinner for the first time; previous to which, however, she had been introduced to Lord Beugle, who was a handsome man, though in the decline of life; perfectly polite to his lady, and all the world, regarding such behaviour as indispensable in a man of fashion. He had married because it was necessary

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to leave an heir to his estate ; but his natural disposition was cold, careless, and indifferent of every object but himself. He therefore welcomed Peggy with his usual politeness, declaring himself particularly happy in her visit, though on the first moment of her absence, he would most probably have forgotten she ever existed. Peggy had now seen the whole family, except an only son, Lord Wilmot, who had accompanied Captain Campbell to Harwich when he embarked with the troops, and from whence he had not yet returned, remaining with some young men of fashion whom he was acquainted with in that part of the country. As Peggy had for a considerable time been accustomed

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in customed to the Colonel's table, her behaviour was easy though timid; Sophia, who sat by her side, kindly addressing her during the whole; nor indeed was Lord Beugle backward in paying her some little attention, for which he received two or three contemptuous sneers from his lady.

After dinner the family party adjourned to the drawing-room, as her ladyship remained that evening at home, having a private concert; at which, however, her select friends to the number of fifty or sixty were admitted.

Peggy, as a young and beautiful stranger, claimed every one's attention, And "Who is she? Where does she come from?" was universally whisper-

ed round the room, without any one being able to resolve the questions, until an old beau ventured to address Lady Beugle with, "I never saw your ladyship accompanied by your daughters, but I considered you as the representative of Venus; the likeness only imperfect in wanting a third grace: it is now complete: but who is this wonder your ladyship has so suddenly brought among us?" "A *protégée* of my uncle Campbell's," replied she coolly, "with whom he has troubled me for this season."—"Ah! ah!" exclaimed he significantly, "I understand you; he was always a fly rogue." "You mistake, my lord," answered she, "the girl is no relation to Colonel Campbell: you
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may have heard he is rather an extraordinary character, and bringing her up in a manner improper to her birth is nothing more than one of his whims."

The discourse was here broken upon by the concert being opened by Lady Eleanor; who sung, and accompanied herself on the harpsichord in a very passable manner. When she had concluded, Lady Sophia took her place; performing, however, in a style far superior to her sister, then returned to her seat which she had chosen next to Peggy. Eleanor, who had not seen unmoved the attention Peggy had attracted during the whole evening, now determined to gratify her spleen, and shew her to the company in an unfavourable point of view; therefore ad-

dreſſing her with more ſeeming kindneſs than uſual, ſhe deſired her to favour them with an air. Peggy would willingly have excuſed herſelf; but the more ſhe declined, the greater were Lady Eleanor's entreaties—as it confirmed her in the ſurmife that Peggy knew nothing of the inſtrument. At length, thus preſſed, ſhe roſe, and covered with bluſhes took her place at the harpſichord; where ſhe ſoon convinced the mortified Lady Eleanor, that had ſhe contrived to ſhew the girl ſhe deſpiſed in the moſt fascinating manner, ſhe could not have done it more effectually.

Lord Withers, which was the name of the old peer before mentioned, could not at this diſplay of her talents conceal

his

his raptures, but pressed forward to lead her back to her seat, complimenting her in the most high-flown language. "It was not necessary, enchanting creature!" said he, "to give us a proof that your voice was equally charming as your person; were you not before sufficiently dangerous?—Alas! my heart felt you too much so!" Peggy, unaccustomed to such compliments, and from an object whom she regarded as an old scarecrow, could not suppress a smile, although her spirits were by no means good, and dropping him a graceful curtsy, retook her seat by Sophia. Lord Withers remained fixed by her side the whole evening. The concert over, and the company departed, So-

phia and Peggy retired to their apartments; which being adjoining, before they went to rest, they entered into a conversation respecting the company; Sophia laughing, and congratulating Peggy on the conquest she had made. "Indeed," said Peggy, "I did not think it possible that any one could be so ridiculous; but he was certainly in jest: yet how he was dressed—poor man! I think at his age a woollen coat would be more comfortable than a silk jacket. I am sure I felt quite sorry for him, he looked so poorly, until I saw him make such a monkey of himself." Sophia could not refrain bursting into laughter at this speech. "Why, you saucy puffs!" exclaimed she, "do you know
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he is one of the richest peers in the kingdom; has never been married, but is actually now on the look-out for a wife—young, beautiful, and accomplished enough to make him bear the marriage chain, to credit the head of his table, and to produce him an heir to his large fortune? Consider how you would surprise your northern friends; an elegant equipage, coronet, and title Countess of Withers: then such a charming smug old husband to complete the whole; you surely could not refuse him!" "You forget my rank in life, Lady Sophia," replied Peggy, smiling at her humour; "yet I assure you, notwithstanding that, I would not marry Lord Withers, nor indeed any man, had they the world

to lay at my feet.” “ Yet I think I could mention a youth who has only a little bit of Scotland, whom you would not refuse : what say you to my cousin Duncan ? ” returned Sophia. Peggy remained for a moment overcome with confusion and covered with blushes : at length she said, “ I am not weak enough to think of such a thing, Lady Sophia, yet can truly assure you that I should equally refuse him. Was giving up my life necessary to his happiness, I would not hesitate a moment ; but to disgrace him, and return my obligations to the Colonel with ingratitude, never ! ”

“ He has made an impression on Eleanor,” replied Sophia, “ but I fancy he prefers ease and nature to affectation

tion and art; which, I am sorry to say, totally destroy the effect of my sister's personal charms. Indeed he appeared insensible to every amusement my mother could project for him, and entirely taken up with his regiment, or else lost in thought."

Peggy was scarcely able to conceal her agitation during this speech. Lady Eleanor she had never liked, she now detested her. "Heigh-ho; I am sure I wish him happy: Lady Eleanor is very handsome," said she faintly, "and is his equal in rank." "True—but she stands no chance for all that; indeed I neither wish Duncan nor her so ill, they are of very different tempers. She cannot exist but in a crowd,

and he appears attached to a country life; for he declared that, was the war over, he would not remain three days in London." With such discourse our young friends passed an hour; but the subject in every respect being distressing to Peggy, as soon as possible she bade Lady Sophia good night, and retired to rest.

Peggy, who was accustomed to rise early, was ever first in the breakfast-room, where she frequently remained alone for two hours before any of the family made their appearance. These intervals were spent in reading the newspapers, at least the paragraphs relative to the war, with the utmost accuracy, her spirits rising or sinking according

according to the information she received from them. The morning after the concert, breakfast was hardly over when Lord Withers was announced; between whom and Lady Beugle a very tonish conversation took place, in which however neither Sophia nor Peggy was calculated to shine, and that to the latter appeared nothing more than a jumble of unconnected subjects of marriages, deaths, elopements, divorces, actors, bishops, cards, levees, ministers, gamblers, drefs, equipages, liveries, diamonds, and other fashionable subjects. At the conclusion of this edifying dialogue, the ladies retired to adjust their dress in order to attend a fashionable auction,

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to which Lords Beugle and Withers were to escort them.

They were soon ready; indeed Sophia and Peggy wanted no preparation, but the addition of hats and gloves. Lady Beugle and Eleanor, indeed, had to add some little to their complexions, which however being perfected to their liking, our party set off in two carriages to the scene of action.

Here all was new to Peggy, whose attention was engrossed though not amused: her eyes running over the various gaudy trinkets before her, yet without a desire of possessing them. A row of remarkable fine diamonds attracted Lady Beugle's attention, but were of too serious a price for her to think

think of purchasing without the concurrence of her Lord; who had, to confess the truth, no great inclination to lay out such a sum to decorate the neck of his wife,; a secret her ladyship was well aware of, so forbore to mention it, although the self-denial cost her a sigh. Lady Eleanor, on the contrary, ran into the most rapturous praises on the enchanting brilliants, appealing to Peggy if she had ever seen so beautiful a necklace. "Never, madam," replied she: then turning to Sophia, in a low voice, she added, "I wish my Lord Beugle would purchase it for Lady Eleanor." The discourse was here broken off by the auctioneer holding up the glittering prize, and entreating the ladies not

to

to let so favourable an opportunity slip, of furnishing themselves with what might never again be in their power to equal.

Lord Withers had heard Peggy answer Lady Elinor in favour of the necklace; he had also perceived her whispering to Sophia, and heard the words *I wish*; and as there was nothing present which he apprehended could be so desirable as a diamond necklace to a female, concluded that to be the ultimatum. Determined to shew at once his love and generosity, he bid a thousand pounds for the ornament, which however was raised to fifteen hundred before the final rap declared it his. As Lord Withers was a bachelor, this purchase attracted the attention

rention of all the female part of the assembly, whose eyes instinctively fixed on the party that accompanied him; who however were at as great a loss as themselves, and whose curiosity was equally excited to guess what happy envied female was to possess the gorgeous ornament. Peggy's curiosity alone was unexcited; the sum expended on such a bauble surprised her, and indeed engrossed her whole attention, until disturbed by Sophia asking her what she was considering so seriously. "To confess the truth," said she, "I was reflecting what a valuable wife that man must possess, whose lady's dress is thus decorated." Sophia laughed until Lord Beugle insisted on knowing the cause; of which when informed,

formed, he heartily joined, to the great confusion of the author of the mirth, who felt half angry with Sophia for disclosing it, particularly as Lady Beugle and Eleanor seemed by no means to relish the jest, and Lord Withers appeared crest-fallen, though he attempted to join the laugh.

Our company now returned home, when Lady Sophia and Peggy framed an excuse to retire; the one to dress, the other to write to Kenneth Castle, leaving Lord Withers, Lady Beugle, and Eleanor, for Lord Beugle had not returned home with them.

Peggy had remained chatting with Lady Sophia somewhat better than an hour, when Lady Beugle's French waiting-maid knocked at the door to
inform

inform Miss Grant, her ladyship would be extremely glad to speak to her; a command which was instantly obeyed with the greatest alacrity, as she flattered herself her ladyship had received letters from Scotland. Lady Beugle and Eleanor were alone on her entrance, the former of which addressed her thus: “From the particular respect I entertain for my uncle Campbell, Miss Grant, I was induced to take on myself the care of introducing you to the world; hoping, as your person is pretty and education tolerable, you might be fortunate enough to meet some good match, who would condescend to forget your birth, and place you in a rank above your expectations. Such a party now offers, who generously

roufly means to raise you to an elevation my most sanguine hopes could never have expected, and which I have no doubt you will gratefully accept, and endeavour to merit: in short, not to keep you in suspense, the party is Lord Withers. I shall write to Colonel Campbell in a day or two, to communicate these fortunate tidings, which I am sure will please him as much as myself." Had Lady Beugle continued until the morrow, Peggy's astonishment would have prevented her answering, and even on the lady's concluding her harangue, she still continued the same; her eyes fixed on the carpet, and her face glowing with blushes. "I do not wonder at your surprise," continued Lady

Lady Beugle after a short silence;
“but Lord Withers will be here this evening, and will then himself confirm his noble intentions; which I have no doubt you will receive properly, as this is a business which I shall take the utmost pleasure in having speedily settled.” These last words operated like a magic charm, unsealing Peggy’s lips at once; who raising her eyes timidly from the ground, her complexion still dyed with a crimson blush, answered, “Your ladyship’s condescension has indeed been above my most flattering hopes and deserts, as are also the offers of Lord Withers; an honour which I feel myself so unequal to, that I must entreat to decline it. Born, as your ladyship well observes,

serves, in humble life, it is the sphere best suited to my inclinations and talents ; a stain which I can never wish to obliterate by an ill-suited marriage : poor as my birth is, I will never disgrace it, then can it never disgrace me. I am thoroughly sensible of your ladyship's goodness, but must entreat you to add to your condescension, by answering Lord Withers in a manner suitable to the favour conferred, but that I totally decline the honour he intends." " You surely are not awake !" answered Lady Beugle ; " refuse a peer, whose offer I should readily have accepted for Sophia. You forget yourself strangely, Miss Grant ; give this business a second thought, and prepare to see Lord Withers in
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the evening: a young woman must have some great predilection to induce her to refuse so very advantageous a match. I will not return so improper an answer: if you choose to throw away such an offer as may never return, you are certainly at liberty: his lordship will not, I dare say, force you to be a countess, and one of the richest women in England." "I had rather be the poorest in either England or Scotland than his wife," replied Peggy with firmness; "but, as your ladyship commands, will obey, and see him this evening." So saying Peggy rose, and, making a curtsy, left the apartment. Her first care was to hasten to Sophia, whom she informed of the whole of
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what had passed. "Good Heaven!" exclaimed she, "how could the man think of such a thing? Why he is old enough to be my grandfather! though that is not my reason for refusing him; his years make no difference; were he but twenty I should equally dislike him." Sophia expressed but little amazement at the information. "Indeed," said she, "I expected some such thing, he used to be rather attentive to me; nay, I believe, my mother entertained hopes that I had made a conquest: but you, wicked witch, have robbed me of my lover, and what is worse, are not thankful for your good fortune."——

"For goodness sake do not jest,
but

but tell me what I shall say to him, for Lady Beugle ill-naturedly declares that she will not give him a denial."

"Deeds are more effectual than words; tread on his gouty toes, it will spoil his gallantry for the whole evening. I once got rid of his company by such an expedient."

"Nay, but dear Lady Sophia, be serious; indeed this affair makes me very uneasy: yet I cannot think my refusal will displease the Colonel, he is too just, too good to wish me so unhappy."——

"Certainly not, but write to him to-morrow after you have seen Withers. I find nothing in the business so very alarming; the old beau cannot marry you unless you are willing. Had he

offered himself to me, I must have been much worse off, yet would never have married him notwithstanding, though my mother and sister would both have been his advocates, and most likely my father into the bargain. You have no parental duty to combat; simply therefore give him a determined answer, and leave the rest to chance."

Peggy now felt the consolation of having a friendly female bosom in whom she could repose her griefs, and therefore dressed and attended dinner as usual, Lady Sophia kindly chatting to her on indifferent subjects. Indeed such support was necessary, as Lady Beugle and Eleanor appeared by no means friendly or communicative,
except

except to each other. Dinner over, the ladies had but just reached the drawing-room when Lord Withers was announced, to the great discomposure of Peggy. His Lordship entered with that happy ease which self-approbation ever gives; a refusal was the last thing his vanity could apprehend: how could such a girl possibly deny a peer? for Lady Beugle had not concealed Peggy's real situation from him; a circumstance which she however palliated by observing, that as she had been brought up so far distant, no one need, on her settling in England, be acquainted with that secret. Lord Withers, after a general compliment on the whole party, seated himself by Peggy, who now considered him with

redoubled disgust, which her averted eyes plainly evinced. Lady Beugle at length arose, saying, "Miss Grant, I shall be particularly obliged to you to make tea for my Lord Withers this evening, as myself, Eleanor, and Sophia are engaged. Adieu, my Lord! I suppose I shall find you here on my return." Peggy felt ready to sink, and involuntarily caught hold on Sophia's gown; who, though she sincerely pitied her, could only press her hand, and give her an encouraging smile as she quitted the room. Thus left, Peggy felt no inclination to break silence, until Lord Withers ventured to hope that the proposal he had made Lady Beugle had met her approbation, at the same time attempting to take her
hand;

hand ; but recoiling as though bit by a serpent, she answered with downcast eyes and faltering accent, “ Indeed, my Lord, I scarcely know how to reply in proper terms for the honour you have conferred on me, an honour which I must beg leave to decline.”—

“ You will not surely be cruel enough to refuse me, Miss Grant ?” replied the astonished peer ; who, however, on a moment’s reflection, considered her words but as the effect of maidenish coyness and country education. “ That beautiful bosom,” continued he, “ cannot, I am sure, cover an obdurate heart, or doom to misery the most faithful of its votaries. Speak again, divine creature ! but first permit me to lay at your feet a bauble which I flattered myself,

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this

this morning, met your approbation." So saying, he presented her the necklace which had attracted so much attention at the auction. Guess his astonishment, to find the girl whom he expected to see dazzled and enchanted with his generosity, decline his present. "As I hope soon to return to the Highlands," said she, "so elegant an ornament would be useless, for a wreath of roses there would be more estimated. Indeed this splendid costly glass on my neck, instead of pleasure would be a trouble any where, as I should be in perpetual fear of losing or breaking it. I must therefore entreat you, sir, to preserve it for some one more sensible of your condescension and its value; for me, born in humble life,
and

and unaccustomed to such decorations, I look on them as superfluous, and regard the hoarding such expensive ornaments but as a dead fund of money, whose interest ought to be otherwise employed." "Madam, Miss Grant!" replied the peer, who could hardly speak from the astonishment her discourse had thrown him into—for though he certainly thought her an accomplished girl, yet her words shewed a reflection above her years—"permit me to admire sentiments which at your age are somewhat uncommon: however, you are perfectly right, you need no ornament, yet suffer me to hope!"—"Pardon me, sir," interrupted Peggy with firmness; "I must entreat you not to misunderstand me:

I shall ever think of your offers with gratitude, but can never accept them."

"Never, Miss Grant! you surprise me; what objection can you possibly have?" surveying his withered figure with complacency in the glass—"My fortune I am sure is undeniable, and as to my person——" "Are both objects," replied she, "on which I have not bestowed a thought. I never perhaps intend to marry, more particularly one so much my superior. I am poor, my Lord, but proud, and will never accept a state I am unequal to support." Lord Withers, who was really as much in love as it is possible for a debauchee of sixty, notwithstanding his vanity was piqued at her refusal, yet determined not to give
up

up the point so easily; therefore throwing himself at her feet, and seizing her hand, which she struggled to disengage from him, he was in the midst of a most passionate speech when the drawing-room door suddenly opened, and a young gentleman of a very prepossessing appearance entered; but who, on the sight of Lord Withers's humble posture, paused until the old peer made shift to rise and advance to meet him, exclaiming, "You are welcome home, my Lord." The stranger, who was no other than Lord Wilmot, replied, "I beg your pardon, but really I had no idea of any one being in the drawing-room, for the servant informed me my mother and sisters were out." It would be impossible to

paint Peggy's confusion during this discourse: Lord Wilmot surprising Withers at her feet, made her unable to raise her eyes, while he on the contrary appeared proud of being caught in so gallant a position. Lord Wilmot's eyes were fixed on Peggy with the most scrutinising attention: as he knew nothing of her coming to London, he could not conceive who or what she was, that he thus unexpectedly found in his mother's apartment, and more particularly tête-à-tête with Withers. "You have remained at Harwich longer than Lady Beugle expected," said the peer." "I met with some friends," replied Lord Wilmot, "who entreated me so warmly that I could not refuse, and with whom

I re-

I returned this day to town, they being obliged by express to attend at the War-office; from whence I also learned that my cousin Duncan has joined his regiment, and is now at no great distance from Franckfort, near which it is thought the armies under the command of Granby and Rochambeau will soon meet and come to action, in which case our young captain may perhaps have an opportunity of signalising himself, as it is expected to be a warm engagement." Peggy, whose confusion had prevented her raising her eyes since the entrance of Lord Wilmot, forgot every other consideration on the news of Duncan's approaching danger, and involuntarily ejaculated, "Heaven protect him!" at

the same time her features assuming a deathlike languor, and with the utmost exertion preventing herself from fainting. Her emotion was by no means lost on either of the gentlemen; the eldest of whom now accounted for the coldness with which she had treated his addresses, by her agitation on only the bare supposition of Duncan's danger. Lord Wilmot on the contrary was still more bewildered; and as soon as she had in a small degree recovered herself, determined no longer to bear the tortures of suspense, and therefore retired for a few minutes to enquire of his mother's attendant, who was the young stranger he had so unexpectedly met with.

During Lord Wilmot's absence,
Withers

Withers once more attempted to mollify Peggy, whose mind being deeply wounded by the news she had heard, answered more peevishly than before, "I beg, sir, you would receive as my final answer, what I have already said, nor trouble yourself or me any farther as my mind is fixed, and cannot alter."

"On Captain Campbell, doubtless!" interrupted the mortified peer with a grin. "I did not suspect you were engaged, madam, or should never have taken the liberty to offer myself; Lady Beugle indeed ought to have informed me of it." Peggy remained a moment too much confused to reply: at length struggling with her natural timidity, she answered, "You have no reason, sir, for such a surmise.

Colonel

Colonel Campbell and Captain Duncan are my benefactors, and my heart must ever feel the most lively anxiety for their welfare. I think proper to say thus far, as doubtless your supposition originated from the concern, I was not hypocrite enough to conceal, I felt for Captain Campbell's danger."

"Oh! you have no cause for alarm," replied the disappointed beau with a malicious sneer, "he will certainly be *careful* of so *precious a life*." "Captain Campbell," returned Peggy with a haughtiness that those accustomed to her natural gentleness would have thought her incapable of, "will ever do his duty, and shew his courage against opponents worthy his anger, or able to withstand it." Withers
was

was on the point of making an answer that probably might have increased Peggy's anger, had not Lord Wilmot at that moment entered the apartment, having gained the information he required. "Miss Grant," said he, "I know not how to apologise, but my ignorance of who you were must plead my excuse." Peggy replied to his compliment, and a few minutes after Lord Withers took his leave, hardly deigning however to look at Peggy, who was heartily rejoiced at his departure, nor was Lord Wilmot less so.

C H A P. II.

" So doth the turtle chaste and true
Her fellow's death regrette,
And daily mourns for his adieu,
And ne'er renews her mate."

MARQUIS OF MONTROSE.

LORD Wilmot was about twenty-four, handsome, generous and brave; bred in the fashionable world, he gave into its pleasures more from custom than inclination; he had made the tour of Europe, was perfectly accomplished, and universally pronounced a complete gentleman. Heir to a considerable fortune, he had for some time been thought a desirable match by several prudent fathers, and possessed of a good person and lively understanding, by no means disliked

disliked by the daughters; but, defended by indifference, his heart had withstood all attacks. In his address to women, his manner was peculiarly soft and pleasing; to his own sex open and manly: partial to his youngest sister through a similarity of disposition, he ever warmly espoused her part, defending her against the ill humours of Eleanor, which he was particularly enabled to do from the power he maintained over the mind of his mother.

His likeness to Sophia gained him at once an interest in the grateful heart of Peggy, who, on the departure of Withers, conversed with him less timidly than she had done with any man since her arrival in London. Lord Wilmot was apprised from his mother's abigail
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of Withers's business, the *tête-à-tête* was therefore accounted for ; Peggy's distant behaviour, and the disappointed peer's departure, likewise informed him of his bad success: he therefore employed the whole force of his satire to represent the offended beau in the most ludicrous colours ; which, however, was far from exciting any mirth in the bosom of Peggy, whose thoughts were intirely fixed on Duncan's approaching danger. Lord Wilmot finding Peggy had neither abilities nor taste for scandal, though merited, changed the conversation, by inquiring how she liked London? " Really, my Lord, to confess truly, not much ; the variety of objects and perpetual bustle bewilder me, and make me regret more than I think.

Leven.

I even should in a quieter life, the pleasures of Kenneth Castle.”—“ At your age,” replied he, “ few ladies are fond of retirement, in so lonely a spot too, for I think you have no neighbours within some miles ; did you not there find time frequently hang heavy on your hands, or rather how did you dispose of it ?”—“ Very easily, for we were perpetually busy from six in the morning to eleven at night : as soon as breakfast was over, if the weather was fine, the Colonel and Mr. Sommers walked, and usually condescended to take me with them ; on our return, Captain Campbell,” said she with a sigh, “ or myself read until dinner, after which, conversation, music, or very frequently dancing closed the day—happy days.

days, that never can again be known at Kenneth Castle, should, which Heaven forbid ! Captain Campbell fall. Alas !” continued she, the agitation of her mind overpowering every other idea, “ even now perhaps he bleeds, far from those who would sooth his pains, and give their lives to save his.”—“ Happy Duncan !” exclaimed he, “ as you doubtless include yourself among the number.” Peggy remained for a minute silent through confusion and vexation, that her ready lips should ever disclose the thoughts of her heart. “ Colonel Campbell and Mr. Sommers, my Lord, I am sure could not survive his loss; for myself, my obligations to him—his virtues—”—“ My dear Miss Grant,” interrupted he, “ your behaviour

behaviour needs no excuse, it is too amiably interesting: Duncan I doubt not will return safe, nay, should he fall, by Heaven I do not know the man that would not envy him!"—"Lament him rather, my Lord," said she, mistaking his meaning; "what heart acquainted with him, but even now must feel his danger? Ah, why would the Colonel, who lost his only son in one of these horrible encounters, venture so precious a life!" The discourse was here broken off by a loud knocking at the street-door, and a moment after Lady Beugle and her daughters entered: Lord Wilmot's surprise had been extreme on seeing Withers and Peggy alone; but his astonishment was trifling compared to that of the Lady

on

on finding the old beau gone, and his place supplied so little to her liking. However, concealing her vexation, she inquired for Lord Withers, who, Peggy replied, had been gone a considerable time; a piece of information to which her Ladyship answered with coolness, " I am sorry for it, I hope he met with nothing to render his stay in my house disagreeable. You, Wilmot, I should have imagined would have been polite enough to have retired when you found Miss Grant particularly engaged."—" Particularly engaged!" repeated he, laughing—" my dear madam, I never suspected she was so, nor indeed on my entrance knew what to think on finding an angel and a satyr *tête-à-tête*; curiosity therefore compelled me to stay."

stay." Though Lady Beugle was by no means satisfied, she said no more on the subject, but after some general conversation, the whole party retired for the night.

The following morning brought Peggy fresh vexation. Lord Withers complained loudly of his refusal, falsely affirming that Miss Grant had threatened him with the vengeance of Captain Campbell; an accusation, to which though Peggy pleaded not guilty, Lady Eleanor treated with great acrimony, nor Lady Beugle less so. Sophia was silent; but on the matter being spoke of before Lord Wilmot in Peggy's absence, he undertook her cause in the most strenuous terms: "Is it possible, madam," said he to his mother, "that you could expect

expect such a sacrifice? a worn-out debauchee, the refuse of every prostitute in town, to be united to so much beauty and innocence! if you give it a second thought, you cannot desire it. Consider, my dear madam," continued he, kissing her hand, "had any one required such a severe task of you at Miss Grant's age, when I am sure you were gifted with all those charms, which make that old wretch so ardently seek her."—"But, Wilmot," interrupted the Lady somewhat softened, "remember the difference of birth—is it not an amazing offer for such a girl? But I assure you she is very proud, and nothing less than disgracing the family who has raised her can suffice, the name of Campbell alone gratify her vanity."—

“ My

“ My brother, madam,” said Lady Eleanor satirically, “ is partial to pretty women : no wonder then he takes the girl’s part; nay, perhaps he envies Duncan’s happiness in being beloved by such a beggar. I wonder how ever Lord Withers could think of disgracing himself by such a marriage.”—“ True, Elen, I am very partial to pretty women particularly those whose faces are unbedaubed by cosmetics, and forms undistorted by affectation. Duncan’s taste is perhaps somewhat similar; but, my sweet sister, as you appear so interested in providing Lord Withers a wife, where can he find one so charming and fashionable as yourself?” Lady Beugle was here obliged to interfere, which, together

with the entrance of company, put an end to the dispute.

Peggy wrote the day after Withers's dismissal to the Colonel, informing him of the whole, as well as her timidity would permit : Lady Beugle had also written to him, condemning her refusal as very imprudent, as such a marriage would inevitably have made her fortune.

Thus were affairs at Lord Beugle's : his lordship formally complaisant ; Lady Beugle cold and haughty ; Eleanor satirical and distant ; Sophia gentle, affable and kind, blunting the acuteness of her family's ill-humour by the sweetness of her own, friendly to Peggy, and treating her rather as a beloved sister than an inferior.

Lord

Lord Wilmot, before Peggy's arrival in town, was seldom at home; he was now perpetually so, unless he accompanied her with his mother and sisters to any public entertainment, in which case he was fixed by her side, paying her all those little attentions which well-bred men adopt when they study to please. Sophia was tenderly attached to him, which, added to his own behaviour, made him estimable to Peggy, who had no more idea of his being in love with her, than if she had been his grandmother. Withers visited Lady Beugle as usual, even sometimes endeavouring to mollify Peggy, who, in such cases, took refuge by Sophia, nay, often by Lord Wilmot; for, as she had peremptorily refused to see him any

more alone, he had no opportunity but in public company.

In this manner six weeks elapsed, during which nothing material happened, the time passing in a continual succession of amusements of different kinds, all of which Peggy attended with a heavy heart : her disagreeable situation at Lady Beugle's pressed on her spirits, which were ill-formed to withstand pride and haughtiness, and that would inevitably have overpowered her, but for the generous support of Lady Sophia, and the attention of Wilmot, who, careful to gratify her wishes, ever brought her the news from the army, informing her about the period above mentioned, that the action near Frankfort had taken place, during

which Duncan had signalised himself in a particular manner. Fortunately no one but himself and Sophia were in the apartment when he communicated this news to Peggy, whose raptures on hearing of Duncan's safety were as ungovernable, as her fears for his danger had before been; every word and action being convincing proofs how tenderly she was attached to him—a certainty that forced a sigh from the bosom of Wilmot.

CHAP. III.

"The post of fate unshrinking I maintain."

HOME.

WHILE Peggy was counting the hours until the time that should restore her to her beloved friends, the Colonel and Mr. Sommers did not pass their days so cheerfully as usual at Kenneth Castle; they both found the want of their youthful companions, news from whom ever afforded them peculiar pleasure. Lady Beugle's letter respecting Peggy's refusal of Lord Withers, instead of exciting his anger pleased him: "I would have given her up for ever," said he, "had she been despicable enough

enough to let his paltry wealth influence her to sacrifice herself to such an old dotard." Peggy's description of him excited his mirth. "Figure to yourself, my dear sir," said she in her letter, "a man who they say is not more than fifty, but that appears older than our highlanders at eighty, tall, meagre, bony, and emaciated; his eyes red and sunken, yet squinting in strange frightful directions—but that, Lady Sophia says, he means for ogling; then his hair is dressed in the most ridiculous manner, being curled all over; his body straitly compressed in a silk jacket, for it cannot be called a coat; and under his arm a little three-cornered flat thing, which Lady Sophia informs me is a hat, or I should never have guessed it for such;

his legs swelled to a dreadful degree, but decorated with silk stockings, and, to complete all, his old withered hands stuffed in an enormous muff. His person must at once interest pity, were he not so clothed, and did not make himself still more disagreeable by his behaviour, which is ridiculous beyond conception. Indeed, my best friend, could you once see him, I should stand perfectly excused; for I well know that you could not help despising him, for his wealth and titles would have no weight with you." Such was Peggy's description of Withers to the Colonel, who in return informed her that he was satisfied with her refusal, as he thought the match a very improper one. To Lady Beugle he replied in much the same

same terms, thanking her for the care she had taken of her charge, but expressing a fixed resolution of not exerting his power over her in a circumstance in which her future happiness was so materially concerned.

The Colonel frequently heard from Duncan, and had also received the most flattering testimonies of his courage from several veteran officers with whom he was acquainted. These informed him that Duncan had behaved so bravely, that he had been pitched on to command in some desperate skirmishes, and had accompanied Prince Ferdinand and Granby in their attack against Stainville, who had posted himself in a wood near Cassel, at the head of the flower of the French infantry, in which action he glori-

D 5 ously

ously distinguished himself, receiving a wound in the arm. His own account of it to the Colonel ran thus :

“ You have doubtless, my dear sir, before now heard of our engagement with Stainville, in which the fortune of the day was with us; two battalions only of the enemy escaping, notwithstanding they behaved bravely.

“ Mr. Sommers and yourself I hope are well. He informs me in his last, that Peggy is gone to Lady Beugle’s : why would you deprive yourself of her company ? Neither can she, I am sure, be so happy there as with you ; I think I know her heart, it is too much like my own to be amused with the foppery that reigns there ; let me prevail with you, my dear sir, to recall her.—I have just

received an order to hold myself in instant readiness to join the troops covering the siege of Cassel, from whence, by the first opportunity, you shall hear from me. I almost forgot to tell you I received a shot through my left arm, but it is now quite well. I should not have mentioned it, but feared that you might be otherwise informed of it, and think it something material; but I assure you it is so mere a trifle, that I do not believe I shall be able to shew you the scar. I was fortunate enough to form an acquaintance at Lady Beugle's with a young officer called Orfield, and who embarked at the same time as myself. Little obliged to fortune, nature appears to have been determined to make him amends for that slight, by bestow-

ing her favours in profusion. A good person, a brave and generous heart, an open demeanour, a strong and polished understanding, ought not, my good sir, to languish in obscurity ; he must, therefore, on our return become your friend, as he is already mine. A pair of colours is too poor a provision for such a man : nay, to tell you a secret, which by the way is rather a breach of friendship, he loves and is beloved by my cousin Sophia, but in the unhappy state of his finances, dares not hope to meet with Lady Beugle's approbation, and is determined rather to relinquish her for ever, than marry to reduce her to live on his slender pittance. Adieu, my dear uncle, I have just received an order that obliges me to break off—Let me entreat
you

you to send for Peggy back to Kenneth Castle ; consider how dear you are to her—The drums beat, I must away—once more farewell!

DUNCAN CAMPBELL."

" Orfield !" said the Colonel. " I knew his father well ; he was a Captain in the twenty-sixth regiment of foot, and what is more, Sommers, was as valiant a fellow as ever headed a company, and, by Heaven ! his son shall not want a friend while I have life and ability : he is a gentleman, and, though perhaps not Sophia's equal in point of fortune, is by no means behind her in rank, as his family is both ancient and honourable."

The discourse now turned on various subjects, and on Peggy among the number,

number, who Mr. Sommers observed would, he supposed, return in about two months, expressing also his satisfaction that her grandmother was not yet come back from Sky, "as," said he, "she might be disappointed on finding her absent : however, the time will now be short; and, upon the whole, I think it was rather a good thing that we have not informed her of it, as the poor creature would have been perplexed with a thousand anxieties for her grand-child."

CHAP. IV.

“ To me nae after days nor nights
Will eir be fast or kind ;
I'll fill the air with heavy sighs,
And greet till I am blind. ”

OLD SCOTTISH BALLAD.

NOTHING material happened to disturb the peace of Kenneth Castle for near a month after the Colonel received Duncan's letter, and all remained as before mentioned at Lady Beugle's, except that Peggy had become much thinner than on her arrival in London, a circumstance which she had never mentioned in her letters, determined to wait with resignation her recall. She had heard of Duncan being wounded in the
arm

arm, an event that had preyed on her spirits, and rendered her almost incapable of maintaining an appearance of calmness, although Sophia, who really loved her, took all possible pains to console and convince her his wound was not dangerous. "My dear Peggy," said she, as they were one day alone, "you feel too acutely ever to be happy: believe me, my heart is as anxious as yours for one who is in equal danger with Duncan; perhaps I shall give you satisfaction when I tell you it is his particular friend, yet I do not imbitter every moment of my life with the reflection that he will be killed. Alas!" continued she, "if he returns safe, I never can be his." She then with frankness informed Peggy, that she had
long

long loved Ensign Orfield, but that their affection was a secret to the whole family: "as," added she, "though my fortune is tolerably good, you know my mother too well to imagine she would consent to such a marriage; for she would rather see me a miserable countess, than the happy wife of a commoner."

Peggy, consoled by the friendship of Sophia and repeated assurances from every quarter that Duncan's wound was completely healed, began to look forward with pleasing expectation to the time that should restore her to Kenneth Castle; a circumstance that gave redoubled satisfaction, as there was a strong report of peace—news that contributed more towards relieving

lieving her spirits than any other cause.

Lady Beugle, though much disappointed at the Colonel's letter, yet concealed her vexation for fear of incurring her uncle's displeasure, and frustrating what she still hoped to bring to perfection, the union of Duncan with Eleanor. For Lord Beugle, his indolent temper hardly permitted him to give a thought on what was passing; but, his opinion asked, he was ever too polite to dissent from his lady.

One evening that Lady Beugle had remained at home from a cold, Lord Withers entered, and after some previous conversation informed the ladies that a decisive action had taken place at Cassel; the garrison of ten thousand
men

men being obliged to evacuate the place. As both Peggy and Sophia were interested in this intelligence, they listened with the utmost attention, neither, however, daring to venture any question, Peggy with difficulty supporting any appearance of calmness. "Your nephew I think, Lady Beugle, is at Cassel; it is to be hoped he will escape safe. Fame gives him to you, Lady Eleanor," said he, with a spiteful leer at Peggy; "it is therefore to be hoped that he will return with the usual number of limbs, for so much beauty must not be bestowed on a halting partner."

Peggy's agitation became more and more violent. She was employed in sprigging muslin, and endeavoured to conceal her concern by working with
unusual

unusual speed, sewing one stitch over another, pricking her fingers, and forming the flower she was embroidering in such a shape, that it was impossible to have known it for such.

“Fame, my lord,” said Lady Eleanor, “is frequently false. Duncan, even in the state I have already seen him, needs much alteration before he can please me; then I leave you to judge whether the loss of a limb or two would be any additional recommendation.”—“The woman to whom such a misfortune would not render him more dear,” said Peggy with heat, her anger mastering even timidity and fear, “is unworthy of him.”—“Miss Grant,” interrupted Lady Beugle, “you forget yourself.”—“I beg your Ladyship’s pardon,”

pardon," replied she, "but—" The entrance of Lord Beugle put a stop to the discourse: in his usual indolent manner he threw himself upon a sofa, saying carelessly, "I am sorry to be the messenger of bad news, particularly as it must materially distress your uncle Campbell. Duncan is dangerously wounded in his endeavours to rescue Ensign Orfield—but—bless me, what is the matter?" seeing Peggy fall senseless on the carpet, and the moment after his daughter Sophia, who made an instinctive effort to save her, but sunk overpowered on her bosom in the same situation.

Assistance was immediately administered, but without effect on Peggy, who was removed to her apartment in a
state

state of insensibility ; her situation, however, exciting no pity in either Withers or Eleanor, the former of whom said, “ I hope the partiality which I informed your ladyship I suspected is now visible enough ; indeed I had heard the news when I came, though I did not choose to be the messenger : but I must take my leave : —this vexatious event will, I fear, deprive the world of your charms until you learn the real state of your cousin. Adieu ! I shall do myself the honour of inquiring daily after your health.”—Lady Beugle had not paid much attention to the peer’s last speech, being wrapt in meditations of a different nature. Should Duncan die, which from the account received was the most probable event, her ladyship

ship became heiress to some valuable estates; she might likewise expect, as the Colonel's nearest relation, to inherit considerably from him—ideas that doubtless enabled her to bear her sorrow with great fortitude. Nor had this prudential consideration less effect on Lord Beugle, who conversed with his Lady on the misfortune with truly philosophic calmness; Lady Eleanor in the mean-time reclining on the sofa, smelling her salts, deploring her weak nerves, and passing satirical remarks on the exquisite sensibility of Sophia. Peggy remained for a considerable time insensible; Sophia, who had speedily recovered, giving her every attention which friendship or feeling could dictate: at length, restored to a keen sense of the horrors

horrors that had occasioned her disorder, she gave way to the anguish of her heart, Sophia in vain endeavouring to bring her mind to composure. "Alas!" said she, joining her tears with Peggy's, "Duncan's misfortunes I think they say originated from his attempt to rescue Orfield, who has, perhaps, shared his fate: if so, my friend, my loss will be severe as yours; yet let us not give way to despair—we generally learn the darkest side of misfortune: Duncan, I have no doubt, is wounded, and perhaps severely, yet, it is very probable not so dreadfully as represented; let me intreat you therefore to be calm, while I endeavour to learn the real state of the case. Wilmot unfortunately was out when we heard the first account,

perhaps

perhaps he is now returned, and can inform me more particularly."

Peggy, distracted with grief, entreated her to do so, and Sophia immediately left her in quest of the intelligence she wished to gain. Wilmot really loved Peggy, yet was a generous rival; he respected Duncan, and was sincerely concerned for his misfortune; from him Lady Sophia learned that her cousin's wounds were very dangerous, though not decisively pronounced mortal: he had received a shot in the shoulder, and several other wounds with a bayonet on different parts of the body; particularly one in the thigh, which appeared the most alarming, as it was feared an amputation must take place; in consequence of which, an express had been

sent to Colonel Campbell; the messenger that came over with the account having likewise brought a letter for him written with Duncan's own hand. "But how came my cousin so much in the heat of the action?" demanded Sophia, trembling and dreading an answer. "Ensign Orfield," replied he, "was taken prisoner by four of the enemy; upon which Duncan, who had even then received some trifling wound, rushed forward and endeavoured to rescue him; an attempt in which he had undoubtedly fallen, as he had no second, Orfield having been disarmed when first taken. The odds were too great against him, yet he fought undauntedly with two, the others being employed in guarding the Ensign until,

one

one falling, one of those who had the care of Orfield supplied his comrade's place. Duncan's loss of blood began to overpower him, when Orfield, who, though unarmed, had now only a single antagonist to encounter, made a bold effort, freed himself, and snatching a bayonet that had appertained to the soldier who had fallen, rushed forward to assist his brave deliverer: but the conflict was still too unequal—the enemy pressed hard upon them, Orfield shielding Duncan to the utmost; his efforts were, however, vain, and both most probably must have been victims to their friendship, had not, at the very last extremity, a Scotchman joined them, who seeing the distress of his countryman, for Duncan had fallen,

with heroic courage defended him, and so successfully, that with his own hand he brought two to the earth, the third seeking his safety in flight. You may easily imagine they did not take the trouble to pursue him, their whole cares being now on Duncan. Orfield was wounded though but slightly, yet too much to assist in helping him off. A detachment of the enemy was at no great distance; and the brave soldier, for he was only a private, unassisted bore our cousin from the field.”—“Blessings on him!” exclaimed Sophia; “but Orfield, brother, are his wounds dangerous?”

“By no means so—but my dear sister, soften this account to Miss Grant; her gentle nature will, without proper

proper care, sink under so severe a blow."

Sophia had no need of this charge; she was possessed of too much humanity to wound any one when it was possible to avoid it.

On her return to Peggy she found her much more calm than she expected, but on her features a fixed melancholy that was far more alarming than turbulent grief: "You come to tell me, my kind Lady Sophia, that he is dead. I am prepared. Heaven is kind; our states were unequal here—but there that difference will cease, and we shall part no more!"—"My dear girl," replied she, "you ever surmise the worst; Duncan is certainly dangerously wounded, but not dead, nay, the messenger

that arrived with the news also brought a letter written by himself to the Colonel; I therefore leave you to judge on calm reflection, whether he can be in so much danger as report first published." She then, in terms soft as friendship could devise, related the whole to Peggy, fearful that some voice less consolatory should bear the tale of woe. When she came to the account of his preservation by the brave soldier, Peggy's languid and sunken eyes for a moment beamed with animation: "Gallant man!" exclaimed she, "may your reward be equal to your valour! may Duncan live, then will you feel the gratitude of a noble heart!—but alas!" continued she, her features again relapsing into their former languor, "I
flatter

flatter myself;—he cannot live, and his death will sink the Colonel's grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. What then remains for me when they are my all, my whole world, but to pray to join them?" Sophia was now obliged to attend her mother, who had sent for her, leaving Peggy alone. "Tell Lady Beugle the truth, my dear Lady Sophia," said she: "if she asks for me, I am unable to wait on her, and care not now what surmises may be formed on my conduct; my first, my generous benefactor, either lies dead, or at the last extremity; and can I dress my face in smiles? Ah no, never, never shall the wretched Peggy smile more!"

While the family at Lady Beugle's were situated as above described, the

Colonel and Mr. Sommers had met with a great surprise, though the unhappy news of Duncan's misfortune had not yet reached them.

CHAP. V.

"I took her in my arms ; the bairn smil'd
Wi' sic a look, wad made a savage mild.

Nor do I rue my care about the wean,
For she's weel worth the pains that I ha'e tane.
Ye see she's bonny ; I can swear she's good,
And am right sure she's come of gentle blood :
Of whom I kenna."

ALLAN RAMSAY.

TWO days after the melancholy news of Duncan's misfortune reached London, as the Colonel and Mr. Sommers were sitting playing at chess, Mrs. Donald entered to inform them,
that

that Peggy's grandmother was just arrived from the Isle of Sky, and appeared much hurt at her grand-daughter's absence. "Admit the good woman instantly," said the Colonel, "I warrant we will comfort her." "She seems not so well as usual," replied Mrs. Donald, "which I fancy makes her feel the absence of Peggy more severely; but when you inform her she will so speedily return, she perhaps may be more composed." Mrs. Donald now retired, and in a few minutes introduced Jannet, whose health indeed appeared much impaired. The Colonel kindly insisted on her sitting down, which after many apologies was complied with. "Jannet," said he, "I am sorry to see you look worse than usual. Peggy I expect home in

about a month; she is on a visit at my niece Lady Beugle's, so I desire you will not make yourself uneasy; but as your health appears indifferent, remain at the castle until her return, Mrs. Donald will take care of you." "The God of Mercy requite ye," replied she, "I am stricken in years, and canna lang survive. I have had meikle sorrow sin' I left ye. I ha' laid my pure sister in the grave, and feel that I shall soon follow. Wae is me, perhaps I may na live to see my dear bairn: alack, year after year I flattered myself that my brae lad Allan wad return and assist her in claising my ene; but the hope was vain, he has pressed before me to the grave."—"Allan!" said the Colonel: "I understood your son was dead a long time

time previous to Peggy's coming to the castle."

"I told you, sir," answered she, "I had long lost the staff of my age; but I did na say he was dead, though mair sorrows me, he is too surely so. It is above thirteen lang years sin' he quitted poor Peggy and me, during which time I ha' never heard of him, though I left our present direction wi' the minister of the kirk from whence we came, in case he returned or sent any letters."—

"Indeed, Jannet, I always understood he was dead," replied the Colonel; "I am sure you informed me Peggy's mother was so."

"I did truly; these hands claiped her ene, the brightest ene that ever mine beheld, the day after Peggy's
E 6 birth."

birth." "Perhaps the loss of a valuable wife drove your unhappy son to forsake his home and infant child," said Mr. Sommers.

"Ye ha' all along mista'en me," replied Jannet, "and it was nae my interest to set ye right, though my heart revolted at deceiving, even without telling a lie—a deceit however of which Peggy is as ignorant as yourselves; therefore dinna impute to her my faults, nor the faults of her parents. Alack, I feared I should never live to get hame to disclose it; and whatever may be the hazard will declare a', lest death should prevent me."

"You have deceived me then respecting Peggy!" said the Colonel gravely.

The old woman appeared weighed
down

down with the importance of what she had to reveal, and was for some time unable to proceed, until Mr. Sommers gave her a glass of wine, saying, "I cannot suppose, Jannet, you have any thing to disclose that can either draw the Colonel's anger on yourself or Peggy, therefore relate what you have to say without fear."

"Alack," replied she, "the confusions some years back must excuse me; and your attachment, gude sir, to the family at present on the throne, and abhorrence to the Stuarts, caused my silence; or gratitude would lang sin ha' opened my lips: but I feared your anger, yet canna die with sic a secret on my heart. If my dear bairn is what ye ca' a rebel, can she help that?"

that? Dinna cast her off; in gude troth ye'll break her heart!"

The Colonel remained silent.

"She certainly cannot help the errors of her parents; therefore proceed, and be assured of pardon from the Colonel, if you merit it," said Mr. Sommers.

The old woman thus encouraged, after a short pause, began, "I believe I before informed ye that I kept house within three miles of Edinburgh.—My gudeman died when my son was about eighteen, wha immediately took on him the care of the land which we farmed; and that so prudently that we thrived mainly, until the unhappy confusions of one thousand seven hundred and forty-five. Content in our hame, we
did

did na trouble ourfells wi' kings and princes, whose quarrels we thought wad never shake fae humble a roof as ours. My lad was then about twenty-five, and, troth, as cadgie a pawky youth as any in Scotland, and weel favoured withal. During the troubles at Edinburgh, the soldiers, who used to act as they listed, over-ran our fields, trampled down our corn, and carried awa' our sheep; fae that I grat day and night, for naething but ruin was before my ene. My brae son used to comfort me with saying, "Hoot away with ye mither, sic doings canna last lang, a' will fune gae weel again; if not, thank God I am able to maintain ye by my labour." As naething is fae sweet as comfort from those we love, his words cheered me, and

and in spite of the troubles I kept on my spinning and usual occupations. One day it was, I weel remember, the nineteenth of April one thousand seven hundred and forty-six, my son went to pay his rent to the laird to whom our land belanged, and who detained him until it grew late. As he was returning hame, he met twa lasses in a chaise, and a weel dressed mon on horseback, who called to him to ask the way. The ane that appeared the mistress, and wha had a foreign accent, said, " My gude friend, can you tell us where we could lodge to-night, nae matter how humbly, so it is quiet ? " My son, who as he professed himsell, was at anes ta'en wi' her fast voice, answered, There were plenty of gude
inns

inns in Edinburgh; but that for quietness the town couldna much boast. The mon then asked, If he didna ken some private-house where the ladies could repose for a night, as they were wearied wi' travelling? My Allan replied, he ken'd nae lodging; but that if they wad be contented wi' sic cheer as his hame afforded, they should be welcome. Weel, to be brief, they agreed, and accompanied him, knocking a loud rap at my outer yett, which I ever kept carefully fastened for fear of danger. My heart treimbled within me, for I thought naething less than it was soldiers; therefore I loked out of the window demanding wha beat sae rudely; but my fears soon ceased on hearing my son laugh, saying, "Doff your fears.

fears, mither, and dinna leave me shivering in the wind." Upon this I needed nae hastening, but went and unbarred the door. Guess my surprise when I saw wha he had brought wi' him. "Mither," said he, "mak up a brae fire, and prepare our best bed: these travellers were distressed for a lodging, and ye I weel ken'd wad bid them welcome." I loo'd Allan, and was weel satisfied to do what he requested; therefore fetched a meikle coal, and bid them be seated. The lady wha appeared the mistress was big wi' bairn, and seemed sorely oppressed wi' sorrow. The ither, and the mon wha accompanied her, on the contrary were canty; indeed the lass I think was his lemmane. The lady questioned

questioned my son particularly respecting the war, on which she wad heave sic sighs as reached at anes the bottom o' my heart. In the course of the evening, she said she was on her way to Argyleshire, and nae doubt she spake truth, for surely falsehood was never concealed under sic a heavenly visage; but I ha' nae occasion to describe her—Peggy is her very marrow. “My gude friend,” quo' she to Allan, “I will requite your kindness to me; but can ye do me the favour to gang til town to-night, and enquire what news from the Highlands. The Duke of Cumberland I weel ken is in pursuit of the Chevalier; perhaps before now,” continued she with a heavy sigh, “they have had an engagement.” As
I thought

I thought she might ha' a gudeman in the army; I pressed Allan to gang, who was ready enough of himsell to oblige her, though it was rather late at night. Weel, he returned in about twa hours, with an account that the report was, that the Chevalier had gained a battle; in consequence of which the Jacobites had given a ball, though the news was by nae means confirmed. The lady said little, but grat until her heart was like to break, and at length retired to bed wi' her maid; the mon wha accompanied her sleeping wi' Allan. About ane o'clock we were disturbed by the firing of the castle guns and those in the harbour; on which Allan rose, took his staff, and went to see what could occasion sic
an

an alarm in the dead of night, and found that the news he had brought hame before was unka false; for instead of the Chevalier having gained a battle, he had been completely defeated at Culloden. The lady had risen at the first alarm of the guns, and troth we had meikle to do to keep her frae fainting during Allan's absence; and I coudna help observing to her companion, that I dreaded the fright should bring on the pains of child-birth. Weel, we retired anes mair to rest; but I could hear the pure soul making mane a' night; and as soon as day-break she rose, and drawing me aside, put five guineas intil my hand; which, though I refused repeatedly, she wad insist of my taking—saying,

“ Alas!

“ Alas ! if my beloved husband has out-lived the horrors of the battle, ye shall nae find my gratitude stap here.” She then desired my Allan to gang to town anes mair, and enquire into a’ particulars, and if possible to gain a list of those wounded or killed on either side. My lad obeyed, and remained a lang while absent ; but was na’ successfu’, as he brought word back that he could-na get a sure account until night. The agitation of the pure lady a’ day would ha’ grieved a heart of stane, yet it seemed to mak nae meikle impressioun on her maid. At even Allan went again, and returned wi’ the fatal list, which the lady plucked out of his hand wi’ eagerness ; but, wae to tell ! she hadna loked five minutes before she sunk

from her chair in a fainting fit, which terminated in convulsions. We immediately took her up to bed, where she was presently seized wi' the pangs of child-birth, though still strangely convulsed and insensible. I hastened for a howdy, wha remained wi' her a' night; during which her agonies never ceased, and about ten the next morn she was delivered of Peggy. I should nae neglect to inform ye, that through a' this mournfu' scene, neither of her companions were so dowie as mysell, that was but a stranger til her. She continued in dreadfu' fits a' the day after her labour, until near even, when the convulsions left her, and she recovered her speech; but was sorely wrang in her head, calling on several
of

of the Chevalier's party and others. About midnight she fell asleep, and continued so till towards morn, when she awakened, but was sorely changed ; her face was covered wi' the cauld swat of death, and her bonny blue ene almost lost in their sockets. She tried to speak, but was too feeble, and laid aane of her white hands on her brow, as if she was endeavouring to think. Hearing me mak mane as I stude by her side, for my heart bled to see her, she turned and saw the bairn which lay pressed on my bosom. I held it til her, saying, " It is a bonny lass—Heaven shield her !" Never shall I forget the luke she gave it ; surely it was sic a luke as angels give on faikless innocence, and leaning her head forward,

forward, fixed her sweet but already could mou on the babe, making a convulsive endeavour to speak, but only said, "Almighty God—protect her!" And wi' a heavy sigh her heart burst in twain, dying wi' her mou on the bairn's cheek.—By your leave, firs, for a moment I canna help greeting, even now, though it is near seventeen years back. I wad-na undergo sic anither scene for the world's lucre. Pure feckless bairn, thou hast cost me dear, and I ha' loo'd thee dearly in return. Ye ha cost me my only lad—but Heaven's will be dune: it is na for me to complain." So saying, the old woman wiped off the tears that hung on her venerable cheek, and was preparing to continue; but the Colonel, who as

well as Mr. Sommers was moved at her simple yet feeling recital, insisted on her pausing a-while, and taking some refreshment, which with difficulty she complied with, and then continued her narrative. “ The spirit had na funer left the fairest of a’ earthly man-sions, than the lafs wha attended and the mon held a lang conference alane; after which they called me, and she said, “ The lady wha lies dead is of a very gude family in the north, where she was ganging to join her gudemon. It is proper that her family should be acquainted wi’ what has happened; we will therefore leave the bairn wi’ ye, and tak that mournfu’ charge on us. I wad gang alane, but think in these troublesome times it is dangerous
for

for lasses to be unprotected; and this young mon might gae, but is unacquainted wi' her friends. Ye may depend of hearing frae us in about a fortnight; in the mean while bury the body, for which I will leave ye money, and some likewise for the bairn if ye are willing." I readily consented, Heaven kens, nae for lucre of gain, but for the sake of the feckless bairn, whose saikless innocence knockit on my heart; first however consulting Allan, wha replied, "The mither of the bairn is dead, and I dinna like these folks at a'; and by the living G—, they shall nae ha the las till they prove their title til her. They seem to me, for a' their speciousness, mair glad-some than waefu' at her death, for

which I suspect them to be gude for nought. Let them bring back sufficient testimonies of right to the bairn, and we will gi' her up; if not, I wad as fune trust the feckless lamb wi' the bludy wolf. If they canna do that, mither, she shall be mine; she will fune be a canty companion for ye, and I shall ha a bairn without mounting the stool." Weel, I ha informed ye, I consented, and troth they fune were ready to depart. The lady hadna a great deal of baggage; the whole being contained in a trunk that was fixed ahint the hired chaise that brought them, and a sma' box which she carried in her ain hand when she entered our house. Weel, the las loked up a', packing in the chamber where her mistress lay dead,

dead, and that sae racklesly, that I could hardly contain my temper, or help shewing my abhorrence ; but I loked on the dead lady, and my anger was rebuked. “ Ye smile, ye fast saint ! ” thought I, “ and shall I dare, even before your senseless clay, to let passion overpower me ? ”—To be brief, they hired a chaise and set off the very eve after her death, leaving the bairn wi’ me, and ten guineas for the burial. I needna tell ye they tuke a’ the geer wi’ them, not forgetting even the little box, which I canna help thinking was of value, they appeared sae carefu’ of it ; but the lafs said it only contained her mistress’s letters. Troth, I was gladsome to see them depart ; and that very night Allan went and

spoke for a coffin, and likewise to fetch my sister, wha then lived in Edinburgh, but has sin retired to Sky, to assist in the mournfu' business we had in hand. I should ha told ye before, that I wadna ha the lady muv'd out of bed, though the brute lassie that was wi' her, said, "Lay her out on the sackclaith;" but I couldna help replying, "Hoot awa', sackclaith for yoursell; she shall na be pulled out, and her decent bonny limbs exposed and affronted in my house." The day but ane after her death, the burial men brought the coffin: wae is me, I think I hear even now its dolefu' rumbling up the narrow stairs. I coudna but greet over the bairn, whose wee hands were clipst round my finger, as til
crave

crave protection. Weel, the men entered, and went to the bed in order to remuve the body. "Haud, for your lives," cried I, "I winna suffer it; women alane should perform the last duties to women." Sae speaking, I made them depart, and wi' a heavy heart tuke the bairn down to Allan, to haud while my sifter and self put the dear soul in her last hame. I had a holland sheet, the marrow to that in which I buried my gudemon, and I fetchd it to wrap up the lady; putting her on also my bridal coif, which was the best I had: weel, as we went to put it about her, I was nearly astound on discovering on her bonny breast, the picture of a lady hung til her neck wi' a black ribband: we

take it off, surmising, and troth I think truly that the hatefu' wench had forgotten it in her speed to be gane. When we had wrapped her in the sheet we put her in the coffin, and hastened down to Alan wi' the discovery we had made; he was as meikle astounded as ourfells; but said, " Mither, why surely it is her ain? but I believe ladies dinna wear their ain portraits—yet it can be nae ither." Oh! it was a bonny picture! wi' just sic soft ene as Peggy's, a smiling mou, a beautifu' nose, a skin fair as mountain sna, wi' cheeks like pale roses: behind was set a lock of hair, which was also the same colour as Peggy's." " And where is this picture," interrupted the Colonel, " that bears so strong a resemblance to Peggy?"

Peggy?"—Alack, I ha nae it; but will speedily inform ye by what means I lost it. Weel, to cut my story short, the morn before we meant to bury the lady, the minister sent for Allan, wha immediately went til him. "I am meikle concerned," quo' he, "til hear ye are guilty of sic doings." "Doings!" replied Allan, "I kenna what ye wad be at; pray ye explain?" "Why," said he, "ha ye nae gotten a bairn contrary to the laws of God and those of the land? a bairn whose mither, as I am informed, lies dead at this minute in your house! Hoot, lad, it is a wicked action, which ye must answer baith in this world and the next." "Haud ye there, gude sir," replied

Allan, "I am safe frae punishment in the next warld ; and for this, lookye, was I the father, I wadna heed the stool a bawbie, fae I had purchased the bairn without the loss of its bonny mither. God never surely sent sic a heavenly babe to bring punishment on its parents, and ye may lecture to the day of judgment before ye persuade me it was a sin til mak sic a ane !" " If ye are nae its father, wha is ?" said the minister, for he weel ken'd that Allan was nae lyar. Allan then repeated briefly til him a' that had passed, upon which the minister ceased til blame him ; but said, it was an unka pity he didna mak the people, that attended the lady, declare wha she was, as he strangely suspected, as they had taen her gear, they wadna
come

come back. The minister then accompanied Allan hame, and loked at the lady, and the picture which was on her breast, almaist as astounded as ourselfs, and after a lang consideration, said, "I kenna what to think: there is a lady which the Chevalier left wi' bairn at Carlisle, when he marched to the Highlands. She is said to be a foreigner, and attended wi' but twa domestics, a lad and lass; it is weel kenned she came the Edinburgh road, and is at this moment eagerly sought after. The shock she received at the news of his defeat, and reading the list of the dead and wounded, shew she was deeply concerned, and I think mak it probable is the very woman. I therefore advise ye, as a friend, til

keep the affair secret for a-while, til ye see how matters turn out—or ye may get intil meikle trouble for secreting a rebel. I had my information of the affair frae the burial men, wha simply think it is your bairn : let them think sae still, I will protect ye, in case of necessity, frae blame.” The gude mon sune after departed, and in the even the lady was laid in the earth. I kenna why, but her saft manner had won upon my heart, and I grat as if she had been my ain bairn.

Weel, a fortnight elapsed, and nae lads returned ; after which, I canna say, I had meikle expectancy of her. The bairn thrived amain, and was the sole delight of my Allan, wha wad ha her called Peggy, as he had anes lued a maid

maid of that name, but wha died when he was about twenty-one. In the mean time the gude minister made a' possible enquiry concerning the lady, wha was said til be wi' bairn by the Chevalier, and wha answered til the description of Peggy's mither; but coudna gain any tidings, some saying she was concealed in Scotland, ithers that she was gone off til France.

When we found a' enquiries vain, we made ourfells easy; entering intil nae explanations respecting Peggy, wha was generally believed to be a bairn of Allan's.

Naething material happened for three years. Peggy was our hale delight, cheering us wi' her guileless tricks: Alan particularly ken'd nae pleasure

in her absence, she was ever trotting by his side, calling him dad and myfell minnie; the gude minister advising us til keep her, even in an advanced period, in the same happy ignorance, unless we could discover her parents: "for," quo' he, "it could only inspire hopes that wad render her discontent wi' the state in which God hath placed her, and perhaps end in her ruin." Allan planted twa bonny trees over the lady's grave til mark the spot, a green bay at her head, and a cypress at the fit, for as we didna ken her name he coudna fix a stane over her.

Allan wad frequently luke at the bairn and sigh, saying, "My bonny love, ye were nae made for sic a cot as this," and I could see he was often lost
in

in meditation. One day he said, "Mither, I ha lang thought of taking a journey, but fear ye will nae approve it. This dear bairn is surely of high blude, and we do nae justice in bringing her up in obscurity; what think ye? were I to gae to the Chevalier's court, and endeavour to get an audience, perhaps the picture might lead til some discovery: if nae, we are but where we began, the bairn shall share our hame, and become truly ours."

I canna say but I was meikle against sic a project, and reminded Allan of the many dangers that might attend the enterprise, but I could see he was deaf to a'.—"Ye ken, mither," replied he, "a' is now at peace, the journey to France therefore is a mere naething."

Seeing

Seeing him resolved, and that he wad be uneasy if prevented, I at length agreed wi' a heavy heart, and Allan went to consult wi' the gude minister, wha was weel pleased at his intention, saying, "I am nae rich, but will willingly furnish ye with five guineas towards your journey. I weel ken a gentleman in London, wha can gi' ye a letter to the Chevalier's court; to this friend ye shall bear ane frae me, and I trust your journey will be successfu'." Allan returned hame weel satisfied wi' the minister, and in a few days was ready for his departure, taking little wi' him but the picture, his best claife, and a few necessaries. Ah me! never shall I forget my sorrow at parting wi' him; I called him back, for my heart was sorely oppressed.

Peggy

Peggy greeting, though she, pure innocent, ken'd nae why, "Mak haste, dad," quo' she: "Ay, love," replied he, "I'll speed me back to thee, and trust til bring thee hame a better father."—"I winna ha him, I will ha nane but ye," quo' the bairn, clippin' his neck until Allan himself was moved, wha, putting her intil my arms, gave us a last luke, saying, "Heaven shield ye!" and hastened out of the house. The old woman's tears for some time prevented her continuing; the Colonel, though silent, was moved; humanity struggling against the prejudices of party: but Mr. Sommers, whose temper was neither elate with the ardour of heroism, nor yet humble below the dignity of man, and servant of the first
of

of kings—even in his patron's presence, whose abhorrence to the Stuarts he well knew, and whose expressive features shewed he was by no means pleased with Allan's journey to the Chevalier's court, took the old woman by the hand, bidding her be comforted in terms of mild philanthropy, that seldom fails of its effect on the wounded mind.

After drying her tears, Jannet continued thus:—"Allan, I before informed ye, was til tak London in his way, in order to get a letter to an attendant of the Chevalier. Frae London I had a letter, my bonny lad informing me he was til quit that city the morn after in a vessel bound til Dieppe, having procured the necessary recommendation. Weel, frae that sorrowfu' day, I ha nae ken'd

ken'd what became of him; month after month, and year after year have I greeted and waited his return, but he is gane never mair to blefs my aged ene. If I ha dune wrang against the laws of the land, and if the los of my only hope is na sufficient, let me be punished: I canna feel any thing mair severely than what I have already dune; but let the comfort of my age, my bonny, now only bairn escape censure; she kens nae her origin to be otherwise than ye thought it."

"Are you sure you speak truly in that?" said the Colonel: "it is very astonishing, as she is now grown up you never disclosed it to her."—"In a moment I will inform ye a'," replied the old woman. "Allan's lang absence,

as

as weel as giving me sorrow caused my ruin ; I could na manage the land without him, and was sorely back in my rent, and at the end of little mair than ane year, was completely undone. The gude minister assisted me what he could, but a' was nae sufficient, for though wi' that I spinned night and day, I could na pay the arrears ; the laird took a' my gear, and I had nae resource but til come hither, this wee house being, as I before informed ye, my ain. Weel, the minister promised me to tak any letter that came frae Allan, or in case of his return to send him til us, giving me, as he had also before done to Allan, a certificate of the truth of the bairn's birth and the death of its mither at my house, Allan and myself taking

our

our aiths of what had passed in his presence, and that of anither minister, his friend. Weel, I ha little mair til say, but that before my departure, the gude mon advised me til keep a' secret, "as," quo' he, "it wad be weaknes to put thoughts in the bairn's head which I fear canna now be ever realized; bring her up til honest industry, and leave the rest til God, wha, nae doubt, if necessary, will in his ain time bring on a discovery: if nae, he conceals it for wise purposes that our frail mortality canna comprehend, but which are ever for the best." Weel, I determined til tak his advice, and accordingly fat out for the highlands wi' my bairn: goud we had nane, and filler but little, and that we owed til the kindness of the minister. We had
a lang

a lang and wearisome journey, our hale support being a few oat-cakes and milk for the fortnight we were walking. At length we reached our present hame, where wi' the blessing of God and your kindness, we have thriven mair than I could ever ha' expected; but in a' these years, never ha' I heard frae Allan, and but anes frae the gude minister, wha I ha' meikle fear is dead; for I ha' repeatedly written, but never received any answer sin the first year. In my visit till my sister lately dead at Sky, she questioned me meikle concerning Peggy, whose birth she weel ken'd, being as I before tauld ye at Edinburgh at the time. She strangly advised me til consult a seer in the neighbourhood on the affair, which I agreed til, and
wha

wha bade me reveal the hale to ye, which, as sune as death released my puir sister, I ha' faithfully dune, let whatever will be the consequence, and now can die contented when it shall please God to ca' me, sae ye dinna discard Peggy."

On the old woman's conclusion, the Colonel assured her that he could by no means condemn Peggy for what she was unable to prevent, supposing her, which he notwithstanding hoped erroneous, the daughter of the Chevalier. "I would rather," said he, "have her the child of an honest cottager, than the offspring of depravity however highly graced:—for the present, Jannet, retire with Mrs. Donald, and endeavour to regain your health." So saying, he called

called his housekeeper to conduct the good woman to Peggy's apartment, which was destined for her use.

CHAP. VI.

"Shou'd auld acquaintance be forgot,
Tho' they return with scars?
These are the noble heroes' lot,
Obtain'd in glorious wars.

OLD SCOTTISH BALLAD.

"IT is a strange tale," said the Colonel to Mr. Sommers, on Jannet's departure. "I have, in all probability, been assisting the child of licentiousness, and what is more, the offspring of my country's foe."—"Grant it so," replied Mr. Sommers, "which, for my own part, I think by no means to be depended

depended on, as the proofs are but circumstantial, and those very slight; her unhappy birth does not lessen her personal merit, nor your humanity; rebellion appears neither in her heart nor features, and I would venture a good wager, that even informed of the supposition of her origin, she would rather deplore it than otherwise, considering herself as no longer so estimable to you."

"Be it as it may," replied the Colonel, "it has fixed my opinion respecting Duncan's attachment to her, which if he pursues farther than friendship, he loses my affection for ever: the idea was disagreeable before, it is now beyond all bounds. I will certainly still continue my intentions in her favour, for I have been too long accustomed to

her not to love her, but we must never be nearer related."—"I am an enemy to the doctrine of punishing children for the errors of their parents," replied Sommers, "and Peggy, the daughter of a prince or of a cottager, will remain equally estimable to my heart: her mind I am convinced is as spotless as her form, and the little I have saved of my own patrimony in the many years I have been honoured with your friendship, at my death is her's."—Here the conversation was broken off by the abrupt entrance of Sandy Mackintosh, who, with an air of alarm rather than pleasure, announced a messenger from London, that brought news, and a letter from Captain Campbell.—"From Duncan!" replied the Colonel, a momentary

mentary paleness overspreading his features, which however as instantaneously gave way to an universal glow :—
“ Give me his letter,” continued he with firmness, “ he is a valiant lad, and all must be well.”

The messenger presented it, and retired with Sandy, who longed to question him respecting his youthful laird.

Mr. Sommers trembled—the death of James rushed upon his mind, and made him dread the contents of this unexpected letter, whose conveyance bespoke it to be of consequence. The Colonel with a forced composure broke the seal, and found the following words :

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“ My

“ My beloved and revered parent,

“ I have received some wounds before Cassel, which the surgeons wish to persuade me are dangerous ; but you well know those gentlemen are not infallible, and as I thought a letter would alarm you less than the news by any other means, preferred informing you myself of what had happened. I cannot enter into particulars, which, however, you will learn from the gazettes, but those you well know exaggerate matters : for my own part, I declare I have great expectation of enjoying in a short time the pleasures of Kenneth Castle, as peace will certainly soon take place : but, my dear uncle, as in this sublunary world nothing is certain, we should in some measure prepare

pare for the worst. If I live, it will be with honour; if otherwise, my death has not disgraced you. My only wish for life is for the sake of those so deservingly dear to my heart, for yours, for Mr. Sommers's, and, permit me to add, for Peggy's; I need not inform you that I love her, well convinced that at this moment I shall not incur your displeasure by affirming, what in health I did not deny; and must intreat you, in case of my wounds taking an unfavourable turn, to transfer the affection you bore me to her. Indeed, my dear sir, she merits it; you are not aware how sacred your commands are to her: to prove it, I freely confess that before my departure I used my utmost efforts to persuade her to

consent to wed me in secret, having provided a minister for that purpose; but she was inexorable. Oh my dear uncle, regard her as the wife of your Duncan, let the meanness of her birth be lost in that thought; assured of which, I can meet death with the firmness of a man and a soldier! Tell Mr. Sommers all his kindness is written on my heart, and that, having nothing so estimable as his and your friendship to bequeath, I wish him to transfer his where I entreat you to place your's. I have much to say, but am weak. Do not forget Ensign Orfield, he is a brave fellow, and will introduce an honest private to your notice, who I doubt not will meet your favour. Farewell, my dear, dear father!

father ! I know no name so applicable to our relationship. Adieu ! write by the most speedy means."

The Colonel and Mr. Sommers both remained for some minutes silent, the former violently ringing the bell, which however was not answered with the usual alacrity. Sandy at length making his appearance with a face expressive of the deepest sorrow : " My good fellow," said the Colonel with a sigh, " send up the messenger : I see you have heard bad news—but we are soldiers, Sandy."—" We are," sobbed Sandy, " but troth we are men also ; I feel I hae lived too lang, and canna help d——g the blundering engineer that pointed his gun sae ill at Dettingen, not to strike my body instead of my leg,

leaving me a miserable hirpling wretch to outlive a' those maist dear til me."

With these words he called up the messenger, who gave much the same account, though rather softened, as has been before stated, of Duncan's wounds, the manner of their being received in defence of Orfield, and the rescue of both at length by a private soldier. "Oh the brae chiel!" exclaimed Sandy, unmindful of the presence of his laird; "I ha' faved forty pounds, and by the living G— he shall hae it every bawbie!"—"He shall not need thy forty pounds, my honest Sandy," replied the Colonel; "he must henceforward be thy friend, and my friend; let my brave lad live or die, he shall be rewarded. Cheer up, Sommers," continued the
veteran,

veteran, seeing the good man with his head sunk on his bosom, and lost in silent anguish—"Heaven will not, I trust, deprive me of my last hope, and, for the loss of a leg, we must learn to bear that. What say you, will you accompany me to Germany? dead or alive I will see my brave Duncan. The Gazette of last Saturday announced a transport vessel in the port of Leith, bound to Embden. I will this day set off, and bring back my boy with transport if alive; if dead, sink with him to the grave."—"My dear sir," replied Sommers, "suffer me to go alone; you have, I am sure, sufficient interest to procure me a permission for that purpose. Duncan is dear to me as to yourself, and you may depend will

want no care that I can bestow.”—“ I know it well,” interrupted the Colonel, “ but, Sommers, I cannot bear the agonies of suspense ; we will go together, my old friend, and Heaven send our cares may be successful.” He then ordered Sandy to withdraw and entertain the messenger to the best of his power.

“ How frail are our firmest resolves !” said the Colonel to Mr. Sommers : “ how willingly would I at this moment unite him for ever with Peggy ; she is a noble girl, and let her be whose daughter she will I care not ; her honour in refusing him, and his affection, shall not go unrewarded. Can you, Sommers, write to her, and I think desire her to stay in London until our return ?

Tell

Tell Jannet also not to mention the affair she has disclosed to us, as she values my favour; at least for the present, hereafter she is at liberty." Mr. Sommers instantly agreed, writing to Peggy in the following terms :

" My dear child,

" You have doubtless before this heard of our Duncan's misfortune. We are all in the hand of God, Peggy, and must submit to his decrees, however painful. Blessed are they who receive the stroke allotted them without murmur; but as neither you, the Colonel, nor myself, I fear, can boast of so much fortitude, we in this trial must endeavour at least to support each other; nor let selfish weakness increase the suffering of those friends which the bounty

of Heaven yet spares. The Colonel and myself this day mean to depart for Leith, in which port is a transport vessel on the point of sailing, and that we mean to take the advantage of to convey us to Germany. Duncan perhaps yet lives, and the cares of his uncle and friend may contribute towards his cure ; at all events, my dear girl, I will return by the way of London, and bring you back with me, the Colonel wishing you to remain in town till that period. Your grandmother is at the Castle, so you may be perfectly easy on her account.

Adieu !

ARCHIBALD SOMMERS."

The Colonel before his departure spoke to Jannet, assuring her that he would.

would still protect her grand-daughter ; also desiring the utmost care to be taken of her health during his absence.

The veteran and Mr. Sommers as before projected set off immediately for Leith, where they arrived in safety, finding the vessel they expected ready to sail in the course of a tide or two ; on which they embarked, and soon after took their departure.

C H A P. VII.

“ I joy that thou art safe ; and I admire
Him and his fortunes who hath wrought thy
safety.

———— The soldier now of hope
He stands conspicuous ; fame and great renown
Are brought within the compass of his sword.”

HOME.

DURING the surprise occasioned by
the old woman's tale at Kenneth Castle,
and

and the subsequent sorrow on hearing of Duncan's wounds, all was not more composed at Lady Beugle's; Peggy at intervals being seized with faintings of a most alarming nature, remaining entirely confined to her apartment, her eyes fixed on the ground, and scarcely ever breaking silence; a situation which deeply wounded the generous heart of Sophia, but excited no pity in Eleanor, who never mentioned her but with a satirical sneer, which passed unanswered, unless in the presence of Lord Wilmot, who was sure to return it with redoubled acrimony; for as he was at least as great a favourite with his mother as Eleanor, that lady never interfered farther than to restore peace between them—Wilmot, though in the main a good son, perfectly understanding how to profit by Lady Beugle's vanity, which he never failed to gratify at the expence of a few harmless compliments.

Sophia

Sophia was hardly a moment absent from Peggy ; for as etiquette required the family of Lord Beugle to live retired during the uncertainty of Duncan's fate, she had but little to prevent her attendance, soothing her to the utmost, yet fearful of inspiring hopes that would, perhaps, redouble the violence of the shock, should any ill news arrive. A fortnight elapsed in this uncertainty ; at the conclusion of which, the messenger returned, bringing Peggy Mr. Sommers's letter, which was in some measure an alleviation to her trouble. If Duncan yet survived, the cares and presence of such dear friends she hoped would have the happiest effects. " If," said she, weeping, " he should have the misfortune to lose his leg, for I am sure, it either is, or is feared it must be so by what that wretch Lord Withers said to Lady Eleanor, and which, my dear Lady Sophia, is corroborated

roborated by your own avowal of his most dangerous wound being in the thigh; the support of the Colonel and Mr. Sommers I am sure is necessary. Why am I deprived of the mournful satisfaction of attending him? Whose attention would be so constantly awake as mine? Ah! Lady Sophia, all I ask of Heaven is his life; let him be spared, and I am content to submit to every thing. How handsome, how graceful, when he went to this hateful war, yet if disfigured his friends will but esteem him the more. His mind, his generous soul will remain the same; and could I only distinguish his voice, my heart might sigh, but could have nothing farther to wish. Alas!" continued she, weeping bitterly, "should he be dreadfully maimed, no power on earth, no commands but his own should remove me from him, every consideration must sink before such a duty. I have

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not the vanity ever to expect to be his wife; and I will be no man's mistress," added she firmly, "but Duncan's faithful friend through life. Let the censorious world say what they please, conscious of innate rectitude their venom can never reach my heart. If even he survives, harassed perhaps by pain, and the remembrance of what he once was, will he not require the softest voice of friendship to reconcile him to it, to convince him that personal charms are trifles, and that the loss of them have no effect but to increase the love and esteem of true friends!"—"Bear up, my dear girl," replied Sophia, "I trust Duncan will recover, and hope the day is not far distant when I may salute as my cousin one I already love as a sister."

While the above discourse passed between Sophia and Peggy, one of a very different nature took place with Lady Eleanor

Eleanor and her waiting-maid. "Heigh-ho!" yawned Lady Eleanor, viewing herself in the glass: "It is useless to dress, Fringe, until we hear from the army. I am absolutely annihilated with staying at home. If you have nothing more material to do, look up my black, as in all probability I shall want it."—"I fear your ladyship will indeed; it is a pity such a fine young man should be killed, or even maimed. All the servants were in hopes we should have had a wedding; what a charming couple your ladyship and him would have made!"—"Pr'ythee, Fringe, do not mention it; his person was certainly very well, but the horrible vulgarity of his education I should never have been able to suffer. How could I possibly bear such a figure in my drawing-room? a frightful plaid on his back, and then his bare knees must shock the modesty of any delicate woman. No, Fringe, I could
never

never submit to sacrifice myself to such a highland monster, unless indeed he would consent to undergo a total metamorphosis."——"Indeed!" replied Mrs. Fringe, "Mademoiselle La Papillotte told me her lady had such intentions; but as your ladyship truly observes, he is a very different figure from most of the gentlemen that visit here, though for my own part I think his dress looks very graceful; and as for his knees, they are so white that I declare I see nothing at all shocking in them."——"Pr'ythee have done with the discourse," replied the lady, "he is fit for nothing but a husband to that Scotch wench, who, I suppose, is very graceful too in your wise ideas."——"Lord, ma'am! now you mention her," added Fringe, surmising her mistress's thoughts by the polite epithet she had made use of, "did you ever see such an ungain creature? Why, she is taller than
your

your ladyship—and then how awkward she dresses herself—To be sure she has good hair enough, and might look tolerably well, had she your ladyship's taste; but, poor girl, how can it be expected? La Papillotte says, she was a mere country wench when Colonel Campbell took her. I was observing the other day, that I wondered how gentlemen could debase themselves in such a manner; and I assure you my Lord Wilmot's valet behaved very rudely to me, saying nothing but envy could make any one rail at her, and that he did not believe that all England, or Scotland either, could produce such another woman.”—“Doubtless he is a great judge,” sneered Lady Eleanor. “Wilmot I fancy is of the same opinion. I wish my mother may not have reason to repent being plagued with her. Did you ever hear such insolence as that of her refusing Lord Withers?”

Withers? Should Duncan survive, which however will be a pity, as by all accounts he must be a sad spectacle, I think he cannot now do better than engage her for his nurse."

A few days after the foregoing conversation, a messenger arrived, who brought letters for the Beugle family, and one particularly for Peggy, written by Mr. Sommers, which ran thus :

" My dear girl !

" As I am sure it must give you equal satisfaction with myself to know that our young friend is almost out of danger, I could not resist affording you that pleasure as soon as possible. The Colonel and myself had a very speedy passage; and I believe our presence was not a little efficacious to Duncan, who, I however assure you, was not so dangerously wounded as at first thought, the hurt in the thigh being the only one that gave alarm; but
1 which,

which, from the excellence of his constitution, youth and strength, will now, we have scarcely any fear, be cured without amputation, which was at first seriously apprehended. As soon as he can be moved with safety, we shall return home. I know not whether the Colonel will come by the way of London, but you may be assured I shall, according to my promise. Ensign Orfield, and the brave Scot who so gallantly defended Duncan, and also preserved him from falling into the enemy's hands, is constantly with us; the former has nearly recovered his hurt, and the latter received none worth mentioning. He has been our Duncan's constant attendant, and I assure you is no inconsiderable favourite with the Colonel, who, having purchased a lieutenancy for Orfield, has, by his interest, procured his ensigncy for the brave fellow, though, as he says, but as the preliminary

preliminary step to farther advancement. You cannot form an idea of any thing more interesting than our first interview. The Colonel had hardly patience to wait until announced, as I feared the surprise affecting the invalid too greatly. He speedily rushed after the soldier, throwing himself on the couch of his nephew, unable to articulate a word for some minutes ; at length exclaiming, " My boy ! my brave boy ! Heaven spares you to my wishes ! my age will not be sunk to the grave with sorrow—See Sommers too ! reach him thy hand, my son ; speak to us, and let thy voice confirm my hopes !" Duncan, as speedily as the astonishment caused by our presence would permit, readily obeyed his uncle, assuring him he was already half recovered by the cares of his honest deliverer, who had neither left him night nor day since his receiving the wounds, attending him with unwearied
attention,

attention, and sleeping on a mattress by his side: at the same time pointing him out to the Colonel as he stood at a respectful distance. I cannot describe the Colonel's features at that moment; they glowed with an animation impossible to form an adequate idea of, without having seen it. He loosed his nephew from his embrace, and advancing towards the soldier, who appeared overwhelmed with his condescension, shook him heartily by the hand, saying, "Henceforward regard me as your friend. The man to whom I owe my nephew has a sacred right to that title." The honest fellow, who appears about forty, with one of the most benevolent faces I ever saw, replied modestly, "I did but my duty, sir, and the pleasure I have reaped in being instrumental to the safety of my captain and countryman, greatly compensates for the little effort

fort I made in his favour : all I ask in return, is to be his faithful attendant."

"No!" replied the Colonel; "the man to whom Duncan owes his life must be his friend: he would blush to view him in any other character." Much more passed, which however I neither entirely recollect, or have time now to inform you of. Suffice it that Duncan appeared to mend daily, and at this moment is thought nearly out of danger; though many officers, who were far less severely wounded, have sunk under the fever that usually attends their situation, but from which Duncan has been uncommonly clear.

After our arrival the Colonel, at Duncan's request, adopted the measure I have before mentioned in favour of Orfield and the honest soldier, who received his promotion with a modest, but manly gratitude; his friend Duncan at the same time presenting

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him

him with two hundred guineas, to equip him properly. The Colonel insisted that during our stay here he should eat at the same table ; a request he found the utmost difficulty to make him comply with ; but which both his patrons and Lieutenant Orfield warmly insisted on, as the rank and countenance of the Colonel could not fail of removing the cloud in which his former situation might envelop him. I know not, my good girl, when I have before written so long a letter, but I thought every circumstance would be pleasing to you. Adieu—our meeting I hope will be speedy ; keep up your spirits, and hope all for the best—Once more adieu !

A. SOMMERS."

The messenger who brings this has a letter for Lady Beugle.

Sophia was with Peggy when Mr. Sommers's letter was brought her : an
universal

universal trembling prevented her opening it. "Read it, Lady Sophia," said she; "I will try to collect myself, and prepare to hear the worst."—Lady Sophia instantly broke the seal, though not without being infected with some portion of Peggy's alarm. Glancing her eyes over the beginning, in order if possible to form an idea of the purport; the first two or three lines at once removed apprehension, and, unable to read or speak more fully, she exclaimed with rapture: "Duncan is better! He will recover, my Peggy! Look, he is out of danger!" at the same time throwing her arms around Peggy's neck; tears of thankfulness and pleasure streaming from the eyes of both, and mingling as they fell on each other's cheeks.

For some minutes neither could ask nor read a confirmation of the happy

tidings. Peggy at length saying, in a voice agitated at once with joy and fear, " Perhaps, Lady Sophia, you might mistake on such a slight glance. Alas ! should it be so, how dreadful the disappointment." " Banish your fear," replied Sophia, wiping off her tears ; " I will soon satisfy you, my eyes have not deceived me : " So saying, she began to read ; but had proceeded no farther than to learn that amputation was no longer apprehended, than Peggy, sinking on her knees, exclaimed, " Spare me, Lady Sophia ! spare me ! the effects of joy are painful as those of sorrow, I can bear no more ! To Heaven be the praise with which my heart overflows, but that my tongue cannot utter. Wretch that I was to doubt its protection of the best, the most deserving of mortals ! " Lady Sophia, after a short pause, continued ; every line confirming Peggy's hopes,
and

and almost overpowering her with pleasure. The honest Scot, who saved Duncan, likewise came in for his share of praise. "Best of men!" exclaimed she, "though unknown, I already love you; what a heart, Lady Sophia! Is he not a living proof, that the noblest spirits frequently dwell in those who have neither birth nor education to distinguish them? Thank Heaven, he will no longer shrink under the command of those whose minds are perhaps unworthy that distinction: he will be the Colonel's friend, and needs no other supporter." Thus did the affectionate soul of Peggy run into rapturous effusions of grateful sensibility:—nor was Lady Sophia less thankful; she before respected and esteemed Duncan, but his friendship for the man most dear to her had now redoubled those sentiments.

The letter to Lady Beugle, which

accompanied that for Peggy, was from the Colonel, and merely specified that Duncan was thought out of danger, desiring her to communicate those pleasing tidings in the most speedy manner to her father and mother. Lady Beugle was by no means so transported with this news as Peggy and Sophia had been; but as she had not given up the project of a match between Duncan and Eleanor, she consoled herself with that idea. Lady Eleanor received the information with the utmost calmness, simply observing that she supposed they should now be honoured with the company of the love-sick damsel; but in that surmise she was however mistaken, Peggy not making her appearance publicly for some days; for although the news of Duncan's returning health in great measure removed her depression, yet her heart had not sufficiently recovered its

its serenity to suffer, her to mingle in the fashionable circle that frequented Lady Beugle's: besides she dreaded the scrutinising eyes of her ladyship, and the satirical sneers of her daughter. Therefore, forming the most delightful pictures of future happiness and enjoyment with her beloved friends at Kenneth Castle, she beguiled the time, except when favoured with the company of Sophia, who passed every hour with her she could possibly steal from her mother's drawing-room.

CHAP. VIII.

“ — Eager looks, and dying sighs,
My secret soul discover;
While rapture trembling through mine eyes
Reveals how much I love her.”

SCOTTISH BALLAD.

PEGGY's health mending daily, she was at length obliged to make her appearance

pearance in public; and accordingly one morning, with a beating heart and slow step, entered the breakfast room accompanied by Sophia, who endeavoured all she could to laugh her out of her fears. Lady Beugle received her with the most marking coolness. Eleanor, after some few minutes, saying, "You are a great politician, I fancy, Miss Grant: the news from the army affects you singularly;" Peggy remained silent, her eyes ready to overflow; but pride restrained her tears, and determined her not to gratify Eleanor's malevolent spleen by such a weakness.

Lords Beugle and Wilmot soon after attended; the former complimenting Peggy with his usual indolence, the latter addressing her with a softness and attention that did not escape either Lady Beugle or Eleanor.

The news of Duncan's returning health,

health, which was confirmed in a short time by another letter from Germany, relieved both mother and daughter from the torments of confinement, setting them at liberty to mingle in the whirlpool of fashionable amusements, from which Peggy would willingly have excused herself, but was retained by a fear of giving offence, though frequently in the most sprightly scenes she wiped off a tear that intruded itself on her cheek. The Colonel in his last letter had informed Lady Beugle, that as there was no doubt but peace would soon take place, he should return by the way of London. At which time the lady determined to propose to him the union of Duncan and Eleanor; who, notwithstanding she pretended the utmost indifference to him, might be truly compared to the fox in the fable, who called the grapes sour only because he despaired of reaching them.

Peggy, since her return to public company, had however enjoyed one peculiar satisfaction, the absence of Lord Withers, who had been in the country for a fortnight previous to that event.

It has already been observed, that Peggy was usually first in the breakfast parlour. One morning that she was sitting reading until the appearance of Lady Beugle and the family, the servant entered, and presented a note with her address; a circumstance that surprised her, as she was unacquainted in London, and made her observe it was perhaps some mistake: but the man replying he fancied it was only a petition, she immediately opened it, and found as follows :

“ Madam,

“ Distress renders the most timid bold. My own sorrows I could bear, but the misery of a parent is hard to support. A native of Scotland, and
stranger

stranger in London, I have no resource but to apply to yourself, who by chance I learned are of that country. The miseries of our situation are too numerous to enter upon in a letter; but would you permit me the honour of an audience, I have no doubt of interesting your compassion in favour of a distressed widow and unhappy daughter."

Peggy enquired of the servant for the person who brought the note. The man answered, it was a young woman, who said she would call the next morning.

"Poor girl!" said Peggy when alone, "I shall do no more than my duty in assisting you! Was I not the child of poverty myself, till raised by the kindness of the Colonel? I have money remaining sufficient to help you, and which will be better expended on your necessities than my

superfluities. Alas! I myself might have shuddered over my grandmother; unable to assist her, but for Duncan; and ought I not, when in my power, to soothe the distress of others? She needed not to have mentioned her country to interest me; every child of misfortune has surely an equal claim on the assistance of those who have the means of relieving them; Scots, English, or even Ethiopians, my heart can know no difference."

Such were Peggy's thoughts till the entrance of the family; the distress of the poor girl intruding itself on her mind the whole day, she waited the next morning with impatience, longing to dry the tear of misery, or at least to soften its bitterness.

The young woman was true to her time, being introduced by the footman into the anti-chamber, where she was speedily joined by Peggy, who felt the
the

the pity she before experienced for her redoubled by her demeanour and interesting person. She was about twenty-three, and perfectly handsome; though her face was shaded by a large cap and bonnet by no means calculated to set off her charms. Her gown and cloak were of old black silk, which, without being ragged, plainly bespoke the poverty of the wearer. "Pardon me, madam," said she with tears, "I am not used to beg; but my mother's distress has banished every other consideration: confined to her bed, from whence my father was taken but a short month since to the grave—without nourishment or friends, I dared apply though unknown to you; but you are of Scotland, as I was informed, and I flattered myself I should not sue in vain for a dying parent." "Heaven forbid you should!" said Peggy, presenting her a purse, which contained
nearly

nearly all she possessed: "Take this, assist your mother; hereafter, if possible, I will help you more." The young woman interrupted her with the most rapturous thanks, saying, "May every wish of your heart be gratified! You will save my mother from death. Alas!" continued she, concealing her face with her handkerchief, "perhaps, had I received this before, I had yet had a father."

Peggy's susceptible heart was moved; she entreated the young woman to be comforted—asking, to divert her grief, from what part of Scotland she came. "From Aberdeen," replied she; "my father's name was Thompson, and formerly in trade, but had retired some years from business with a decent competency, which he placed in a builder's hands at a more advantageous interest than commonly allowed, and that was regularly paid for some time; but the
villain

villain whom he entrusted, having a reputation of probity, obtained several large sums, and made off. For a long while we were ignorant whither he had fled; but at length heard he was in London, on which my father set off for this city, determined to stop him: but, alas! he had by some means information of his intention, and departed the day before for the continent. My poor parent, harassed and disappointed, fell sick, and was obliged to employ a stranger to inform us of his situation. My mother instantly sold our furniture, which was all the property we had left, and accompanied by myself hastened to London. My father lingered three months and then expired, during which we expended all; and my mother, oppressed with distress and sorrow, appeared hastening after him, though I now trust by your bounty to be able to save at least

least one parent." The grief of Miss Thompson, during this recital, was extreme. Peggy dropped a tear at her sorrows, entreating her once more to be comforted, and desiring her to let her hear from her in the course of a day or two. Miss Thompson then departed, and Peggy returned to the breakfast-room, where she was soon after joined by the family. In the course of the day she informed Sophia of her morning's adventure, who entreated her to let her purse assist the unhappy girl, which Peggy promised if she found occasion.

Two days elapsed without hearing anything of the object of her bounty ; but on the third Miss Thompson called, informing her, with many expressions of gratitude, that her mother was better, and that she hoped soon to be able to return to Scotland, where she could support her with the help of her friends

friends and needle-work, which she understood perfectly well. Peggy congratulated her on the occasion, saying, that she however hoped to procure her some further assistance by the help of a young lady who was her particular friend, desiring her to call again in a short time for that purpose : a promise she readily gave, and then took her leave.

About a week after this visit, Lady Beugle received a letter from Germany, that had nearly overpowered Peggy with pleasure. It informed her that the Colonel proposed to be in London in a fortnight from the time it was written ; news that caused Peggy's eyes to sparkle with delight ; which was redoubled with the intelligence of Duncan being nearly recovered, and likely to receive no ill consequence from his wounds.

On

On Lady Beugle and her daughters retiring to dress, Peggy remained alone in the drawing-room, reflecting on the pleasing intelligence, until disturbed by the entrance of Lord Wilmot; who, with a sigh, had beheld her joy at the information of the Colonel's return. His face was pale, and his spirits unusually depressed: throwing himself on a sofa, he remained silent until Peggy, with a voice of kindness mixed with alarm, said: "You look ill, my Lord! can I do any thing to relieve you?" "Miss Grant!" said he, taking her hand, "you see before you one of the most miserable of men; doomed to love a woman whose heart is devoted to another, and he my friend too—what then remains for me but despair? To fly her, and to seek in some distant clime a forgetfulness of all that can make woman amiable."

"Alas!"

“ Alas !” replied Peggy, blushing to be made the confidant of a love tale, though ignorant of its object, yet grieved to see him so depressed—“ you are surely too much affected, and I too young to advise you ; but the Colonel is coming home—go with him to Kenneth Castle, we shall there find means to restore your spirits.” “ To Kenneth Castle !” repeated he, “ to death rather ! No, innocent angel, I should but imbitter your pleasures ; the torments of the wretched Wilmot would force a sigh from that susceptible bosom, even in the presence of the happy Duncan !” “ Merciful goodness !” exclaimed Peggy, at once comprehending him, and withdrawing her hand, “ what do you mean ?”

“ By Heaven, I scarcely know myself ! pity me, do not shrink thus ! I meant to conceal this unhappy passion in my own bosom ; but the news of
Duncan’s

Duncan's return has forced it from me : say but you forgive me, and I will never more offend !”

“ Do not speak thus, my Lord ; you forget you are addressing the object of your uncle's bounty ; which, but for the humanity of Duncan, had never been honoured to stand in such a presence.” “ Ah ! why,” replied he, “ did Heaven peculiarly bestow on the fortunate Duncan such a distinction ? Who could have acted otherwise ? who could see and not love you ? or who know, and not respect you ? Ah ! would to Heaven I might be suffered to lay myself and fortune at your feet !” “ My Lord !” answered Peggy, “ cease such discourse I entreat, or I must leave you. I honour, I esteem you for Sophia's sake, for your own ; but cannot listen to what at once distresses me ; and degrades yourself. Gratitude, or love, my Lord, attaches me to Duncan +

can! I know not the nice distinctions of refinement, but feel his happiness is necessary to my existence. You too shall give me a share, which I feel my heart has room for: a sister's part, another Sophia, though a humble one."

"Be what you please, enchanting Peggy!" exclaimed he, "I will endeavour to be satisfied with any place in that valuable heart." "Brother, then!" said she, "and henceforward let your behaviour be consonant with that name: I esteem and love you as such; your own conduct alone can force me to alter these sentiments, or oblige me to conceal them. "You shall do neither, my beloved girl!" replied he, throwing himself at her feet: "your brother then—cold name! while the happy Duncan will enjoy the first of all earthly blessings—the rapturous title of your husband!" "Why, my Lord!" answered Peggy, blushing deeply, "will you again put
me

me under the necessity of reminding you of my birth, and obligations to your family? which," continued she, "ought to banish every such idea." "Were you in Duncan's place," replied he, would such cold prudential motives guide you?" "I know not," said she, hesitating, "how to answer your question—my obligations are so great, that did I possess a throne, it could poorly shew my gratitude; but I entreat you rise, my Lord, I cannot see you in that posture!" Just at that moment the door opened, and Lady Eleanor entered, surprising Wilmot at Peggy's feet. "I beg pardon," said she, "for my intrusion; it is true I long suspected this business, and congratulate you, Miss Grant, on your happy foresight, in having provided a party in case Duncan's wounds should take an unfavourable turn." "Eleanor," replied Wilmot, "I could easily undeceive

deceive you if I thought it necessary, but will neither gratify your curiosity or impertinence by any concession; yet must insist that you curb your malevolent temper, nor suffer it to insult one by no means able to contend with you, and as superior in disposition as personal charms."

"Mean, barbarous wretch!" exclaimed Eleanor, "for I cannot call you brother; but Lady Beugle will not suffer me to be treated thus." Indeed, Lady Eleanor!" said Peggy, endeavouring to recover from her confusion, you are displeased without a cause; had you heard my whole conversation with Lord Wilmot, you would have held me blameless." "Go! go!" interrupted Eleanor hastily, "you are a cunning designing creature; but my uncle shall be acquainted with your arts; nay, even Duncan too, whom you have drawn in by your pretended innocence,

innocence, shall know all." "I am satisfied, madam," replied Peggy, "that they should know, not only my actions, but even if possible my very thoughts: they would find nothing in either worthy of forfeiting their friendship and protection." Peggy's calmness increased Lady Eleanor's rage. "Insolent!" returned she, "I have no doubt but you have art sufficient to persuade them to any thing; nor indeed is your cunning to be wondered at, when your origin is remembered." "Peace! I can bear no more, Eleanor!" interrupted Wilmot. "Miss Grant is a living proof how superior the qualifications of the mind and temper are to those of birth; while on the contrary you truly reflect, that rank cannot ennoble a soul naturally mean." "For Heaven's sake!" exclaimed Peggy, "my Lord, do not say such cruel things to your sister; her mistake is

not to be wondered at; relate to her the whole that passed." Lady Beugle just at that moment entered, and was not a little surprised to find Eleanor sunk on a chair, endeavouring to call up the assistance of tears—Peggy overwhelmed with confusion, and Wilmot walking up and down the apartment in a frame of temper that was plainly portrayed on his features. "For goodness sake, what is the matter?" said Lady Beugle; an answer to which question she received from Eleanor, who related the whole scene with various additions, besides endeavouring to increase the interest she wished to inspire by tears. Lady Beugle heard her in silence, regarding Peggy with disdain; and on her conclusion turned to Wilmot, asking an explanation of his behaviour. "Pardon me, madam," replied he, "if I decline discussing it in the presence of that puppet, whom I blush to

call my sister : I am ready to give you any satisfaction, but will only assure you now, that, by my honour, if there is any blame it is totally mine." " Indeed, Miss Grant," said Lady Beugle, " I shall be very happy to give up the charge of you to my uncle."—" I must beg, madam," interrupted Wilmot, " that you will not accuse Miss Grant until informed of the whole; reproof you will then find needless." " Oh, sir!" cried Eleanor, " the sooner you make the lady's defence the better; I will retire and leave you to exculpate yourself by what falsehoods you please: but my dear mamma," continued she, with a fresh flood of tears, " will not see me insulted so cruelly, for no reason but having surprised you in a situation at once derogatory to your rank and fortune." " Pr'ythee begone, child!" replied Wilmot, " the enamel is entirely washed off your cheeks, and

and it will take you a considerable time to replace it." As he spoke, Eleanor left the apartment—Peggy entreating Lady Beugle's leave also to retire, which was assented to by a contemptuous bow. Lord Wilmot now entered into an explanation of his conduct, with a modest but manly firmness: he confessed he loved Peggy, but that he had never before disclosed it to her; he likewise related her behaviour, entirely exculpating her from any share of blame; concluding the whole by saying, "Miss Grant, madam, is the first woman I ever loved, and my heart is strangely deceived if any other replaces her there, although I am perfectly convinced she will never be mine."

Lady Beugle, though extremely displeased, in some measure concealed it. As Peggy's stay was now in all probability to be short, she hoped her ab-

sence would entirely destroy Wilmot's attachment: her ladyship's affections being as fashionable as her garments, she imagined her son's the same, and as easily worn out; therefore dismissed him with a mild reprimand—first obtaining a promise that he would not behave particularly to Miss Grant during her stay; an assurance that he however refused, until her ladyship gave her word to treat Peggy as usual; nay, more, to inform her that Wilmot's declaration had convinced her she was blameless.

Peggy declined going down to dinner: the occurrences of the afternoon had greatly vexed her; Lady Sophia endeavouring all she could to banish her uneasiness, even sitting up to chat with her for two hours after the family were in bed.

Peggy had but little sleep—she wished a thousand times that she had never
come

come to London, where she met with nothing but repeated vexations. In the morning, Lady Beugle deigned to inform her that Wilmot had entirely exculpated her; at the same time desiring she would in future avoid him—a promise that was readily given, after which Peggy accompanied her ladyship to breakfast.

CHAP. IX.

“—————What perils and injustice
Await the poor man's valour!—————”

HOMER.

BY the letters from Germany, the reader is already informed that Duncan was nearly recovered, Orfield had obtained a lieutenancy, and that the brave Scot was raised far above his expectations. The Colonel particularly appeared to think his bravery could never

be sufficiently repaid ; his manners too increased the veteran's esteem for him, possessing a strong understanding and excellent heart. His name was Grant, which, though a common one in Scotland, made him, if possible, more estimable to Duncan, as it was likewise that of the woman ever present in his thoughts.

Duncan's health being at length re-established, the Colonel took the opportunity of remitting the letter before mentioned by a messenger to Lady Beugle, as also one to Scotland from Duncan to his grandfather, informing them they should set out in a day or two for England, Duncan's regiment being ordered home. Grant entering at the time of the Colonel delivering the packet to the messenger, the veteran asked him if he had any commands to Scotland, as he would inclose his letters, " Alas ! none," replied he ;
" those

“those that rendered that country dear to me are either dead, or gone. I know not whither.” The Colonel, sorry to have awakened a painful sensation in the breast of the honest Ensign, dispatched the messenger, and endeavoured to relieve the mind of Grant by changing the subject. But Duncan, whom youth rendered more sanguine in his expectations than the Colonel, replied: “As you express yourself, Grant, you are not certain your friends are dead, why therefore despond? When I was confined, I think you told me you had been a great traveller, and met with many misfortunes, which you promised to relate to me. We are now a snug party; if not disagreeable, my uncle will, I am sure, be pleased with such a mark of your confidence.”—“Alas!” said he, “my misfortunes have all arisen from fulfilling the duties of humanity, and a wish to succour a sweet

little innocent, whose mother died an unknown stranger in my house four days after the battle of Culloden.”—

“Good Heaven!” interrupted Mr. Sommers, his name and the similarity of the account instantly striking him as resembling that of Jannet, “you are not surely the son of Jannet Grant who formerly lived near Edinburgh, and whom she lost many years ago?”—

“Too surely I am that unfortunate son,” replied he, gazing on Mr. Sommers with astonishment; “but, my dear sir, satisfy my impatience, for you surely knew my mother. Does she yet live? Is my little darling well? Perhaps, you know her too? how have they existed? where have they wandered?”—“They are both well,” interrupted the Colonel hastily, “and are under my particular protection; how they came so you shall know hereafter; at present, excuse my impatience, have you yet the picture
that

that appertained to Peggy's mother? You find, my good fellow, that we are acquainted with more of your affairs than either of us at first apprehended. Are you yet satisfied who were her parents?"—"Parents! whose parents?" exclaimed Duncan with surprise. "Peace!" replied the Colonel, "you shall know all; but first speak, Grant, have you yet the portrait?"—"Yes!" returned Grant; "for many years it has been my constant companion, and my search to know the original the source of all my misfortunes."—"Quickly give it me," said the Colonel; "the astonishing resemblance your mother informs me it bears to Peggy, makes me curious to see it."—"I have it not about me," replied Grant, "but can easily procure it. The day previous to that I reckon the most fortunate of my life, that on which I assisted your nephew, I went to the chaplain of the thirty-seventh regiment,

I 5 requesting

requesting him to take charge of a small packet, and in case any thing happened to me to open it; which packet contained nothing more than my own name and former place of abode, some short detail of my misfortunes, and the picture, with a written account how I came by it. My reason for preferring him to our chaplain was simply this: his cares for the sick and dying had given me a better opinion of him. Since my advancement he has offered to restore it, but I entreated him to keep it till our return to Britain, as it was safe with him; indeed, had you not previously mentioned it, I should have informed you of it in the course of the story I was about to relate."

Grant then departed to fetch the portrait; Mr. Sommers in his absence relating Jannet's account to Duncan, whose anxiety was strongly imprinted on his features, hazarding no question

tion throughout, lest he should lose a word of a recital that so powerfully interested him.

Mr. Sommers had hardly concluded, when Grant returned, saying, he had not been able to meet with the chaplain, who he was informed had dined with some officers belonging to the regiment; but had left his business with the man who attended him. This delay in some measure damped the spirits of the party, their curiosity being awakened to see the portrait found on the bosom of Peggy's mother, and which was said to resemble both parent and child so exactly. Mr. Sommers then informed Grant what he had been relating to Duncan in his absence, entreating him to begin the account at his own departure from Edinburgh.

"You say, gentlemen," replied Grant, "you are acquainted with all previous to that period; you may there-

fore imagine me safely arrived in London, where I procured a letter to a person that attended on the Chevalier from a friend of our minister's, who gave me a recommendation for that purpose. I then wrote to my mother, informing her I was to depart the day following on board a vessel bound to Dieppe; the evening previous to which, I went to a public-house near the water-side, where I had appointed to meet the mate who was to accompany me on board.

I had not sat long, before I fell into conversation with a man of a very specious appearance, and who soon found I was a stranger in the metropolis, offering me a thousand civilities, all of which I thought real. As the mate did not come according to appointment, when it grew dark he offered to accompany me on board of ship; an offer I thought particularly polite, as he was an utter stranger, and that I gratefully accepted of

of, as I hardly knew my way along the streets. In short, about ten we set off together. I had not been on board before; my new friend, however, assured me he knew the vessel and would see me safe. At length we arrived at the water-side; my companion gave a loud whistle, on which a boat was immediately put off from a vessel that lay near the shore: my friend got in, myself following, and a few minutes brought us to the ship; where indeed my conductor seemed perfectly acquainted; but as I had bargained for my passage with the mate, the rest of the crew were totally unknown to me; he soon after took his leave, myself expressing a thousand thanks for his kindness. I was shewn to a decent birth, where I slept tolerably well till towards midnight, when I found by the motion of the vessel that we had weighed anchor and were on our way. All appeared quiet when I
came

came on board, but now nothing but horrible oaths were to be distinguished on every side, intermingled however, at intervals, with the voice of complaint. As soon as day broke, I rose and went on deck, where, not to weary you with long details, I was soon convinced, that, instead of being on board a merchantman of Dieppe, I had been kidnapped into a vessel bound for America, and which had a number of convicts on board. You, gentlemen, doubtless need not be informed that such practices were common at this period, though rather beginning to decline. It was in vain to remonstrate with such wretches, whose brutality I saw daily fresh proofs of; I therefore made a virtue of necessity, expecting however to be heard and relieved when I got on shore. Alas! how bitter my disappointment! On our arrival at Williamsburg, I was recommended as a strong

strong hearty fellow, and, to complete all, to my utter astonishment a forged certificate was produced, which accused me of having been guilty of theft, for which I was condemned to a transportation of fourteen years.

All patience at this accusation forsook me, and I verily believe, had the villainous captain who fabricated it come in my way, I should at once have been guilty of a worse crime than that with which they charged me. Protestations were vain, I was sold for the term before specified, and doomed to drudge in whatever way my owner, who lived several miles up the country, thought fit. I had been used to labour, but it was for those I loved, and could not submit without repining to work for those I despised; for which I frequently got severely reprimanded.

Our settlement was, as I before observed, at a considerable distance from
the

the coast. I knew nothing of the country, and feared to attempt an escape lest I should be seized, as it was necessary at every district to produce a certificate from whence you came. Money I had none, and clothes barely necessary to shelter me from the weather. The picture, on my departure from home, I had sewed in an old flannel waistcoat which was too indifferent to tempt the avarice of the villains who brought me over. In short, I passed five years in this horrible slavery, deprived of every comfort, uncertain of the fate of those most dear to me, and regardless of life but for their sakes. One day, being weary with labour and the extreme heat, I sat down; my inhuman master happening to pass at that moment, came up, and, not content with reprimanding, struck me. I am not gifted with a more than ordinary stock of patience, and therefore

therefore repaid it with interest. Several slaves came out at his cries; I was instantly seized, bound, and confined in a horrible dungeon, or rather cellar, which was under our dwelling, and from whence I was brought on the third day to be tried for my crime by three or four planters who lived in the settlement. It was in vain that I pleaded the rights of a freeman, and related my being kidnapped; all was either disbelieved, or pretended to be so. I was accused of the most unpardonable of crimes, rebelling against my owner; for which I was at first condemned to die, a sentence that, however, they desired me to entreat to get changed into a longer period of slavery, but which I peremptorily refused. I was then retaken to my dungeon, and fed still more sparingly than before, having scarcely sufficient allowed to support nature. I cannot say I did not feel
those

those calamities, but not so greatly as you might suppose ; I was torn from all that rendered life dear, and longed on my own account to be rid of a burthen, which was daily marked with fresh misfortunes ; but that the horror implanted in us both by nature and education prevented me from shaking off. The coward, said I, basely deserts his post if perilous, but the brave soldier stands out the heat of the day, nor forsakes his, until relieved by superior command : thus then will I weather the storm : come death when it may, I will welcome it ; but not extinguish with felon hand the divine spark that animates this earthly clay, which the Great Giver meant to burn until designed for a nobler use. The ills of life are but a debt imposed on weak mortality, which, nobly borne, intitle the dust they agitated with every idle wind, to lasting happiness. The longest or the shortest
life,

life, the most fortunate or most miserable, how speedily they pass, and undistinguished are forgotten!—Accustomed to think thus, I calmly bore the ills that surrounded me, determined to wait the event with patience, and bear all with resignation. I was at length again taken before my judges, who informed me that my master, through mercy for me, had entreated what I refused to do for myself—a seven years added to my slavery, and to receive five hundred lashes; desiring me, when they acquainted me with this favourable sentence, to return thanks to my master and the court, which I did, nearly as I can recollect, as follows:

You see before you a man unconscious of guilt, unaccused by the laws of his country, meanly intrapped and sold for a slave, but whose soul in spite of all is free, and that will one day claim at the great tribunal, where all hearts shall

shall appear undisguised, that justice denied him here—at that court where the king and the beggar, the planter and the slave, shall meet on equal terms: where no counsel takes a fee, nor venal judge decrees, but one that sits supreme in light infallible and views the hearts of all. At that tribunal alone will I either plead my cause or return thanks; I owe no duty here, I am free as yourselves; gold may purchase men's bodies but not their souls, they remain in spite of you at liberty. Where is the difference between the master and the slave? Myself have convinced you, it is a mere name; was not my arm as strong as his? my blood as red?—am I not as susceptible of pain? Where then is this boasted superiority? It is not in the body, you must allow: I grant it is in the mind. Scourge me, you are welcome; I shall not sue for mercy, I despise ye all; discharge my soul when
you

you please from the miserable tenement which nature, rather than the subtleties of schoolmen, obliges it to keep, and that will rise to meet the stroke that sets it free: but you will not do it; gladly as you would shed my blood, your interest withholds you, until my nerves, unstrung by labour, have lost the power to wield the hoe, or till your lands. Then will ye meanly devise some weak excuse to disembarraß yourselves of one no longer serviceable; regardless, or at least forgetful that you are sending forth another witness, whose every scar shall be a mouth to condemn you beyond the power of mercy."

They had often attempted to interrupt me during this address, but, careless of life, I braved them to the utmost; the consequence of which was, that I was immediately ordered to the whipping-post, where they tied me, exercising their fury until spent with its own violence.

violence. An obstinate bravery kept me firm, determining me rather to expire under their blows, than give them the satisfaction of hearing me complain. An old Cherokee chief, who had come to our settlement some days before to trade, and who was greatly feared among the planters, by the power he possessed over the minds of his countrymen, stood smoking with apparent unconcern while I received part of my punishment: he had likewise been present at my condemnation, having accompanied one of the planters through curiosity, possessing sufficient English, from a long intercourse among them, to understand common topics and traffic. At length he stepped forward, and by his manner seemed to be making a proposal to my master, who appeared to demur for some time, but ordered the sentence to be awhile suspended, still conversing with the old Indian, who I afterwards found

found was bargaining for me, and which was at length concluded, much in favour, you may be well assured, of the infamous planter, who ordered me to be untied; when presenting me streaming with blood to the Cherokee, he said rather in a low voice, "Go, villain, and learn the difference between a Christian and a Heathen." If thou art a Christian, replied I, with as much disdain as my state could possibly assume, I thank Heaven for the change. The Indian was a venerable old man of a copper colour; his hair lightly sprinkled with grey, and his features, though strong, softened with a benevolence that could not escape an accurate observer. He ordered two Indians who attended him to dress my wounds, himself assisting to bind them up with plantain leaves, giving me, during the operation, a large bumper of rum; after which he said, taking the calumet from his

his mouth and presenting it me :—
“ Christian Englishman, but Indian
soul—no more slave—forget bad coun-
try, worthy good—no mind flesh
wounds, soon heal—bad heart never
cure.” I know not how I expressed my
gratitude to the humane Cherokee,
whom, I afterwards found, I had been
fortunate enough to interest in my fa-
vour by the energy with which I ad-
dressed the planters, and likewise by the
careless manner in which I received their
chastisement ; the Indians considering as
the highest proof of heroism, a regard-
lessness of pain. We remained but three
days at the settlement, and these merely
to enable me to gain sufficient strength
to accompany them in their journey,
which by their care I then found my-
self equal to ; the generous Indian re-
fusing with great obstinacy to suffer me
to carry any burthen during the way,
though I often attempted it, saying,
“ Indian

"Indian carry now; when Indian sick, white man carry." In short, we travelled twelve days, reposing in the extreme heat, and walking during the night. At length we reached our place of destination, where my friendly Cherokee was received with every mark of respect these uncorrupted souls knew how to express. They hallooed, they clapped their hands, surrounding him and admiring the purchases he had made, which consisted of hatchets, guns, powder, shot, spirits, &c. and for which he had exchanged skins and other commodities. The relatives of the old Cherokee consisted of a wife and son, the former of his own age, the latter about twenty, and to whom he particularly introduced me, relating as I knew by his expressive gestures, his reason for purchasing me, and at length shewing them my back. During this recital I could form a tolerably just idea of their

sentiments, for tears streamed from the old woman's eyes, while her son's features assumed by degrees, as the Cherokee continued his tale, a marking and ferocious disdain, which I must confess gave me some alarm, until at his father's conclusion he stepped forward, presenting me the calumet, again viewing my back, and stamping with an energetic expression, which plainly shewed his anger was against my oppressors. This young man and myself were soon upon the most intimate footing ; I studied to gain his friendship—a conduct that procured me also that of his father and mother, who, after my being some short time with them, made no visible difference between us. I taught him as much as in my power, our skill in husbandry ; learning him English, at the same time that he instructed me in the Cherokee language ; in short, we seemed two affectionate brothers, the same pursuits

employing

employing both, and never happy afunder. The esteem of the old chief procured me likewise that of the rest of the tribe; and had not the remembrance of my mother, and the innocent babe, whom I loved as my own, interfered, I should have been perfectly satisfied with my situation, nor ever sought to change it: but, as it was, a thousand distracting ideas made me insensible of the blessings I possessed. My mother and her little charge were destitute of that succour I could have afforded them, and perhaps reduced to the utmost misery. All communication with Europeans appeared for ever cut off. I was at a prodigious distance from any settlement, and, had I even gained one, should have been treated as a deserter; being naked, unprovided with a passport, or, what was yet more necessary to bribe their cupidity, gold. In short, I had remained seven years among them, when

one day being out hunting with Abourou, the son of my benefactor, suddenly a tyger rushed from a thicket, and attacked him with a rage which was redoubled by hunger. I hastened to his assistance, but not time enough to prevent his receiving a desperate wound in the bowels from the ferocious beast, who would infallibly have killed him on the spot, as he seized him unawares, had I not been fortunate enough to make him lose his hold by a well-applied shot, which Abourou instantly repeated with a firmness, notwithstanding his wound, that brought the tyger to the earth, where we at length dispatched him. The immediate danger over, my whole cares were for my friend. I gently led him to our hut, where, with the assistance of his father, and other Cherokees, I bound up his wounds, which appeared of the most dangerous kind; the intrepid youth, however,

ever, venting no complaint, but relating with enthusiastic fervour the little service I had rendered him; all which I now understood, being by his cares quite conversant in the Cherokee language. On the fourth day, the wound becoming visibly worse, he desired his father to send for the principals of the tribe; which being complied with, he raised himself on his mattress with astonishing fortitude, and addressed them, as nearly as I can recollect, to the following purport: "I feel, my friends, that the spirit which animates me is struggling to be free, and must soon join our fathers in the land of souls; a circumstance that on my own account gives me infinite satisfaction, as doubtless the change must be for the better: but my father, weakened by age, requires the attention of a son; on whom can he fix more worthy than Allan? Eighty times has the moon changed

since his stay among us ; yet has he not changed, but, firm as the bravest Cherokee, deserves to be considered as such, and no longer humiliated by any other appellation. Adopt him then, my father ; so shall you not feel my loss, nor I the pang of leaving you without a son." Such was the request of the young Cherokee, which was immediately complied with, his father promising to fulfil his desire to the uttermost. To be brief, Abourou died in my arms the day following : his death was a severe affliction to me, as, from what little instruction I had given him, he was an agreeable as well as friendly companion. Being with his father and mother in the hut when he died, I could not refrain tears, as I considered myself now bereft of all that could make that savage life bearable. The old Cherokee observed me some time in silence, then rebuked me, saying in his own

own language, "Banish such European effeminacy, which must inevitably lessen you among my companions; my son was brave, and I doubt not is happy in the land of spirits. Repine not at his felicity, but from his example make yourself equally worthy."

Abourou's mother did not possess so much fortitude; grief preyed on her in spite of all myself and the old man could do to banish it, and brought her to the grave in about a month after her son. One day, being alone with the old Cherokee, who treated me with the tenderness of a parent, and for whom I had equal attention, I ventured to consult him on my future resolutions, telling him that I was determined to hazard all rather than stay in that country, should any thing happen to him; that duty and inclination prompted me to seek my mother, who, if she even yet survived, must be plunged in the great-

est distress ; requesting his advice, how in such a case to gain a sea-port where I might embark for England. The old man endeavoured for a considerable time to dissuade me, but in vain—I stedfastly affirming I would never quit him; but that, in case of his death, nothing should prevent my attempting to regain my native land. The old man appeared grieved at my determination, which he would frequently entreat me to relinquish; but finding persuasions fruitless, he at length consented to procure me the means, saying: if I determined to go, he had too much affection for me to neglect it till his death, however disagreeable it might be to part from me; as he observed, from the power he maintained, he could more securely obtain me a passage to England than any of his brethren. In short, the year following, on his going to traffic at Charles-Town, he took a double

double quantity of goods, and accompanied by myself and about fifty Cherokees began his march, which we performed in ten days. On our arrival my worthy patron was presented to the governor, to whom he made a present of some of his finest skins, informing him of the manner in which he had purchased me of the planter for a considerable quantity of goods, adding, that I had been adopted as his son, but was weak enough to wish to revisit my own country. The governor listened to him in silence; the friendship of the Cherokees he well knew the value of, and after some pause consented to what he requested, which was, procuring me a passage to Britain. The old man then presented me with various articles of traffic, which I changed for habiliments, and to pay the captain. The picture I had never shewn to any one, being fearful of their wishing to deprive me of it;

therefore kept it carefully concealed among the rags which covered me during my whole stay with the Cherokees. The day at length arrived on which we were to sail. My heart was at once overwhelmed with joy and sorrow; the first from the hope of regaining my own country, the other at leaving my generous host, who parted from me with the utmost reluctance, saying in English as we separated, "Tarbech live too long—all sons gone—go home die!"—"No, my father," interrupted I, penetrated by his disinterested behaviour, and the affection he expressed for me, "I will sooner go back and remain in your country for ever, than distress you; I am yours, honour and gratitude both demand it."—"No!" replied he with firmness; "go, remember Cherokee, Cherokee ever remember white man." So saying, he departed with his companions, leaving me

me on board of ship. England and France were then at war, a circumstance I was unacquainted with until our arrival at Charles-Town; for though a party of Cherokees went yearly to some or other of the English settlements, yet from their account I could gain but little information. Our voyage was particularly happy, arriving in the Downs in somewhat more than a month. Delighted as I was to reach Britain, yet a number of fears imbittered that pleasure; I dreaded my long absence had been fatal to my mother and the helpless child; and determined to hasten to Scotland as speedily as possible and relieve my doubts, where if I found them well, I concluded, notwithstanding the bad success of my first enterprise, to hazard another in pursuit of the babe's parents.

At Deal we touched to procure vegetables and fresh provisions; but had

not taken them in, before we were boarded by a press-gang, who seized on nearly all our hands, and observing my sun-burnt complexion, insisted likewise I was a seaman. It was in vain I protested; the account I gave of my being kidnapped was by no means satisfactory, but rather furnished them with weapons against myself; the lieutenant swearing I was an old offender, and might be glad to be sent for a sailor, rather than hanged for returning from transportation. In short, I was dragged before a regulating captain, and the whole story related to him. My appearance I must confess was not much in my favour; my complexion of a red brown; my clothes, though whole, of the most indifferent kind, and to complete all, not a single penny in my pocket: for though the friendly Cherokee presented me with a considerable number of skins, the whole
were

were disposed of for my passage and habiliments; the honest savage not having the most distant idea that I could need farther assistance when I reached my country and fellow-citizens. The regulating captain was deaf to all I could urge, and sent me immediately on board a vessel destined to a three years station in the West Indies: here, however, they found their mistake, for I was so awkward in maritime business, that previous to our sailing the captain of the vessel sent for me into the cabin, and offered, if I preferred the land service, to turn me over to his brother who was a lieutenant in the army, and was then going to London. I accepted this offer with transport, and that very day, the lieutenant coming on board to take leave of his brother, I accompanied him on shore, and from thence to London; where, however, we were to stay but a short time, being ordered to Germany.

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I can truly assure you these late calamities made, if possible, more impression on me than all the former ; a thousand times did I curse civilised society : —“ Savages,” exclaimed I, “ do not dwell in deserts, but in polished cities ; the first are the uncorrupted children of nature, the latter the offspring of ambition, avarice, and a thousand other vices ; to satisfy which, they employ every art, regardless of the ties they rend asunder. What to them is the paternal pang ? They feel it not, insensible to all but the gratification of their wishes ! The tender appellations of father, mother, child, brother, and countryman are swallowed in the gulph of self-interest ! What to them is the cry of misery ? They hear it not in the arms of wanton debauchery ! nor can it reach them through the riot of the table, glutted even to brutality with all the luxuries that wealth can bestow ! Are
not

not these then the real barbarians? In what are they superior to brutes? do they not devour the weak, oppress the defenceless, and gratify at any expence the vilest passions? yet they boast their refinement! In what doth it consist? civilised cruelty, and unfeeling education!—The Cherokee bravely and openly attacks, kills, and scalps his enemy; but the name of parent, friend, or countryman with him, are indelible ties, nay to even the stranger the bare puff of smoke which evaporates from his calumet is a more sacred bond than that which pedantic refinement has given to the polished world!—Soured with misfortunes, thus did I reason. My journey to London, however, gave me some slight satisfaction, as from thence I hoped at least to be able to write to Scotland, and procure news of my mother: in short, on the very day of our arrival I wrote two letters, one to my
mother,

mother, the other to the minister who was acquainted with the business I went upon, and who had advanced me five guineas towards my expences; calling also at the house of the gentleman who had given me the recommendation to the Chevalier's court, but he was removed no one could tell me whither. As to the letter, it had many years been worn to atoms; for though I was tolerably careful of it, yet having no place to secure it but about my person, it was impossible it should be otherwise. I waited the return of the post with impatience, fearful of being sent on board of ship before I could receive an answer. At length it arrived, but brought me no letter; distracted, I almost determined to desert and go to Scotland, whatever might be the consequence: however, on calm consideration, I resolved to try the event of another enquiry, which I addressed to a man I had

had some little acquaintance with in Edinburgh, entreating him in the most pressing manner to favour me with an immediate answer. A week after I had written this last we were ordered to depart for Harwich. I will not attempt to describe to you my frenzy at this command: to gain a furlough, even for a day, was impossible; but the lieutenant of the regiment, who really was a man of humanity, in compassion to my sufferings, left a strict command at the post-office, that if any letter came with my direction it should be forwarded to him with speed. In short, we arrived at Harwich, and had just got on board of ship which was ready to sail when he sent for me, and delivered one from the person I had last written to. This informed me the good old minister had been dead twelve years, and that my mother had left that part of the country previous to his decease, and was said to have

have retired into the Highlands, but he knew not whither. This letter afforded me at least some gloomy satisfaction ; my aunt had removed to the Isle of Sky the year before my departure ; my mother, if she yet survived, might be with her, or, what I however less expected, at the little cot my father had left her, but which we used to let at the humble stipend of ten shillings per year. Our vessel was already on its way, so it was impossible to make any reply to this, or procure further information : however, it inspired hopes, that, should I ever return, I might by some means discover my mother and the child. Such was my situation when we arrived at Cassel ; here I could find no opportunity of procuring intelligence ; I therefore wrote my name with some short account of my misfortunes, and what related to the infant, and delivered it to the clergyman, desiring
him,

him, in case any thing happened to me, to open it. Heaven, however, appears to view me with a more benign aspect since, by making me the humble means of assisting Captain Campbell : it not only has given me information of my parent, but raised me above my highest expectations ; a reverse of fortune which I hope I shall bear with moderation, nor ever forget the lessons of humility adversity has taught me. As to your offer this day of sending any letter, as I was so uncertain of what place to find them, I declined it, particularly as fortune had now put it in my power to seek them in so short a time; little aware at that moment, my own advancement was among the least of my obligations to you."

At the conclusion of Grant's story, the Colonel shook him heartily by the hand, saying, " I congratulate myself on being acquainted with you. By
Heaven,

Heaven, I would go three times the distance of from hence to Scotland, to serve so honest a fellow! But tell me, how came you by an education which I must certainly think superior to the humble line in which you were bred?"

"If I possess any," replied Grant, "I owe it to the kindness of the minister before mentioned, who used to have me a great deal with him, until the death of my father rendered my presence at home necessary." At this moment a soldier entered to inform Ensign Grant, that a gentleman desired to speak with him. "It is doubtless Mr. Bennet, to whom I entrusted my little packet; have I your permission to introduce him?" To which the Colonel assenting, Grant withdrew, and soon returned with the chaplain, who was a venerable old man of a very prepossessing appearance. The Colonel and his company rose to receive

ceive him; Grant in the mean time apologising for the trouble he had given him. "My good sir!" said the Colonel, "'tis myself who have occasioned it: my friend here informed me you had been kind enough to take charge of a packet, that contains a portrait which has greatly interested us all." "I have it about me," replied he, "as I imagined, from what my servant informed me, that Mr. Grant wanted it, as I hear he is on the point of leaving Germany:"—so saying, he drew out a small parcel neatly folded and sealed, which he presented to the Ensign, who reached it to the Colonel, saying, "Open it, sir; to your charge I now deliver it, determined to be directed by you in what manner to act in respect to procuring the intelligence I wish to gain." Curiosity made the Colonel hastily unseal the packet, nor
were

were Mr. Sommers and Duncan divested of that sentiment, all being anxious to behold the picture; which however had no sooner met the Colonel's sight, than he became enervated with astonishment—the picture dropping from his trembling hand, at the same time exclaiming, in a voice hardly articulate, “Merciful God! it is Mary Frazer!”—“Mary Frazer?” interrupted Mr. Sommers, not less amazed than the veteran; “can this be Mary Frazer’s portrait, and which was found on the neck of the lady who died at Grant’s house?” “’Tis, indeed, that which was found on her bosom,” replied the Ensign, “and as like her as is possible for the art of man to draw one.” Duncan had now in his turn seized the picture that caused such wonder: “Mary Frazer!” exclaimed he: “no, on my life ’tis Peggy’s portrait:

trait : her every feature—the likeness is too strong to mistake it : nay, her hair too—look, sir ; you must confess it can be only hers.” “ No, Duncan,” replied the Colonel, “ it is indeed Mary Frazer’s, and, what will surprise you yet more, the very portrait she presented me ; but which I returned to Lady Jane Montgomery above forty years ago. The amazing likeness Peggy bears to her struck me even at first sight, and perhaps increased my partiality to her ; nay, I told Sommers she had a claim on my favour which he was not aware of, but that I would some day disclose to him.”

The chaplain, who had brought the portrait, appeared during this discourse to listen with the utmost attention. “ Pardon me, sir,” said he, “ for the question ; but you surely cannot mean Miss Frazer, the daughter of Alexander Frazer ? And yet,” continued he, “ the
portrait

portrait bears a striking resemblance of that lady, who however could not have existed at the period you mention." A momentary flush crossed the features of the Colonel. "No," replied he, it is her mother's: the best, the most abused of women: as to her daughter, I know her not; that she belonged to Alexander made her name detestable to me for many years: but now that time has in some measure calmed my passions, I feel that anger unjust. The part she held from Mary gives her a claim on my affection. Can you, sir, inform me, whether she yet survives? Her villainous father, I once heard, had educated her even from her most tender age in a convent, designing her for a religious life." "I know not whether she be living or dead," returned the chaplain, "but need not now fear to disclose a secret, which long since must have ceased to be one.

Miss

Miss Frazer, the daughter of Alexander Frazer, I myself married above seventeen years back to a young Scottish officer of Argyleshire, named James Campbell, and by whom she was with child when she left France, in the early part of the year one thousand seven hundred and forty-six, since when I have never heard of her."——

"Merciful Heaven!" exclaimed the veteran, "it cannot be! speak—say—describe his person; sure 'tis impossible!" "Cease your agitation, my dear sir," replied Sommers; "unwillingly I disclose what I had determined should die with me rather than distress you. Your son James Campbell was indeed married to Miss Frazer, the daughter of your once beloved Mary; a truth I am well assured of, though the particulars are even at this moment unknown to me." "And why," returned the Colonel impatiently, "was

it concealed from me? Such a deception, Sommers, was unworthy your calling, and doubly unworthy our friendship." "I am clear from blame," answered he; "nay, even now I wish I could conceal it. The woman so beloved by your son did not deserve that distinction; at least I have been led to believe it: as to her being with child, I was totally unacquainted; but thus unwillingly forced will relate all I know. The morning before your departure for Culloden, Captain James came to me in the breakfast parlour: "Mr. Sommers," said he, "I have long wished to speak with you on an affair of the utmost importance, but a foolish dread has kept me silent; yet I know you are my friend, and that you will not increase my father's anger against me. In short, my dear sir," continued he, taking my hand, "I am married"—"Married!" interrupted I, with

with astonishment——“ and without the knowledge of your father, whose concurrence you could not doubt for a deserving object! you have at once been guilty of imprudence and ingratitude.” “Peace, my dear sir!” replied he; “the object is truly worthy, and yet could never have been approved of by my father, whose deserved hatred to Alexander Frazer would have placed an insuperable bar between his daughter and myself.” “The daughter of Mr. Frazer!” cried I: “is it possible you can have married one so very obnoxious to your father?” “She is the best, the fairest of women,” replied he; “nay, they tell me, the exact image of her mother—then is it so extraordinary that my heart should be as susceptible as his? If we return safe, I mean to disclose it to him, for I cannot live longer separated from her; especially as during the war our correspondence

is perpetually broken by some accident or other ; for I have heard from her but twice since my return to Britain. All I entreat, my dear sir, is, that should any unlucky accident befall me, you would reveal this marriage to my father : how I became acquainted with her is too long to disclose now ; suffice it, I am sure, when once known, he cannot fail to esteem her. I should have informed him of the whole, but for the continual business he has been employed in respecting the danger of our country, and, if I return, will not hesitate a moment. Should I fall, my dear sir, she must be your charge : introduce her to my father—let her know a blessing she has never yet experienced, that of possessing an affectionate parent. Alas ! her gentle nature will need every support, should such an accident happen.” He then informed me she was boarded in a
convent

convent at Lisle, having refused to take the veil, though strongly pressed by her father, who wished to dispose of her in that manner in order to enrich an illegitimate son. Our discourse was here interrupted by your entrance, nor had we any other opportunity of renewing it, as you both departed as soon as breakfast was over. Six days after this conversation, the decisive battle of Culloden was fought, and you returned childless and overwhelmed with sorrow: you must allow this was no time to increase your agitation; a thousand resolves did I make to disclose the secret that weighed so heavy upon my spirits. A number of times did I endeavour to introduce a subject in which Fraser necessarily bore a part; but the anger that name ever inspired you with, deterred me. At length I resolved to go to Flanders, seek Miss Fraser, and, if I found her as

amiable as described by your son, persuade her to return with me in spite of every obstacle, and trust to the humanity of your own heart, and James's attachment to her, to obtain the place in your affection I wished her to possess. In short, you must remember that about six weeks after you came from Culloden, I informed you that indispensable business required my absence for a time, and to which you acquiesced without inquiry. I departed from Kenneth Castle, travelling with the utmost diligence to London, from whence, being at war, I had no resource but going by the way of Germany. On my arrival at Lisle, I hastened to the convent mentioned by your son, inquiring for Miss Fraser at the grate; but was informed that she had quitted it somewhat more than three months. Naturally supposing she might be with her father,

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I entreated to speak with the abbess, who I apprehended might give me a more circumstantial account; and was accordingly favoured by her presence. I told her business of the utmost consequence made me thus importunate, desiring her in the most pressing terms to give me all possible information respecting Miss Fraser; which at length she did to the following purport: "Miss Fraser," said she, "was not with us more than a year; her father having purchased an estate in this vicinity only about eighteen months ago, when he removed from Paris. She frequently went home, at which times she doubtless formed an improper acquaintance; as she was since known to have had several private interviews with her father's secretary, and with whom she finally eloped about the period I before mentioned, being seen in a chaise

with him and her maid, at the several post-houses they passed. You may suppose they were immediately pursued, but had used too much speed to be easily overtaken : some conjecturing they were gone to England, or otherwise to Holland." This is all the information I could gain from the abbess ; and that caused me a vexation I cannot express, as I considered Captain James the dupe of an artful wanton, who eloped equally from him as her father—that event taking place above a month before the battle of Culloden. Determined however to be better informed, I went to the village where Frazer lived, and made several inquiries, all of which confirmed the abbess's story ; Miss Frazer being known to have held several private conferences with her father's secretary, and on the night of her elopement was seen to enter a chaise with him and her maid.

maid. Her father had made many inquiries, all of which proved fruitless; though on the whole he was perhaps not displeased to be quit of one whom he regarded as a troublesome incumbrance on the fortune of his son. Disgusted with women, from the falsehood of Miss Fraser, I returned to Scotland, determined, unless necessitated, to conceal a marriage which every way must give you pain, and perhaps awaken thoughts derogatory to your son: a resolution that time strengthened rather than decreased; for although I frequently inquired for some years through different channels after Miss Fraser, yet it was without effect—a circumstance which convinced me of the truth of the story I had heard, and that the worthless woman was so attached to her paramour as to make her regardless of every other object.”

L 5 “Just

“Just are the ways of Heaven, though beyond the comprehension of man!” exclaimed Mr. Bennet. “Little did I think, seventeen years back, that I should live to give my weak testimony of the innocence of a woman whose beauty was her least endowment.—Warmly, though secretly attached to the protestant faith, she became the wife of Captain James Campbell, who I now understand was your son; a circumstance that I was before unacquainted with, being even a stranger to your name and rank. To render my account as clear as possible, I must inform you, that ever since the year one thousand seven hundred and forty I married, and some time after meeting with repeated misfortunes retired to France, both for personal safety from unfeeling creditors, and also upon economical principles. Chance placed me at no great distance from Mr. Fraser’s, with whose daughter my wife became
some

some little acquainted, though not intimately; Miss Frazer being usually at the convent where she boarded. Some short time previous to the battle of Fontenoy, a young gentleman, closely wrapped up, came one evening to my house, and, after a genteel apology for his intrusion, informed me that he had a favour of the utmost importance to entreat, which was no less than uniting him to Miss Frazer; telling me at the same time she was in her heart a protestant, and unless that step prevented it, would be forced to take the veil. He then said that his fortune was superior to her's; his name Campbell, from Argyleshire, and under the command of the Duke of Cumberland; renewing his instances to espouse them on the morrow, as he ran the utmost risk of being taken for a spy, as he had only through the favour of his disguise

and night eluded the vigilance of the enemy ; concluding the whole by informing me that Miss Frazer had recommended him to me, and would meet him for that purpose, if I would consent. I must truly confess there was somewhat in this young man's whole appearance and behaviour that interested me in his behalf. In short, I married them on the morning following, in the presence of my wife, Miss Frazer's maid, and the secretary, with whom I am sure you have unjustly suspected her of evil, and whose name I well recollect was Simpson."

"Simpson!" exclaimed Grant, interrupting him—"Simpson was the name of the man that attended Peggy's mother; I well recollect her calling him so, addressing him as a domestic. He was of a more than common size, fallow complexioned, with a deep cut
across

across his right cheek." "He was exactly as you describe him," replied Bennet; "the maid black haired, yet much freckled, and very short and fat." "The same, the same!" interrupted Grant; "if this picture then is a resemblance of Miss Fraser, whom you term Mary, on whose breast was it so likely to be found as her daughter's?"

"Heavenly powers! if this be so," exclaimed Duncan, throwing himself on his uncle's neck, "whose child is Peggy?" The various passions contending in the breast of the Colonel prevented his answering, but by a silent embrace. Mr. Sommers, though hardly less agitated, entreated Mr. Bennet to continue.

"Mrs. Campbell, who however was still known by no other name than Miss Fraser, returned to her convent some days after the marriage, it being determined

determined to keep it a secret until he had divulged it to his father. They, I well knew, used to have private meetings whenever she came home, which she now did as frequently as possible; and I am sure these interviews were always with the privity of her maid and the secretary.

About four months after their marriage, Captain Campbell returned to England, leaving his wife in the convent, who seldom came to her father's after his departure, consequently we did not see her as usual. However, in the beginning of March, she called on my wife, telling her, in the course of the conversation, that she hoped to be able in a short time to go to Scotland, and make her marriage public, as it was now necessary (being with child), expressing the warmest wishes for our happiness; and on her departure, whatever my wife could say to the contrary, presented

presented her with a note for fifty pounds, saying, "My beloved Campbell desired me to act thus, and his desires shall ever be sacred to his Mary." So saying she left my wife, and a few days after we heard was gone no one could tell whither. As to the story of the secretary, I certainly heard it, but knew its falsehood; for had she any secret interviews with him, it was certainly to contrive her escape, in which he doubtless accompanied her as a guard; having, as I heard after her departure, taken with her a considerable quantity of jewels which were left her by her mother, totally independent of her father, and that she had in her possession at the convent, from which she brought them previous to her elopement."

"All! all confirms 'tis the same!" replied Grant; "their haste to be gone; the little casket they were so cautious of doubtless contained those jewels that
caused

caused them villanously to abandon the infant; as had they declared her birth, they must have produced the property that the unhappy mother took with her. The extreme anxiety she shewed concerning the army, though she did not express of what party; her declaration that she was going to Argyleshire to seek a beloved husband, and the fatal list of the dead in which your son was included, undoubtedly struck the blow that brought her to the grave." "Alas! I have little doubt but 'tis as you suspect," replied the Colonel; "dear beloved child, of unhappy parents! the attraction my heart felt towards thee was not chimerical; Heaven stamped the well remembered features of Mary on thy innocent visage for its wisest purposes. What a debt of love do I owe thee, and that I shall now glory in paying!—precious wreck of all my soul once held dear!—
the

the part thou bearest from Mary Frazer, my Jemima, and her beloved son, obliterates all remembrance of the hated Alexander!"

"My good sir," said Sommers, "might I advise you, though I confess I have as few doubts on this matter as yourself, to make a particular inquiry by advertisements for those people who were said to attend your son's wife on her leaving Flanders; if it were possible to find them, you could not have the shadow of a doubt, as they must declare, in case of her death, where that event happened, and how they disposed of the property she had with her."

"I cannot flatter myself," answered the Colonel, "that I shall ever enjoy that satisfaction, as Lady Jane Montgomery's jewels were half left to Mary, and were doubtless those my unhappy daughter-in-law took with her, and of
great

great value. Be it as it may, nothing shall prevent me regarding Peggy as my grand-daughter : so Duncan," continued the veteran cheerfully, " thou hast lost a tolerable fortune, and found in exchange a cousin." " A cousin, sir !" replied Duncan with a sigh.— " Aye ! a cousin, Duncan ; nay, never look grave—I know no crime against either the laws of God or society in a man loving his cousin." " Nor I either, upon my soul !" rejoined Grant in a transport of pleasure ; " shall I then live to see my darling raised so high !—how will my heart rejoice to present one she must glory in acknowledging a parent !" " When she ceases to honour, nay, call you such, she forfeits a grandfather," replied the Colonel ; " how little does she owe me comparatively to what she stands indebted to you !" " I flatter myself," answered Mr. Sommers, " that Peggy is not of a dis-

a disposition to forget her old friends ; but if I may hazard the question, where is Mr. Frazer now ? as I know he is yet living, or we must have heard who inherited his estates in the highlands." " I am but little informed of any thing respecting him more than already disclosed," replied Bennet, " for my wife dying in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty, I returned to England, where I have undergone various vicissitudes of fortune ; until a twelvemonth since I obtained an ensigncy for my son, who is my only child—myself choosing rather to accompany the regiment to which he belonged as chaplain, than accept a more lucrative situation distant from him."

" My good friend," returned the Colonel with warmth, " like myself you are too much in the decline of life to encounter fatigues. I have a snug
home,

home, though in the highlands of Scotland, and with just such a companion as yourself to make up our parties. Your son, when unemployed for his country, can there join us; we will endeavour to make you forget the ills you have hitherto met with."

Mr. Bennet returned thanks to the veteran, promising to profit by his invitation, as it was expected their regiment must also soon return to England, as there was now no doubt but peace would speedily take place.

After much more conversation on the amazing event which chance had brought to light, they turned the discourse on their departure; to which no party wanted hastening, all being now doubly anxious to return to Britain—Duncan, as he flattered himself he might now give way without reproof to the passion that constituted his whole felicity—The Colonel longed to embrace

brace Peggy, and contemplate in her beauteous face the resemblance of those features which were too strongly engraven on his heart for time to obliterate them—Sommers, to congratulate his favourite on an event which gave his virtuous mind the utmost satisfaction—Orfield, to see his much-loved Sophia Wilmot, with whose mother the Colonel had promised to be his advocate—and Grant, to embrace a venerable parent, and the innocent cause of all his misfortunes. With such incentives they determined to depart on the second day after this discovery : Mr. Bennet promising to join them in a short time.

CHAP. X.

"——— virtue is its own reward!—
I think that I have hit the very tone
In which she loves to speak."

HOME.

WHILE the party from Cassel were on their way homewards, rejoicing at the discovery they had made; Peggy's impatience hourly increased. An hundred times a day did she consult her watch, and as often run to the window on the stopping of any vehicle. Careful of keeping her promise to Lady Beugle, she studiously avoided meeting Lord Wilmot alone, passing the intervals she was absent from the drawing-room with Lady Sophia. Miss Thompson had called twice in great dejection, informing Peggy that her mother had relapsed, and was in the utmost danger;

a circumstance that gave her compassionate heart a sentiment of sorrow, even in the midst of her pleasing expectations. A few mornings after, as she was just risen, Miss Thompson again entreated to speak with her; on which she hastened down, having procured the evening before a supply from Lady Sophia. On her entrance she was in the most poignant distress, her mother, as she informed Peggy, being at the last extremity, the physician declaring she could not survive the day. "Alas!" said she, "her whole anguish is on my account; she is perpetually exclaiming that I shall be left unprotected in this great city, an idea that makes her refuse all comfort." "Indeed, indeed, you shall not," replied Peggy; "though I cannot promise to assist you myself, yet I am sure a young lady in this house will, for my sake at least, enable you to reach your native country, where you
say

say you have friends." "Alas!" sobbed she, "I told my mother I was certain you would help me; but I cannot convince her, she thinks I only say it to render her easy: I scarcely dare ask, yet you are so good that I am sure you will forgive, if you cannot grant my request," continued she, throwing herself on her knees before her, "deign, best of women, to see and speak consolation to her; we live but three short streets off, it will not detain you a quarter of an hour—she will believe you, and die in peace: it will save me from despair, and confer on yourself a satisfaction which virtuous minds can only feel. "Do not," said she, clinging round her, "refuse me; hear my entreaties, and grant my request."

Peggy was moved at her sorrow: Lady Beugle never breakfasted before eleven, and it was now but just eight;

I

therefore,

therefore, after a short pause, she went to fetch her hat, in order to accompany the distressed girl; calling however first in Sophia's room to inform her of her intention, but finding her in a sweet sleep, declined waking her.

Peggy now came down stairs, and immediately went out with Miss Thompson, who testified her gratitude with the most rapturous expressions. The morning was peculiarly fine, and Peggy refused to ride, as the distance was trivial, though not quite so short as she had at first understood. At length they came to a handsome paved court, at the end of which was a small door, where the young woman ringing, it was immediately opened by a middle-aged man, whom she asked how her mother did? to which he replied, "Much the same," shutting the door after him. Miss Thompson led the way through a long dark passage, which at once

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opened into a spacious and well furnished hall ; a circumstance that not a little astonished Peggy, as she expected a very different abode. They next reached an ante-chamber ; Peggy trembled, yet she knew not why, and inwardly reprobated her folly in accompanying a stranger, who appeared to have left her melancholy on the outside the house, her eyes sparkling with a quickness and fire that alarmed her. Peggy stopped—yet recollecting herself, asked the young woman if her mother lived there ? to which replying in the affirmative, she opened a parlour door, and taking Peggy's hand, introduced her, not to a sick mother, but to Lord Withers, who sat on a sofa by the fire-side.

Peggy remained some minutes silent through astonishment ; but Lord Withers rising and attempting to take her hand, she exclaimed, “ Monstrous hypocrisy !

pocriſy ! would to Heaven I had never ſeen this hateful city, where I have been daily doomed to ſuffer vexations ! For what purpoſe, my Lord, has that vile girl deceived me hither ? weak creature that I was to truſt myſelf with a ſtranger ! but my imprudence is puniſhed. What are your commands ? it will ſoon be Lady Beugle's breakfast-time, from which I was never abſent." Lord Withers attempted in ſome meaſure to excuſe his conduct, ſaying, " Banish your fears, divine creature, and pardon the effects of a paſſion which even your cruelty could not overcome ! You know my former offers ; I am willing to fulfil them even yet, and introduce you to the world to-morrow as my bride." " I beg, ſir," replied ſhe, " you would ſuffer me to return home ; the mean deceit you have uſed to get me into your power is beneath you. As for you, vile hypocrite !" added ſhe, turning to

the girl, "depend you will not escape unpunished. Merciful God ! who could have surmised that such infamous treachery dwelt under so specious an appearance ?" Miss Thompson replied by a loud laugh, saying, "What think you of my plan now, my Lord ? I believe you doubted my powers of acting ; but could you suppose that I had so entirely forgotten virtue, as not to be able to assume its sanctified tone ? I hope, in future, you will do more justice to my talents. Come," continued she, advancing familiarly towards Peggy, "don't be angry with your countrywoman, who has taken all these pains to serve you, and root out your foolish prejudices. Have I not plainly proved that virtue is all a farce, to be assumed at pleasure ; a troublesome companion that deprives us of a thousand enjoyments ?—Before long you will thank me for this little
deceit,

deceit, and confess that one woman has no more business with virtue than another."

"Monster, begone!" exclaimed Peggy, shuddering with horror; "nor dare shock my ears longer with your vice and ignominy!—Disgrace to the form you bear! how can you judge of what your heart is incapable of feeling?"

"To shew you I am very good-natured, I shall not be affronted at any thing you say," replied Thompson, laughing yet more than before—"Do now pray comfort my poor mother," (pointing to Lord Withers, and assuming an air of distress) "a little consolation will certainly be of infinite service. Compassion is a virtue, and virtue is its own reward: bestow some therefore on an object that appears to stand so much in need of it."—"Miss Thompson," interrupted Lord Withers, who was by

no means pleased with the conclusion of her speech, "I shall be obliged to you to retire; the service you have rendered me shall be repaid."—"I fly, my Lord!" replied she—"what a stupid being was I to stay! Adieu—and remember that fortune favours the bold." With these words this votary to shame departed singing, leaving Lord Withers and Peggy alone, who now endeavoured by all possible means to persuade him to suffer her to depart; for she truly apprehended it was not possible but by his permission. The windows of the room where they were, she observed, opened only into a paved yard surrounded by high walls; she had therefore no hopes that any exertion she could make with her voice would be heard, and might only increase the horrors of her situation. Entreaties were however vain—he peremptorily refused. "My wife, or mistress!"

mistress!" said he, "fix your choice: if the first, I will immediately marry you; which, if you do not consent to, I have infallible means of securing you for the latter, and taking you where I have a retreat safe from interruption; there time will reconcile you to your situation, leaving however a wish that you had profited by my generous offers."—"Despicable man!" exclaimed Peggy, blushing with resentment and anger, "know that no power on earth shall unite me to you; nor you, with all your fiends to assist, ever triumph over my honour: you may murder me, I believe you vile enough; but shall never reduce me to shame."—"Very well, madam—'tis very well; do not reduce me to extremities," replied he—"profit by my generosity, or take the consequence."

Peggy made no reply: his Lordship a few moments after ringing the bell

for breakfast, which was brought in by an old woman, whose figure, had a painter wished to personify vice, was exactly calculated for that purpose, and whom Peggy could not view without disgust and horror. Lord Withers desired her to entreat her mistress to favour Miss Grant and himself with making breakfast—a request she immediately left the room to obey. He then attempted to sooth Peggy, who replied, “It is in vain, my Lord, to torment me further, my mind is fixed; let me depart if you have any mercy—if not, this house shall be my grave, sooner than I will submit to be the wretch you would make me.”

The entrance of the mistress of the mansion here interrupted the discourse: she was about forty, with the remains of a tolerable person; but fat, and all the external appearance of being given to drink. She fixed her eyes on Peggy with

with the scrutinising gaze of female curiosity; but instantly starting, her face became of a deadly paleness, an universal trembling seizing her whole frame, and, unable to articulate a word, stood motionless in the middle of the apartment. "What is the matter? are you suddenly taken ill?" said Lord Withers. "No—no, sir!" replied the woman, hesitating; "but—" Peggy, who beheld her agitation with surprise, flattered herself it was an emotion of pity, and running up to her, exclaimed, "For the love of Heaven assist me! I am sure you have a feeling heart; I have friends that will requite your kindness." "God defend me!" replied she, shuddering at Peggy's voice, which was soft as the flute's dulcet note, as though it had been harsh as bursting thunder. "Protect me!" added Peggy, "and depend on my everlasting gratitude! You well know

the deception that has been used, and the ignorance my friends are in respecting me ; dare to be just, declare the truth, and depend on protection and pardon." Lord Withers now in some measure, by his interference, relieved the mistress of this execrable mansion, saying, " Indeed, Miss Grant, you alarm Mrs. Brown ; retire, madam, and send your husband or Miss Thompson to make tea." Mrs. Brown, whose spirits were uncommonly agitated during the whole of this scene, did not wait for a repetition of his lordship's desire ; but, roughly disengaging herself from Peggy, hastily left the apartment. Peggy, judging she had nothing to hope from this behaviour, gave way to the anguish of her heart, Withers in vain endeavouring to appease her.

After some time Mr. Brown, the husband of the lady, or at least who passed for such, entered to know his lordship's

lordship's commands, and likewise to apologize for the extraordinary disorder of his wife; who however he informed him was now quite recovered. During this account his eyes were earnestly riveted on Peggy, whom he before had but a transitory glance of as she entered: though among the fairest of female forms, yet her beauty appeared of the petrifying kind to this well-matched pair; for if it had not that visible effect on him as on his wife, yet for some cause it raised a blush on cheeks that had long been strangers to the glow of shame: but it was a transient sensation which his accommodating conscience stifled in an instant.

Peggy refusing to taste any breakfast, the tea-table was speedily removed, and Mr. Brown retired; after which Peggy remained silent, or gave such answers as in no measure flatter-

ed the passion of the old debauchee, who, wearied with her obstinacy, determined to succeed in his project by any means, however vile. Under pretence therefore of ordering dinner, he retired for a few minutes; though in reality it was but a plausible excuse, his business being to consult his agents on what measures to pursue to accomplish his purpose.

Peggy, left alone, looked cautiously round her, but could discover no means of escape; to endeavour to leave the room she knew would be useless, as in the ante-chamber she heard the voice of Miss Thompson conversing with the old hag that had occasioned her such disgust, and who was applauding her ingenuity in the scheme against Peggy; interlarding her discourse with oaths and vulgarities, that made Peggy's heart shrink; and, though alone, caused a burning blush on her cheeks.

Opposite

Opposite to the parlour door at which she had entered was a smaller one: this Peggy concluded led to some other apartment which might be situated near the street; an idea that instantly determined her to satisfy herself—therefore cautiously advancing towards it for fear of noise, she gently turned the lock, and to her great disappointment found it was but a closet, without communication, containing bottles, a few books, and various other articles. Vexed, and hopeless, Peggy was turning hastily away, when on a shelf she discovered a pair of loaded pistols. She was no coward, and determined not to let slip an opportunity which might never return; therefore seizing one in haste, she put it in her pocket, saying, “This shall protect me in case of danger—or at least give me death rather than dishonour!” She then closed the door, and had just seated herself when Lord Withers returned.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

“ Despair and anguish fill my breast.”

SCOTTISH BALLAD.

WHILE Peggy was lamenting the folly she had been guilty of, in trusting herself with a stranger however specious in appearance, her absence caused universal wonder at Lord Beugle's: she was accustomed to be first in the breakfast room, where not attending, Lady Sophia immediately asked after her; the servant replying she had been gone out above three hours with a young woman. “ A young woman !” repeated Lady Beugle in amaze—“ what acquaintance can she have formed unknown to the family ?” Lady Sophia, well aware it could be no other than Miss Thompson, whom, however, she had never seen, her visits being always paid very early, replied, that she had

no doubt but it must be with a person from Scotland, who some time before had entreated and obtained assistance from her. Lady Beugle made no other answer than, Doubtless, if that was the case, she would soon return, yet must think the step she had taken unbecoming either her youth or situation to go without her concurrence.

"Perhaps, madam," observed Lady Eleanor, fixing her eyes on Wilmot, "some love-sick swain may have persuaded this beautiful damsel to elope, in which case her knight may distinguish himself in England as well as Germany."—"Miss Grant," replied Wilmot coolly, "has too much delicacy and understanding to consent to such a degradation; the man who would not glory in leading her to the altar in the face of the whole world is unworthy her."—"Indeed," replied Lady Beugle, "Wilmot, you say very improper things

things respecting this girl, who, I thank Heaven, is now on the point of leaving us; for surely my uncle cannot fail being in town to-day, or to-morrow at farthest, when I shall willingly give up a trust that has at once been derogatory and troublesome." Lord Beugle, who during all the inquiries after Peggy had not asked a question, or made a single observation, now gave a yawn, then replied, "Very troublesome and derogatory indeed, madam—Put more sugar in my next cup of tea, Eleanor—What you were saying respecting an elopement, is impossible; who would steal a girl simply for a good person? unless indeed for a mistress." "I fancy, my Lord," returned Eleanor, "no man of fashion, or understanding, could consider such a girl in any other point of view; except, indeed, Lord Withers, whom she had the insolence to reject." "Your *exquisite delicacy*, then, Eleanor," replied

replied Wilmot, "excuses such a step? On this subject, I must confess, I should prefer a lady whose ideas were not so *refined*."

Sophia, during this little dialogue, had sat in the greatest anxiety for Peggy; nor was Wilmot in reality less uneasy—therefore rising as soon as possible, he retired, and questioned the servant afresh, who however could give him no farther information than he already possessed.

Breakfast over, Lady Beugle and Eleanor went to pay some morning visits; Sophia excusing herself from attending them under pretence of being indisposed. On their departure, she hastily ran to consult her brother on what measure to pursue, as she had no doubt but some dreadful accident had befallen Peggy. "My suspicions rest all on one person," replied Wilmot; "I cannot help thinking that Withers is concerned

concerned in her absence, and am at this moment going to procure what information I possibly can respecting him."—With these words he left his sister, who again returned to the drawing-room, where she sat overwhelmed with melancholy. On the entrance of Lady Beugle and Eleanor, their first question was respecting Peggy, whose absence Lady Eleanor insisted must be voluntary, as she went out willingly with a stranger; giving distant inuendoes that Lord Wilmot was concerned in her flight, a circumstance that, however, afforded her satisfaction rather than otherwise, as the step must infallibly ruin her with the Colonel and Duncan.

Lady Sophia's temper was uncommonly mild. She had been accustomed to suffer the insults of Eleanor with patience and good humour; but on hearing her thus cruelly slander the person

person whom similitude of disposition had rendered dear to her, she forgot her usual calmness, replying with acrimony, "Miss Grant is as superior to such conduct, as she would be to surmise so vile a slander, which must at once proceed from a weak head and bad heart. Wilmot, by your account, loves her, and I am sure is too honourable to degrade the woman he distinguishes. Duncan also loves her, and you say is beloved in return; then wherefore should she fly from the man who would glory to make her his wife, or from him for whom she would devote hers?"— This reply brought on one replete with bitterness against the innocent object of the controversy from Lady Eleanor, Lady Beugle only endeavouring to make peace between them; for though she by no means liked Peggy, yet she did not believe the scandal of Lady Eleanor

Eleanor to have any foundation but in her own idea.

Thus they continued disputing : Sophia, for the first time in her life, contended with even more obstinacy than Eleanor, until at length a loud knock at the street-door gave notice of visitors ; but the dispute was at too great a height for either party to give way, until the servant entered, and announced the Colonel, Captain Campbell, and company. Lady Beagle instantly rose to meet them, the Colonel saluting her on the stair-case, at the same moment anxiously gazing round for Peggy ; Duncan in the mean-time, regardless of etiquette, rushing by them into the drawing-room, determined to be the first to press Peggy in his arms ; Mr. Sommers, Grant, and Orfield, being behind the Colonel. On entering, his eyes in vain wandered after Peggy ; for a moment

ment he was mute, from disappointment and amaze. Eleanor, whose face was usually more inclined to the lily than the rose, was now of a deep crimson, occasioned by vexation and passion; while Sophia's natural glow was replaced by a pallid languor, and her eyes suffused with tears. On the Colonel's entrance, he was no less disappointed than his nephew; and, hastily speaking to his nieces, asked for Peggy; Orfield, in the mean time addressing both sisters, his eyes enquiring, in a language well known to Sophia's, the cause of her disorder. Lady Beugle now entered into a hasty detail of what had passed, not without reflections on her charge, which Eleanor supported with redoubled acrimony and falsehood from the late dispute, adding, to complete all, that she had seduced her brother. "You are both cruel and unjust to advance such an untruth!" answered Sophia:

Sophia: "that my brother loves her, I am wellaware—but is not happy enough to be beloved in return; her whole soul is my cousin's, witness her distress during his danger, which, had it not terminated well, I am sure she would not have survived."—"Sophia," interrupted Lady Beugle, "I do not comprehend such behaviour—leave the room."—"I will, madam," answered Sophia, rising to obey her; "but again declare, either an accident has happened to Miss Grant, or she has fallen into the power of some villain; she is the most amiable and innocent of women, and I will pledge my life on her honour." With these words Sophia was leaving the apartment, had not the Colonel interfered, entreating her stay. During the whole of their discourse, Duncan was walking hastily up and down in an agitation which was too strong to be concealed; Lady Beugle

Beugle still endeavouring to throw the blame on Peggy, but exculpating her son; the Colonel listening to all with the utmost attention, his face glowing with passion; Sommers asking questions that he thought might lead to some discovery; and Grant murmuring with vexation, and taking strides along the drawing-room as heedlessly as if he had been traversing a Cherokee hut. In this disagreeable moment Wilmot entered, scarcely less agitated than the strangers:—however, he collected himself sufficiently to address his uncle and cousin Duncan; the latter only replying, “Do you know any thing of Miss Grant, Sir?”—“No, on my soul!” returned Wilmot warmly; “but I have strong suspicions that the villain Withers has, by some means, drawn her into a snare; for I have just learned, that though he was said to be out of town near a month, he has been

been seen two or three times within that period; and by Heaven I will not sleep nor rest until satisfied!" There was something in the whole of Wilmot's manner and appearance, that at once found belief in the breast of the Colonel, who replied, "You are, I am told, partial to Peggy?"—"I am not accustomed to be brought to confession," returned Wilmot firmly, "yet in this case will not deny that you are truly informed, and that was Miss Grant's heart free, I should glory in raising her to a rank she was formed to adorn!"—"Your intentions, sir," interrupted Duncan, "will be better explained to me than thus publicly."—"If you please," replied Wilmot calmly, "for the present, unite your efforts to mine, if possible to discover where she is concealed; hereafter we will enter into any explanation you choose:—let us seek the part of the town where

Withers resides—these gentlemen will perhaps be so obliging as to assist us in making enquiries.”—“ To-morrow,” interrupted Lady Beugle, “ will surely be time enough ; you forget, Wilmot, that your uncle is just arrived from Germany.”—“ True, madam,” answered he ; “ but as this is a case that will not suffer me to remain in a state of suspense, I imagined it might actuate others equally.” At these words the Colonel rose, saying, “ Wilmot, I believe you an honourable fellow, excuse the petulance of Duncan ; favour me to accompany him in the search of Miss Grant.”——“ With your permission,” said Mr. Sommers, “ I think lieutenant Orfield had better go with Mr. Campbell, while with Lord Wilmot’s leave I will attend him.”——“ ’Tis a good thought,” replied the Colonel, “ nor will Grant and myself be idle. Alas ! if I have lost her, this sorrow will be the severest I

have experienced: would to Heaven I had never suffered her to quit Kenneth Castle!"—"Indeed," returned Lady Beugle somewhat piqued, "I have taken all possible care of her, though I must confess, when I considered her birth, it was out of respect to you that I submitted to such a humiliation."—"I am sorry," answered the Colonel coolly, "that you have been so degraded; however, if I regain her, when it is known she is heiress to one of the noblest families in Scotland, that disgrace will be obliterated." Lady Beugle appeared in the utmost astonishment, as did all those unacquainted with the secret: but there was no time for explanations. Wilmot readily consented to accompany Mr. Sommers; Duncan also prepared to depart instantly, Orfield first stealing a farewell glance at Sophia, who pressed them to hasten away; Lady Beugle desiring, and Elea-

nor

nor in vain entreating them, at least to remain till after dinner ; for in spite of her pride, and the little hope she could have of subduing the heart of her cousin, she had been thinking for a whole long half hour, that it would be even possible to live with such a man in the barbarous highlands of Scotland, as instead of his person being injured by the fatigues of a campaign, it had acquired a dignity and manhood that rendered him doubly pleasing. The Colonel and Grant now followed, though both strangers to the town, being provided with all the information Sophia could give them respecting the person of Miss Thompson, who had been described to her by Peggy. It was about four o'clock when the gentlemen departed on their search ; Lord Wilmot and Mr. Sommers first going to Withers's, who the servants firmly insisted was out of town ; but on being contradicted by the evi-

dence of some neighbours, confessed that he had been at home twice lately. Lord Wilmot then insisted on being suffered to examine the house, which with some difficulty was agreed to, walking over the whole accompanied by Sommers and the domestics. This search being fruitless, they next made repeated enquiries all round the vicinity, but equally vain, and at length returned to Lady Beugle's wearied and dispirited about ten at night. Duncan and Orfield were near two hours later, but equally unsuccessful ; they had traversed the town, enquired in the environs, and at all the turnpikes, if any carriage had passed which they could surmise had conveyed away Peggy. Duncan, on his entrance, was distracted with his bad success, throwing himself on a sofa, unable to hold any conversation; viewing, at times, Wilmot with a look of suspicion, and turning with disgust
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from Eleanor, who attempted to sooth him. The Colonel and Grant were not yet returned, which astonished the whole party, as it was now midnight: a delay that, however, was occasioned by their ignorance of the town, wandering and bewildering themselves among the different streets, exploring their way through dark alleys and courts; unwilling to hire a vehicle, as it would prevent their enquiries; and promising rewards to all the watchmen they met, could they make any discovery of the object they sought.

CHAP. XII.

“ ———— Had I one grain of faith
In holy legends, and religious tales,
I should conclude there was an arm above
That fought against me, and malignant turn’d
To catch myself, the subtle snare I fet.”

HOME.

ON Lord Withers’s return to the
apartment where he had left Peggy, he
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again endeavoured to persuade her by all possible means to accept his hand: fortune he possessed sufficient, he therefore only wished to gratify passion and vanity, by possessing a woman that must cause him to be universally envied. His rhetoric was however vain, and the dinner hour arrived, without making any alteration in Peggy's sentiments. Mrs. Brown attended, and performed the honours of the table with tolerable composure, speaking however but little; gazing at times intently on Peggy, whom she endeavoured to soothe by all possible means, entreating her to eat, which she refused, drinking only a glass of water. To complete Peggy's vexation, the infamous Thompson came in after dinner: her former dress has been described; it was now gaudy, and licentious to the highest degree, being scarcely half a covering; added to which, she gave her language a freedom which

which could not fail to shock the innocence of Peggy, who, however, enjoyed one advantage, that of not comprehending the half of what she uttered.

This party, truly worthy of each other, tried all their arts to reconcile Peggy to her situation, and persuade her to take some refreshment; but their trouble was fruitless, she denied all they could offer. Mrs. Brown, as the night advanced, remarked she appeared fatigued, desiring her to retire to rest; which, however, she peremptorily refused, saying, she would not leave that apartment. Mrs. Brown and Thompson at length retired, after which, Withers renewed his persecutions; Peggy answering all by entreaties to be released from that dreadful house. "Consent to espouse me," said he, "I can procure a special licence, and marry you to-morrow morning, after which I will take you home, where

you shall be absolute mistress. Nothing but the necessity of employing Thompson to secure you could have made me bring you hither, but it will be a secret between us ; consent then, and free yourself from confinement." Peggy remained silent through despair ; her mind not only torn with the dangers of her situation, but likewise distracted on the account of her friends—In all probability the Colonel, Mr. Sommers, and Duncan were returned, in which case, what could they think of her absence ?—she went out with a stranger, and they must naturally suppose her flight willing, an idea that drove her almost to madness. Lord Withers also appeared no longer inclined to bear her scorn and coldness, which, every answer she gave, became more pointed : his offers were all rejected, his love returned with disdain ; to succeed by fair means, he despaired of ; the house and
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its inhabitants were exactly suited to the most infamous purposes; the former being placed far back in a lonely court, the latter deaf to every cry, however piercing, but that of interest—conscience indeed sometimes intruded on the hostess; but that Mr. Brown affirmed was a malady easily removed by brandy, for his heart was too callous to be actuated by such a trifle. As for Thompson, gifted by nature with a handsome person, and an excellent understanding, she had prostituted both to the vilest purposes, early forsaking a paternal roof to become a votary of shame, glorying in standing unrivalled in wickedness, and reducing others to her own level. The old attendant completed this hateful group; worn out with debauchery, she was a living example of the disgusting consequences of such a life, and might have even rendered vice hateful to any bosom in

which the glimmer of one faint spark of virtue remained ; but that was a sentiment long since extinguished in Thompson, and as totally obliterated from the minds of the owners of the mansion.

Withers being alone with Peggy about eleven, ventured to approach, and taking her unawares kissed her neck. Peggy's temper had ever been supposed, by those acquainted with her, to be peculiarly mild ; but if so originally, its softness at this insult intirely forsook it, and, darting a look of ineffable fury and disdain, she bade him begone, in a tone of voice that demanded obedience, had not the old wretch at that moment been determined to profit by the opportunity, whatever might be the consequence. Advancing therefore towards her in spite of her cries, which no one appeared inclined to pay any attention to, he attempted to take her
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in his arms ; but Peggy's form, though extremely delicate, had all the advantages of a constitution healthy by nature, and uncorrupted by a false education ; therefore seizing the villain trembling through excess of vice, she threw him violently from her, his head lighting in the fall against the fender, where he lay deprived of sense and motion ; then rushing towards the door, heedless through alarm, she darted along the dark passage ; but the opening of the outer door was too difficult to be immediately done, and the heavy fall of the iron bar instantly alarmed the family, who had before been deaf to her cries ; her hand was already on the last bolt when they entered the passage. Despair gave her supernatural courage : she remembered the pistol, and, snatching it from her pocket, fired it undirected among them ; at the same moment, throwing it down and rushing out of

the door, which she made shift to unbar, amidst the horrible screams the pistol had occasioned. She pressed forward, unmindful whither, not doubting but the fiends were behind her, until, on turning out of the court in which the house was situated, through the extreme darkness of the night, she ran against two men, exclaiming, "Protect me! protect me! or I am undone!"—at the same moment her senses, from the violence of the exertion, failing, she sunk at their feet. "Merciful God! that voice," said the elder, as he in vain attempted to raise her, "I surely dream! Help me to support her, Grant! 'tis Peggy! what can have reduced her to this extremity?"—"Peggy!" repeated Grant in an accent of surprise (for it was no other than himself and the Colonel, whom a happy ignorance of the town had bewildered to this spot), "sure 'tis impossible!" The amazement

ment caused by thus unexpectedly finding the object of their search, and in such a situation, had an effect on both that placing them in the front of a battle could not have produced : they trembled till almost unable to raise her, which they had hardly performed before the cry of " Stop her ! stop her !" struck their ears. Brown, his wife, and the old harridan at that moment reaching them, " I thank you for catching her," said the first of this infernal trio, " she has committed murder."—" Murder !" repeated the Colonel, supporting Peggy still senseless in his arms, " then fatal necessity has reduced her to it ; but who are you that arrogate the power to detain her ?"—" A power that you shall feel to your cost if you do not instantly give her up," replied Brown, insolently advancing to seize Peggy from the Colonel ; but Grant, whose trepidation, as well as that of the veteran, had immediately

immediately vanished on being thus addressed, rushed before him, and with a well applied blow, at once stretched Brown on the ground, saying, "Lie there, villain!"—"Murder! thieves! murder!" now yelled the whole crew, in so shrill a note that even Peggy began to stir, the veteran pressing her close to his bosom, and uttering words of consolation and support to banish her fears; though her ear was yet as deaf to them as her heart was insensible of the blessing she enjoyed of being in perfect safety. The screams of these furies at length alarmed the watch, and now from every quarter the noise of rattles, and repetitions of "where? where?" were only distinguishable.

At length the watch reached the scene of confusion, all running with staves and lanterns to discover and end the fray. Brown by this time had risen, but was kept at a distance by Grant, having

having no inclination to feel the weight of his hand a second time. The watchmen now enquired the cause of the alarm; but holding up their lanterns, several recognized the Colonel and Grant, who had already in the evening given them money, and promised large rewards for the discovery of Peggy, who, he now informed them, was the person they sought, desiring their assistance to convey her home. "He is a noble gentleman!" exclaimed they, "and has been enquiring for the young lady all the night."—"She has committed murder!" bawled Brown, "and I insist she be stopped."—"Nay," replied one of the watchmen, "if you are sure she has committed murder, we must take her into custody: but you had better have a care, Master Brown, your character is pretty well known; this is a gentleman, I am sure, by his generosity; and I as representer of the constable

stable of the night, who reprehends the justice, who reprehends the king himself, insists that you, to make good the accusation, produces the body."—Peggy at that moment recovered her recollection—gazing round her in surprise, then fixing her eyes on the Colonel, clasped his neck in a transport of amazement, unable to speak for joy. "Fear nothing, my dear girl," said the veteran, "you are safe; speak, how came you here?"—"Oh! sir," said she, pressing him still closer, "an infamous woman cruelly deceived me."—"This is no place for examination," interrupted Brown; "secure her, I accuse her of murder: if you doubt my word, walk in to my house, and satisfy yourselves; the young woman is desperately wounded, if not killed." "What provoked her to such an action?" answered Grant—"Ay, ay," repeated the watchman, "what provoked her?

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we know your house before to-night, Master Brown; if she has killed a woman in self-defence, the law can only make it manslaughter — therefore I say let us see the corpse.” — “ ’Tis well thought! lead the way,” said the Colonel. — “ Oh! sir, for Heaven’s sake,” cried Peggy trembling, “ do not enter that hateful house! I have, indeed, perhaps killed some one.” — “ Fear nothing, my child, I dread to hear your provocation; you are now safe; I will defend you with my life and fortune; then let us see this wounded woman.” Brown now entered, followed by the Colonel and Grant supporting Peggy between them, the watchmen behind completing the group. On entering the parlour, even the Colonel’s assurances could hardly prevent Peggy from fainting. On a sofa sat Withers bathing his head with brandy, and by his side Thompson

son crying bitterly, from the agony she sustained by a bullet having passed through her cheek, and demolished her front teeth. Withers started with amazement, for though he had little doubt of Brown bringing back Peggy, yet he by no means expected her thus accompanied. "Sir," said Brown addressing him, "these gentlemen would not be convinced of the mischief that wicked girl has done; what say you now, will you give her up to justice?"—"What provocation had she?" demanded the Colonel—"What right have you to question?" returned Withers, recovering the surprise the sight of strangers who appeared above the common rank, though unknown, had occasioned: "I am a peer of the realm, my name Withers, and will substantiate the charge: you have now satisfied your curiosity, therefore begone and leave her."—"Despicable wretch! I am almost

most sorry you are too mean for my anger," answered the Colonel; "I now guess all: say, Peggy, has that villain dared to insult you?"—"Had he not, sir," replied Peggy, "I should not have wounded the infamous girl who betrayed me hither under pretence of seeing her dying mother: but Heaven preserved me from ruin, and also directed my hand in the stroke which, though she richly deserved, I cannot but lament."—"Enough, my child!" said the Colonel. "Now, sir, in your turn," addressing Withers, "learn that though I have no title to distinguish me, I am not of a family that tamely bears insult; nor shall even your insignificance protect you; for though I should blush to meet so weak and despicable a foe, whose crazy body must sink beneath my arm, yet you shall suffer the utmost the law can inflict." Grant, during this discourse, had remained

remained silent, his eyes fixed first on Brown, then on his wife, with the most scrutinizing attention. "Your name," said Grant, "I think, is Brown; pray, sir, how long may you have been so called?" There is nothing perhaps so dangerous to a villain as to be taken unawares. "Name, sir!" repeated he, "name! my name is Brown, sir."—"On my soul you lie, sir!" interrupted Grant—"your name is Simpson! I am sure I am not mistaken, I will prove the charge against you with my life: What have you done with the property of the lady, villain, whose infant you basely robbed and left at my house?"—"Sir," replied Brown trembling, and sinking at once to the lowest ebb of cowardice—"you surely mistake, I am not the person:—the young woman, I hope, is not dangerously wounded; perhaps she may recover; take the lady home to-night, give me your direction,

rection, you shall hear from me to-morrow.—“ You shall hear me to-night !” exclaimed Grant—“ Speak ! for by Heaven I will not lose sight of you till informed of the lady’s name that died at my house ; nay, look at me, have seventeen years made such an alteration that you do not recollect me ?”

Peggy shuddered, and clung closer to the Colonel ; while the watchmen, whom his liberality had entirely gained, remained in silent astonishment, except the former speaker, who said, “ Why, Master Brown, don’t be down in the mouth, ’tis not the first skirmish you have been in ; to be sure a pitcher that goes so often to the well, usually gets broken at last.”—“ Seize him,” interrupted the Colonel—“ His person, indeed,” addressing Grant, “ exactly answers your former description ; nay, the cut in the cheek is too remarkable for you to mistake—Speak, if you expect mercy !

mercy ! what was the name of the lady you attended, and who died a few days after the battle of Culloden ?"—“ I know not what you mean,” replied Brown trembling, “ I will answer your questions to-morrow.” “ Prevaricating villain !” exclaimed Grant, “ you shall answer them now before Colonel Campbell.”—“ Colonel Campbell !” screamed Mrs. Brown sinking on her knees, “ Oh ! forgive me, forgive me ! I will disclose all.”—“ Do so, then, if you expect favour,” replied the Colonel, “ is this the woman who accompanied him ?”—“ It is,” returned Grant, “ though she is much altered, and had she not been in his company, I perhaps should not at once have recollected her ; for him, I will swear to in any court in Britain.”—“ Speak, woman,” said the Colonel, “ who was the lady ? I am already informed of the whole ; your testimony is immaterial, yet I will force the

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the truth from your lips.”—“ Alas !
sir, the hand of God is this day upon
me ; nothing less could have brought
Miss Grant, whose appearance has
awakened agonies long since stifled.
The person who died at the farm near
Edinburgh, was a daughter of Mr.
Alexander Frazer, and married to your
son, if you are Colonel Campbell of
Kenneth Castle in Argyleshire.”—
“ Great God !” replied the veteran,
“ just are all thy ways, however intricate !—Peggy, thou shalt yet rejoice at
this day’s disaster.—And what became of
the jewels and property you purloined
of the unhappy Mrs. Campbell’s ?” de-
manded the veteran. “ I will inform
you all, and likewise make all the re-
stitution I can,” replied she ; “ I have a
certificate of the marriage, and some
letters.”—“ Do so,” said the Colonel,
“ and you shall escape punishment.
This villain I consign to the law ; seize
him,

him, Watch ! to you I look to produce him : I accuse him of theft, having seventeen years back stolen a considerable quantity of jewels that belonged to my daughter in law." The watchmen now secured Brown, or more properly Simpson ; the veteran likewise ordering two to convey his wife to Lady Beugle's, desiring them not to lose sight of her, as she was to bring the papers with her. Lord Withers, on learning the rank of the Colonel, and hearing the accusation against Simpson, was overwhelmed with shame ; he was likewise witness of the Colonel's fondness for Peggy, and had no doubt he would warmly resent the affront that had been offered her ; therefore the first minute he could find an opportunity he slunk off, leaving his partner in vice under the care of a surgeon, which the old harridan had procured to dress her wound.

CHAP. XIII.

———“A little while
Was I a wife ! a mother not so long !”

HOME.

THE Colonel, Grant, and Peggy, now entered a hired vehicle : the latter part of the conversation that had passed at Simpson's was a perfect enigma to her ; but her deliverance and happy meeting with the Colonel obliterated every other idea. At length they reached Lady Beugle's ; the whole family being still, though past one, in the drawing-room. “ It is my uncle,” said Duncan faintly, when he heard the coachman knock : “ he, I fear, has not been more successful than myself.” With these words, as in great disquietude we catch at the most slender hopes, he advanced to the stair-case,

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Lord Wilmot and Mr. Sommers following him; but guess their surprise on seeing the Colonel and Grant leading Peggy up between them! Duncan gazed for a moment unable to advance; then suddenly recollecting himself, with one leap he cleared the stairs between them, and caught her in his arms, regardless of every thing but the joy of finding her. Peggy involuntarily returned Duncan's pressure, both speechless with pleasure, the Colonel enjoying the scene in silence. Peggy was the first to recollect herself; she remembered her former promise, and withdrawing from Duncan's embrace, her face and neck of a deep crimson, said, "I am so happy to see you, that indeed I know not what I do."—Mr. Sommers now advanced towards her, Peggy running to meet him with the affection of a daughter. The Colonel then presented her to Grant, saying,

saying, "This gentleman is your namesake and countryman, Duncan's preserver, and my friend; you must learn to love him, Peggy."—"I have learned it already, sir, before I saw him," said she as Grant saluted her; "can I be insensible that I owe him the life of my first benefactor?" Sophia now came in for her share of caresses, being, however, the only one that had sufficient recollection to observe that Peggy looked ill.—"Indeed," replied she, "I feel very faint, but I was too happy to be sensible of it; perhaps it is occasioned by my having had nothing to-day but a glass of water." Tea, by Peggy's desire, was now brought; during which, Lord and Lady Beugle, who were by no means pleased with the attention paid the girl, whose situation with the Colonel appeared more and more an enigma, retired to rest. Lady Eleanor also pleaded weariness; indeed

her malignant heart was overflowing with disappointed pride and vexation, and longed to be relieved by tears. Lord Wilmot in the course of the day had been acquainted by Mr. Sommers with the discoveries made in Peggy's favour—a circumstance that raised no emotion in his bosom; he loved her for herself alone, and fortune could make no addition to his affection. After Peggy's taking some refreshment, the Colonel insisted on her retiring with Sophia; a command which she reluctantly obeyed, Duncan leading her to the door and whispering a soft adieu, while Orfield followed his example with Sophia. The Colonel and the friends who accompanied him from Germany, were now left alone with Lord Wilmot, to whom Duncan advancing said, " Pardon me, Wilmot, my behaviour to-day needs an excuse; the loss of Peggy distracted me, and made me even suspicious

cious of you.”—“ Your apology is sufficient, Duncan,” replied Wilmot, “ yet you ought to have had a higher opinion of my honour. I love Miss Grant, or, as I now understand, Miss Campbell; but that sentiment could never make me act unworthy her or myself.” At this moment the servant entered to inform the Colonel that two watchmen were below with a woman. Lord Wilmot instantly ordered them up, when the veteran was informed that their companions had conveyed Simpson safely to the watch-house, on which he dismissed them, with a present to be shared with their comrades.

Mrs. Simpson was now left alone with them, and after many tears, protestations of sorrow and remorse, produced a little box with various letters from Captain James Campbell to Miss Fraser, both before and after she was his wife; also a certificate of the mar-

riage signed by Mr. Bennet. Mr. Sommers raised his eyes to Heaven in silent thankfulness ; the Colonel hastily glancing over the contents, dropped at once the tear of paternal affection for James, and that of rapture on having discovered all that remained of so beloved a son.

“ Mrs. Simpson,” said he, “ I have promised you mercy, but it depends on your disclosing the truth ; relate the whole you know of my son James’s attachment to Miss Frazer.” Mrs. Simpson, with many apologies for her conduct, began thus :

“ I was hired to attend on Miss Frazer in the year one thousand seven hundred and forty-two, she then being about sixteen. Mr. Frazer lived in Paris with a son about two years older, and to whom he was so partial that he neglected his daughter, keeping her almost perpetually in a convent, and pressing

sing her to take the veil; which, however, she declined, replying, that she would willingly remain a boarder, but never consent to an irrevocable confinement. Her mother, you perhaps knew, died soon after her birth, and, by what I have heard, never loved Mr. Frazer; she therefore, before her decease, left in trust for her child, in the hands of an old counsellor of known probity, a considerable quantity of jewels independent of her father, and to be delivered at the age of eighteen, tying also her own picture round the babe's neck; where it ever remained, and, if not discovered (for in the confusion I forgot it), was doubtless buried with her. At the age before mentioned the gentleman gave her the jewels, desiring her, as she valued a dying mother's commands, to secure them for her own use, as the inhumanity of Mr. Frazer might make such a supply necessary.

cessary. Miss Frazer promised to obey, and always kept the jewels at the convent, where she usually resided, only visiting home at intervals ; the counsellor dying soon after, and renewing his commands. About the beginning of the year one thousand seven hundred and forty-five, we went to Flanders, where Mr. Frazer had purchased an estate ; my mistress was consequently removed to a convent at Lisle. One day that we had been at her father's, and were returning home in a post-chaise, we were stopped by a detachment of English soldiers from Tournay, who had been on a foraging party, and supposing us French made us prisoners, our only guard being my present husband, then Mr. Frazer's secretary. My mistress was greatly frightened, until a young officer belonging to the party, but not with them when we were seized, came up, and enquired her name and country ;

country; which when informed of, he entreated her not to be alarmed, assuring her she was free, telling her at the same time, her mother had been too dear to his father for her person not to be sacred; concluding by saying his name was Campbell, and of Argyleshire. My mistress was no stranger to the name, nor indeed myself; for I have often heard Mr. Frazer reproach his daughter for her mother's partiality to Colonel Campbell, to which she never made any reply but tears."—"The villain!" interrupted the Colonel rising, and crossing the apartment with a hasty step; but recollecting himself he resumed his seat, and desired Mrs. Simpson to continue. "In short, Mr. Campbell not only released us, but put us on our way in safety, taking our names and address; my mistress saying to me after his departure, "Alas! if the Colonel is like his son, who could blame my mother's

partiality for him?" We did not go home again for near a month, when Simpson told Miss Frazer he had business to communicate, and which was no other than that Captain Campbell had bribed a French sentinel, who had brought him a letter to deliver to her, accompanied with a considerable present for himself. Miss Frazer loved the Captain, and replied to his letter,—entreating him, however, to decline writing, for the safety of both, while the war continued. This command was of no avail; for three nights after, by the means of the sentinel and Simpson, he passed the out-post as an Irish soldier, and brother to Simpson. Miss Frazer was at once delighted and terrified; she met him in Simpson's apartment, which was rather distinct from the house, and where they in future had many private interviews. In short, some time before the battle of Fontenoy, he persuaded
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my mistress to espouse him in secret, as the hatred their fathers had to each other would otherwise, if possible, separate them. My mistress consenting, by her advice he applied to a Mr. Bennet, who married them in the presence of his wife, myself, and Simpson. Captain Campbell still continued his visits, till some time after the battle of Fontenoy, when he was obliged to return to England to assist against the rebels. Never shall I forget their parting : my mistress fainted on his bosom ; he, amidst a thousand caresses, telling her he would return and fetch her as soon as the rebellion was quelled, which he had no doubt would be in a short time. After his departure she received several letters, in which he complained of the uneasiness he suffered from their correspondence being frequently broken by the taking of the packets. About two months after she found herself with child, and

now waited with impatience his promised return, delaying however to inform him of her situation, as she said, "Such an occurrence would make my beloved James hazard every thing, and perhaps hasten matters, and displease his father : I will therefore wait with patience a few months, and try the event." Prince Charles's fortune at first on his landing in Scotland, prolonged the rebellion ; and my mistress's shape became so enlarged, that our utmost arts could hardly conceal it. In short, the confusions in Britain not being terminated ; in the beginning of the month of March, one thousand seven hundred and forty six, she consulted Simpson and myself on going to Scotland ; and on our agreeing to accompany her, we departed in a post-chaise, using the utmost speed, by the way of Holland, where we were however detained a considerable time before we could

could fail for England. At length we reached the Downs; and after a day's rest, which was absolutely necessary for my mistress, though her impatience would hardly let her consent to it, we took the way to Scotland, Simpson attending us. We arrived safely within about three miles of Edinburgh, where my mistress preferred staying, to entering the city. Here it was she learned the death of her husband from the list of the slain, and that no sooner apprised of, than she fell into convulsions; in which state she remained some hours, and was then delivered of a daughter, dying the day following, without ever being able to enter into any explanations respecting the child or herself.—Simpson had long paid his addresses to me, and acquired a power over me from my affection to him: he pressed me to let us seize the jewels, which he said no one was apprised of. In short, forgive me, sir, we took
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all and departed, Simpson selling the diamonds to a Jew in London for four thousand pounds. Five hundred however were only advanced, the remainder being promised next day ; but the Jew, no doubt surmising they were not honestly come by, decamped in the night, and got clear to Holland, from whence we could never recover any thing, nor yet dared to pursue him. Simpson then changed his name, hired a house, and was employed by several men of fashion in providing for their pleasures ; among whom was Lord Withers, who has occasionally used our house ever since we kept it. About a month ago he came, and said, he would give five hundred pounds to get a young woman into his power, who was companion to Lady Beugle. " But," added he, " no common method will do ; she never stirs out but with the family, is perfectly virtuous, and by no means to
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be caught by either pride or flattery." My husband considered for a long time, then consulted Thompson, who lives with us. She questioned Withers on every particular of Miss Grant's temper; and on his saying, he had remarked she had a feeling heart, and was very charitable, replied, "'Tis enough, I ask no more; if I don't succeed, hereafter set me down for a fool." The next morning I was much surprised at her odd dress, which had every appearance of poverty, and soon learned her plan was entreating assistance of Miss Grant; which obtained, under pretence of gratitude she visited her frequently after, and at length went in apparent violent sorrow, saying, her mother was expiring, and could not die in peace, unless some one would promise to enable her to get back to Scotland, which she pretended was her country. Miss Grant fell into the snare, and accompanied her

her home : indeed, had it not been the dread of my husband, she should never have been insulted ; for on our first meeting, my surprise was not lost even on her. I could not help thinking it was Miss Frazer risen from the grave to reprove my wickedness, nor do I now know who the young lady is, but can hardly doubt, from her extreme likeness to my mistress, she was led by Heaven to bring detection on me. Finding herself deceived, she profited of an opportunity, Heaven knows for what purpose, to take a pistol from the closet, which, on our endeavouring to stop her flight, she fired among us, desperately wounding Thompson, after having first thrown down Withers, who, on our entrance into the parlour to discover the alarm, lay with his head over the fender ; she seizing the moment of his insensibility to escape from the house as virtuous as she entered it."

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“ By my honour she is a brave girl ! I shall love her the better as long as I live,” said the Colonel. “ Where will you find me another woman, who at once possessing all the softness of her sex, can defend herself so nobly ? ”——“ Not many indeed, I believe,” replied Wilmot : “ a modern fine lady would faint at the bare idea of such a vulgar exertion.”

The Colonel, being now satisfied, dismissed Mrs. Simpson, saying, “ I have no intention of punishing you ; the villain Simpson shall alone feel my vengeance.—Begone ; and hereafter act uprightly.”

Mrs. Simpson dismissed, the company prepared to retire to rest ; Orfield returning home for the night ; the Colonel first thanking Grant for taking no further notice than as a stranger of Peggy—a forbearance he had entreated, fearful of her spirits suffering greater alarm ;

alarm; then shaking Wilmot by the hand, "You are a good fellow," said he, "and, though I cannot give you my grand-daughter, we must be friends." Wilmot answered by a sigh; a general good night, or rather morning, soon after taking place.

Peggy was too happy to sleep sound: a thousand delightful ideas amused her imagination. Never had the Colonel, though always kind, behaved with so much affection: Duncan too was improved, rather than injured; he had embraced her in the presence of the Colonel, with a freedom he never before attempted, and which by no means seemed to displease the veteran. The conversation too at Simpson's was remembered. "Who could they be whose crimes were so well known to the Colonel, and likewise to Grant?" thought she. "The Colonel's son married, I think they said, to Miss Fraser;

Frazer; and something about robbing and abandoning an infant." These ideas, the more pursued, the more bewildered; and soon gave way to a whispering certainty of being beloved by Duncan. The only disagreeable thought was Thompson's wound, which she sincerely hoped would however not be dangerous; a wish the gentleness of her nature prompted, and that shuddered at being, even in self-defence, the means of giving pain to the most unworthy.

In the morning the company met in the breakfast-room, all but Lady Eleanor, who sent an excuse of indisposition. She could not endure to see the girl she despised, so greatly distinguished, and therefore determined rather to keep her apartment. The tea-things were no sooner removed, than the Colonel, who was seated by Peggy, began speaking of her grandmother Jannet, saying,
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"My dear girl, you have I fancy but little remembrance of your father?"

"Alas! no," said she, the smile that wanted on her face suddenly giving way to a look of sorrow. "I was so young that I scarcely recollect him: yet sometimes I think I remember sitting on his knee. Since I came to any knowledge, I never dared mention him to my grandmother; who laments him the more bitterly, as she never knew how he died, he being from home on business for the minister." Perhaps then," said the Colonel, "he may not be dead, Peggy; nay, more, I have good reason to think he is not." "Not dead!" replied Peggy, "is it possible Heaven can have such a blessing in store for me; such a comfort for my dear grandmother? Oh, sir! keep me not in suspense! I am sure you know more of him than you say, for you never inspire hopes without some certainty :

tainty: but you fear my fortitude; indeed, sir, I am very calm!" continued she, trembling excessively: "perhaps he needs my care, and is sinking under distress, while I, blest with your favour, enjoy every gratification!"——"No, Peggy! the man thou callest thy father is the friend to whom I owe Duncan's preservation, and"——"Duncan's preservation!" interrupted she, rising and fixing her eyes on Grant; who, unable to bear more, started from his seat, and caught her in his arms, exclaiming, "My darling! how greatly are all my sorrows overpaid!" "My father!" cried she, sinking from his embrace to his feet, "how shall I express the rapture with which my heart overflows, and pay the long arrears of duty I owe you?"——"You owe me none," said he, raising and leading her to the Colonel, "here pay your duty. Heaven only made
my

my mother and myself the humble instruments of saving the wreck of a noble house.”—“ Yes, beloved representative of those most dear to me !” said the veteran, snatching her to his breast, “ in me behold a parent who glories in such a grand-daughter. Precious remains of James Campbell and his Mary Frazer ! No longer now a cottager, and dependent on my bounty ; but the heiress of Kenneth Castle, and welcome claimant on my warmest affection.”—“ Gracious Heaven !” replied Peggy, “ you are too good to sport with my feelings ; and yet, how can it be ? the child of poverty—the honoured dependent of your bounty—my senses are surely bewildered.”—“ Recall them, my Peggy, my much-loved cousin, recall them,” said Duncan, “ and listen to a tale of wonder.”—“ Oh ! in pity relate it then ; I feel, I know that happiness awaits me, and

long to be informed by what means. I suffered much yesterday, and cannot but think my senses in some measure now deceive me.”—“Never less than at this minute, my child,” said the Colonel: “be composed, and Grant, thy reputed, though ever to be honoured father, will clear all doubts. Nay, seat thyself by me, pride of my age, and hear a recital, which, however, must cost thy susceptible mind a tear.”

Peggy obeyed in silence, eagerly fixing her eyes, with expressive anxiety, first on the Colonel, then on Grant, who, after a short pause, related the story of her mother, as before told by Jannet, though in more elegant terms. At the description of Mrs. Campbell's death, Peggy hid her face on the Colonel's bosom, sobbing aloud until Grant mentioned the circumstance of her expiring with her lips on Peggy's cheek.—“On my cheek!” interrupted she,

she, "Oh say ! which received the honoured salute ?" involuntarily putting up her hand to her face. "On your left, I well know," replied Grant; "for my poor mother used to say that Heaven had fixed a dimple in the spot to render it a lasting mark."—"Ay, Peggy," added Duncan, in order to divert the sorrow which he observed ready to overwhelm her, "it was just there," gently stealing a kiss from her cheek ; a trick which covered Peggy's face with blushes, but in some measure disturbed her sorrow, and for which the Colonel was by no means displeased. Grant then continued, and disclosed the whole, not omitting the discovery of the night before; Peggy listening with wonder and astonishment. The Colonel, at the conclusion, produced the portrait of Mary Fraser, and presented it to Peggy, saying, "My beloved child, receive the faint resemblance of thy grand-

grandmother; wear it as thy mother did, ever remembering it is to thee doubly sacred, as it must not only recall a parent to thy memory, but was the instrument which raised thee to the place thy birth designed." Peggy received the picture, pressing it to her lips in silence, and, turning aside, dropped it into her bosom. Lord Wilmot now congratulated his new cousin, as did Sophia, in the warmest terms; Lady Beugle coldly retiring to communicate the story to Eleanor; Lord Beugle, with a yawn, observing it was a wonderful discovery.

C H A P. XIV.

“ Not worse the fruit,
That in the wilderness the blossom blow’d.
————— in the humble cot
I learn’d some lessons, which I’ll not forget
When I inhabit yonder lofty towers.”

HOME.

A FEW days after the foregoing discovery, the Colonel, to the complete satisfaction of Duncan and Peggy, began talking of returning home; the punishment of Simpson alone detaining him, and for whom Peggy pleaded a long time in vain, but who, from her repeated solicitations, was at length set at liberty; the Colonel, however, giving such an account of him to the police, that they promised in future to keep a strict eye over him, ordering him, under pain of prosecution, to give up house-keeping. Lord Withers had, the very

very morning after the confusion at Simpson's, set off for the continent; a step that did not prevent the Colonel commencing an action, which, though not terminated until many months after our party returned to Scotland, went so unfavourably against him, as to be the most expensive of all his villanies; money which, however, the Colonel ordered to be distributed among the poor. Thompson, who lay heavy on Peggy's spirits, was in a fair way of recovery when they left England, though greatly disfigured, Peggy privately sending her a note for fifty pounds. Eleanor still kept her apartment, declaring Peggy's birth a story which she could not give the least credit to, and that it was doubtless compiled among them. Duncan now openly avowed his passion. Wilmot contemplating his happiness with a sigh, and, when pressed to accompany them to Scotland, replied, "Some

time hence, when I can trust myself, such a journey will be very agreeable, but at present you must excuse me ; it would cost me too dear." The Colonel, who was not regardless of the promise he had made Orfield, now attacked Lady Beugle. For some time she was inflexible ; but the veteran declaring that on such a marriage taking place, he would make an addition of ten thousand pounds to Orfield's pay—her ladyship, by the advice of Eleanor, who was glad to be rid of a sister whose manners were a perpetual reproach on her, consented ; the union of Sophia and Orfield being to take place at the same time as that of Duncan and Peggy.

The Colonel, on the first discovery of his grand-daughter, had written to Scotland, to his brother Campbell, entreating him to meet him at Kenneth Castle, and witness the union he meant to take place soon after his arrival there.

Lord

Lord and Lady Beugle declined to accompany them ; Sophia dropping a tear, even on separating with an unworthy sister, and obtaining a promise from Wilmot to join them in the course of the ensuing summer, at which time they likewise expected Mr. Bennet and his son.

Our company now departed; and after an easy journey of nine days reached Kenneth Castle ; having stopped one day on the road, to view Grant's former dwelling, and visit Mrs. Campbell's grave, in the village kirk-yard, which they found, as described by Jannet, with a laurel, or, as she called it, a green bay at the head, and a cypress at the feet, between which the Colonel ordered a marble monument to be erected to the memory of his daughter, Peggy weeping over the spot until the Colonel taking one hand, and Duncan the other, obliged her to quit it. Fifteen

miles from home they were met by some hundreds of the Colonel's vassals and dependents, headed by Sandy Mackintosh on horseback, who received them with repeated acclamations of pleasure ; after which, they continued their way ; Grant, who was also on horseback, entering into a conversation with Sandy, as though they had been twenty years acquainted.

On reaching the Castle, Grant, impatient as he was to embrace his mother, lingered behind until she was informed of his arrival. At the entrance stood Jannet and Mrs. Donald. Peggy flew to her grand-mother's arms, neither being able to speak for some minutes ; and at length, accompanied by Sophia, retiring with her, when in the most cautious manner Peggy informed her of what discoveries had been made, and who waited to be introduced to her. " Blessing of my eild ! " replied Jannet,

net, "though thou art discovered to be of high blude, thou wouldst not mock my grey hairs; yet it canna sure be true. My Allan alive! My bonny lad! Ay, if sae, I must die wi' pleasure! but let me see him, for I canna but think some ane has imposed on thee." Sophia now left them to fetch Grant, who returned with her, accompanied by the Colonel. "My mother!" exclaimed Grant, clasping her in his arms. "My bairn! my ain Allan!" returned she, sinking on his neck, unable to speak, until relieved by tears, "do I live to see thee safe? Yet alack, thou art sorely changed; ruefu' mishaps have attended thee, or thou wouldst not have been sae lang absent. Mercifu' Father! have I then lived to see my dear lad come back til claife my ene? and my bonny Peggy amang the first of Highland ladies; what can I wish for mair? I am ready til gae whenever it pleases Heaven.

ven til ca' me."——"No, my dear grandmother," interrupted Peggy, "you will, I trust, be spared to see I am not ungrateful, and that I will endeavour to pay the interest of a debt of gratitude, whose principal can never be returned."——"Ay, Jannet," said the Colonel, "cheer up, we may want you hereafter to nurse a young Duncan, or a Peggy."—A loud ringing at the park-gate now announced visitors, and that proved to be no other than Mr. and Mrs. Campbell, whom the Colonel hastened to receive, Duncan having met them at the first entrance; Mr. Sommers, accompanied by Orfield, being in the mean time employed in informing, in a brief manner, the vassals, that Peggy was now their lady, and the acknowledged daughter of their beloved laird. Mr. Campbell and his lady expressed the utmost surprise at the strange events that had taken place, which, however,
were

were too clearly authenticated to be disputed; Mr. Campbell informing his brother that Mr. Alexander Frazer had been in the Highlands for more than two months back; the illegitimate son, for whom he so cruelly neglected his daughter Mary, being dead since their arrival there. The Colonel now sent Duncan to desire the attendance of Sophia and Peggy, who instantly obeyed the summons, Mrs. Campbell receiving both with the utmost complacency; for as Duncan was to espouse Peggy, it was not material who was the immediate heir to the Colonel's fortune. Mr. Sommers and Orfield now joined the company; Mrs. Campbell making no objection to the Lieutenant, as he was of an ancient family, and so highly countenanced by the Colonel. Dinner was now announced, at which, however, her pride was to receive a severe shock; the Colonel introducing Grant and his mother,

mother, who in vain attempted to be excused; he insisting with the greatest obstinacy on their sitting down, saying in a tone that convinced Mrs. Campbell any remonstrance would be fruitless, "Do we not owe you the greatest obligations? how low would our pride have lain, had it not met your support! The life of Duncan, and the preservation of Peggy, are both your gifts, and think you we will blush to acknowledge them? Certainly not: those who are above confessing an obligation, are unworthy to receive one." With these words he obliged Jannet to sit at table with the rest of the company; Peggy stealing a look at the Colonel which expressed her pleasure; Mrs. Campbell, whatever she might suffer from bursting pride, being obliged to conceal it.

About a week after their return, Mr. Sommers united the enraptured Duncan and

and Orfield to their blooming brides : the first, by the command of the Colonel receiving his much beloved Peggy from the hand of Grant. The whole village were invited to the ceremony, that was celebrated by a ball, at which birth and riches did not scorn to join hands in the merry round with the rustic children of industrious poverty ; even honest Sandy hopping a reel on the occasion, saying, “ The man that wadna stir a stump on sic an holiday, ought to be banished Scotland for ever.”

FINIS.