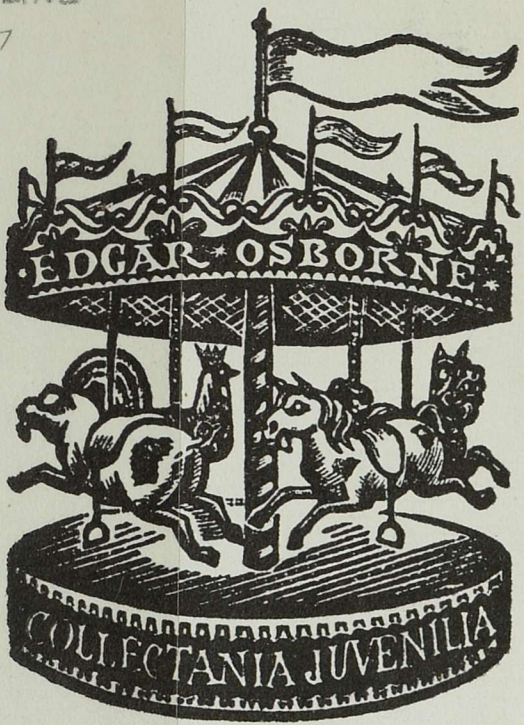

ADELINE DE COURCY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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1797.

TO THE READER.

THE following Story was written ſeveral years ago, without any deſign of making it public; but when the Authoreſs was perſuaded by ſome partial friends to prepare it for the preſs, ſhe made a few alterations, and introduced the Hiſtory of ZODISKI, as a model for young people to copy. If the virtues exemplified in his conduct tend to awaken emulation in the minds of her youthful Readers, ſhe will be pleaſed at having publiſhed it; and in this hope the Work is now ſubmitted to the peruſal of thoſe to whom the ſtudy of characters is intereſting.

ADELINE de COURCY.

LETTER I.

From Madame ST. SEVERIN,

To the Counteſs DE MURVILLE, at the Chateau de Murville, near Pont de Panis.

TO offer you an apology, my dear Madam, for this letter, would be an inſult to your humanity: charity and benevolence are among the train of virtues that belong to you, and I know you are ever zealous to befriend the cauſe of ſuffering virtue. I mean not, my amiable friend, to act the part of a panegyriſt; 'tis neither your character to *receive*, nor mine to *give*, praiſes that bear not the ſtamp of truth.

In the preſent inſtance, your good offices will be limited, and your generoſity ſpared, for the object on whoſe account I trouble you with this letter (which muſt be a long and circumſtantial one) does not ſeem to require any thing but conſolatory advice. To make you acquainted with the little I know of her hiſtory, it is neceſſary for me to tell you how I firſt ſaw the unfortunate woman.—The ſtory will appear romantic, but I aſſure you it will be ſtrictly true.

'Tis near three weeks ago ſince we were ſurprized one evening by a very ſudden and violent ſtorm, which drove the hay-makers from their work, and called my attention to the field; where I perceived a woman ſitting at the foot of a tree, apparently loſt in thought, and heedleſs of the ſtorm. The rain fell in torrents, accompanied with frequent flaſhes of lightning and loud thunder.

thunder. I imagined the unhappy wretch muſt have been intoxicated after her day's work, and that nothing but ſuch a ſtate of inſenſibility could prevent her from following her companions from the field.

I rang for one of my ſervants, to inquire about her; who, to my great ſurprize, informed me ſhe did not belong to the hay-makers, and had only come into the field juſt before the ſtorm began; that ſhe was a well-dreſſed woman, and ſeemed rather out of her mind. While he was ſpeaking, the tempeſt abated: I flung up the ſaſh, and called to her. She neither looked at me nor replied, but I could hear her ſinging in a low and plaintive voice. I ſent the ſervant to offer her money, and to aſk who ſhe was: before he came to her the ſky began to clear, and I ſaw her riſe with difficulty from the ground, like a perſon who was feeble,

and attempt to make hay with one of the pitch-forks that was left; at which finding herſelf very aukward, ſhe threw it down, as if diſpleaſed with her want of adroitneſs, and ſat again on the wet graſs, covering her face with her hands.

My ſervant ſpoke to her ſeveral times without obtaining any anſwer; he aſked her to dry her clothes by the kitchen-fire, and to accept of money or refreſhment; ſhe ſhook her head, and waved her hand for him to leave her. At length he conquered her obſtinacy by a ſtratagem; for perceiving that ſhe held a little box in her lap, which ſhe ſeemed afraid he ſhould take, he ſuddenly ſnatched it from her, and made towards the houſe, while ſhe ſtarted from the ground, and followed him to the terrace as quick as her ſtrength would permit. I ſtood at the window to receive the box, and in a moment after ſhe approached me.—I felt my heart impreſſed with

with the deepeſt ſenſe of melancholy when I beheld her near the window.

The object before me appeared not more than twenty years of age, and in ſpite of ſickneſs, poverty, and ſorrow, looked exquiſitely beautiful: an eager ſort of wildneſs in her eyes indicated a mind where reaſon had too ſeverely felt the pangs of grief. Her form was delicate, but full of dignity; and when ſhe ſpoke, the plaintive and tuneful ſound of her voice was ſuch, that I found my eyes fill with tears. In ſpeaking every feature improved; animation glowed upon her face, and all her actions diſcovered graces beyond my power of deſcription.

"When," ſaid ſhe, "may I be at reſt? I braved the warring elements! —I prayed for death!—I had no fear but *one*, and that was for the precious caſket which contained my only wealth!—Oh, Madam! (and here ſhe

burſt into tears) let me, while this interval of reaſon laſts, appeal to your juſtice, your mercy, your compaſſion.—I aſk no alms, I want no relief; but I conjure you to reſtore *that* which is truly mine."

Her intereſting manner, and pathetic voice, ſtruck me to the heart. I told her I would reſtore the box on *one* condition alone, which was, that ſhe would conſent to come into the houſe, and be guided by my directions.—She promiſed to obey my will—the ſervant brought her to me—we dried her clothes, and ſet ſome proviſion before her—but her whole attention was fixed on the box which I had reſtored. She took a key out of her pocket, and opened it—I ſaw it was full of papers, out of one (which ſeemed to be a letter) ſhe took a miniature picture, which repreſented a very handſome young man. She looked at it ſome time,

time, then burſt into tears; ſeemed again afraid it ſhould be taken from her, and locked the box very haſtily. She then attempted to eat, but could not—roſe ſeveral times from the table, walked wildly round the room, pointed to her head, then to her heart, as if *that* was the ſeat of her diſorder—at length, ſeeming a little more compoſed, I entreated her to tell me where ſhe came from; and on her mentioning the name of Dubois, I recollected that a woman of that name kept a lodging-houſe in the village. I felt her pulſe, and found ſhe had ſo ſtrong a fever, that I ſent for the apothecary, and ordered the ſervant to gain all the information he could from Madame Dubois concerning this unhappy creature. He brought me back word that ſhe arrived in the diligence about three weeks before, and took an apartment in *her* houſe, ſeemed very melancholy, but perfectly reaſonable, and paid

for every thing ſhe had the firſt fort-night; at the end of which ſhe was taken with a violent fever, from which ſhe recovered very ſlowly—that at the end of the laſt week ſhe told Madame Dubois her illneſs had coſt her more money than ſhe expected, and therefore ſhe ſhould not be enabled to keep her lodging, unleſs ſhe could get any needle-work, or other means of maintaining herſelf, which, as Dubois could not immediately do, ſhe grew very melancholy, and ſeemed at times to talk in a wild and incoherent manner; but that her name and ſtory were unknown.

The apothecary judged it neceſſary to have her blooded, and put to bed;—ſhe at that time ſeemed in a ſort of ſtupor, of courſe made no oppoſition to our deſigns.

Her dreſs, when ſhe came into my houſe, was a brown camlet gown, with a white cloth apron, a muſlin cap

cloſe

cloſe to her face, and a ſtraw hat, tied under her chin with a faded pink rib-band. When we took off her cap, a profuſion of beautiful brown hair fell over her ſhoulders, and under the diſ-guiſe of a ſtuff gown the extreme fine-neſs of her linen confirmed the idea which I had before formed from her be-haviour, that ſhe was a perſon who had been in a ſuperior line of life.

As ſhe continued in a ſtate of inſen-ſibility, I thought it proper to lock up her box, and every thing which was con-tained in her pockets: I alſo ſent for the few things ſhe had left at Dubois's houſe, which conſiſted of a crucifix, ſome linen marked *A. R.* a roſary, a prayer-book, and a very ſcanty quantity of wearing apparel.

Her fever continued ſo violent, at-tended at times with delirium, that the phyſician (whom I ſent for on the ſecond day) thought it highly requiſite

requiſite to put on bliſters. She frequently talked in a wild ſtrain, but did not ſay any thing from which her hiſtory could even be gueſſed at. On the tenth day her fever began to abate, ſhe grew compoſed and rational, enquired where ſhe was, expreſſed her gratitude to me in the moſt eloquent terms, and was in a ſhort time able to go from one chamber to another. Her firſt care was to aſk for the box; and to apologize thus to me for her ſolicitude: "The papers incloſed herein were written by a perſon who is dead to me. I ſhall keep them even to my laſt hour, that in moments when my ſoul is inclined to be moroſe, and to form a bad opinion of mankind, I may ſee that the true ſpirit of honor is not utterly extinct."

In a ſhort time my unknown viſitor was able to come down ſtairs, and aſſumed an appearance of ſerenity, which I have ſince reaſon to believe her heart

was

was a ſtranger to. I found her poſſeſſed of an excellent capacity, of the moſt winning manners, and amiable diſpoſition. I never ventured to aſk any queſtions reſpecting her ſtory, for fear of diſtreſſing her; and as I found her grateful for my attentions, I hoped in time ſhe would willingly confide her diſtreſſes to me.—I was delighted with my new companion, and pleaſed to ſee a faint appearance of health dawn upon her cheek; when one day Madame Dubois brought a letter directed to Mademoiſelle de Ruvigny, at Madame d'Orval's, which, ſhe apprehended, was meant for her lodger. On reading it I obſerved ſhe changed countenance, and for two days after ſeemed gloomy and thoughtful.

The evening of the ſecond day I was ſent for to my couſin Madame Briſac (who was taken ſuddenly ill, and with whom I was obliged to ſtay at Paris

Paris till the end of the week.) When I left her I obſerved her eyes were full of tears; ſhe graſped my hand, but did not ſpeak; and, on my return, I found that the morning after my departure ſhe walked out early, and was never ſeen afterwards. You may eaſily imagine my anxiety and apprehenſions were great, till I received the incloſed letter, which acquaints me ſhe is in a convent at Dijon. I therefore beg, my dear friend (if not inconvenient to you to go ſo far) that you will have the goodneſs to ſee her, if poſſible, and to ſhew her thoſe little attentions which are ſo particularly ſoothing to the unfortunate. —Perhaps her ſtory may be known to the lady abbeſs.

I have treſpaſſed greatly on your time; but I am ſure, when you have ſeen the perſon of whom I write, you will be too much intereſted about her, to think any thing tedious that concerns

an

an object calculated to inſpire compaſſion and tenderneſs.

Adieu, my dear Counteſs.

I have the honor to be,

Your's obediently, and affectionately,

MARIE ST. SEVERIN.

Bellevüe, near
Orleans, July 5th.

LETTER II.

To Madame ST. SEVERIN,

From the Convent de St. Croix, at Dijon.

DEAR MADAM,

I SHOULD be the moſt ungrateful wretch exiſting, if I did not feel very ſenſibly the obligations I owe to you.—I therefore take the firſt opportunity of

of exculpating myſelf from the fault I muſt ſeem to have committed, in leaving your hoſpitable houſe in ſuch an abrupt and *apparently* unaccountable manner.

At this moment I cannot reſolve to make you fully acquainted with my ſtory; but, leſt I ſhould ſeem ungrateful, or unworthy of all your kindneſſes, I beg leave to aſſure you that my misfortunes are derived from the crimes of others, and the weakneſs of my own heart, which is too vulnerable not to feel ſeverely *that* ignominy which I innocently have incurred.—When my mind is more compoſed, I will venture to trouble my revered benefactreſs with a long and true recital of my wrongs. A ſubdued ſpirit like mine would be content to ſuffer ſilently thoſe ills that cannot be remedied, did not an honeſt wiſh to prevent my character from being hurt in your opinion, induce me to ſpeak of

diſtreſſes

diſtreſſes which I meant to bury with me in the grave. I have choſen this ſacred houſe for my aſylum. The lady abbeſs (who is a moſt reſpectable woman) has received me kindly; and I mean to dedicate the remaining part of, I hope, a very ſhort life, to patience and prayer. Be aſſured, while I exiſt and retain my ſenſes, I ſhall never forget the marks of friendſhip and benevolence which I received from you. Madame St. Severin will be remembered in my lateſt prayers; and I truſt the Almighty will make amends, by every bleſſing this world can give, for *my* inability to repay the obligations that I owe her. My ſtrength decreaſes every day—indeed how ſhould it be otherwiſe! My malady is far beyond the reach of human aid. The diſeaſe is in my mind, and the grave, to which I look forward with joyful hope, will ſoon afford me that peace which the world cannot give. I

will not wound your ſuſceptible heart by entering farther on this ſubject; but for the preſent will ſubſcribe myſelf,

Dear Madam,

Your moſt grateful and affectionate,

ADELINE DE COURCY.

As ſoon as I have leiſure to recollect *every* minute circumſtance of my life, (for thoſe that are the moſt trivial are the only pleaſant things I have to remember, and the moſt agreeable to relate) I will employ myſelf in writing a full and true hiſtory; and will ſubmit it to your peruſal the firſt opportunity.

LETTER III.

From the Counteſs DE MURVILLE,
To the Abbè ST. BERTIN.

REVEREND FATHER,

I SHOULD not think myſelf warranted, by my ſhort acquaintance with you, to make a requeſt, was it not on account of an abſent friend, Madame St. Severin, whoſe excellent character cannot be unknown to you. She has commiſſioned me to render any offices in my power to Mademoiſelle de Courcy, who is in the convent de St. Croix, and to whom I hear you have frequent acceſs. I muſt, therefore, petition you to introduce me to that lady, who, from my friend's deſcription, I am prepared to pity and eſteem. I ſhall be at home all to-morrow morning, and

if you will do me the favour to come over to my château, which is half way between Joigny and Dijon, I ſhall be happy to converſe with you on that ſubject.

I remain, with ſentiments of reſpect,

Your obedient humble ſervant,

BLANCHE DE MURVILLE.

Chateau de Murville,
near Pont de Panis.

LETTER IV.

From Madame ST. SEVERIN,
To Mademoiſelle DE COURCY.

YOUR letter has relieved me from the utmoſt anxiety! — Your reaſons for an abrupt departure I will believe

to

to be juſt, and I ſhall wait patiently till it ſuits you to intruſt me with the ſecret of your heart.—In the mean time, let me conjure you, my dear, by thoſe religious principles you profeſs, to ſtrive againſt deſpondency; it is the ſnare into which weak minds inevitably fall; but *you*, who are bleſſed with an enlightened capacity, and who have faith in the Divine Power, ſhould prove, by your ſubmiſſion and fortitude, that you can bear the arrows of affliction with patience, as you would have done the ſun-ſhine of proſperity with an humble mind.

If poverty is the calamity under which your ſpirits are ſubdued, you may expect aſſiſtance from the hand of friendſhip; and your heart need not be averſe to *receive* from thoſe who are treaſurers of Fortune, and happy to diſtribute her gifts.

If you are not miſerable on account of pecuniary diſtreſſes, but from being robbed of your happineſs by the deſigns of treachery and art, comfort yourſelf with the thoughts of your own innocence; and think how many people groan under oppreſſion, cruelty, and wrong. —Why ſhould not you bear misfortune with as much heroiſm, as much patience, as others have done?

If you have made a falſe ſtep, and have fallen from an honourable and virtuous ſituation, do not (as many erring ſinners have done) think yourſelf too far involved in guilt, to aim at a return to virtue. There are many degrees of criminality; and there is no reaſon, becauſe you have ſlipped down one ſtep, you ſhould ſuffer yourſelf to fall to the bottom of the ladder. I am not one of thoſe moroſe ſevere prudes, who can abandon a perſon becauſe

becauſe they failed in one duty; I am not like many ſtrict moraliſts of my acquaintance, who will not allow that one error may be counterbalanced by a train of amiable qualities.

If you have loſt a beloved friend, I can only adviſe you to believe, that Heaven foreſaw he would meet with various misfortunes in this life, and by taking him to a happier ſtate, kindly exempted him from thoſe cares and ſufferings which would have been his portion here.

As the continuance of my couſin's illneſs (who I have brought to Orleans) makes it impoſſible for me to ſhew you any perſonal attentions, I have deſired a moſt reſpectable and intimate friend of mine, the Counteſs de Murville, to be my deputy: I flatter myſelf you will receive her for my ſake, and I make no doubt you will experience from her every mark of kindneſs and civility.

Accept my beſt wiſhes; and believe me

Your affectionate Friend,

MARIE ST. SEVERIN.

LETTER V.

From the Counteſs DE MURVILLE,

To Madame ST. SEVERIN.

MY DEAR MADAM,

ON the receipt of your letter I reſolved to try if I could gain acceſs to the unhappy perſon whom you recommended to me. I happened at that time to have buſineſs at Dijon, therefore it was no inconvenience to me; and if it had, I ſhould not have thought it any trouble to comply with your requeſt.

I went

I went to the convent, but found Mademoiſelle de Courcy had given a ſtrict charge that no perſon ſhould be admitted to her. The lady abbeſs was ſilent upon her ſtory; aſſured me ſhe had all the appearance of a tranquil, reſigned, and religious diſpoſition; and that, except her confeſſor and the Abbè St. Bertin, ſhe had not ſeen any one ſince ſhe came into the convent. She added, her intention was not to be a nun, but ſhe believed her reaſon for coming there was to find a temporary aſylum to ſcreen her from perſecution.

When ſhe mentioned the Abbè St. Bertin, I immediately had hopes of ſeeing her, as he was not unknown to me. As ſoon as I returned to the inn at Dijon, I wrote to him, and the venerable man came to me immediately. I had enforced my petition

with your name, and was happy to find he had imparted the contents of my letter to the fair ſufferer; and that when he mentioned me as a friend of yours, ſhe expreſſed a deſire to cultivate my acquaintance. On the ſubject of her hiſtory he was ſilent, but his looks indicated that it was truly woeful.

I went with him to the convent.—She received me with an air of mournful grandeur, which was expreſſive of a great mind ſtruggling with diſtreſs. Her manners were elegant, her converſation poliſhed, and ſuch as might be expected from a woman of refined education, and clear underſtanding. The tone of her voice affected *me*, as it had done *you*; and when I mentioned your name, a tender look of ſatisfaction beamed from her eyes, and a ſoft but ſickly kind of ſmile, a ſomething between the expreſſion of tears and ſmiles, dawned upon her face.

Nothing

Nothing can be more perfect than her form, nor more intereſting than her countenance.

I offered to repeat my viſits, for which ſhe thanked me; then turning to the Abbè, ſhe ſaid to him, with a look of ſweetneſs, "How can I refrain from breaking through the laws I had impoſed on myſelf, when a friend of Madame St. Severin is introduced to me by *you?*"

I have now, my dear Madam, acquitted myſelf in ſome meaſure of the pleaſing taſk you deſired me to undertake; and ſhall think myſelf very happy if I can in future contribute to the eaſe or comfort of this poor young woman. I have a great deſire to have the myſtery of her ſtory unravelled, which I ſuſpect ſhame alone prevents her from revealing: but from whatever ſource her misfortunes may have ſprung, her ſorrow and contrition

are

are a greater punishment to her than the censure of the world. A wounded conscience, I am of opinion, is a more severe accuser than any earthly arraigner of our actions.

I remain, dear Madam,

Your affectionate and obliged friend,

BLANCHE DE MURVILLE.

LETTER VI.

From ADELINE DE COURCY,
To Madame ST. SEVERIN.

SINCE I had the honour, dear Madam, of writing to you last, my declining health has reminded me of the necessity of performing my promise, and of vindicating my character, while I am able to give you a clear and exact account of my unfortunate life.

My

My hiſtory will wear the colouring of romance, but I aſſure you it is founded on truth. I have neither wiſhed to embelliſh or prolong it; I have neither extenuated the faults of others, nor wiſhed to throw a veil over my own.—I beſpeak your patience for a long narrative, which it is neceſſary I ſhould begin from the earlieſt period of my exiſtence, and introduce to you ſome circumſtances and people, that would not deſerve your notice, if they were not ſo much connected with the events of my life, as to be requiſite towards the explanation of my ſtory.

When you are acquainted with the nature of my misfortunes, I am ſure, ſo far from condemning me for ſinking under them *now*, you will wonder how I ſhould have ſurvived the firſt ſhock I was deſtined to meet with.

The

The Counteſs de Murville has, by her kindneſs, fully anſwered your expectations, and in ſome meaſure alleviated my diſtreſſes.—She is entitled to my confidence; and the Abbè St. Bertin is commiſſioned by me this day to entruſt her with all he knows of me and my misfortunes. Allow me, dear Madam, to renew my grateful thanks to you for your goodneſs to the unfortunate

ADELINE DE COURCY.

HISTORY

OF

ADELINE DE COURCY.

My father, who was a younger brother, of the ancient and noble family of Courcy, had a ſmall eſtate left

left him by an uncle in Lorraine; and was, at the age of thirty, deemed by the court of France a proper perſon to fill an important ſtation under government; in which he acquitted himſelf ſo wiſely, that he gained great applauſe from adminiſtration, and was ſoon after ſent to Rome in a public capacity. He there became enamoured of Violetta Bernini, an Italian lady of great beauty, and noble family, but ſmall fortune, whom he married, and I was the only offspring of that union.

In leſs than two years after my birth, my father was recalled, and he had not been long returned to his native country before he had the misfortune to loſe my mother, whom he ſincerely lamented; and has often ſaid, had not my ſtate of helpleſs innocence claimed his protection and care, he does not think it would have been poſſible for him to have long ſurvived her.

This

This heavy blow was only the prelude to a ſeries of unfortunate events.—Scarcely ſix months were elapſed before his elder brother died without children, to whom, it was naturally ſuppoſed, my father would be heir; but he had quarreled with him on his marrying in Italy ſo much, as to have cut off the entail of the eſtate, (which it was in his power to do) and left it to a diſtant couſin.

My poor father had a ſpirit of liberality which bordered on extravagance. During five years, that he poſſeſſed a lucrative and honourable place under government, he was ſo bad an œconomiſt as to ſpend every ſhilling of his income in deeds, which were *then* called generous, but have ſince been ſtyled imprudencies; and, when the king died, and a total change took place in the offices of ſtate, he found himſelf oppoſed by a powerful faction, and retired

from

from court abſolutely diſgraced, and in poſſeſſion only of a very ſmall fortune. —He left me to the care of an old aunt at Orleans, (who promiſed to preſide over my education) and reſolved to go to the Weſt-Indies, to ſuperintend an eſtate which was left him there by his uncle: but this voyage did not anſwer his expectations—the eſtate was rated far above its value; the land was poor, the crops bad; and after ſpending a conſiderable ſum in trying to improve it, the hurricanes deſtroyed the harveſt he expected to reap from his care and induſtry, and he returned in a few years to France, without being enriched.

He now found his health and ſpirits ſo much hurt, and his circumſtances ſo narrow, that he reſolved to retire into Lorraine, to a ſmall farm, the remaining part of his uncle's bounty, and there paſs the remainder of his days in peaceful obſcurity.

He was delighted, on approaching the farm, to obſerve the beauty of the ſituation, and the fertility of the fields around it.—The barns were large, and filled with grain, the premiſſes in good repair; but he was grieved to find the farm-houſe too ſmall to accommodate him with a lodging, unleſs he incommoded the tenant's family.

In the valley beneath the farm was an old uninhabited houſe, which had once been a monaſtic building, and was the property of the Marquis de Rozancourt, an old acquaintance of my father's, (who had a caſtle about a league from thence, which his partiality for Paris prevented his reſiding at more than two months in the year). Charmed with the quiet retirement of the place, and its vicinity to the farm, my father wrote to the Marquis, requeſting he would allow him to hire it; which was granted very handſomely, at a low rent.

Here

Here my father found himſelf quite happy; and after being there three months, he ſent for me to enliven his retreat. I was ſorry to leave my kind aunt, but delighted with the thoughts of ſeeing my father; and I ſaw the preparations for my journey with all the pleaſure which young minds are apt to feel at the idea of exploring new ſcenes.—A maid, who had been with me from my earlieſt infancy, and whoſe education had been ſuperior to the common run of ſervants, was my attendant; and her fidelity and attachment to me will be ſufficiently exemplified in many parts of my life.

Notwithſtanding my joy at the thoughts of the journey, when the moment of ſeparation from Madam d'Orval, my aunt, arrived, I felt my heart ready to burſt, and I ſhed tears of gratitude and love. The good old lady gave me her bleſſing, recommended me to the care of Genevieve, and ſaw us

get into the diligence, which was our cheapeſt mode of conveyance.

My eyes were ſwoln with crying, and my heart heavy, for ſome miles. It was early in the morning, and ſcarcely light; but when the day advanced, and I grew more compoſed, I looked up to take a view of my fellow-travellers. I found myſelf ſeated between my maid and a ſharp-faced prim man, whom I afterwards underſtood was an *avôcat*. On the other ſide ſat a fat publican, faſt aſleep, and a ſhort red-noſed woman, who looked very conſequential, and was ſo vain of her ſilk gown, that ſhe almoſt buried under it a ſenſible-looking little man, who retired quietly into the corner, and appeared to be an Abbè. I then ſurveyed the beautiful proſpects, and ſhould have made my remarks upon the different objects that amuſed me, had not timidity checked the vivacity of my youthful ſpirits.—Happy, moſt happy,

ſurely is that age of innocent playfulneſs, when every trifle can excite curioſity, and every new ſcene enchant the imagination!

The ſilence was at laſt broken by the woman beginning to ſcold her huſband for ſnoring; who, waking in a peeviſh humour, return'd her compliments with looks of anger. The *avôcat* (who ſeemed to aim at the character of a wit, and delighted in miſchief) ſpirited up the diſcontented man to make a keen reply; which ſo provoked the lady, that her lecture did not ceaſe till we came to the end of our firſt ſtage.—I was happy, however, to find in the evening her rage had ſubſided; but alas! in her good-humoured moments ſhe was an everlaſting talker, and it was ſeldom the Abbè had an opportunity of ſpeaking; when he did, his remarks were ſo judicious, all his expreſſions ſo pleaſing, and his looks ſo mild and engaging, that

I ſecretly wiſhed I might find my father juſt like the intereſting character before me.—To my great concern, at the ſecond ſtage he took his leave of us, ſaying, he muſt wait there the arrival of a companion, and, without having had the curioſity or the thought to aſk whither we were deſtined, he left us to purſue our journey.

On the third day we arrived at my father's retreat. I ſaw an old houſe, almoſt enveloped in a wood, near a beautiful green hill, on the ſummit of which ſtood the farm-houſe, and a little hamlet. On one ſide of our retired manſion was an old ruin, conſiſting of broken arches, terminated by an octagon building, which once had been a chapel, and now was almoſt overgrown with buſhes and trees.

My father met us at the door of his habitation—I threw myſelf into his arms —I looked for the placid face of the Abbè,

Abbè, but ſaw a countenance expreſſing dignity and pride, and a brow marked with care. His perſon commanded reſpect, but, when he ſpoke, his features, relaxing from their uſual gravity, ſoftened into complacency. He inſpired me with awe mingled with affection, and as I ſaw the big tear force its way down his cheek, my heart beat in uniſon with his, and I wept on the boſom of my honoured father. I was at that time near fourteen years of age, docile in my diſpoſition, but lively in my converſation.—I knew no cares, I had no ambitious hopes—my thoughts were gay and innocent—and my actions were thoſe of an artleſs being, who had never been taught to diſguiſe the ſenſations of her heart. My father was charmed with my ſimplicity, and doated on a face that bore a ſtriking ſimilitude to the features of his beloved Violetta. I became the joy, the comfort

of his heart, and by my mirthful converſation enlivened his retreat.

I had early been taught to ſing, and to play a little upon the harp. My father had a great taſte for muſic, and was delighted with my having a genius for it. He was a man not leſs converſant in literature than he was in the manners of the world. He had brought ſeveral inſtructive books (both in the hiſtorical and moral line) into his retirement. Previous to my arrival he ſent to Paris, and added to his collection thoſe wherein amuſement was blended with inſtruction, knowing that young minds muſt be beguiled by degrees into ſtudy.—He contrived to make my new abode wear as cheerful an aſpect as poſſible; and, to prevent the time from paſſing heavily, or my feeling the want of ſociety, he taught me geography and aſtronomy. We read together, and ſometimes admitted my faithful ſervant Ge-

nevieve

nevieve to be of our party. We walked, we fiſhed, we worked in the garden, and idleneſs was baniſhed from our peaceful habitation. Obſerving that I had a great deſire to explore the country farther than what lay within the compaſs of a walk, my father promiſed to buy a couple of mules in the ſpring.

Winter ſoon approached, and paſſed on without bringing with it dulneſs or *ennui*; for my father had a moſt excellent memory, a brilliant fancy, and a manner of converſing, both on gay and grave ſubjects, ſo as to intereſt and pleaſe thoſe who were his companions. In the ſpring he purchaſed the mules; but before he would truſt me to ride with him, he choſe to try their ſafety, and to make them as docile as he could, for the purpoſe of carrying me.

One morning (on his return from what I thought muſt have been a won-

derful long ride) my father came home with an uncommon air of vivacity in his countenance—"Adeline," ſaid he, "I have found a treaſure—do not ſuppoſe, my child, (obſerving my eager look and joyful actions) that I have diſcovered a mine!—there are treaſures in this world more rare, and of greater value than riches. In a remote ſituation like ours, forgotten as we are by one part of the world, and unknown by the other, who could ſuppoſe my deſtiny would ſend a dear and old friend to cheer my ſolitude? In a little hamlet, on the other ſide of yonder hill, whither I ſuffered my mule to carry me, that unexpected, long abſent friend reſides.—As I came down the ſide of the hill I ſaw a figure ſitting under a tree, with a book in his hand. I meant not to interrupt his ſtudies, and was paſſing ſlowly by, but the ſound of my mule's feet (in a road ſo unfrequented) caught his ear.

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He looked up—I ſaw that revered, that benign face, which once ſeen could never be forgotten—in ſhort, I gazed aſtoniſhed at the Abbè St. Bertin. The joy and amazement of the worthy man at ſeeing me cannot be deſcribed; we embraced each other, and congratulated ourſelves on this fortunate diſcovery; but the ſight of a ſtranger, and our appearance of ſurpriſe at meeting, made the villagers gather round us; and as I was afraid you would be uneaſy at my long ſtay, I parted from the Abbè, on his promiſing to borrow a little vehicle, belonging to the principal farmer in the hamlet, in order to pay me a viſit this evening."

Here my father ended, and, with the impetuoſity of a girl who is delighted at any thing new, I ran to impart this amazing event to Genevieve, and from that time till the evening my thoughts were employed how I ſhould beſt do honour

honour to my father's friend, and the firſt viſitor who had graced our habitation.

There was a little part of the grove that ſurrounded the ruins of the abbey, which we had formed into a garden; by the ſide of it ran a clear ſtream, and on a bank above a few trees were ſo happily ſituated that their boughs met, and hanging over, made a ſort of receſs. Here we had placed a ruſtic ſeat, made of fern, with a wooden table, and three chairs in it, for my father, myſelf, and Genevieve; I had planted honeyſuckles at the foot of the trees, which had twined round them, and were juſt beginning to blow; and here I reſolved to prepare for our gueſt ſuch a repaſt as our humble ſituation would afford: it conſiſted of coarſe brown bread, a large diſh of ſtrawberries, and cream in a wooden bowl. I then ran about the wood gathering wild roſes, which I placed

placed round a ſtraw hat to adorn myſelf with, and put on a clean white jacket to make my appearance as neat as poſſible.

Before I was quite dreſſed I heard the dog bark, and I ran down as quick as I could to receive the viſitor; but before I could arrive at the parlour door he was admitted. I heſitated a moment, from a ſenſation of baſhful modeſty; but recollecting, though he was a ſtranger to me, he was my father's friend, I reſumed my courage, and with a gay countenance entered the room. To my great ſurpriſe and confuſion I perceived there were two people with my father; yet ſo much had ſecluſion from the world made the ſight of ſtrangers intimidating to me, that I did not even diſtinguiſh the features of either, but caſt my eyes on the ground; till my father took me by the hand, and ſaid, "Adeline, regard this gentleman

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as more than a *relation*, for he is a *friend*. Abbè St. Bertin, this is my daughter."—I raiſed my eyes from the ground, and, to my infinite joy, beheld the ſame benevolent ſerene face that had charmed me ſo much in the diligence. Overcome with ſurpriſe I gave a ſhriek; I felt as if I at that moment found a long-loſt friend, and the firſt impulſe of youthful joy tempted me to embrace the welcome gueſt; but recollecting there was another perſon in the room, I checked myſelf, and caſt my eyes on *him*. There, embarraſſment ſucceeded to the innocent joy I had juſt experienced, and I grew inſtantly awkward, ſilent, and covered with bluſhes. I ſaw a handſome youth of ſeventeen years of age, whoſe countenance was full of ſenſibility, and his figure elegant beyond any thing I had ever ſeen. He bowed to me with a modeſt yet graceful air, which I returned with a con-

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fuſed ſort of ſide-curtſey, and dared not look that way again, till my father propoſed a walk in the garden.

We adjourned to my favourite ſeat, which both the viſitors were pleaſed to commend. The Abbè talked a great deal, reminded me of the quarrelſome couple we travelled with, and by his cheerfulneſs and eaſe encouraged me to converſe with him. By degrees I grew more familiarized to hear the ſound of other voices beſide my father's, and I began to laugh and talk with the Abbè without the timidity which I at firſt experienced. My only diſtreſs was, that as there were places but for three people in the fern ſeat, our young viſitor was obliged to ſit on the graſs. I made apologies to him on the occaſion, which he returned with the politeneſs one ſhould expect from a man who had lived in courts, rather than the civility of an unexperienced boy. His com-

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panion never mentioned his name, but encouraged him to converſe, and he diſplayed infinite pleaſantry and wit in his lively anſwers.

The Abbè whiſpered my father, he had a great genius, an excellent capacity, and the moſt generous and kind diſpoſition in the world. I overheard what he ſaid, and ſtole a look at the object of his praiſes. Senſe, candour, and liberality were written in his open countenance, and good humour was expreſſed in every ſmile. I admired his fine dark eyes, and grew envious of his hair (which hung in large ringlets on his ſhoulders,) becauſe I thought it more beautiful than my own.

At this moment the Abbè expreſſed a wiſh to ſpeak alone with my father: they left me with the ſtranger and Genevieve, who was waiting on us. I was again embarraſſed, and a long ſilence enſued; nor was it broken till

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one of the roſes happened to fall from my hat, which he took from the ground, and preſented to me.—Ignorant how to behave, I told him he was welcome to keep it, and, with the *naiveté* that is natural to ſuch an artleſs character as I then was, aſked him if he loved roſes? He replied, "Some roſes were much ſweeter than others." On this Genevieve propoſed my ſhewing him our little conſervatory (if it deſerved the name); and thither ſhe went before us, to open the door of a ſmall ruſtic green-houſe, which joined to the aviary where I kept my birds. With a childiſh ſimplicity, I ſhewed him all the plants I had reared, and felt piqued at perceiving he did not praiſe them as I thought they deſerved. We went to the aviary, which was made of wire high enough to allow a little tree to grow in the middle: but here a melancholy event happened; for

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he careleſsly left the door open, and one of my priſoners eſcaped, which vexed me extremely, as it was a ſmall pigeon of a very particular breed, given to me by the wife of the man who hired my father's farm; I reddened with anger, and the tears came into my eyes, while the ſtranger made his excuſes to me.

The reſt of our walk paſſed in ſilence, and we joined the Abbè and my father at the door of the houſe. Here our viſitors took their leave, and my father was ſo delighted with the acquiſition of ſuch neighbours, that he made them promiſe to dine with us at the end of the week.

When they were gone, and I had a little recovered my ſpirits, which ſuffered for the loſs of the bird, I longed, from an impulſe of curioſity, to know the name of the younger viſitor, but I was afraid or aſhamed (I knew not which)

which) to ask a question that would betray the inquisitiveness of my temper.—We talked of two or three indifferent subjects; at last my father anticipated my wishes, by asking me how I liked our new neighbours? I replied, "The Abbè is charming; he seems to have a divine soul, and his conversation is a lesson of improvement to all who hear him: as for the other——" and here I paused—the tears again came into my eyes. "Well!" said my father, rather impatiently, and surprised at my seeming so much disconcerted.—"Indeed, Sir, I cannot help being sorry any thing that looks so *pretty* should be so *awkward*;" and here I, in the fullness of my heart, told the story of my bird's elopement. My father laughed heartily, told me I was no longer an infant, and ought to be wiser than to allow my temper to be so much discomposed by trifles; that as I saw how inconvenient

and diſguſting an accidental awkwardneſs appeared, I ſhould correct my own manners, and form my behaviour to the rules of good-breeding. Here, for the firſt time ſince I came to the retreat, I felt my inferiority in point of knowledge of the world. I at that moment was ſenſible of my diſadvantages; I was aſhamed of my childiſhneſs and ignorance; and feeling ambitious to be a more agreeable companion, I anſwered rather angrily to his reproach, by ſaying, if I appeared deficient in manners, 'twas for want of opportunity to obſerve thoſe of others.

My father was ſtruck with my words. He took me in his arms, and ſaid, "Dear Adeline, I am but too ſenſible of this truth — Heaven knows, my child, I have nothing in the buſy ſcenes of life to regret; yet I lament that my narrowneſs of circumſtances forces me to this retreat, and that I cannot afford

you

you thoſe advantages which your birth entitles you to receive. Do not think," he continued, (ſeeing me weep with the idea of having made an ungrateful ſpeech) " do not think I am offended at your honeſt frankneſs; I have long thought as you do. I have ſeen a thouſand awkward actions in my Adeline that have hurt my pride, and which an intercourſe with feminine characters of taſte and knowledge alone can properly correct. The Abbè expects, in a few days, a relation of his from Paris with his wife and two daughters; they are women of the world, and may be an improvement to you. My Adeline's good ſenſe will teach her to diſtinguiſh *effronterie* from eaſe, affectation from politeneſs: if you ſee any abſurdities, avoid an imitation of them; if you diſcern any perfections, endeavour to copy them. I have promiſed the Abbè we will

devote a week to that agreeable purpoſe."

My father now called Genevieve, bade her bring my harp into the garden, and we walked to the ſeat. "I am ſorry," ſaid my father, "for your loſs; the boy ſhould have been more careful." I ſeized the opportunity, and ſaid, rather in a heſitating voice, "Pray, Sir, what is his name?" He pauſed a moment—then anſwered, "Valzune." At that inſtant Genevieve returned, and though my curioſity was by no means ſatisfied with his reply, I dared ſay no more, and therefore began to play and ſing as uſual.

At night, when I went to bed, Genevieve aſked me, how I could be ſo angry with that civil good-humoured boy, for happening to leave the door open? "He looked ſo much concerned, and begged your pardon," ſaid ſhe, "in ſuch an engaging manner, that I was quite

quite ſhocked to perceive your little heart ready to burſt with paſſion, and your eyes flaſhing fire at the ſubmiſſive ſtranger. I am ſure, if I had been you, and he had let *every* bird in the aviary fly away, I could not have been ſo angry with him."

The words of Genevieve humbled me exceſſively; I knew myſelf in the wrong, yet I was diſpleaſed to be reprimanded by her. She continued her harangue, which I interrupted with only ſaying, "Genevieve, you do not love birds."—She ſmiled at my reply, wiſhed me a good night, and ſhut the door.

When I was left alone, I could not for ſome time ſettle myſelf to reſt—the events of the day crowded on my mind—I thought of the bird—I thought of Valzune—at length I fell aſleep, and dreamt of both.—In the morning I awoke in better humour, and was

pleaſed to think in three days our friends would return. They did return, and I was happy to ſee them. Such an addition to our ſociety was a pleaſant circumſtance. My reſentment to Valzune was gone; it had left no trace in my mind; and if it had, an inſtance of his attention muſt have removed it—for he brought a wood-pigeon that he had taken from its neſt; he had tied a red ribband to its leg, and gave the fluttering bird to me, as a ſubſtitute for my loſt pigeon. This action delighted me amazingly. Our hearts are very apt to be charmed by thoſe trivial attentions which are inconſiderable in themſelves, but expreſs a great deal. I careſſed the bird, and ran to place it in my aviary, while the bright eyes of Valzune ſufficiently explained the generous warmth of his heart, and the joy he had in making me amends for my loſs.

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He was all ſpirits, all pleaſantry, the reſt of the day, and I grew by degrees unreſerved and cheerful with him. In the evening, when they were to return, a violent rain came on, which induced my father to preſs their ſtaying with us all night, or ſleeping at the farm. Fearful of putting us to any inconvenience, they preferred the latter, but agreed to ſtay with us till it was time to go to bed.

Valzune had brought a german-flute in his pocket; the Abbè propoſed our having a little concert in the evening; I therefore took my harp, which I accompanied with my voice, and played an Italian air. The Abbè was pleaſed to commend me, and my father, who had an excellent baſs voice, joined us in a trio. There is not any thing ſo inſinuating as muſic. When Valzune played on the flute or ſung, I fancied I diſcovered charms in his countenance

which had not appeared before; his ſmiles, his vivacity was gone, but a ſort of intereſting melancholy ſucceeded.

When it was too late for our gueſts to think of returning to their home, the rain had ceaſed, the ſky looked beautifully ſerene, and the riſing moon caſt a ſilver light upon the groves. As there was a path to the farm all the way from our houſe (which, in future, I ſhall call the Priory, a name it formerly bore) my father propoſed our wallking with them up the hill. We ſat down to a ſupper of fruit, and after nine o'clock began our walk. Never ſhall I forget that evening! As we came from the Priory, the moon ſhone full upon the ruins of the chapel; her broad beam pervaded through every arch; and as we aſcended the hill, we ſaw her reflection in the clear boſom of the lake below.—Theſe quiet ſort of ſcenes ſoothe and diſpoſe the mind to melancholy

choly reflections. Valzune offered me his arm; I was a ſtranger to prudery and falſe delicacy, I therefore accepted his aid, and it ſeemed the ſhorteſt walk I had ever taken in my life—we ſaid little, but I believe we both thought much. The amiable Abbè and my father reaſoned on various topics, which were more learned than amuſing. I ſtrove to attend to their diſcourſe, but could not; my thoughts were wandering; I made wrong anſwers to ſeveral queſtions they aſked me, and was aſtoniſhed and aſhamed at my own inattention.

Juſt as we reached the ſummit of the hill, the ſound of the bell below, piercing through the ſtill and vacant air, ſeemed with a ſullen tone to announce the hour of ten. I felt as if it ſtruck upon my heart.—"Alas!" ſaid Valzune, with a ſigh, "perhaps that melancholy bell has often rung the knell of a departed monk in yonder Priory—it performs

ſorms an equally melancholy office, for it tolls forth our ſeparation—farewell—I know not when we are to meet again."—His words were dreadful to me; a weight of ſudden ſorrow ſeized upon my ſenſes; my hand fell from his arm; I was mute with ſurpriſe; I looked at him earneſtly, my eyes enquired what I could not aſk, but he made no reply.—My father took me by the hand, I turned and walked with him down the hill in ſilence.—He ſpoke to me twice before I anſwered; a tear hung on my cheek: at laſt he mentioned the name of Valzune, and it caught my attention. "Valzune," ſaid he, "is going into Italy."—"I am ſorry for it," was my anſwer; "we have then only made acquaintance with theſe new friends to regret them." "No, Adeline," continued my father, "the Abbè will be left." I felt peeviſh at his *ſang froid* on the occaſion.—"Indeed, Sir,"

Sir," ſaid I, "the Abbè is very agreeable, but Valzune is younger."—"And is he a more eligible companion for that?" cried my father, laughing.—"No, Sir! but he is more cheerful."—"In ſhort," ſaid he, "difference of ages will always cauſe reſtraint. You revere and admire the Abbè; yet——" Here I interrupted him.—"Do not, Sir, imagine Abbè St. Bertin can inſpire me with fear or reſerve—He is *your* friend, and in that character I love him—As a man of virtue, ſenſe, and learning, I eſteem him; but the ſportive ſallies of a young imagination render the diſcourſe of Valzune more entertaining, though perhaps leſs inſtructive to me; and whenever I ſee him, and am laughing and talking with that pleaſant boy, I am ſorry it was not my fate to have ſuch a brother."

The reſt of our walk was in ſilence. When we came home, my father called Genevieve

Genevieve to give her ſome family orders, and I went into my chamber. When ſhe came to me, I aſked her, with an eagerneſs of curioſity, what ſhe knew concerning Valzune? She told me her maſter was going to write a letter of recommendation for him to Signor Viotti, one of my mother's relations at Rome, which ſhe was to take early in the morning, when he expected a letter from his father to decide whether he was to ſet out immediately for Italy. This news made me very ſorrowful, but from no other cauſe, as I then thought, but that of loſing a young gay companion, which was ſo great a rarity in our ſtate of retirement.

I awoke very early, and got up—the ſun was juſt riſen—the flowers were delightfully refreſhed by the rain, and I walked to the aviary, for want of ſomething to make me gay.—The ſight of my wood-pigeon brought Valzune into

into my mind—I faſtened the ribband he had given me round the bird's leg, and carried him with me to the ruins of the chapel, there, ſitting on one of the mouldering columns (that lay on the ground almoſt covered with moſs and wild thyme that grew among the graſs) I careſſed the bird—he made an effort to fly—when, looking at the fluttering captive, I exclaimed, "Ah! little traitor, will you be ungrateful?—will you leave me like your maſter?" At that moment I heard a noiſe behind me, and turning my head haſtily round, I diſcovered Valzune. I was ſo much ſurpriſed and confuſed that I ſtarted up, and gave a ſhriek.—He took me by the hand, and apologized for having alarmed me—ſaid he awoke earlier than uſual, and wiſhing to explore the reliques of this gothic building, had walked out before the Abbè was awake, and ſearching among the

ruins

ruins had found an old box, which he was inſpecting behind one of the arches when I came in; adding, with a look of ſatisfaction, that he was amply gratified for the trouble he had had in opening the box, by ſeeing me beſtow ſo much attention on the wood-pigeon, whoſe lot he envied. "If I was that happy bird, Adeline," continued he, "I ſhould never wiſh to fly from you." Not knowing what anſwer to make, I propoſed inſpecting the contents of the box. We ſat down together—I placed it on my knee—the firſt things we found were a roſary and crucifix, a ſtring almoſt mouldered away, to which was faſtened a medallion, engraved with ſome myſtic characters on one ſide, and two hearts united on the other; and under this a parcel, which was much impaired by time and the dampneſs of the place; we could not diſtinguiſh the writing on the outſide, but, taking

a parch-

a parchment out of the cover, Valzune read as follows, in a hand hardly legible from the decayed colour of the ink and the old ſpelling.

" IF the laſt murmurings of a broken ſpirit ſhould reach beyond the grave, and in ſome future age this box become the prey of ſacrilegious hands, let them reſpect my ſorrows, and preſerve the relics—The hand that pens theſe lines will then be mouldered into duſt—ſoon will this aching boſom be at reſt—this rebel heart at peace within its cell, and every earthly care be ended.—Reader! the wretch who addreſſes thee, is now expiring—his dim and languid eyes will ſcarce direct his hand to write, and my ſtrength almoſt deſerts me when I wiſh to relate the ſorrows of my life.

" Here, in this houſe of prayer, I have buried in religious ſilence, during the

the ſpace of five long years, the ſtory of my woes. Reader! if thou haſt a ſoul for ſenſibility, pity my weakneſs, and beware of love—'tis this that brings me to the grave—'tis this that wrings my heart. Amidſt my prayers, the name beloved will paſs my tongue; and, in the hours of penitence, my Iſabelle cannot be forgotten.

"I loved her more than all the world, I loved her (ye celeſtial ſaints, forgive me!) I loved her more than honour. Forbidden by the duties of the profeſſion I had embraced to marry, and reſtrained by morality and virtue from wiſhing to ſeduce her, the agonies of mind that I endured, the conflict I ſuſtained, cannot be deſcribed; and had not my vows of celibacy forbid the union, her imperious father, proud of high birth and immenſe poſſeſſions, would have ſpurned a lowly man like me, who was of mean extraction, and devoid

devoid of fortune. To be brief, love conquered my religious ſcruples. I had a friend in the town of Beſançon, who was a proteſtant prieſt; him I conſulted, and Iſabelle agreed that he ſhould marry us in ſecret. Alas! we loved, and thought not of the future; but fate frowned upon this clandeſtine union.—I had broken my monaſtic vows, and the crime was to be chaſtiſed in the way moſt cruel to myſelf.

" Several months after our connexion, the illneſs of my father obliged me to leave Beſançon: I was attending on him at Veſoul when I received this letter:

' To *Antoine.*

' It is decreed by Heaven, that ' guilt ſhall not eſcape puniſhment.— ' Oh Antoine! I could bear every mi- ' ſery, every pain in nature, better than ' the ſhame of being expoſed to the

'contempt of an unfeeling world, and
'to the reproaches of a family whom
'I have diſhonoured. The prieſt who
'married us is dead, and my crime
'can no longer be kept ſecret; yet
'ſomething within me whiſpers, it will
'only be divulged in death. I am as
'unable to ſurvive the public loſs of
'honour, as I ſhould be to ſurvive
'the loſs of your affection. I cannot
'bear to expoſe your character; nay,
'if I proclaimed myſelf your wife,
'who would believe it? My ſpirits
'are ſubdued—my frame is ſhaken—
'and the thoughts of your love for
'me, and the pangs you would ſuffer
'at my loſs, alone ſupport me.—My
'ſoul lingers on earth, and feels re-
'luctance at the idea of death, only
'for your ſake. Write to me—ſpeak of
'patience, but not of comfort, for peace
'is become an alien to the wretched

'ISABELLE.'

"Stung

" Stung to the heart with this deſpairing note, I haſtily ſent the following anſwer:

' Let not my Iſabelle deſpond.—
' Heaven knows, impoſſibility alone
' prevented us from marrying publicly.
' How then is that a crime in *us*, which
' would have been our glory, had my
' profeſſion allowed us to avow it?
' Oh! my friend, my wife! it is true
' that this public ceremony is wanting;
' but the union of our hearts is equally
' pure and indiſſoluble as if it was
' ſanctified by the approbation of the
' world. Nature and love have licenſed
' an attachment that was not allowed
' by the laws of our country.—We
' have obeyed their voice, and ſpurned
' thoſe obſtacles that were framed only
' by the ſevere rules of monaſtic law-
' givers. This has been our crime;
' for, Heaven knows, had it been in

'the power of Antoine to marry Isabelle publicly, he would have rejoiced 'in leading her to the altar. I earneſtly intreat you not to encourage 'deſpair. Let us fly, my love, to 'ſome leſs ſevere and happier clime, 'where the legality of our connexion 'may not be queſtioned, and where 'we may live contented, though in 'poverty. I do not deſire any part 'of your father's wealth. There is no 'ſituation in life that can prove irkſome to me, if Isabelle is my com'panion. Be comforted, deareſt of 'women—be patient till my arrival.— 'As ſoon as I can leave my father, I 'ſhall fly to you, and we will conſider 'on the moſt eligible plan for your 'ſafety and my happineſs.

'Farewel,

'Your ever faithful,

'ANTOINE.'

'My

" My father now grew better, and I reſolved in two days to leave him; but the day before that on which I meant to ſet out for the town where Iſabelle lived, I received, by an unknown perſon (who left it at my father's houſe without aſking for an anſwer) theſe words, written with a trembling hand, and rendered almoſt unintelligible by the tears with which they were blotted:

' My cruel ſtars have done their
' worſt—my deſtiny is decided. Oh
' Antoine! your kind but fatal letter
' has been replete with ruin to your
' Iſabelle—It was intercepted by my
' father, and all is diſcovered—I can
' write no more — Alas! what ſhould
' I write?—Silence would beſt become
' a wretch like me—Publicly diſgraced,
' I have nothing more to do but to
' expire with ſhame.—Antoine! do

 ' not

' not forget me.—You are the only
' one who can love the memory of
' ISABELLE.'

" I trembled with agitation on reading this letter. I got on horſeback immediately, and travelled day and night till I reached the town of Beſançon (where ſhe lived). I waited all the evening, in hopes I ſhould ſee ſome ſervant come out of her father's houſe, who might convey a meſſage from me to Iſabelle. Night came on, and I ſtill hover'd round the dwelling that contained my love. The ſkies were obſcured with heavy and dark clouds, lightning flaſhed in the horizon, and diſtant ſounds of awful thunder were heard. It ſeemed as if Heaven reproved me for my fault—the elements appeared to conſpire againſt me. —With a wounded conſcience I proſtrated myſelf on the cold ground before the

Searcher

Searcher of all hearts. At that moment the door of the houſe opened—It ſeemed illuminated—I ruſhed forward, and met in the entrance a train of people clothed in white, with lighted torches in their hands.—Oh, Heaven! they were meſſengers of misfortune inſtead of joy—A coffin followed.—At that ſight a deadly preſage filled my mind—my blood ſeemed to ſtagnate in my veins—and I had ſcarcely breath to aſk whoſe corpſe they carried.—When the name of Iſabelle burſt from the lips of thoſe who ſcattered roſes in the proceſſion, I felt as if a thunderbolt had cruſhed me into atoms.—'Twas a ſenſation as if total annihilation muſt enſue—All the faculties of my ſoul were ſuſpended, and I fell ſenſeleſs on the earth.

"When I recovered from my long trance, the proceſſion was gone, the doors were barred, I heard only the

ſolemn tolling of the bell, and I found myſelf attended by a charitable friar, who was paſſing that way, and had compaſſion on me.

" Frantic with deſpair, and unknowing what I meant to do, I ſtarted from the earth, I ſtaggered to the door, and rapped inceſſantly, notwithſtanding his entreaties, till it was opened by an old ſervant, who was remonſtrating with me, when the father of Iſabelle appeared. ' Wretch!' ſaid that venerable grey-headed man, ' 'tis enough to have robbed me of my daughter! profane not theſe walls with thy preſence, nor with impious ravings dare to diſturb her departed ſpirit. If thou haſt a ſoul capable of contrition, go to a convent, and repent.'

" As he ſpoke I gazed on his pallid face; his eyes were ſunk in his head, and almoſt dim with age. I ſurveyed his altered countenance, his limbs bending

bending under the heavy preſſure of affliction. I dared not caſt a ſecond look; my heart ſeemed to die within me; I turned my eyes abaſhed upon the ground.—The friar, who knew my name, ſeized that moment of quiet ſorrow to convey me to the houſe of a relation of mine in that town—to the houſe, alas! where I firſt became acquainted with Iſabelle.—A fever ſucceeded to this ſullen calm. I lay in a raving ſtate for the ſpace of three days, and recovered my reaſon only to lament my crime and my misfortune more bitterly—Life was hateful to me, and I prayed to die; yet Heaven, perhaps, was merciful to decree that I ſhould live and ſuffer, in order to have time to expiate my fault by the force of my repentance, and by the fervency of my prayers.

" When I was recovered ſufficiently to bear the recital, I was told by my couſin

couſin that my letter to Iſabelle was intercepted by her father at a time when ſhe was confined by illneſs to her chamber, and appeared to be in a weak and languiſhing ſtate of health. His indignation conquered every tender ſentiment, and burſting into her apartment with the fatal paper in his hand, he charged her with an attachment of which her conſcience too ſtrongly convicted her, inſiſted on her promiſing never to ſee me more, and, flinging the letter on a table, left the room.—The unhappy victim heard him in ſilence, took the opportunity to write the few lines ſhe ſent me on the inſide of the cover, and, with an appearance of reſignation and calmneſs, charged her ſervant to ſend them to me by a truſty meſſenger; but this compoſure was the laſt effort of her exhauſted ſpirit—'twas the cruel prelude to a dreadful change. She commanded her maid to leave the

room,

room, and was ſoon after heard to groan, and pray fervently at intervals. Her mother, having learnt the afflicting news of her ſituation, came into her apartment, and found her in the pangs of labour—aſſiſtance was inſtantly procured——but—my Iſabelle expired, and the hapleſs infant (brought ſo prematurely into the world) did not ſurvive its unfortunate mother.

" This melancholy tale was yet freſh in my mind, when the tidings came to me of my father's death. I had now no tie left to bind me to the world, I therefore reſolved to retire from it, and to fix my reſidence in this monaſtery. Here I have experienced that change of place and length of time may cure many diſeaſes of the mind, but cannot aſſuage thoſe pains that ariſe from a ſenſe of our *own* miſdeeds. This little taliſman, given me by Iſabelle, and a book in which ſhe had written my

name,

name, were all the treaſures I poſſeſſed; theſe I had often ſwore to keep till death, and in death only will I part with them.—In theſe monaſtic walls I hoped to find repoſe for my ſoul, but in vain. The ſilence, the gloom, the religious ceremonies of the place, increaſed my melancholy. Often by a faint lamp within my cell have I invoked the ſpirit of Iſabelle; my ſobs, my cries, have echoed through the dome, and diſturbed my brethren from their peaceful ſlumbers. Every night the ſad proceſſion has ſeemed to ſwim before my eyes, and glide along the venerable aiſles. In my dreams the voice of Iſabelle has ſtruck on my affrighted ears, and made that ſleep a torment to me which brings refreſhment to the innocent. Continual grief, continual terrors, have at length ſubdued my frame. I have been gradually falling into a decline ever ſince I came into this abode.

abode. My meagre figure is only now the ſhade of what it was. Often, when I in prayer lift up my feeble emaciated hands towards Heaven, I ſtare with amazement at their change. My altered looks ſurpriſe my pious brethren; they ſee me waſting to a ſkeleton; they endeavour to reſtore my health by medicinal aſſiſtance; but they have no balſam which can heal the *mind*.—I now have poured out the ſecret of my ſoul; yet ſuch a crime as that I have committed would make my memory a ſcandal to the ſociety I die among—it ſhall therefore be buried in the earth; and if at ſome remote period theſe already decaying walls ſhould be eraſed, and another building erected on the ruins, perhaps this memorial of my errors and my afflictions may be diſcovered.

" Reader! take warning by the fate of Iſabelle and the ſorrows of Antoine.

toine. Beware of love; avoid temptation, or learn to reſiſt it. Remember this leſſon, offered to you by the expiring

"ANTOINE."

Whilſt Valzune was reading this affecting paper, I was almoſt ſuffocated with ſympathetic grief, natural to an artleſs girl, who wept over a romantic tale. My tears fell on my boſom, and when he ceaſed I ſobbed like a perſon who was ſuffering ſome heavy calamity. After a conſiderable ſilence, I grew more calm, and raiſed my eyes to Valzune. I ſaw by his countenance he felt for the lovers as much as I did, but with a more ſedate and reaſonable concern. I was aſhamed of my own folly, in giving way to ſuch a violent and childiſh grief; and ſmiling on Valzune through my tears, ſaid, "Let us be gone."—"Yes," he replied, "we will go; but this box

ſhall be yours."—"Nay," continued I, "as we have trodden upon conſecrated ground, and been equally guilty of diſturbing the manſions of the dead, who are interred among theſe mutilated columns and broken tombs, 'tis right we ſhould partake the reliques; yes, Valzune, this taliſman ſhall be yours: God forbid the misfortunes of Antoine and Iſabelle ſhould be annexed to it! Their love, and not their crime, has given it value, and it ſhall be your's. Perhaps, if you diſdain the gift, yet you may keep it for my ſake, and think of Adeline when you are far from her."—"I need no token of remembrance," he replied, "from you——how is it poſſible Adeline ſhould ever be forgotten? Yet I will wear it for your ſake, my fair friend, and whenever I return it to you, be aſſured it will be as the token of my *death*; for till the hour of diſſolution it ſhall hang round my neck,

neck, and be the companion of my heart."—Saying this he raiſed my hand to his lips, bowed, and took his leave.

When he was gone, I fancied I had omitted ſaying a thouſand things about his journey, and wiſhed to aſk as many queſtions, but it was too late; I looked up the hill, and ſaw him haſtening towards the farm; my eyes purſued him, till a clump of trees concealed him from my ſight—I went into my favourite ſeat in the garden, after having replaced my wood-pigeon, but I could not attend to reading—I had no ſpirits to ſing—I could not think of any thing that pleaſed me, yet I wiſhed to be alone; and I ſtayed there till Geneviève ſummoned me to breakfaſt.

In a few days after I had the ſatisfaction to hear that Valzune's journey was poſtponed till the autumn. I was ſo unconſcious of doing any thing improper

proper in expreſſing my joy, and ſo unuſed to diſguiſe my thoughts, that I jumped about the room like a wild thing, and made my father laugh at my *naiveté* on the occaſion, when I declared how happy I was in the thoughts of ſeeing the dear boy again.—The ſummer paſſed on moſt happily. Valzune found a ſhorter way through the woods to the Priory, by which means it was within the compaſs of a walk.—He was for ever bringing me flowers, birds, and whatever he thought would be acceptable to me. We danced, we ſung, we read together, and our innocent amuſements were licenſed by the approbation and preſence of my father and the Abbè.

I do not recollect any particular event happening in the ſummer, except that once, when we were all riding out, my mule fell with me, and I received a bruiſe on my arm, when the exceſſive

fright of Valzune, and his joy at my recovery, were proofs of the goodneſs and tenderneſs of his heart; that heart, indeed, contained every noble, generous, and honourable ſentiment, blended with the ſofteſt feelings of humanity.

The autumn came too ſoon; Valzune took his leave, and ſat out, attended by an old ſervant, for Italy. I felt quite lonely and heavy-hearted after his departure, but was ſoon obliged to exert myſelf in order to go with my father to Abbè St. Bertin's, where we were to meet Monſieur and Madame de Ronſal, with their two daughters.—I had in that family a full ſcope for obſervation and improvement. Monſieur de Ronſal and his lady had lived many years in ſplendour at Paris, where their eldeſt daughter (who was a widow when they came to the Abbè's) married the Baron de Luzane, with whom ſhe lived for a few months in a ſtile of magnificence,

and

and among the firſt people of the court. She was a woman diſtinguiſhed for elegance and politeneſs; nothing could be more eaſy than her manners, nor more pleaſant than her converſation. She was a woman of taſte and genius, had read a great deal in the younger part of her life, and had cultivated her mind with every uſeful ſtudy, which enabled her to be on a footing, in point of knowledge and argument, with the Abbè and my father, though ſhe could deſcend to converſe at times with us on the moſt frivolous ſubjects, and was by no means vain of her ſuperior talents.

Mademoiſelle de Ronſal, her ſiſter, had infinite wit and repartee, was prettier than the Baroneſs, and coquettiſh in her manner, but perfectly good-humoured, and amuſing in her converſation. Monſieur de Ronſal's paſſion was antiquity, and his foible family pride: his lady had been a beauty in

her youth, and was highly born; ſhe had retained her graces, though her features were no longer beautiful, and her air and manners were inſpired by that dignity ariſing from conſcious pride of hereditary greatneſs.—Such was the family we went to meet, and from them I attained a knowledge of people and manners that I was ignorant of before. The vivacity of Juliette de Ronſal amuſed me; but the penſive looks and placid manners of the Baroneſs were much more intereſting,—conſequently, though the youngeſt ſiſter was moſt frequently my companion in my walks and childiſh gambols, Madame de Luzane was the perſon I ſelected for my friend. I frequently thought of Valzune, but dared not aſk any queſtions of the Abbè concerning him, leſt it ſhould betray an impertinent curioſity.

I often walked alone in a little grove leading to a vineyard belonging to the

Abbè's

Abbè's houſe, becauſe I had heard him ſay Valzune uſed to walk there, and I experienced a mournful pleaſure in thinking I ſurveyed thoſe trees which had ſo often afforded him a ſhelter from the burning rays of the ſun. I found the name of Adeline inſcribed on one of them, which gave me no other emotion than what was cauſed by the ſurprize of knowing he had thought of me in the ſame grove where it was now my deſtiny to think on him.

Winter came on apace. Madame de Ronſal and her youngeſt daughter were anxious to go to Montpellier, more for an augmentation of ſociety than for the reaſon they gave, which was, that the Baroneſs, on account of the delicate ſtate of health ſhe had been in (cauſed by her unwearied attendance on her huſband in his illneſs) had been ordered by the phyſicians to paſs the winter there. The whole family peti-

tioned ſo ſtrongly that I might accompany them, that my father (who wiſhed to give me every advantage and amuſement) agreed for me to go. I was uneaſy at leaving him to paſs the winter in the Priory alone; but he would not quit the ſuperintendance of the farm; and the Abbè, who had hired the little cottage he inhabited for a year, promiſed to ſpend much of his time with my father.

Genevieve ſeemed more delighted at the thoughts of our removal to Montpellier than I was, yet I will confeſs that novelty was not without its charms; and after the pang of parting from my father was over, I gave myſelf up to the pleaſing thoughts of going to a new place, and having an opportunity of being among new people.

Monſieur de Ronſal hired a large hotel, and kept open houſe for all the people whoſe ſituation was ſuch as to

entitle

entitle them to a reception. We partook of every gaiety the place could afford, had dances and *petits ſoupers* continually, which at firſt delighted me extremely; but I ſoon grew weary of the eternal routine of diſſipation we were engaged in, and remonſtrated with Juliette on her exceſſive love of admiration and gaiety. She rallied me on what ſhe termed a romantic idea of philoſophy, and was ſurpriſed to ſee me often ſteal from the gay ſociety to paſs a quiet hour in rational converſation with the Baroneſs, whoſe health did not permit her always to join the party, and from whom I ever derived improvement.

Among thoſe ladies who invited us to their aſſemblies was the old Baroneſs de Verdun. At her houſe I one evening met a gentleman, who, I afterwards learnt, was ſon of my father's old friend, the Marquis de Rozancourt.

He was about four-and-twenty, of a remarkable fine figure, had all the addreſs of a man converſant with the world, and beauty enough to make it impoſſible for him to paſs, even in a crowd, unobſerved; but I diſcerned an air of ſupercilious pride under the thin veil of feigned civility; every thing he ſaid ſeemed the effect of deſign, and his actions were more artfully ſtudied than naturally graceful. His figure, his rank, his poliſhed manners, and the elegance of his dreſs, attracted the notice of all the company. He was polite to every one, but particularly ſo to me, though his converſation proved, that he conſidered me as an ignorant fooliſh girl, who would be too vain of his condeſcenſion and preference not to give credit to all the flattering ſpeeches he could make uſe of.

It happened that Madame de Ronſal and her daughter Juliette were gone

to

to the play, and Madame de Luzane went with me to the Baroneſs de Verdun's, on the ſuppoſition of meeting a very few people. Fortunately for me our acquaintance with Madame de Verdun had been of ſo ſhort a date, that ſhe ſuppoſed me to be a relation of the Savron family, knew me only by the name of Adeline, and imagined I lived with them, which prevented her being able to inform Monſieur Rozancourt of my place of reſidence, or any particulars about me. He was only on a viſit of ceremony to her, in paſſing through the town, and I ſaw him no more at Montpellier. The Marquis, his father, had only been once to his château, and that was juſt before I came to the Priory, conſequently, though ſome viſits had then paſſed between him and my father, I knew nothing of his family, and was ſurpriſed to find he had a ſon.

The

The winter was nearly over; I began to grow impatient to ſee my father, and was wiſhing to propoſe my return home, when Monſieur de Savron received the news that his preſence was neceſſary at Paris, where he was engaged in a *procès*. The lively Juliette, who longed to appear in more faſhionable circles than thoſe Montpellier could afford, perſuaded her mother alſo to be of the party, and they wrote ſuch preſſing letters to my father for me to accompany them, that he conſented. I felt ſome reluctance at the thoughts of this journey; but my friendſhip for the Baroneſs, and her earneſt ſolicitations, induced me to acquieſce.

At Paris a new ſcene was unfolded; I ſeemed to move in the grand *theatre du monde*, and was drawn more by the perſuaſions and example of others, than by my own inclination, into a vortex of diſſipation: we were at every public

public ſpectacle. The ſpring was far advanced, but Paris was juſt at that time particularly gay, on account of a marriage in the royal family.

At one of the balls I happened to dance with Count Zodiſki, a Poliſh officer, who early in life had, on account of his mother's ſecond marriage with the Baron de Luzane (the father of my friend's huſband) reſided ſo much in France as to acquire a perfect knowledge of the language, and to have formed *liaiſons* of friendſhip with many of the inhabitants. He lived very much in the circle of his mother's friends, and had for the widow of his late brother as much affection as if ſhe had really been his ſiſter. He was about forty years of age, and of a gentleman-like appearance, univerſally admired for his talents, extolled for his bravery, and reſpected for the integrity of his heart.

The

The deportment of Zodiſki was not tinctured with that ſort of pompous gravity which marks the ſolemn coxcomb or the conſequential man of ſcience; it was ſedate, but not ſerious. He wore a blue ribbon with a gold croſs at his boſom, which was enamelled with red, having a white border, and four flames between the points of the croſs; on one ſide was the Poliſh eagle, with the white croſs and electoral ſword on its breaſt; and on the other, the king's cypher, encircled with this motto: "*Pro fide, rege, et lege.*"

This order of knighthood I afterwards learnt was conferred on him by the king of Poland for his ſignal ſervices in the army; and when I obſerved that he appeared to uſe his right arm awkwardly, a lady, who ſat next to me, mentioned his having received a wound in the laſt battle wherein he was engaged, and that he was created a Count

many

many years ago by the King of Poland, as a mark of his particular approbation: ſhe told me this foreign nobleman's converſation was not leſs coveted by men of letters than by young officers, who looked up with reſpect to his judgment in the military ſcience. I am thus particular in my account of Zodiſki, becauſe he will be frequently mentioned in the courſe of theſe memoirs. At that time I thought of him only as an agreeable man, and the brother-in-law of my friend; but I ſoon learnt the excellencies of his character, which unfolded itſelf in every ſubſequent converſation. Zodiſki was diſtinguiſhed by a noble figure and an intelligent countenance; but he had neither youth nor beauty to recommend him at firſt ſight to a young inexperienced girl like myſelf; it was, therefore, by acquaintance with his well-

 informed

informed mind, that I grew to admire his talents, and esteem his heart.

Zodiski's mind was strong and active; yet pride and violence had no access to it. Without being unpolished in his manner, he despised every thing effeminate or conceited. He was the very soul of honour, steady in his friendships, strong in his resentments, just in his opinions, and consistent in his conduct. He looked upon flattery as an affront to the understanding; and, though possessed of knowledge and judgment superior to that of most men, he never delivered his sentiments in a dictatorial tone, or was offended if others did not subscribe to his opinion. He had dignity without pride, sensibility without weakness, learning without pedantry, sociability without familiarity, and wit without malice. Such was my new acquaintance; and after having been some

time

time accuſtomed to a frivolous ſet of beings, who lived always in a crowd, and could converſe only on trifles, I learnt to appreciate the merit of ſuch a man, and to profit by the ſenſible diſcourſe, philoſophical inſtructions, and rational ſentiments of Zodiſki.

There was an honeſty written in his countenance, and a ſincerity in his manner, ſo different from the flattering coxcombs I had lately met with, that I was delighted to ſee he preferred my converſation to that of others. I beheld him as a man whoſe ſtrict ideas of honour, and knowledge of the world, made him an eligible friend to any young unexperienced perſon; and the more I ſaw of him, the greater reaſon I had to rejoice in finding myſelf high in his eſteem.

That amiable man would frequently direct my attention to thoſe companions whom he thought moſt likely to im-

prove me—he would recommend to me thoſe books which were beſt calculated to convey uſeful information—he developed thoſe characters he wiſhed me to avoid, and gave me his advice upon every ſubject whereon I had occaſion to apply to him.—He was above flattery, therefore I never could be deceived by his praiſe, and if he happened to commend any one thing I did, it was more ſatisfactory to me than the fulſome compliments which fops and fools daily offer at the ſhrine of beauty.—I ſaw him frequently with my friend the Baroneſs, whoſe eſteem and confidence he juſtly poſſeſſed. By degrees I uſed to conſult him on many occaſions, and uſed ſometimes to ſpeak of my father's humble abode and narrow circumſtances as freely as I did to my friend, and he always ſeemed to take an intereſt in my concerns.

One morning I was ſitting in Madame de Luzane's apartment, waiting her return from paying a viſit, when Count Zodiſki entered the room, with an air of embarraſſment which I never had ſeen before.—" I come, Madam," ſaid he, " upon an awkward buſineſs. It is not my nature to make fine ſpeeches, or ſtrong profeſſions—excuſe, therefore, the abruptneſs of my manner, and condeſcend to hear what never would have eſcaped my lips, but for a ſudden and unexpected event.—I have ever beheld you as an object of eſteem and regard—I have done more, I have dared to conſider you as the only woman whom I now could ever love.—The follies, the falſhoods, the affectation of your ſex, have for ſome years rendered my heart callous to the *mere* claims of *beauty*; and as for the allurements of rank and fortune, mean muſt that man be, and cruelly diſappointed, who builds

his expectations of happineſs on a connexion of that ſort. Thus ſituated, I firſt met with you.—I will honeſtly confeſs, that your beauty inſpired me with admiration, but I never ſhould have formed a thought of love, had not your ingenuous temper, your artleſs manners, and amiable qualities, engaged my friendſhip. This, Madam, was the prelude to a ſentiment of a tenderer nature, and which I had ſworn, from a paſt diſappointment (when I in earlier life had fixed my choice in Poland) never more to be involved in. When I found my heart ſo unexpectedly entangled, I bluſhed at my own credulity. I recollected my time of life, and the few recommendations I poſſeſſed; I had not the vanity to think Zodiſki was a proper perſon for the huſband of Adeline de Courcy. But a ſtill more powerful argument concurred to keep me ſilent.—I had received only the advantage

vantage of a good education from my father, and when he was taken from his family, my future fortune hung upon my sword. That only dependance failed me by an accident.—I knew the state of Monsieur de Courcy's finances—I was sensible of your deserts, and could not venture to propose an alliance, which would involve you in the fate of a man so destitute of worldly advantages as myself, (even if it was possible you could incline to accept my offer.)—I therefore resolved to render this secret impenetrable to the world—to be a patient spectator of Adeline's future destiny, nor to suffer one discontented murmur to reach her ear. The task was difficult, but I should have submitted silently to my fate, had I not received a letter to apprize me of the death of General Lubienski. His only daughter, who was married after I left Poland, having died

without children, my generous friend has divided his property between his ſon-in-law and me, leaving my portion of his fortune at my own diſpoſal when I die. I will not affront your delicacy or your generoſity, by imagining this alteration can give me any conſequence in the mind of Adeline; but it is ſome juſtification for a propoſal, which it would have been madneſs in *me* to *offer*, and folly in *you* to *accept*, while my circumſtances were limited to ſuch a narrow income as they were when I firſt had the honour of your acquaintance.——If your heart is entirely at liberty, and you can without repugnance accept me as a protector, a friend, a huſband, my happineſs will be far greater than I deſerve it ſhould be—if you feel any reluctance at the idea, remember I ſhould be much more injured, much more hurt by your giving me a divided heart, than if you were honeſtly to expreſs indifference.

ence. Adeline, you might render me a diſcontented and wretched huſband, by accepting me with repugnance; but you cannot by a refuſal make me any other than a faithful friend."

Aſtoniſhment and concern had till now kept me ſilent.—I was ſo accuſtomed to ſee Count Zodiſki in the light of a brother, an adviſer, a friend, that the thought of another ſort of connexion had never entered my mind. I reſpected and eſteemed him; but when he ſpoke of love, I felt an icy coldneſs creep into my heart, and aſtoniſhment ſcarcely allowed me the power of utterance. I was concerned to make a cold reply to ſo generous and kind a procedure—yet to betray him for a moment into falſe hopes, would have been a deception far more cruel, than to ſpeak at once an unpleaſant truth. I therefore told him, in few words, how highly ſenſible I was of the value of his preference,

how much obliged I was to him for the generoſity of his offer, and how much pain it gave me to avow, that though I had the higheſt opinion in the world of his heart, and the greateſt friendſhip for him, it would be an act of impoſition and injuſtice to ſay, I felt that tender regard for him which I ought to have for a huſband. I therefore begged to decline the honour he intended me, and intreated that my refuſal might not impair the friendſhip which was between us—I aſſured him, his propoſal would never be divulged by me, though it would be gratefully remembered, and burſting into tears, while I implored him no more to renew the ſubject, I haſtily quitted the room.

The noble-minded Zodiſki ſtrictly obeyed my commands; he never mentioned a word of love again, nor did my refuſal mortify his pride, or impair his friendſhip: pleaſed with my frankneſs, he

he in ſecret lamented a determination that he had not vanity enough to blame, and imagining I had a preference for another, he reſolved to bury his paſſion in ſilence, and endeavour to content himſelf with the name of friend. To leave Paris, would juſt then have been a relief to his mind, but fearful I ſhould attribute his abſence to pique, or want of friendſhip, he reſolved to ſtay, and though I ſaw him leſs frequently than I uſed to do, his complacency and his attention to me appeared juſt the ſame as they were before.

Zodiſki had not that impetuoſity of temper, thoſe violent paſſions, which cannot bear contradiction, and once out of tune are not to be harmonized again. He was of a philoſophic turn of mind, which inclined him to be ſteady, though not violent, in his affection—and though no man poſſeſſed more perſonal courage, nor a higher ſpirit, he never ſuffered

his animoſities or prejudices to carry him to unwarrantable lengths. With this diſpoſition he could never err, never be blinded by paſſion, or influenced by whim—his regard for me was founded on eſteem, and the reſult of ſober conſideration; it therefore was likely to exiſt beyond that violent and ſudden blaze, which is apt to inflame more vulnerable hearts. I ſaw with pain, that he was thoughtful and melancholy for ſome time, but he had reſolution to reconcile himſelf to diſappointment, and before I left Paris, he appeared as if he had forgot it ever had been in my power to mortify him by a refuſal.

I prevailed on Madame de Luzane to paſs two or three months with me at the priory, and we ſat out on our journey the 3d of May. Her delicate ſtate of health made me think our quiet way of life would be for her benefit, and the

charms of her converſation were ſuch, that I conſidered myſelf always happy when ſhe was my companion.

I had the ſatisfaction to find my father in perfect health, and to meet the Abbè St. Bertin at the Priory, whom, next to my honoured parent, I loved and reſpected. He informed me, on my enquiring after Valzune, that he expected him in the month of July, and had letters frequently from him, wherein he ſpoke with a grateful remembrance of his friends at the Priory.

Nothing material happened in our peaceful retirement—July arrived, and Valzune was hourly expected:—one morning early, Genevieve came almoſt breathleſs to tell me he was arrived, and in the ſtudy with the Abbè and my father. Tranſported with the joyful thought of ſeeing the companion of my youthful amuſements, after a long abſence, I haſtened down ſtairs; the door opened;

opened; but when I ſaw him, inſtead of running to meet my friend with all the freedom of a ſiſter, my ſteps were arreſted by a timid ſort of embarraſſment; I was amazed to find myſelf as confuſed, awkward, and reſerved, as if I had met a formal ſtranger, inſtead of the lively pleaſant Valzune, and at that moment, I could have wiſhed the viſit over, but by degrees, my conſtraint grew leſs painful:—he reminded me of many little trifling circumſtances relative to our firſt meeting, and by his looks and words, expreſſed ſo much artleſs joy at ſeeing me again, that I was ſecretly pleaſed with his attention. I found him the ſame gay, unaffected, elegant creature he was before his departure for Italy, and happening to caſt my eyes upon a glaſs, was diſſatisfied with my own dreſs, and thought I never looked to ſo much diſadvantage before.

When

When they returned home after a very ſhort viſit, I fancied I had omitted ſaying a thouſand things I ſhould have ſaid to Valzune. I was angry with myſelf—my heart, which ſeemed to be chilled, and as if bound up during his ſtay, now relaxed to all the impreſſions of joy and tender friendſhip. I recollected his virtues, the remembrance of them gave new charms to the graces of his perſon. He had promiſed to bring ſome Italian views to ſhew me in a few days, and I longed for his next viſit, that I might introduce him to the Baroneſs, who was then confined to her chamber with a cold.

The day ſo much deſired was not far diſtant. Valzune came early in the morning, bringing a portfeuille, with the drawings he had made in Italy. They were proofs of his good taſte and ſkill in painting. I obſerved there were ſome carefully folded up in a paper, which he paſſed

paſſed over; my curioſity was excited, and on my father's calling him haſtily out of the room (ſo that he had not time to arrange his drawings and tie up the book) I ſeized the opportunity of unfolding the paper which now lay almoſt at the bottom. My ſurpriſe was greater than I can expreſs, when, among a few pictures of Italian ladies, I diſcovered myſelf, amazingly like, and much better finiſhed, in point of painting, than the others. I was pleaſed to think he had beſtowed more pains on my picture than any of the reſt. I ſhut the book in haſte, and I think he muſt have ſeen, at his return, by my confuſed look, that I had not been idle; perhaps, if he ſuſpected what I had done, he ſecretly rejoiced at it.—In a few minutes we were joined by the Abbè, whom he had left on the hill converſing with the farmer, and Madame de Luzane came into the parlour at the ſame time. Never did Val-

zune

zune appear more brilliant in converſation; never did he look better than that morning. The Baroneſs, who had been in Italy, was delighted to find in him the obſervations of a man of taſte, without the affectation which ſo often is blended with the ſmall ſhare of knowledge acquired by young men, who have travelled juſt enough to entitle them to make recitals. All his remarks were judicious, many of his deſcriptions ludicrous and entertaining.

When Madame de Luzane was alone with me, ſhe began to rally me on the ſubject of my young friend, and to ſay it was impoſſible I could be inſenſible to his talents. I bluſhed exceſſively, found myſelf at a loſs for a reply, changed the diſcourſe, and, for the firſt time in my life, was happy to retire from my amiable friend. I went and ſat in the ſeat where Valzune had preſented me with the roſe the firſt time I ſaw him—

there

there I revolved in my mind every thing that had paſſed ſince that day. I queſtioned my heart, which trembled at the enquiry. I recollected my indifference to others—I felt the preference I had for Valzune—I knew it was very different from the friendſhip I had for Count Zodiſki, and that the repugnance I experienced on the ſubject of marrying him, would not have ſubſiſted if Valzune had made the offer.—I remembered all his little attentions to me; gratefully I remembered them. My heart acknowledged the force of his attractions; it whiſpered that Valzune was worthy to be loved.—Yes! I became ſenſible that his graces, the worth of his character, the elegance of his manners, were ſuperior to any thing I ever had, or ever ſhould meet with in the world. I found my heart impreſſed with the moſt affectionate regard, and began to know I was attached to him by a much

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tenderer ſentiment than that of friend-ſhip.

After this diſcovery, which Madame de Luzane's converſation probably accelerated, I became thoughtful, penſive, and reſerved. The myſtery of his ſituation was a perplexing circumſtance—the uncertainty of his affection diſtreſſed me. I had every reaſon to think he had a preference for me. His looks, his actions, ſeemed to avow it—but Valzune was gay—Valzune was young.—He might not ſtay with us long, and might not always prefer Adeline. Theſe thoughts returned every time he went from the Priory, and they made thoſe viſits, that uſed to be my happineſs, replete with uncomfortable ideas.

One evening my father went with the Abbè to take a ride, and the Baroneſs propoſed our walking. We went through a corn-field, where the reapers were buſy getting in the harveſt, and were proceeding

proceeding towards ſome meadows, when Madame de Luzane's ſervant came to appriſe her a gentleman was at the Priory, who would not ſend his name, but ſaid, he deſired to ſpeak with her. She returned immediately, and we agreed to wait for her at the next gate. Thither we walked in ſilence,—finding that Valzune did not ſpeak, I at length ſtarted ſome indifferent ſubject, when ſuddenly ſeizing my hand, and gazing on me with a look wherein the tendereſt reſpect ſeemed to check the vehemence of love, Adeline, ſaid he, I have been ſilent long enough. I have controuled the emotions of a ſtruggling heart, which has panted to diſcloſe its ſecrets to your ear.—Let us not waſte, in frivolous diſcourſe, the few favourable moments allotted us.—If I am not to be ſilent, allow me to ſpeak of the only ſubject it is poſſible for me to think of.——Oh Adeline! have not my looks

(animated

(animated by love) expreſſed the meaning of my heart? Can you doubt the ſincerity of a choice which has never wavered, ſince the firſt day I beheld you?—— Adeline!—I adore you.

Here he pauſed—a ſudden bluſh mantled on his cheek; he looked at me with a timid ſort of regard, and waited for my reply in an agitation that ſufficiently expreſſed the ſincerity of his words.

The abruptneſs of this declaration confuſed me amazingly for the ſpace of a few minutes, but I recovered myſelf ſo far as to aſſure him, that I was always happy to be approved by thoſe whom I eſteemed; and that Valzune was a friend whoſe good opinion I had ever been deſirous of poſſeſſing. He then promiſed, on a future day, to acquaint me with ſome ſecrets which he had long wiſhed to entruſt to me;—and to avoid a repetition of a ſubject which was then

embarraſſing to me, I propoſed our meeting the Baroneſs. In our walk, Valzune reminded me of a thouſand little proofs of his affection; and while his fine eyes beamed forth the effuſions of his ſoul, it was impoſſible he ſhould not read in mine, how much the heart of Adeline was in uniſon with his own.

At the end of the corn-field we met the Baroneſs, and, to my very great ſurprize, the gentleman with her was no other than the Count Zodiſki. I cannot deſcribe the confuſion into which the ſight of him threw me. My conſcious preference for Valzune, the intereſting converſation that had juſt paſſed between us, and the dread leſt the Count's honour ſhould have yielded to his love (which might impel him to make offers to my father, too liberal and advantageous for a parent to refuſe) all theſe apprehenſions induced me to look on him with an air of conſterna-

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tion and embarraſſment, which it was impoſſible for his penetrating eyes not to obſerve. Valzune, on the contrary (on being preſented to him by the Baroneſs) behaved with all that eaſy politeneſs which diſtinguiſhes the man of faſhion, and converſed with the candour and pleaſantry that ſo particularly were his own.—In the courſe of their converſation, Valzune mentioned the name of the Abbè St. Bertin, when the ſurprize and joy of Zodiſki diſcovered to us, that the Abbè had formerly been his particular friend. I felt a ſecret ſatisfaction, when he expreſſed his concern, that as it would be in his power to make only a ſhort ſtay at the farm (where he meant to lodge while he remained in that part of the world) he ſhould not be able to ſee ſo much of his old friend as he wiſhed.

I was all this time perplexed and uneaſy, longing to know Zodiſki's reaſons

for ſuch an unexpected viſit.—When we arrived at the houſe, Valzune, unobſerved by any but myſelf, diſpatched a note to the Abbè, apprizing him of the Count's arrival; and as he ſent the Baroneſs's ſervant on one of the mules, an anſwer was ſoon brought, wherein the Abbè ſpoke of Zodiſki with ſentiments of ſo much regard, and ſo ſtrongly entreated him to take up his reſidence at his houſe inſtead of the farm, that he conſented, and accordingly, after having had a little general converſation with my father, and promiſed the Baroneſs to wait on her again before he left the country, he accompanied Valzune to the Abbè's.

When he was gone, Madame de Luzane informed us, that he came on buſineſs of importance to her, relative to a mortgage that was on one of the late Baron's eſtates, which by no means quieted my apprehenſions, as I thought

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it might only be a pretext for his viſit, and at that moment imagining the Baroneſs to be ſecretly his friend, reſolved to conceal from her my attachment for Valzune. I have ſince bluſhed at having formed ſuch an injurious opinion of the Count; his noble nature was incapable of meanneſs or duplicity; it was not poſſible for him to avail himſelf of my father's good will againſt my inclination.

The Abbè was ſo happy to ſee him, and Valzune was ſo much delighted at an opportunity of profiting by his ſenſible converſation, that they prevailed on him to ſtay many days longer than he intended. We ſaw him often, and he had ſeveral conferences with his ſiſter-in-law, after which I always obſerved him to be ſerious and thoughtful. My father was charmed with his knowledge of the world, the frankneſs of his manners, the rectitude of his heart.—As for

Valzune, he has often ſince declared, the firſt moment he ſaw him there was ſomething ſo prevenante in his manner, ſomething ſo honeſt, and ſo benign in his countenance, that his heart ſeemed to claim acquaintance with him, and he wiſhed to be worthy the friendſhip of ſuch a man. His eſteem for the Count daily increaſed, and before they parted I had the pleaſure to obſerve, that Zodiſki had contracted a real eſteem and friendſhip for the character of Valzune.

A few days after he had left the Abbè, I was reminded by my amiable lover of my promiſe to hear the ſecret he had to impart. I appointed him to come the next morning, when I knew my father would be out, and at an hour when it was not likely the Baroneſs would have quitted her apartment.

Valzune came, and from him I learnt the

the hiſtory of his life, which I will relate to you in as conciſe terms as I can.

His father, he informed me, was a man of rank, who had married a daughter of the Marquis de Montigny, and his real name was Solignac. He lived at Paris many years in a ſtate of ſplendour, even beyond what his fortune made it prudent for him to do, and bred up his only child with all the expence that would have been ſuitable to a man born to inherit a much greater eſtate. His education, his appearance in the world, when he was at Paris, both in point of equipage and dreſs, gave every body the idea of the immenſe wealth of his father, for whom the Marquis de Montigny had procured a very high poſt in the ſtate, which was a vaſt addition of income to him in the laſt adminiſtration. This he was deprived of when there was a change of party; ſoon after which he had the misfortune to loſe

a moſt affectionate and ſenſible wife. This was the prelude to other woes; for in about a year after, the Count de Solignac had a quarrel with one of the princes of the blood-royal, which highly incenſed the King, who interpoſed his authority. In a moment of paſſion, the proud Count de Solignac made uſe of ſome violent expreſſions bordering on ſedition, and theſe being reported to the King, he was obliged to fly into another country, and had only time to recommend his ſon to the care of the Abbè St. Bertin, who was nearly related to the late Counteſs de Solignac. He left the management of other concerns to the Marquis de Montigny. A decree immediately was paſſed from the King, to apprehend Monſieur de Solignac, and to ſentence his family to a baniſhment of one hundred leagues from Paris, on pain of impriſonment. At firſt it was intended to confiſcate his

eſtate,

eſtate, but this order the Marquis de Montigny, juſt before his death, prevailed on the King to revoke; however, he deprived him of a title which had been hereditary in his family for many generations, and alſo of the poſt he at that time held, as governor of the Chateau de Bellegarde. His departure was ſo ſudden, and his route ſo very uncertain, that he could not form any plan relative to his ſon, whom the Abbè carried privately from Paris, under the name of Valzune, and brought to the ſmall houſe he then inhabited, which had been left to him a few months before by a relation. There that amiable man had devoted all his time and attention to his young pupil, whoſe manners were already more formed than the generality of people at his time of life, by his having very early been introduced into the world, and admitted into the firſt circles, where he met with the moſt brilliant

brilliant wits of the age, and mixed with men and women diſtinguiſhed for their rank, their abilities, their knowledge of the world, and taſte for literature.

The Abbè brought from Paris a ſmall collection of ſcarce books, in various languages, and took infinite pains to ſtore the mind of his young friend with every uſeful knowledge, and to ſtrengthen in him every principle of morality. His baniſhed father at firſt took refuge in Germany; but his unquiet and roving temper ſoon made him weary of his abode there: he in a few months after went into Italy, and wrote for the young Solignac to join him at Florence. By this time he had contracted a paſſion for me, which, added to the tranquil happineſs he enjoyed with his revered preceptor, prevented his receiving the news ſo joyfully as might have been expected. He entruſted the Abbè with the ſecret of his attachment,

ment, promiſed to return to him if poſſible, and made him conſent to remain in his retreat till he ſhould inform him by letter of his deſtination. The Abbè approved of his choice, but doubted whether the ambitious and proud Count de Solignac would hear with patience of his ſon's forming a connexion where fortune could not be expected, therefore adviſed him not to mention the ſubject, leſt it ſhould prove a bar to his return, but leave the event to ſome future and happier period. He promiſed not to divulge his ſecret even to my father (who had been appriſed at firſt by the Abbè of his unfortunate ſtory) leſt he ſhould influence my choice; and he departed for Italy with a thouſand anxious fears. He found Monſieur de Solignac living very ſuperbly at Florence, and aſſociating with people of the firſt rank and fortune; but what hurt him extremely, was to find he had made propoſals

poſals of marriage to a lady, whoſe recommendations were high birth and beauty, but whoſe want of fortune and levity of conduct made her by no means an eligible match for him. She was at the ſame time addreſſed by an Italian Comte. This for ſome months made her heſitate in her choice; but at length the artful woman (who meant to make the beſt bargain ſhe could, and had by that time become the abſolute miſtreſs of Solignac's affections) decided for him. The marriage was celebrated with great pomp, and his ſon ſoon after took an opportunity to propoſe returning to the Abbè.—His father, whoſe whole attention was fixed on his new bride and her connexions, readily conſented, and he left Florence with a heart diſguſted at the folly, the vices, and the hypocriſy he had been a witneſs of in that city, and more enamoured than ever of my guileleſs conduct, and

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the peaceful ſcenes to which he was going to return.

Having ended his narration, he entreated I would permit him no longer to be clandeſtine in his attachment, but to requeſt my father's concurrence in a continuation of his addreſſes, which he thought himſelf more particularly bound to do, as the Count Zodiſki had already ſtole the ſecret from him.

I could not help bluſhing when he mentioned that circumſtance; but my lover (whom I muſt now call Solignac) did not obſerve my confuſion at the Count's name; and I conſented he ſhould make his propoſals to my father.

He took his leave, after preſenting me with the picture of himſelf, which you, Madam, have ſeen, and which was painted in Italy; and the next day made a declaration, which my father received with infinite joy. That venerable indulgent parent could ſcarcely ſuppreſs

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the tears of tranſport, when, ſpeaking to me on the ſubject, he confeſſed he had long obſerved our increaſing affection for each other, and that it was the utmoſt wiſh of his heart to ſee me united to a character ſo worthy to be loved. We were now inexpreſſibly happy. Our regard for each other was licenſed by the approbation of the two people in the world whom we moſt reſpected and eſteemed. We poſſeſſed each other's confidence, and our days paſſed on tranquilly, innocently, and affectionately.—This calm was a little diſturbed by the Abbè informing us of the death of the old Marquis de Rozancourt, who had long been ill at Paris; and I obſerved the news made my father grave and thoughtful;—but I put it to the account of old friendſhip, and his remembrance of the happy days they paſſed together in their early travels.

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The autumn fled too faſt—winter began to reign, and Solignac meditated writing to his father (from whom he had not heard for the ſpace of two months) to requeſt his conſent to our marriage; when, one day as we were all ſitting round the fire after dinner, Bertrand, a ſervant belonging to my father, brought the Abbè a letter. I obſerved he changed countenance extremely in reading it, complained of a ſudden giddineſs in his head, and left the room. Solignac, alarmed at his indiſpoſition, followed him. After waiting for their return ſome time, we went to enquire after the Abbè, and found, to our great ſurpriſe, he and Solignac were gone home. Our aſtoniſhment and our ſuſpence continued till late in the evening, when I received theſe lines:

" To Mademoiselle de Courcy,

" My ſudden flight, and the Abbè's agitation, muſt have appeared ſo ſtrange to Monſieur de Courcy and my deareſt Adeline, that, ill qualified as I am for ſuch a taſk, I cannot retire to my bed without informing them of my motives for ſuch a precipitate retreat. This will be explained in a few words, when I tell you, the letter addreſſed to the Abbè contained the news of my father's death. The ſhock was ſo great, that I found myſelf very unfit even for the ſociety of thoſe ſo dear to me; and I therefore haſtened to bury my affliction in ſolitude. The Abbè, who is engaged in writing letters on this melancholy occaſion, will wait on you very ſoon, and before I ſet out for Italy (where my immediate preſence becomes abſolutely neceſſary)

neceſſary) I hope once more to aſſure my deareſt Adeline of the ſincere affection of her

Ever faithful

HENRI DE SOLIGNAC."

I was ſhocked and ſurprized at this letter; but as I had ever conſidered Solignac's father as the only impediment to our happineſs, and had by no means a good opinion of him, I only felt ſorrow at the thoughts of my lover's being abſent from me.

The Abbè, whom we ſaw the next morning, judged it proper for him to ſet out immediately; and as the will was not to be opened till Solignac's arrival, and his advice and aſſiſtance were neceſſary, he agreed to accompany him, with the intention of reviſiting his cottage in the ſpring.

The morning fixed for their depar-

ture, a heavy ſnow fell, but the affectionate Solignac, whoſe love could ſurmount every difficulty, and deſpiſe fatigue or inconvenience, came to take his leave. I will not treſpaſs on your patience with a recital of the tears we ſhed, or the vows we exchanged of everlaſting love. My dear, dear Solignac bade me a laſt farewel; and when I could no longer gaze on his perſon, I mournfully traced his footſteps in the ſnow. His promiſe of writing to me from Italy was my only conſolation; but for the ſake of my father I concealed my ſorrows from his eye, and depoſited them in the boſom of my faithful Genevieve.

Two days after the Abbè and Solignac had left us, I was walking in the fields with my father, when we were ſurprized by the ſudden ſound of horns and hounds. It was ſomething ſo new to us, that my father was at a loſs how

to

to account for it. In a few minutes, they were in view, and came up with us before we reached a gate which led to the Priory. Several of the people paſſed by, and leaped over the gate, without turning their eyes towards us. The laſt of the number was preparing to follow, when, ſuddenly checking his horſe, he exclaimed, Heavens, is it poſſible! have I the happineſs to behold Mademoiſelle de Courcy? at the ſame moment haſtily alighting from his horſe, and running towards us, kiſſed my hand with more familiarity, I thought, than politeneſs.

My amazement and concern were greater than I can deſcribe, when I diſcovered this intruder to be the young Marquis de Rozancourt, of whoſe arrival at the Caſtle there had been a rumour ſome days before, which I was induced to think falſe, from its not having been confirmed or publicly known.

My father, ſtruck with his noble air, and the joy he expreſſed at ſeeing me, requeſted the favour of his name, and appeared wonderfully embarraſſed when it was revealed.

The Marquis was extremely ſurprized, and apparently pleaſed, to diſcover who we were. He loaded my father with civilities, and made him promiſe to pay him a viſit at the Caſtle, adding, that he hoped we ſhould be good neighbours during his ſhort ſtay there; and that he ſhould avail himſelf of my father's permiſſion to ſee us often at the Priory.

I came home exceſſively chagrined with this rencontre. My father's looks were dark and myſterious. I obſerved him often knit his brows, walk up and down the room with folded arms, and frequently ſhake his head. I dared not aſk the reaſon of this change; and he retired to bed much earlier than uſual.

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The next day he went to pay a viſit to the Marquis, and I employed myſelf in writing to Solignac; but leſt I ſhould infect him with my uneaſineſs, I only mentioned that the Marquis de Rozancourt was at preſent our neighbour, without ſaying any thing of the ſtrange manner in which he had renewed his acquaintance with me.

My father came from the Caſtle in one of the Marquis's carriages, extremely pleaſed with his reception, and full of praiſes of the magnificence of the owner, and the great improvements he had begun making in the Caſtle; concluding with informing me, he had promiſed the Marquis we ſhould dine with him on the Monday following, and engage the Baroneſs to be of the party.

I now repented my not having revealed to that excellent friend the ſituation of my heart; but her relationſhip to the Count Zodiſki, and the ſuſpicion

of her being in his intereſt, had kept me ſilent on a ſubject that it was impoſſible ſhe ſhould now remain ignorant of. I could no longer diſguiſe my thoughts, but haſtening to her apartment, I told her my apprehenſions of the Marquis's deſigns, and with many tears acknowledged my preference for Solignac, and owned the reaſons which had made me ſo long reſerved. She replied with her uſual gentleneſs, that having ſeen the firſt time, when ſhe joked upon the ſubject, that it was unpleaſant to me, ſhe had forbore ſpeaking on what it was impoſſible for her not to know; that Solignac's virtues and agrémens entitled him to my preference; and that Zodiſki had ſo much real honour and generoſity, as to own my choice was properly placed, and to forget the character of rival in that of friend.—She told me, that in a late converſation with the

Count,

Count, he informed her my father was deeply in arrears to the late Marquis de Rozancourt for the hire of the Priory. Do not, ſaid ſhe, on that account, ſuffer your averſion to the Marquis's manners to be detrimental to your father's advantage. It may juſt *now* be greatly for his intereſt, that they ſhould remain upon good terms; and there can be no violent puniſhment in our dining one day at the Caſtle;—beſides, continued ſhe, laughing, why are you to be ſuch a vain girl, as to ſuppoſe he means more than civility by his fine ſpeeches? perhaps I ſhall have my ſhare; and you do not know but that I may lay ſiege to his heart, and be ſucceſsful in my attack.—I yielded to her reaſons, and was more induced to do ſo, becauſe the Marquis had not troubled us with a viſit. Some notes and meſſages had been carried by Bertrand from my father to the Caſtle, the purport of which I was ignorant of,

but I ſuppoſed them to relate to the money that was due.

Saturday came too ſoon. The Marquis ſent his coach and ſix to fetch us. I dreſſed myſelf to as little advantage as poſſible, and with a heavy heart attended my father and Madame de Luzane to the coach. In about an hour's time we arrived, through indifferent roads, to a long avenue of trees, which conducted us to a large old caſtle (with four turrets, and every appearance of antiquated grandeur) behind which ſome beautiful and extenſive woods were ſituated very advantageouſly.

The Marquis received us, with marks of profound reſpect, in the portico leading to the great hall, which was hung with eſcutcheons, bearing the blazoned arms of his family in genealogical order. The houſe was in tolerable repair; ſome of the apartments hung with tapeſtry, and others with pictures. The old

Marquis had been a man of taſte and ſcience, an encourager of the arts, and a collector of every thing curious. On one ſide the hall was a large dining-room, a library, and common parlour; on the other, a picture gallery, and a noble drawing-room. There were two pavilions annexed to the houſe, one of which was converted into a chapel, the other contained a room for exotics, a bath, and a ſmall receſs that looked into the garden, and was ſurrounded in the ſummer by roſes. The view from the houſe was limited to the park, and both park and garden were at that time in a very rude and uncultivated ſtate. We had a magnificent dinner. Two or three gentlemen were of the party, and the converſation was general and lively. The Marquis did the honours of his table with infinite grace and politeneſs; and when we came away, my father and

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the Baroneſs ſeemed much pleaſed with our reception.

The next day Monſieur de Rozancourt came to the Priory, and his attention was ſo equally divided between the Baroneſs and me, that I began to blame myſelf for my former ſuſpicions. I grieved to think that Madame de Luzane had but a fortnight longer to ſtay, and ſecretly wiſhed her elegant manners and ſenſible converſation might captivate the Marquis, and that ſhe could be induced again to enter the nuptial ſtate.

Monſieur de Rozancourt came often, and his conduct was ſuch as could not be diſapproved. He expreſſed much concern at the loſs of my friend's company when ſhe returned to Paris, which was in the month of February.

I have here an opportunity of making you more acquainted with the character

of

of Zodiſki, for the ſake of which I ſhall digreſs from my own ſtory, and ſay that, when you peruſe the account of his life (which I wrote from the ſtatement given me by the Baroneſs, and ſhall incloſe, in order that you may read it at this period of my narrative) it may introduce ſtill more to your acquaintance a man who I am proud to call my friend.

The Baroneſs had often promiſed to give me the hiſtory of Zodiſki, which ſhe had learnt from her late huſband; and ſome time after ſhe had left us, I received a packet from her, the contents of which I now, Madam, ſubmit to your peruſal.

" To Adeline de Courcy.

" The hiſtory of the man, who I have the honour to call my brother-in-law, need not be long: it requires no embelliſhments,

belliſhments, and ſhall be a mere epitome of a life that does honour to human nature.

" Zodiſki was the ſecond ſon of a Poliſh gentleman, who, though deſcended from an ancient houſe, had barely a ſufficiency to ſupport a family of five children. His wife, however, was a woman of high rank, by whoſe influence he obtained a poſt under government, and was enabled to give his children an excellent education, and to have the hope of placing them all advantageouſly in the world, through the means of his wife's relations.

" The young Zodiſki having early diſcovered a ſtrong propenſity for the military life, was put into the army almoſt as ſoon as he could draw a ſword, and in a few months after had the misfortune to loſe his father: but his own merit gained him the protection of powerful friends in the military line; and in the firſt battle that was fought after he had

had entered into the army, the courage and ſteadineſs that he diſplayed was noticed by the General who commanded the battalion, and mentioned to the King.

" His elder brother had about this time the imprudence to marry a young woman without any fortune, unknown to his mother, who, left a widow at the age of thirty, with beauty and talents to render her a captivating object, was pining under the obſcurity of her ſituation, and the narrowneſs of her income, for her huſband had little to leave either to his widow or children, and her proud relations (who were offended by her marriage) thought they had done enough in obtaining a poſt for her huſband, without encumbering themſelves with her children. Two of her daughters were placed in the Convent of St. Florian, near Cracow, where they took the veil, and her youngeſt ſon decided to go into

into the army as ſoon as he ſhould be old enough.

" Fortune, however, became favourable to the mother of Zodiſki, when ſhe was deſpairing of better times, and feeling, with the moſt poignant reſentment, the indiſcretion of her eldeſt ſon. Her ambitious and arbitrary ſpirit, which was checked during her huſband's life by the affection ſhe bore him, broke forth even in poverty, and ſufficiently proved, that nothing but the moſt violent paſſion could have taught ſo proud a ſpirit to degrade itſelf by a marriage unequal to her birth, and ſo inadequate to the expectations of her family. She declared that her ſon had forfeited every claim to her notice or affection, and commanded him never to ſee her more. This ſentence operated upon his youthful mind ſo forcibly, that he withdrew with his wife, and the ſmall ſum left him by his father, and ſettled in another country,

country, without letting his family or friends know the place of his retreat.

" Very ſoon after that event, the Baron de Luzane was ſent from the court of France on an embaſſy to Poland. His entry into Warſaw was magnificent, and as ſoon as he was ſettled in that city, the nobles vied with each other in entertaining him. Among others, a near relation of Zodiſki's mother had the honour to receive him for a gueſt, and the young widow, who was then come to Warſaw, was permitted to be one of the company.

" Whether a preſentiment of future greatneſs darted acroſs her mind, or that female vanity prompted her to excite admiration, I know not; but ſhe had taken uncommon pains to adorn a perſon that was naturally formed to inſpire both awe and love; for even when I knew her firſt, ſhe had the dignity of a Princeſs blended with all thoſe feminine graces

graces which are calculated to ſteal into the heart. She danced remarkably well; and the Baron, who was an enthuſiaſtic admirer of grace and beauty, no ſooner diſtinguiſhed her from the reſt, than he became curious to learn who ſhe was. The ſtory of her indigence gave him hopes that ſhe would liſten to his addreſſes on eaſy terms; and, with the freedom and gallantry of a courtier and a Frenchman, he was introduced, and ſoon acquainted her with the impreſſion ſhe had made upon his heart.

" At ſupper ſinging was propoſed. Her voice was remarkably melodious, and her taſte exquiſite; but ſhe remained ſilent till the Baron himſelf ſolicited her to ſing. She had learnt a little French air, the words of which ſhe could imperfectly repeat, and to this ſong ſhe gave ſo many little graces that the Baron was enraptured. He learnt her place of abode, and obtained permiſſion

miſſion to viſit her; but apprehenſive that the Baron's views might not be honourable, ſhe aſſumed the character of dignity, expreſſed alarm at the ambiguous ſtile of his addreſſes, and threatened to retire from Warſaw; ſhe even kept her word; but ſo far was ſhe from intending a long abſence, that ſhe carried a French ſervant into her retirement, and employed all her time in learning the language of the man to whoſe choice ſhe aſpired.

" Abſence increaſed the Baron's paſſion; and when ſhe thought proper to let him know the place of her retirement, he made her propoſals of marriage, and was accepted.

" Very ſoon after that event he was recalled, and his bride left Poland, exulting in the ſucceſs of a project which had united her to a man of high birth, and of good though not ſplendid fortune. In about a year after this mar-

riage ſhe had a ſon, who grew up to be what the fondeſt parents could deſire. He ſucceeded to the Baron's title and eſtate very early in life ;—we were acquainted from the time of childhood—we loved each other—we were married, and till the hour of death, which, alas! happened in two years after we were united, he never occaſioned me a moment's ſorrow. But I will paſs over this mournful event in few words, that I may not wound my own feelings and diſtreſs your's. My mother and Madame de Luzane having ſo long lived on terms of friendſhip, I had frequently met Zodiſki, who was occaſionally with his mother in France, and for whom my huſband had the moſt perfect eſteem and brotherly affection. From him I learnt the hiſtory of this wonderful man, to which it is now neceſſary that I ſhould return.

" When

" When he was a boy, learning military exerciſes at the academy at Cracow, he formed an acquaintance with Count Polnitz, who lived at Sandomir, on the Banks of the Viſtula, and was ſent to the ſame academy; he was only a year older than Zodiſki; and this acquaintance ſoon grew into a very ſtrict friendſhip, which laſted till Polnitz went on his travels.

" This young man he met again, ſeveral years after, (when the ſecond campaign he had been engaged in was over); their intimacy was renewed, and Zodiſki imparted to him his paſſion for Radzina, the daughter of Koſſuco, an officer who was lately dead, and whoſe opinion of his honour, and certainty of his affection, had induced him to bequeath this lovely orphan to him for a wife, (as ſoon as ſhe ſhould be two years older,) and in the mean time had committed her to the care of an ancient

female relation, who reſided in a cottage on the plain of Vola, three miles from Warſaw.

" Zodiſki had conducted himſelf with ſo much activity, ſpirit, and judgment, during the two campaigns, and had evinced ſo much perſonal bravery on ſeveral occaſions, that the General Lubienſki, old and experienced as he was, diſtinguiſhed the merit of his young officer, and preſaged, that his riſing genius would add luſtre to the Poliſh name. His regard and eſteem for him increaſed ſo much, that he offered him his only daughter in marriage, with a fortune that might have dazzled the eyes of an ambitious man, even if the lady had been deficient in beauty or mental accompliſhments. The liberal ſoul of Zodiſki never could ſtoop to falſehood; if his heart had not been engaged to Radzina, he would not have accepted the daughter of Lubienſki for the ſake of riches

riches only—he ſcorned diſſimulation—though his future proſpects very much depended on the favour of his General, he did not heſitate, but with manly candour, while he acknowledged his obligation, he declined the honour of an alliance, which his preference for another forbade him to accept.

"The cheek of Lubienſki fluſhed for a moment with indignation and wounded pride, at having ſtooped to propoſe his daughter to a man ſo much his inferior, and who, to his great ſurprize, rejected ſuch an offer; but his abhorrence of deceit, and his paſſion for diſintereſted virtue, overpowered the momentary ſenſe of anger, and with the honeſt warmth of a true ſoldier's heart, he eſteemed the ſincerity of Zodiſki's character, and continued to be his friend and patron.

"The winter fled away on downy wings; for the young warrior was happy in the

ſociety of Radzina, and charmed to obſerve her progreſs in every uſeful and elegant branch of learning, the pleaſure ſhe felt in ſeeing and converſing with him, the deference ſhe paid to his opinion, and the pride ſhe took in his military fame.

" Spring came, and the troops were called again to action. Zodiſki took leave of his miſtreſs, juſt after his friend Polnitz was arrived at Warſaw to witneſs his happineſs, and applaud his choice.

" The Poles were ſucceſsful in the firſt engagement; they drove the enemy with great ſlaughter from the field, and purſued them far into the country. On their return, as they were paſſing thro' an obſcure village, Zodiſki obſerved a little ragged boy, whoſe features ſtruck him with ſuch a reſemblance to his long abſent brother, that he could not reſiſt the curioſity he felt to queſtion him— the boy pointed to a miſerable looking

houſe, where he ſaid his parents lived. A pale, ſickly young woman appeared at the door, with an infant at her breaſt: ſhe begged to know the ſtranger's name. When he ſaid, Zodiſki, a faint ſhriek came from her lips, which brought her huſband to the door. He, in the diſguiſe of a menial dreſs, was eaſily recognized by the affectionate Zodiſki, who, leaping from his horſe, teſtified the ſincere delight it gave him to embrace a brother, who had ſubmitted to a ſervile ſtate in order to ſupport his drooping family, rather than apply to his friends, when he too well knew he had brought himſelf into that ſtate of poverty by his own imprudence.

"After contributing what he could to the relief of indigence, Zodiſki haſtened after his victorious troops; but in their march they met with a large detachment of the enemy, which had been planted in ambuſh in order to intercept

the weary Poles; theſe aſſailed them with great violence, and like men who knew their own advantage. The King's brave nephew was at the head of the Poliſh troops, ſeconded by the cool and determined Lubienſki; but the valour of the one, and the experience of the other, were inſufficient in this deſperate engagement. The firſt had his horſe ſhot under him, and would have been a prey to the enemy, had not Zodiſki flown to his aſſiſtance: his voice re-animated the drooping ſoldiers; his intrepid air encouraged them to hope for conqueſt: they caught the enthuſiaſm of his courage; again they attacked the enemy, and after a deſperate ſtruggle put them to flight.

" When this action of Zodiſki's was reported to the King, he made him a Count, inveſted him with the order of Knighthood, and promoted him to the rank of Colonel.

" That

"That year, as the troops were returning towards Warſaw, Zodiſki received letters from France, mentioning his mother being dangerouſly ill, and requeſting to ſee him. He obtained leave of abſence —had juſt time to behold his Radzina— to deſire he might hear frequently from her and Polnitz, and to bid them both adieu.

"When he arrived at Paris, he found his mother ſlowly recovering—the ſight of a beloved and affectionate ſon contributed to reſtore her—he had the ſatisfaction to ſee her happy in the regard of a deſerving huſband, ſurrounded with every comfort, and many luxuries; and to perceive in her little ſon the dawnings of that amiable diſpoſition which afterwards made him univerſally beloved; while the young Luzane looked up to Zodiſki with reverential love, as to a ſecond parent, whoſe example he was to emulate.

"After

"After ſome time ſpent thus happily, love and glory recalled Zodiſki to Poland. He flew to his Radzina before ſhe had heard of his arrival; he found her changed in manner—languid and melancholy—reſerved and thoughtful—he ſought his friend for ſome time in vain—at length they met, but he was no longer the cheerful and open-hearted Polnitz that he knew before. Embarraſſment ſat on his countenance, and reſtraint was in his converſation. A ſuſpicion aroſe in Zodiſki's boſom, but he repelled it as an injuſtice to his friend—yet why ſhould both Radzina and Polnitz be changed?—their letters had not expreſſed any alteration in their ſentiments—ſome miſtake might cauſe this eſtrangement.—The next day he went to the houſe where Radzina lived, reſolved to obtain an eclairciſſement—ſhe was not to be found—the female friend with whom ſhe reſided, terrified

at

at her elopement, uttered the name of Polnitz—it was ſufficient for Zodiſki—he inſtantly flew to ſeek him, and met this falſe friend in the ſtreet—there, with all the fury of a lover, and indignation of an injured ſoldier, he charged him with having concealed the daughter of Koſluco. Polnitz changed colour, but denied the charge. Nay, ſaid the determined Zodiſki, it is in vain to pretend you know not where ſhe is—I cannot give you credit there—it is a cowardly evaſion.

" At theſe words Polnitz, drawing his ſword, exclaimed, " Who dares impeach my honour is a villain!"—At that moment ſome people were ſeen coming haſtily down the ſtreet, therefore Zodiſki ſaid—" Offended honour, on which ever ſide it reſts, ſhall be obeyed; but this is not a time; two hours hence I will meet you with piſtols at the north entrance

entrance of the wood of Bielany"—at theſe words they parted.

" On returning home Zodiſki found a paper, the hand-writing of which he knew too well; he opened it with great emotion, and read a letter, the copy of which I am enabled to ſhew you.

" To Zodiski.

" From the Monaſtery at Mariemont.

" Had I been aware of your arrival, I ſhould have ſought this retreat ſooner, and have avoided an interview that wounded me to the ſoul. Oh! Zodiſki! you deſerved that I ſhould act with candour; yet my fear of offending your ſtern virtue has induced me to diſſemble. I thought I loved you, till I became acquainted with Polnitz. When I made the fatal diſcovery of the progreſs he was gradually gaining in my affection, I ſtrove to conquer a preference that I diſapproved,

diſapproved, being conſcious that I ought to fulfil my engagements to Zodiſki—but how was I to fulfil them?—could I offer him a divided heart?—could I impoſe upon his honourable unſuſpecting nature, and preſent him with a hand that muſt tremble at the altar?—I knew not how to act—Polnitz ſaw the conflict in my mind——he fled from me—but love, more powerful than reaſon, brought him back.

" When the time drew near for you to return, I wrote to the Abbeſs of this Convent, to requeſt an aſylum in theſe ſacred walls. I conſidered, that in order to be juſt to you, I muſt be cruel to Polnitz and myſelf; but I concealed my intention from him, and could not reſolve to leave the man I too fondly loved, till compelled by your ſudden arrival to fly from him for ever. He knows not the place of my retreat. I conjure you to conceal it from him,

and

and to believe that the heart which Zodiſki once thought worthy his regard, can puniſh itſelf to pay a debt of honour. Farewell.

"RADZINA."

"Greatly agitated by the peruſal of this letter, Zodiſki wrote as follows:

"Though I have a ſword to puniſh treachery, I have alſo a heart open to the feelings of humanity. Radzina! you have wronged me moſt in ſo long withholding your confidence from me. Much as I loved you, I could have pitied an involuntary paſſion—I could even have promoted your happineſs at the expence of mine. My love was of no common kind; it was founded on eſteem and confidence. I am now puniſhed for being too ſecure; and am taught by a friend and a miſtreſs, that conſtancy does not often belong to woman,

woman, nor faith to man. But my regard for the memory of Kosluco here checks my pen. I must remember, (painfully remember) that you are his daughter. Your letter is arrived just in time to prevent bitter consequences; had it been sent an hour later, I might have deprived you of your lover; but you, Madam! restrain the arm of vengeance, and, in the form of peace, I give you to my rival—may his future conduct prove that he deserves you.

"Zodiski."

After dispatching this letter to the Convent, he went to meet the destroyer of his happiness—he found him true to the appointment, and called on him to fire. Polnitz demurred. "Fire first," said he, "I am the offender, though not a coward. If to possess the heart of Radzina, and to adore her, be a crime, I confess my guilt; but the baseness of concealing

concealing her I deny. The appellation of coward never yet aſſailed my ears unpuniſhed—it wounds me doubly from the tongue of Zodiſki—yet from him I could bear much—our former friendſhip —" Ceaſe," cried Zodiſki, " that recollection comes too late—the name of friend excites my indignation; it is a name polluted by duplicity and ingratitude; to be brief, you have wronged me cruelly; but I have in one inſtance accuſed you falſely—we meet, therefore, on equal terms, and theſe piſtols muſt adjuſt our difference. Fire then with me," he ſaid, and raiſed his arm. At the ſame moment Polnitz fired into the air—but what was his ſurprize, when, inſtead of hearing the report of Zodiſki's piſtol, he diſcovered that it was not charged.

" Ah!" cried he, in a voice of keen emotion, " did not Zodiſki ſay we met on

equal

equal terms ?—Oh Heaven! did he mean me for his murderer ?"

" No !" replied Zodiſki, with an air of dignity and calmneſs, " I had branded you with the name of coward—it was but juſt that I ſhould give you an opportunity to refute the charge—my life was of little importance—your death would have availed me nothing—and I could not aim at the heart of Radzina, which would have been pierced through your's.—Go to the Convent at Mariemont—there you will find the Lady—wed her and be happy—but let me never ſee you more."

" So ſaying, he quitted the aſtoniſhed Polnitz, and immediately joined the army, leaving his friend and miſtreſs to admire his generoſity, and unite their fates.

" In the battles that ſucceeded, Zodiſki fought with his accuſtomed bravery ; but in the laſt engagement he had

the miſery to ſee his young brother (who generally was near him, and proud to copy his example) at a diſtance, and in imminent danger. He flew to ſave him, but at that moment received a wound in his ſword arm, which diſabled him from affording his aſſiſtance; and though a party of his followers ruſhed in to defend the gallant youth, it was too late—mortally wounded, he expired in the arms of his heroic brother—there the warrior was loſt in the tender feelings of humanity—Zodiſki wept, and forgot his own wound till his mighty ſoul, rouzed into fury, urged him to revenge his brother—he then found himſelf diſabled, even from the power to hold his ſword, and, fainting with pain, was carried off by his ſurrounding ſoldiers. There ended his military career. He was brought back to the camp, and nurſed by the venerable Lubienſki with all the tenderneſs of a father. Polnitz came

came ſeveral times during his confinement, and ſolicited to be admitted, but Zodiſki conſtantly refuſed, ſaying, after having pardoned him, his wiſh was to forget him.

" The lovers had the delicacy and conſideration to defer their marriage till he retired from Poland, which was as ſoon as his wound permitted him to travel. Senſible that he could no longer render any ſervices to his country, he deſired to retire, and, on pretence of travelling, quitted Poland with an intention never to return. He brought into France the ſmall fortune left him by his father, and devoted his time to a mother who was proud of him, and to a brother whoſe ſtudies he was ſo capable of ſuperintending. If I was to relate what his tenderneſs had been to that parent and brother, it would fill a volume. He found his mother again a widow, in need of his care, aſſiſtance, and advice; his

young brother required a friend and guardian: ably he performed his duty to them both. The reſpect in which he is held at Paris you muſt have obſerved, and it is his own fault that he has not filled ſome places of importance; but wealth is not his object, and freedom is.

"With a mind thus great, he has a tenderneſs of ſoul truly aſtoniſhing; and what he ſuffered in attending on his dear brother in his laſt illneſs, is more than I can deſcribe; for his affliction appeared equal to my own. The character he bears in Poland will be evinced by this letter, written to Madame de Luzane, by Lubienſki, ſoon after his departure, and of which I preſerved a tranſlated copy.

"To the Baroness de Luzane.

"While you, Madam, are rejoicing in the arrival of your excellent ſon, he is regretted in Poland as a man and a ſoldier.

ſoldier. His Majeſty ſpeaks of him with the praiſe that is ſo much his due—even the courtiers cannot but commend him; and in the army his loſs is irreparable. The common ſoldiers, who adored his magnanimity in battle, and experienced his benevolence in private life, mention him with tears, and have abſolutely contributed to raiſe an humble memorial of Zodiſki's valour on the ſpot where he received his wound in the defence of a brother. Is not this a prouder trophy than the moſt elaborate work that art or expence can frame?—To the noble mind of Zodiſki I know how impreſſive ſuch a circumſtance will be. It is the tribute paid by honeſty to valour and virtue—of courſe it muſt be grateful to the brave man who is thus immortalized.

"Why will he not return to a country that cheriſhes the remembrance of his virtue?—Though he can no longer ex-

 erciſe

ercise his arm in the defence of Poland, he can assist her with his counsels in the Senate; but it is not for me to judge.—That he may be happy wherever he resides, is not only the wish of my heart, but that of every man who honours merit.

" I remain, Madam,
" with great respect,
" your faithful Friend and Servant,
" STANISLAUS LUBIENSKI."

" To this, continued the Baroness, I will subjoin two letters that I found among Monsieur de Luzane's papers, written by Zodiski; one is the copy of what he sent to the King of Poland (when he was ill of his wound) in consequence of his Majesty having offered him a pension; the other contains instructions to his brother, which might be serviceable to the present set of wild young men; for these gay characters require advice

advice and direction more than my husband did, who was naturally good, and too wise to suffer his heart to be warped from the rules of duty and honour by the arts of others, or the license of the times.

" This is the letter Zodiski wrote to the King of Poland, while he was confined by his wound in General Lubienski's tent.

" SIRE,

" The trifling services I have had the good fortune to perform, I considered as a debt which I owed to the best of masters, and to my country: your Majesty is pleased to over-rate those services. I am proud to bear a badge of honour conferred upon me by my Sovereign, which I thought a sufficient reward; but as your Majesty has been graciously pleased to offer me a pension, I hope you

will allow me the liberty of ſaying, that if you will transfer it from me to my eldeſt brother (who has a family to ſupport) I ſhall eſteem it as the greateſt mark of my Sovereign's goodneſs and condeſcenſion. I truſt your Majeſty will pardon the preſumption of this requeſt—it is the laſt favour I ſhall aſk from your indulgence; for I no longer can pretend to ſerve your Majeſty.—Diſabled for life from fulfilling the duties of a ſoldier's ſtation as I ought, it is impoſſible for me to keep my commiſſion in the army; I therefore beg leave to reſign; and intreat your Majeſty to believe, that in every place and every circumſtance I ſhall with pride recollect the marks I have received of your approbation, and feel that attachment, loyalty, and affection, which is due to ſuch a King.

" I have the honour to ſubſcribe myſelf,

ſelf, with ſentiments of profound reſpect, your Majeſty's dutiful and grateful ſubject,

" ZODISKI."*

LETTER from ZODISKI

To the Baron de LUZANE.

" MY DEAR THEODORE,

" THE death of your excellent father, and the early age at which you ſucceed to his title and eſtate, renders it neceſſary for me to ſupply his place as well as I can, and to make uſe of, perhaps, more than a brother's privilege in directing your conduct. I am going to travel for

* It is neceſſary to add, that the King, highly pleaſed with the diſintereſted conduct of Zodiſki, ſettled a conſiderable penſion upon his brother's family; ſince which time a wealthy uncle of his (by the mother's ſide) having had the misfortune to loſe an only ſon, has adopted Zodiſki's brother, who is now in very flouriſhing circumſtances.

ſeveral

ſeveral months; and though I leave you under the roof of a tender mother, and with a wiſe preceptor (whoſe age and learning muſt induce you to reſpect him) I cannot omit giving you a leſſon of advice, both for your preſent and future conduct in life. I have hitherto had the ſatisfaction to ſee your young and docile mind open to every good impreſſion. Your ſtrict adherence to truth, your candour and good-nature, cannot be too much commended. If your ardent ſpirit has ever betrayed you into ſtarts of paſſion, your good ſenſe always has brought you back to mildneſs and reaſon; I, therefore, do not work upon a ſtubborn ſoil—it will, I am ſure, repay me for all my care and labour.

"The time will, ere long, arrive, when you will be no more treated as a boy. I ſee with anxiety, that on your firſt appearance in the great world you will be expoſed to many dangers, to which

which the young, credulous, and affluent muſt ever be ſubject; and the higher their rank in life, the more perilous their ſituation at that period of it when there are knaves ready to plunder the unwary, temptations to aſſault the weak, paraſites to flatter the wealthy. I do not mean, my Theodore, to write you a ſermon, or to be a harſh monitor; I can make allowances for the ardour and volatility of youth; I know that men muſt be ſubject to paſſions; but I would have them alſo ſubject to reaſon; and on this I ſhall ground my treatiſe.

" In the firſt place, I wiſh you to avoid idleneſs; many a young perſon has been ruined for want of occupation; the mind gets into a ſtate of dull inactivity, or turns from what was perhaps its natural bias to bad habits. When it is uſefully employed, a train of miſchief and miſeries may be kept aloof.

" I charge you to be particularly cautious

tious in the choice of friends. I know numbers of young men born with ſhining talents, and calculated by nature and education to make a diſtinguiſhed figure in the world, who have ſunk into the meaneſt of characters from the bad advice and example of worthleſs profligate friends. Aſſociate with the amiable; if they happen to be ſenſible as well as good, ſo much the better, but of the two I would prefer a good man to a brilliant companion.

" When you are with men of learning, (which I hope you will think it your intereſt to be whenever you have the opportunity) do not preſume to talk upon topics which they muſt underſtand far better than yourſelf. If you do, be aſſured you will infallibly betray your ignorance, and be deemed a fool, or a pert forward puppy; in one inſtance they will regard you with pity, in the other with diſguſt and contempt.

" Much

" Much may be learnt in the ſociety of men of letters and men of the world, by attending ſilently to their diſcourſe. If you are aſked your opinion, give it with the modeſty of a boy joined to the firmneſs of a man. I would from this be underſtood to mean that medium between baſhfulneſs and boldneſs, which is recommendatory to every young perſon. It is difficult to ſteer between theſe two points; and, perhaps, ſome commerce with the world (which is the beſt ſchool for manners) may be neceſſary to ſhew a young man the difference between eaſe and impudence—an open cheerful manner is pleaſant in youth, but forwardneſs and familiarity muſt be diſagreeable. If you differ in ſentiments with another, do not argue with vehemence or inſolence; and if his opinions ſeem to carry moſt weight with them, do not bluſh to be convinced by your diſputant.

" Pay

"Pay a particular deference to perſons who are older than yourſelf; compaſſionate age and infirmity; the aged in their turn will make allowances for the miſtakes of the ignorant and young. Receive advice with attention, reproof without petulance, and little diſappointments without violent chagrin. We muſt all meet with vexations, for life will be chequered both with ſtorms and ſunſhine. We are born with paſſions, and though is eaſy to talk of ſtoical indifference, it is not ſo eaſy to ſubdue natural inclinations; I muſt ſuppoſe you to have the feelings of a man, but I would have you learn to control them, and while you feel the force of paſſion, be equal to the taſk of ſubduing it by the power of principle.

"I wiſh you to be neither a coxcomb or a ſloven—the firſt is unworthy a man of ſenſe, the other renders him diſguſting to delicacy. To be neat in your perſon is commendable; and it is as particular,

ticular, and often not leſs affected, to be out of the faſhion, as to be in the extreme of it; appear therefore like other young men of your own rank, as far as may be conſiſtent with manlineſs and ſenſe, but avoid all abſurdities of dreſs.

" Be dutiful and affectionate to your mother; remember how much you owe to a parent, and treat her with the reſpect of a ſon, and the confidence of a friend; be kind and obliging to your relations, and ſerve them when you can. Be, as I before ſaid, cautious in the intimacies you form, but ſteady in your friendſhip when you are ſure it is well founded. Do not liſten to the voice of flattery; and do not arrogate any merit to yourſelf, becauſe you happen to be born a man of rank and fortune. I know not any advantage a perſon of ſuperior rank has, ſo important to ſociety as the good example he may give to others, which wears more eclat from

elevated ſtation than it would have in an humbler walk of life; and the beſt thing that attends *fortune* is the power of contributing to the happineſs or comfort of others.

" Do not deſpiſe your inferiors—on the contrary, remember that civility is due to all ranks of people, and do by them as you would be done by. Think how galling it muſt be to a feeling mind to bear the ſupercilious impertinent frown of a man, who, though many ſteps higher on ambition's ladder, may be very inferior in mental qualities to him whom he treats with ſcorn. In my opinion, it is not only tyranny, but the certain mark of a contracted mind, for a great man to treat a perſon ill who dares not reſent it. I think it is like treading on a worm, becauſe you know it can neither hurt you nor defend itſelf.—But your's is not a little mind, my Theodore, and it is a humane one; I there-

I therefore will not affront you by ſaying more on a mode of conduct that only ſuits the proud or narrow-minded, who can ſport with the feelings of a dependant, or deſpiſe the poor; for I have obſerved you kind to your ſervants, civil to tradeſmen, and generous to the indigent.

" I will now ſpeak of thoſe follies to which young men are liable, either from their own inclinations or the bad example of others. In early life we look for amuſement, and pleaſure preſents itſelf in a variety of forms, before young people can well diſcriminate between what is allowable and what is otherwiſe. A quick fancy and warm paſſions hurry them very often into the vortex of diſſipation, and they frequently find the bad effects of libertiniſm when it is too late to reeal the time miſpent; but loſt friends, injured reputation, and ruined health, will then be

ſubjects of regret, if they reflect at all. I have often been ſurprized to hear men habituate themſelves to ſwearing, till they forget the meaning of the words they ſpeak, and make uſe of them merely as expletives. Such a practice, in my mind, does not become a gentleman or a man of ſenſe: every blackguard can ſwear, though he cannot act the gentleman; why then are we to pay ſo bad a compliment to our underſtandings as to put them on a level with the loweſt capacities in this vulgar inſtance?

"I am told there are ſome alſo who will degrade themſelves by holding converſation of the loweſt kind, and ſubſtituting buffoonery and groſs expreſſions for wit. This aſtoniſhes me. Why ſhould the hilarity of a ſocial meeting produce diſcourſe among gentlemen that would be found in the next alehouſe? Believe me, he who accuſtoms himſelf

himſelf to converſe like a libertine or a free thinker, will be apt to live like one, and practiſe the vices he bluſhes not to talk of.

" Wine may betray men into much inconſiſtency and folly, if they ſuffer it to degrade their reaſon, till they are on a level with the brutes; beware therefore of hard drinking; it debaſes the mind, and is injurious to the conſtitution.

" Gaming is ſo pernicious in its conſequences, and ſo baneful to repoſe, that I think you will never be a gameſter—the faro table and the turf are replete with miſchief—the winner, after many hours of anxiety, enriches himſelf with another's property only to riſk it again—the loſer carries to his pillow thoſe agonies that ſpring from ſelf-created misfortune, which, perhaps, involves his family in diſtreſs, if not in abſolute ruin.

" I now come to the admiration of

women. It is natural for every man of taſte or feeling to be ſenſible of the attractive charms that belong to every beautiful and elegant woman; but weak indeed muſt he be who does not wiſh for ſomething more than a picture, which fades beneath the hand of time. A captivating face has often been the maſk to conceal much deformity of mind. I grant that beauty is a letter of recommendation which we are all deſirous of peruſing; but we muſt not truſt to its ſincerity. I know by painful experience how wrong it is, my dear brother, to place great confidence in appearances; and a decided beauty is too much in love with herſelf to be content without a train of admirers.

" Cruelty is ſo repugnant to your nature that I need ſcarcely warn you againſt the crime of ſeduction; you cannot wiſh to poiſon the happineſs of another, or to rob her of the *eſteem* that ſhe

ſhe may have held in the opinion of the world. It is an act of treachery that you can never atone for to the unhappy object of your licentious paſſion. I hope I do not reaſon too much like a philoſopher in ſaying this—I ſurely ſpeak the ſentiments only of a man of honour. Avoid the acquaintance of immoral women, as much as the diſcourſe of profligate men. The ſociety of the virtuous part of the ſex poliſhes the manners and improves the mind, but that of women, who are a diſgrace to their ſex, renders men awkward in the compauy of the virtuous, awed by their ſuperiority, embarraſſed by their civility, and afraid of their obſervations. When you meet with a woman whom you are certain is worthy of your affection, one whoſe temper accords with your own, whoſe manners are gentle, and whoſe converſation is pleaſant, think her a prize worth obtaining, even

if ſhe brings no dower but her merit. I could wiſh you to marry one who is your *equal*; but we ſeldom can find every thing we wiſh united in the ſame perſon, therefore if ſhe is by birth a gentlewoman, and by education fitted to be your companion, rejoice that you can afford to pleaſe yourſelf, and think it is no diſgrace to your hereditary grandeur to elevate ſuch a woman to the rank of Baroneſs de Luzane. I would infinitely rather ſee you married to a private perſon than to a fine lady or a wit; the one thinks herſelf entitled to figure away in the gay world, on the idle pretence that her huſband can afford it, and it is neceſſary for his dignity that ſhe ſhould make an appearance ſuitable to the ſphere in which fortune has placed her; ſhe therefore plunges into the ſtream of faſhion, and lives for the world rather than for her huſband; the other feeds upon the misfortunes,

misfortunes, weakneſſes, and errors of others—not even the name of relation or friend can check the malignant whiſpers of the wit—ſhe aſſaſſinates reputation, ſows diſſenſion, betrays the credulous, and ridicules the ſage; no one is ſecure againſt her baneful influence; ſhe is, like the upah tree, deſtructive to all who come within her reach; and this is done for the ſake of amuſing herſelf at the expence of others; for the vain glory of being a wit and an agreeable companion.

"The femme preciuſe I alſo think is beſt in her own circle of female idolaters, who offer incenſe to the ſhrine of her ſuperior learning. A woman of this ſtamp cannot deſcend from her altitudes to the common offices of a good wife and attentive mother. If ſhe aſſociates with her huſband, perhaps ſhe contends with him on knotty points of learning that are beyond her reach, pretends to move before him in the paths of ſci-

ence, diſcourſes upon politics, decides upon pamphlets, ſets up for a reformer or a Stoic, and when ſhe would be a female Socrates, becomes a Xantippe.

"From a female politician I always turn with diſguſt. Why will women ſtep out of their own characters? I admire ſenſible intelligent beings, whatever their ſex may be; but I abhor affectation, and would have women confined to their own province, exerciſing the mild virtues that belong to domeſtic life. If they have genius let them cultivate it, let them improve their minds by reading; but a female philoſopher, a diſputant in petticoats, is a conceited maſculine character that does not ſuit my taſte.

"I need not go farther—you are too young for me to think it neceſſary now to tell you the duties of a huſband or a parent; and when you arrive at thoſe characters, the recollection of what your

own

own father's conduct was in domeſtic life will be an unerring rule for you to follow.

" I will now give you a few more general rules for your firſt ſetting out in the world. I particularly beg you to be ſcrupulouſly attentive to the payment of your debts, and I adviſe you to be exact in your accompts. It is a great advantage to every man (whatever his ſtation in life may be) to know the ſituation of his own circumſtances, and underſtand how to manage for himſelf, that in caſe of any emergency he may be his own ſteward; beſides this, if a perſon cannot early bear the trouble of buſineſs, and habituate himſelf to it, he will be apt to ſink into a mere *man of pleaſure*, the moſt inſignificant character in life, and which the meaneſt capacity is equal to, whether it be in the form of a fine gentleman, a bon vivant, or a ſportſman. Exceſs is

equally

equally to be avoided, whether in the purſuit of faſhionable amuſements, the fox chace, or the feaſt.

" I counſel you againſt prodigality. Though I deteſt parſimony, I know the difference between liberality and extravagance, and am convinced that many a boy, who in reality was merely prudent, has been laughed out of his diſcretion by the raillery of his companions, and in the end ruined, from a falſe ſhame of not doing the ſame as others, who perhaps had thrice his fortune; for ridicule acts like a potent ſpell upon the mind of youth, and boys are apt to think it is manly to drink, ſwear, and ſpend their money freely, becauſe others that are called *lads of ſpirit* do ſo.

" It may perhaps not become *me* to counſel you againſt *duelling*—there are occaſions, I too well know, when patience and forbearance cannot remain inhabitants of an honourable boſom—

there

there are ſome wrongs that ſhould not tamely be ſubmitted to, others that nature cannot endure; but when I ſee boys ready to aim at each other's life on every frivolous occaſion, proſtituting the name of honour to gratify their pride, their paſſion, or their caprice, I own my blood boils with indignation at a ſhew of courage in ſo mean a cauſe.

"And now, my dear Theodore, I have nothing more to add, but to enforce thoſe principles which have already been inculcated ſo ſtrongly in your mind, that it is ſcarce neceſſary for me to act as an auxiliary to their effect.

"I ſhould in the former part of this letter have mentioned religion, had I not known that your young mind was early ſtored with thoſe precepts that make the life of a Chriſtian reſpectable, and his death happy. The ſentiments you have imbibed of reverential love for your Divine Maker, and charity for mankind,

mankind, leave me no doubt that you will act up to that character I wish you to bear. Christianity will support you in every distress, in every difficulty, and make you an honour to your country and your friends. I trust that the manner in which you have been brought up has rendered your principles firm as adamant, and not to be shaken by bad advice or example. I am sure your understanding is too good for you to conform to any thing that is wrong, because it is the *fashion*; weak must that mind be which leans to absurdity from such a foolish cause. Let the worshippers of fashion sneer and laugh—it is no want of courage to bear the feeble arrows of ridicule, which never fail to recoil on the person who drew the bow.

" Loyalty to your king, and love to your country, I need not, I think, recommend to the son of a man who was zealously attached to both.

" In

" In politics be conſiſtent, firm, but moderate. Let no party prejudices render you unjuſt, no private pique render you illiberal. Support your opinions with manly ſpirit, but preſerve your temper.

" And now, my dear Theodore, I have got to the end of my admonitions; if they prove uſeful to you in the ſmalleſt degree, I ſhall rejoice moſt ſincerely—at all events I ſhall have the ſatisfaction of reflecting, that I have endeavoured to adviſe you well, according to the beſt of my abilities.

" Your affectionate friend
" and brother,

" ZODISKI."

Thus end the papers ſent to me by Madame de Luzane, which will make

you, my dear Madam, thoroughly acquainted with Zodiſki, whoſe name will be frequently repeated in the memoirs of my life, to which it is now time for me to return; I will therefore purſue the thread of a ſad narrative.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.