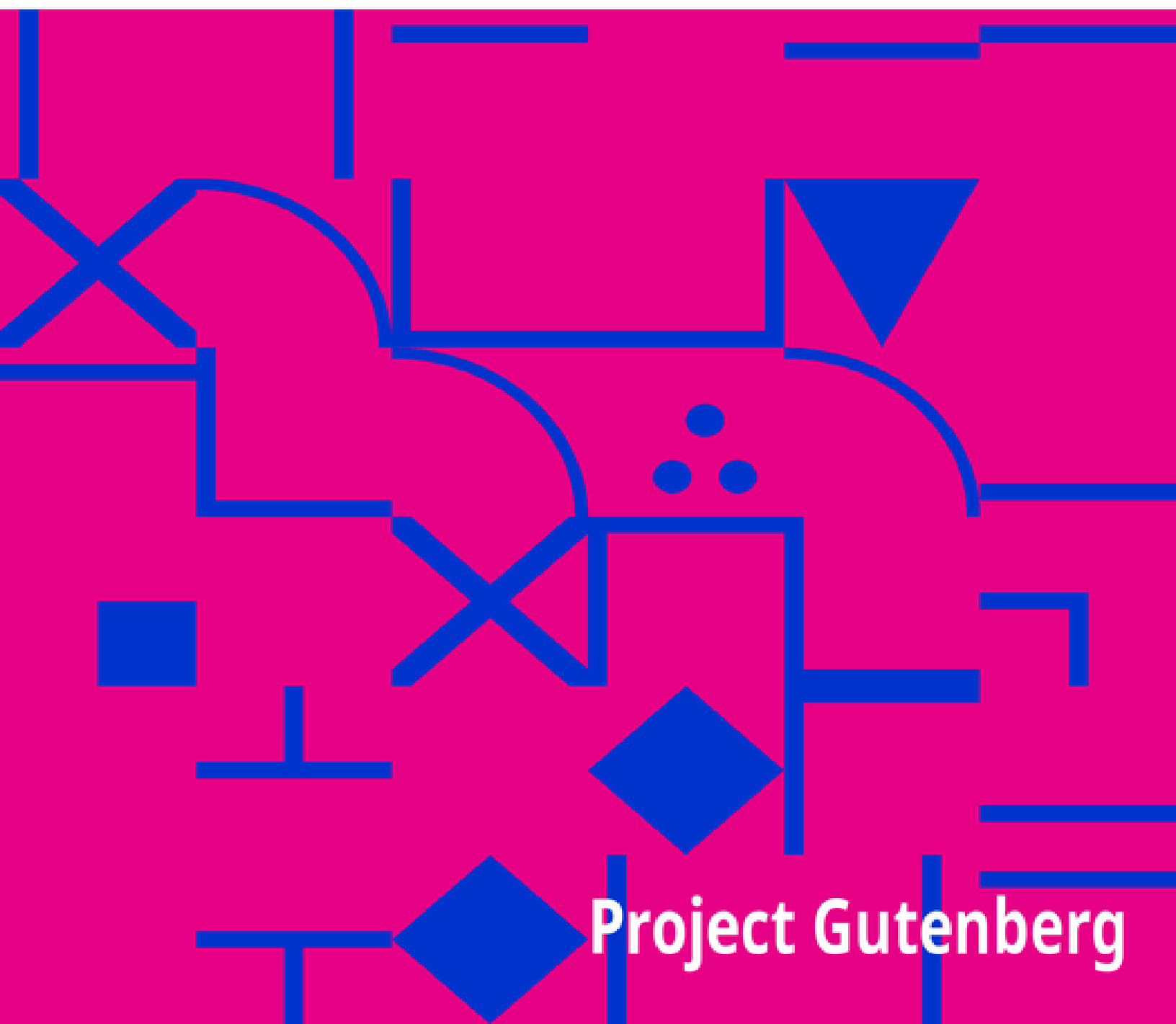


The Devil's Elixir, Vol. 1 (of 2)

E. T. A. Hoffmann



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THE DEVIL'S ELIXIR.

**FROM THE GERMAN OF
E. T. A. HOFFMANN.**

*In diesem Jahre wandelte auch her Deuvel offentlich auf den Strassen
von Berlin.——*

Haftit

Mi

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10

43.

In that yeare, the Deville was alsoe seene walking publiclie on the
streetes of Berline.——

VOL. I.

**WILLIAM BLACKWOOD, EDINBURGH:
AND T. CADELL, LONDON.**

1829.

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THE DEVIL'S ELIXIR.

CHAPTER I.

My life, from my fourth to my sixteenth year, was spent at a lonely farmhouse, on the banks of the river Saale, near the Cistercian Monastery of Kreuzberg. The house, though not large, had once been the residence of a baronial family, that was now extinct, and of whose representatives strange stories were narrated. Of course, therefore, their castle was gloomy; of course, also, said to be haunted, and its immediate environs were in keeping with the character of the principal mansion.

There was, for example, a garden in the old style, with steps and terrace walks, now ruined and neglected; thick hedges of yew and cypress, with trees cut into fantastic shapes, which the present owner had not found leisure, or perhaps had not permission, to destroy. The surrounding country, however, at some distance, was very beautiful, presenting a fine diversity of hill and dale, rock, wood, and water. The situation of the Cistercian Convent, too, is particularly admired; but in the recollections which I am thus commencing, rapid, simple narrative must be my leading object; I have no time for diffuse and verbose description.

Being an only child, I was left much alone, and it is therefore not to be wondered at, that even at this early age, I should have exemplified an undue developement of the faculty of imagination, and betrayed singularities of thought and conduct, with proportionate defects in the more useful qualities of prudence and judgment. It is requisite to observe, however, that I was not born in this neighbourhood, but at the convent of the Holy Lime-Tree in Prussia, of which place, even at this day, I seem to retain the most accurate reminiscence. That I should be able to describe scenes and events which happened in my earliest infancy, need not be considered inexplicable, as I have heard so much of them from the narratives of others, that an impression was of course very powerfully made on my imagination, or rather, the impressions once made, have never been suffered to decay, like cyphers carved on a tree, which some fond lover fails not at frequent intervals to revisit and to renovate. Of my father's rank or station in the world, I know little or nothing. From all that I have heard, he must have

been a person of considerable experience and knowledge of life; yet, by various anecdotes which have only of late become intelligible, it appears that my parents, from the enjoyment of affluence and prosperity, had sunk, all at once, into a state of the bitterest poverty and comparative degradation. I learn, moreover, that my father, having been once enticed by stratagems of the Arch Enemy into the commission of a mortal sin, wished, when, in his latter years, the grace of God had brought him to repentance, to expiate his guilt by a penitential pilgrimage from Italy to the convent of the Holy Lime-Tree, in the distant and cold climate of Prussia. On their laborious journey thither, his faithful partner in affliction perceived, for the first time after several years of a married life, that she was about to become a mother; and notwithstanding his extreme poverty, my father was by this occurrence greatly rejoiced, as it tended to the fulfilment of a mysterious vision, in which the blessed St Bernard had appeared, and promised to him forgiveness and consolation through the birth of a son.

In the convent of the Lime-Tree, my father was attacked by severe illness, and as, notwithstanding his debility, he would on no account forego any of the prescribed devotional exercises, his disease rapidly gained ground, till at last, in mysterious conformity to the words of St Bernard, he died consoled and absolved, almost at the same moment in which I came into the world.

With my first consciousness of existence dawned on my perceptions the beautiful imagery of the cloister and celebrated church of the Lime-Tree. Even at this moment, methinks the dark oak wood yet rustles around me; I breathe once more the fragrance of the luxuriant grass and variegated flowers which were my cradle. No noxious insect, no poisonous reptile, is found within the limits of that sanctuary. Scarce even the buzzing of a fly, or chirping of a grasshopper, interrupts the solemn stillness, diversified only by the pious songs of the monks, who walk about in long solemn processions, accompanied by pilgrims of all nations, waving their censers of consecrated perfume.

Even now, I seem yet vividly to behold in the middle of the church, the stem of the lime-tree cased in silver, that far-famed tree, on which supernatural visitants had placed the miraculous and wonder-working image of the Virgin, while from the walls and lofty dome, the well-known features of Saints and Angels are once more smiling upon me.

In like manner, it appears to me also, as if I had once beheld in the same place the mysterious figure of a tall, grave, and austere-looking man, of whom I was given to understand, that he could be no other but the far-famed Italian painter, who had, in times long past, been here professionally employed. No one understood his language, nor was his real history known to any one of the monks. This much only was certain, that he had, in a space of time incredibly short, filled the church with its richest ornaments, and then, as soon as his work was finished, immediately disappeared, no one could tell how or whither.

Not less vividly could I paint the portrait of a venerable pilgrim, who carried me about in his arms, and assisted me in my childish plays of searching for all sorts of variegated moss and pebbles in the forest. Yet, though the apparition of the painter was certainly real, that of the pilgrim, were it not for its influence on my after life, would seem to me but a dream.

One day this personage brought with him a boy of uncommon beauty, and about my equal in years, with whom I seated myself on the grass, sharing with him my treasured store of moss and pebbles, which he already knew how to form into various regular figures, and above all, into the holy sign of the cross. My mother, meanwhile, sat near us on a stone bench, and the old pilgrim stood behind her, contemplating with mild gravity our infantine employments.

Suddenly, while we were thus occupied, a troop of young people emerged from the thicket, of whom, judging by their dress and whole demeanour, it was easy to decide, that curiosity and idleness, not devotion, had led them to the Lime-Tree. On perceiving us, one of them began to laugh aloud, and exclaiming to his companions, "See there!—See there!—A holy family!—Here at last is something for my portfolio;" with these words he drew out paper and pencils, and set himself as if to sketch our portraits. Hereupon the old pilgrim was violently incensed, "Miserable scoffer!" he exclaimed, "thou forsooth wouldst be an artist, while to thy heart, the inspiration of faith and divine love is yet utterly unknown! But thy works will, like thyself, remain cold, senseless, and inanimate, and in the poverty of thine own soul, like an outcast in the desert, shalt thou perish!"

Terrified by this reproof, the young people hastened away. The old pilgrim also soon afterwards prepared for departure. "For this one day," said he to my mother, "I have been permitted to bring to you this miraculous child, in order that, by sympathy, he might kindle the flames of divine love in your son's heart; but I must now take him from you, nor shall you ever behold either of us in this world again. Your son will prove by nature admirably endowed with many valuable gifts; nor will the lessons which have now been impressed on his mind be from thence ever wholly effaced. Though the passions of his sinful father should boil and ferment in his veins, yet by proper education their influence might be repressed, and he might even raise himself up to be a valiant champion of our holy faith. Let him therefore be a monk!"

With these words he disappeared; and my mother could never sufficiently express how deep was the impression that his warning had left on her mind. She resolved, however, by no means to place any restraint on my natural inclinations, but quietly to acquiesce in whatever destination Providence, and the limited education she was able to bestow, might seem to point out for me.

The interval between this period and the time when my mother, on her homeward journey, stopped at the convent of Kreuzberg, remains a mere blank; not a trace of any event is left to me. The Abbess of the Cisterians (by birth a princess) had been formerly acquainted with my father, and on that account received us very kindly. I recover myself for the first time, when one morning my mother bestowed extraordinary care upon my dress; she also cut and arranged my wildly-grown hair, adorned it with ribbons which she had bought in the town, and instructed me as well as she could how I was to behave when presented at the convent.

At length, holding by my mother's hand, I had ascended the broad marble staircase, and entered a high vaulted apartment, adorned with devotional pictures, in which we found the Lady Abbess. She was a tall, majestic, and still handsome woman, to whom the dress of her order gave extraordinary dignity. "Is this your son?" said she to my mother, fixing on me at the same time her dark and penetrating eyes. Her voice, her dress, her *tout ensemble*,—even, the high vaulted room and strange objects by which I was surrounded, altogether had such an effect on my imagination, that, seized

with a kind of horror, I began to weep bitterly. "How is this?" said the Abbess; "are you afraid of me? What is your name, child?"—"Francis," answered my mother.—"Franciscus!" repeated the Abbess, in a tone of deep melancholy, at the same time lifting me up in her arms, and pressing me to her bosom.

But here a new misfortune awaited us; I suddenly felt real and violent pain, and screamed aloud. The Abbess; terrified, let me go; and my mother, utterly confounded by my behaviour would have directly snatched me up and retired. This, however, our new friend would by no means permit. It was now perceived that a diamond cross, worn by the Princess, had, at the moment when she pressed me in her arms, wounded my neck in such manner, that the impression, in the form of a cross, was already quite visible, and even suffused with blood. "Poor Francis!" said the Abbess, "I have indeed been very cruel to you; but we shall yet, notwithstanding all this, be good friends."—An attendant nun now entered with wine and refreshments, at the sight of which I soon recovered my courage; and at last, seated on the Abbess's lap, began to eat boldly of the sweetmeats, which she with her own hand kindly held to my lips.

Afterwards, when I had, for the first time in my life, also tasted a few drops of good wine, that liveliness of humour, which, according to my mother's account, had been natural to me from infancy, was completely restored. I laughed and talked, to the great delight of the Princess and the nun, who remained in the room. To this moment, I know not how it occurred to my mother, or how she succeeded in leading me on to talk freely to the Abbess about all the wonders of my native monastery, or how, as if supernaturally inspired, I was able to describe the works of the unknown painter as correctly and livelily as if I had comprehended their whole import and excellence. Not contented with this, I went on into all the legends of the saints, as if I had already become intimately acquainted with the records of the church.

The Princess, and even my mother, looked at me with astonishment. At last, "Tell me, child," said the Abbess, "how is it possible that you can have learned all this?"—Without a moment's hesitation, I answered that a miraculous boy, who had been brought to us by the old pilgrim, had explained to me all the paintings in the church—nay, that he himself was

able to make beautiful pictures, with moss and pebbles, on the ground; and had not only explained to me their import, but told me many legends of the saints.

The bell now rung for vespers. The nun had packed up and given to me a quantity of sweetmeats in a paper bag, which I grasped and pocketed with great satisfaction. The Abbess then rose from her seat: "Henceforward," said she, turning to my mother, "I shall look upon your son as my chosen *élève*, and shall provide for him accordingly."—My mother was so much affected by this unexpected generosity, that she could only reply with tears, grasping in silence the hand of the Abbess. We had reached the door on our retreat, when the Princess came after us, took me up once more in her arms, first carefully putting aside the diamond cross, and weeping so that her tears dropped on my forehead, "Franciscus," said she, "be good and pious!" I was moved also, and wept without knowing wherefore.

CHAPTER II.

By the assistance of the Abbess we were not long afterwards established at the farm-house already mentioned, and, through her generosity, the small household of my mother soon assumed a more prosperous appearance. I was also well clothed and cared for, enjoying the freedom and tranquillity of a country life, so congenial to childhood; but, above all, I profited in due time by the instructions of the neighbouring village priest, whom, while yet very young, I attended as sacristan at the altar.

How like a fairy dream the remembrance of those happy days yet hovers around me! Alas! like a far distant land, the realm of peace and joy, *home* now lies far far behind me; and when I would look back, a gulf yawns to meet me, by which I am separated from these blissful regions for ever. One lovely form I yet seem to recognize, wandering amid the roseate light of the morning—one that haunted my early dreams, even before I was conscious that such beauty could ever on earth be realized. I beheld her amid the fresh verdure—beneath the fragrant, beaming sun-showers of May—and not less amid the desolate wildness of autumn, when even the beech-trees lost their leaves; and her voice in sweet music rose on me through the moaning sighs of the departing year.

With ardent longing, I strive once more to catch the soothing chords of that angelic voice, to behold the contour of that form, and to meet once more the radiance of her smile—in vain! Alas! are there then barriers over which the strong wings of Love cannot bear him across? Lies not his kingdom in thought, and must thought, too, be subject to slavish limitations? But dark spectral forms rise up around me;—always denser and denser draws together their hideous circle;—they close out every prospect, they oppress my senses with the horrors of reality,—till even that longing, which had been a source of nameless pleasureable pain, is converted into deadly and insupportable torment.

The priest was goodness itself. He knew how to fetter my too lively spirit, and to attract my attention in such manner, that I was delighted by his instructions, and made rapid progress in my studies. Even at this moment I can yet recal his calm, contented, and somewhat weather-beaten features. He was in manners simple as a child, perplexed often about trifles, of which the contemptible characters around him were completely *au fait*; yet clear and decisive in judgment on matters of which ordinary characters could have no comprehension.

At this moment, how vividly do I recal, not only his own appearance, but that of his dwelling-house in the village of Heidebach, which town, though small and insignificant, is yet in situation very romantic. The walls of his house were covered up to the roof with vines, which he carefully trained. The interior of his humble habitation was also arranged with the utmost neatness; and behind was a large garden, in which he sedulously worked for recreation at intervals, when not engaged in teaching his scholars, or in his clerical functions.

In all my studies I was also very much assisted and encouraged by that unbounded respect and admiration which I cherished towards the Lady Abbess. Every time that I was to appear in her presence, I proposed to myself that I would shine before her, with my newly acquired knowledge; and as soon as she came into the room, I could only look at her, and listen to her alone. Every word that she uttered remained deeply graven on my remembrance; and through the whole day after I had thus met with her, her image accompanied me wherever I went, and I felt exalted to an extraordinary solemn and devotional mood of mind.

By what nameless feelings have I been agitated, when, during my office of Sacristan, I stood swinging my censer on the steps of the high altar, when the deep full tones of the organ streamed down from the choir, and bore my soul with them as on the waves of a stormy sea! Then in the anthem, above all others, I recognised her voice, which came down like a seraphic warning from Heaven, penetrating my heart, and filling my mind with the highest and holiest aspirations.

But the most impressive of all days, to which for weeks preceding I could not help looking forward with rapture, was that of the Festival of St

Bernard, which (he being the tutelary Saint of the Cistercians) was celebrated at the convent with extraordinary grandeur. Even on the day preceding, multitudes of people streamed out of the town, and from the surrounding country. Encamping themselves on the beautiful level meadows by which Kreuzberg is surrounded, day and night the lively assemblage were in commotion. In the motley crowd were to be found all varieties of people—devout pilgrims in foreign habits singing anthems—peasant lads flirting with their well-dressed mistresses—monks, who, with folded arms, in abstract contemplation, gazed up to Heaven—and whole families of citizens, who comfortably unpacked and enjoyed their well-stored baskets of provisions on the grass. Mirthful catches, pious hymns, groans of the penitent, and laughter of the merry, rejoicing, lamentation, jesting, and prayer, sounded at once in a strange stupifying concert through the atmosphere.

If, however, the convent bell rung, then, far as the eye could reach, the multitude were at once fallen on their knees. Confusion was at an end, and only the hollow murmurs of prayer interrupted the solemn stillness. When the last sounds of the bell had died away, then the merry crowds, as before, streamed about on their varied occupations, and of new the rejoicing, which for a few minutes had been interrupted, was eagerly resumed.

On St Bernard's day, the Bishop himself, who resided in the neighbouring town, officiated in divine service at the church of the convent. He was attended by all the inferior clergy of his diocese; his *capelle*, or choir, performed the music on a kind of temporary tribune, erected on one side of the high altar, and adorned with rich and costly hangings. Even now, the feelings which then vibrated through my bosom are not decayed. When I think of that happy period, which only too soon past away, they revive in all their youthful freshness. With especial liveliness I can still remember the notes of a certain *Gloria*; which composition being a great favourite with the Princess, was frequently performed.

When the Bishop had intoned the first notes of this anthem, and the powerful voices of the choir thundered after him, "*Gloria in excelsis Deo*," did it not seem as if the painted clouds over the high altar were rolled asunder, and as if by a divine miracle the cherubim and seraphim came

forward into life, moved, and spread abroad their powerful wings, hovering up and down, and praising God with song and supernatural music?

I sank thereafter into the most mysterious mood of inspired devotion. I was borne through resplendent clouds into the far distant regions of home. Through the fragrant woods of the Lime-Tree Monastery, I once more heard the music of angelic voices. From thickets of roses and lilies, the miraculous boy stepped forward to meet me, and said, with a smile, "Where have you been so long, Franciscus? See, I have a world of beautiful flowers, and will give them all to you, if you will but stay with me and love me!"

After divine service, the nuns, with the Abbess at their head, held a solemn procession through the aisles of the church and convent. She was in the full dress of her order, wearing the Insul, and carrying the silver shepherd's-staff in her hand. What sanctity, what dignity, what supernatural grandeur, beamed from every look, and animated every gesture, of this admirable woman! She herself impersonized the triumphant church, affording to pious believers the assurance of blessing and protection. If by chance her looks fell on me, I could have thrown myself prostrate before her in the dust.

When the ceremonies of the day were completely brought to an end, the attendant clergy, including the choir of the Bishop, were hospitably entertained in the refectory. Several friends of the convent, civil officers, merchants from the town, &c., had their share in this entertainment; and by means of the Bishop's choir-master, who had conceived a favourable opinion of me, and willingly had me beside him, I also was allowed to take my place at the table.

If before I had been excited by mysterious feelings of devotion, no less now did convivial life, with its varied imagery, gain its full influence over my senses. The guests enjoyed themselves with great freedom, telling stories, and laughing at their own wit, during which the bottles of old wine were zealously drained, until, at a stated hour in the evening, the carriages of the dignitaries were at the gate, and all, in the most orderly manner, took their departure.

CHAPTER III.

I was now in my sixteenth year, when the priest declared that I was qualified to begin the study of the higher branches of theology, at the college of the neighbouring town. I had fully determined on the clerical life, by which resolution my mother was greatly delighted, as she perceived that the mysterious hints of the pilgrim were intimately connected with my father's vision of St Bernard; and by this resolution of mine, she for the first time believed, that his soul was fully absolved, and saved from the risk of eternal destruction. The Princess, too, approved my intentions, and repeated her generous promises of support and assistance.

Though the town of Königswald was so near, that we beheld its towers in the back ground of the landscape, and though bold walkers frequently came from thence on foot to our convent, yet to me this first separation from the Abbess, whom I regarded with such veneration,—from my kind mother, whom I tenderly loved,—and the good old priest, was very painful. So true it is, that even the shortest step out of the immediate circle of one's best friends, is equal, in effect, to the remotest separation. Even the Princess was on this occasion agitated to an extraordinary degree, and her voice faltered while she pronounced over me some energetic words of admonishment. She presented me with an ornamental rosary, and a small prayer-book, with fine illuminations. She then gave me a letter of recommendation to the Prior of the Capuchin Convent in Königswald, whom she advised me directly to visit, as he would be prepared to afford me whatever advice or aid I could require.

There are certainly few situations so beautiful as that of the Capuchin Monastery, right before the eastern gates of Königswald. The flourishing and extensive gardens, with their fine prospect towards the mountains, seemed to me at every visit more and more attractive. Here it became afterwards my delight to wander in deep meditation, reposing now at this, now at that group of finely grown trees; and in this garden, when I went to deliver my letter of recommendation from the Abbess, I met, for the first time, the Prior Leonardus.

The natural politeness of the Superior was obviously increased when he had read through the letter, and he said so much in praise of the Princess, whom he had formerly known at Rome, that by this means alone he directly won my affections. He was then surrounded by his brethren, and it was easy to perceive at once the beneficial effects of his arrangements and mode of discipline in the monastery.

The same cheerfulness, amenity, and composure of spirit, which were so striking in the Prior, spread their influence also through the brethren. There was nowhere visible the slightest trace of ill humour, or of that inwardly-corroding reserve, which is elsewhere to be found in the countenances of Monks. Notwithstanding the severe rules of his order, devotional exercises were to the Prior Leonardus more like a necessary indulgence of a divine soul aspiring to Heaven, than penitential inflictions to efface the stains of mortal frailty. And he knew so well how to instil the same principles among his brethren, that in their performance of every duty, to which they were by their vows subjected, there prevailed a liveliness and good humour, which even in this terrestrial sphere gave rise to a new and higher mood of existence.

The Prior even allowed and approved a certain degree of intercourse with the world, which could not but be advantageous for the monks. The rich gifts which from all quarters were presented to the monastery, rendered it possible to entertain, on certain days, the friends and patrons of the institution, in the refectory.

Then, in the middle of the banquet-hall was spread a large table, at which were seated the Prior Leonardus and his guests. The brethren, meanwhile, remained at a small narrow board, stretching along the walls, contenting themselves with the humblest fare, and coarsest utensils, while, at the Prior's table, all was elegantly served on silver, glass, and porcelain; and even on fast-days the cook of the convent could prepare meagre dishes in such a manner, that they seemed to the guests highly luxurious. They themselves provided wine; and thus the dinners at the Capuchin Convent presented a friendly intercourse of spiritual with profane characters, which could not fail to be beneficial to both parties.

Those who were too eagerly occupied in worldly pursuits, were obliged to confess, that here, by a new mode of life, in direct opposition to their own, quiet and composure were to be obtained; nay, they might conclude, that the more the soul is in this world elevated above terrestrial considerations, the more it becomes capable of enjoyment. On the other hand, the monks gained a knowledge of life, which otherwise would have remained from them wholly veiled, and which supplied important *materiel* for contemplation, enabling them many times more clearly to perceive, that, without the aid of some divine principle to support the mind, all in this world becomes "weary, flat, stale, and unprofitable."

Over all the brethren, highly exalted, both in regard to sacred and profane accomplishments, stood the Prior Leonardus. Besides that he was looked on as a great theologian, and consulted on the most difficult questions, he was, much more than could have been expected from a monk, also a man of the world. He spoke the French and Italian languages with fluency and elegance, and on account of his extraordinary versatility, he had formerly been employed on weighty diplomacies.

At the time when I knew him first, he was already advanced in years; but though his hair was white, his eyes yet gleamed with youthful fire—and the agreeable smile which hovered on his lips was the surest evidence of his inward serenity and activity of mind. The same grace which prevailed in his discourse, regulated every gesture, and his figure, even in the unbecoming dress of his order, appeared to extraordinary advantage.

There was not a single individual among the inhabitants of the convent, who had not come into it from his own free choice. But had it been otherwise, as, for example, in the case of unfortunate criminals, who came thither as to a place of refuge from persecution, the penitence prescribed by Leonardus was but the short passage to recovered repose; and reconciled with himself, without heeding the world or its follies, the convert would, while yet living on earth, have become elevated in mind over all that is terrestrial. This unusual tendency of monachism, had been learned by Leonardus in Italy, where the mode of education, and all the views of a religious life, are much more cheerful than among the Catholics of Germany.

Leonardus conceived a very favourable opinion of my talents; he instructed me in Italian and French; but it was especially the great variety of books which he lent to me, and his agreeable conversation, which contributed most to my improvement. Almost the whole time which could be spared from my studies in the College, was spent in the Capuchin Convent; and my inclination towards a monastic life became always more and more determined. I disclosed to the Prior my wishes in this respect; but, without directly dissuading me, he advised me at any rate to wait for a few years, during which time I might look around me in the world. As to society, since I came into the town, I had, by means of the Bishop's choir-master, found myself on that score by no means deficient, but in every party, especially if women were present, I had uniformly found myself so disagreeably embarrassed, that even this alone, independent of my disposition to solitude and contemplation, seemed to decide, that I was by nature destined for a monk.

One day, the Prior spoke with me at great length on the danger of risking too early a decision on a mode of life, which involves so many requisites. "Is it possible," said he, "that at so early an age, you are prepared to renounce all the delusive pleasures of this world? If so, but not otherwise, you may then embrace the duties of monachism. Are you thoroughly convinced, that you have formed no attachment,—that you wish for no enjoyments, but those which the mysterious influences of an existence devoted to voluntary suffering can bestow?"

He fixed on me his dark penetrating eyes, and I was obliged to cast mine on the ground, and remain without answering a word; for at that moment a form, which had been long banished from my recollection, stepped forward to the mind's eye in colours more than ever lively and distracting.

The choir-master had a sister, who, without being an absolute beauty, was yet in the highest bloom of youth, and especially on account of her figure, was what is called a very charming girl. One morning, having formed some other engagements, I had gone at an earlier hour than usual to receive my lesson in music at the choir-master's house, stepped without hesitation into his lodgings, expecting to find him alone, and wholly unconscious that the apartment was used as a dressing-room (or, as it happened on this occasion, as an *undressing-room*) by Mademoiselle Therese, whom, instead of her

brother, I now discovered. So utterly was I confounded, that I stood motionless for a few seconds, without retiring or advancing. My heart beat, my limbs tottered—I could hardly breathe—But when Therese, with her usual *naiveté* and *nonchalance*, had recourse to a large shawl, then came forward without the least confusion, even offered me her hand, and asked what was the matter, and why I looked so pale—this increased my embarrassment tenfold, so that I had almost fainted.

It was a fortunate relief when the door of the adjoining room opened, and the choir-master made his appearance. But never had I struck such false chords, or sung so completely out of tune, as on that day. Afterwards I was pious enough to believe that the whole was a temptation of the devil, and thought myself very fortunate in having, by ascetic exercises, driven him out of the field.

Now, however, these questions of the Prior, though his intentions were very praiseworthy, revived the lost image in tenfold strength. I blushed deeply, and said not a word. "I see, my dear son," resumed the Prior, "that you have understood me; you are yet free from the vices of artifice and concealment, nor do you cherish an undue confidence in yourself. Heaven protect you from the temptations of this life! Its enjoyments are but of short duration, and one may well say, that there rests on them a curse. In possession they expire; and what is worse, leave behind them a disgust, a disappointment, a bluntness of the faculties for all that is truly praiseworthy and exalted, so that the better and spiritual attributes of our nature are at last utterly destroyed!"

Notwithstanding my endeavours to forget both the questions of the Prior, and the image to which they had given rise, yet I could in this by no means succeed; and though formerly I had been tolerably composed, even in the presence of Therese, yet now I was obliged with the utmost care to avoid every meeting. Even the very thoughts of her distracted my attention completely; and this appeared to me so much the more sinful, as I could not disguise from myself that such thoughts were attended with pleasure.

The adventure of one evening, however, was soon to determine all this. The choir-master invited me, as he had often done before, to a music party at his house. On entering the room, I perceived that there were many other young ladies besides Mamselle Therese, and that she was on this occasion dressed more becomingly and elegantly than I had ever seen her. I would willingly have excused myself and fled, but it was now too late. An irresistible longing drew me towards her. I was as if spell-bound, and through the evening stationed myself near her, happy if by accident I came into momentary contact with this enchantress, though it were but to touch the hem of her garment.

Of all this she appeared by no means inobservant, nor did it seem to displease her. The adventures of the night, however, were drawing to a close. She had sat long at the harpsichord, but at length rose, and went towards the window. One of her gloves was left on the chair. This, believing myself unobserved, I directly took possession of, first pressing it to my lips, and then placing it in my bosom. One young lady, however, (who, by the by, was my utter aversion,) had not failed to notice this *etourderie*. She rose directly from her station at the tea-table, and went to Therese, who was standing with another *demoiselle* at the window. She whispered something to Therese, who immediately began to smile. The looks of all three were directed towards me. They tittered and laughed all together. I believed it was in scorn and mockery, which to my feelings was insupportable.

I was as if annihilated. The blood flowed ice-cold through my veins. Losing all self-possession I left the room—rushed away into the college, and locked myself up in my cell. I threw myself in despair and rage upon the floor. Tears of anguish and disappointment gushed from my eyes. I renounced—I cursed the girl and myself; then prayed and laughed alternately like a madman. Tittering voices of scorn and mockery rose, and sounded gibbering all around me. I was in the very act of throwing myself out of the window, but by good luck the iron bars hindered me. It was not till the morning broke that I was more tranquil; but I was firmly resolved never to see her any more, and, in a word, to renounce the world.

CHAPTER IV.

My vocation to the monastic life was thus, according to my own opinion, rendered clear and unalterable. On that very day after the fatal music party, I hastened, as soon as I could escape from my usual studies in the school, to the Capuchin Prior, and informed him that it was my fixed intention directly to begin my noviciate, and that I had already, by letters, announced my design to my mother, and to the Abbess. Leonardus seemed surprised at my sudden zeal, and without being impolitely urgent, he yet endeavoured, by one means or another, to find out what could have led me all at once to this resolve, to which he rightly concluded that some extraordinary event must have given rise.

A painful emotion of shame, which I could not overcome, prevented me from telling the truth. On the other hand, I dwelt, with all the fervour of excitement, on the visions, warnings, and strange adventures of my youth, which all seemed decidedly to point to a monastic retirement. Without in the least disputing the authenticity of the events which I had described, he suggested that I might, nevertheless, have drawn from them false conclusions, as there was no certainty that I had interpreted correctly the warnings, whatever they might be, which I had received.

Indeed, the Prior did not at any time speak willingly of supernatural agency—not even of those instances recorded by inspired writers, so that there were moments in which I had almost set him down for an infidel and a sceptic. Once I emboldened myself so far, as to force from him some decided expressions as to the adversaries of our Catholic faith, who stigmatize all belief of that which cannot be interpreted according to the laws of our corporeal senses, with the name of Superstition. "My son," said Leonardus, "infidelity itself is indeed the worst species of that mental weakness, which, under the name of Superstition, such people ascribe to believers." Thereafter he directly changed the subject to lighter and more ordinary topics of discourse.

Not till long afterwards was I able to enter into his admirable views of the mysteries of our religion, which involves the supernatural communing of our spirits with beings of a celestial order, and was then obliged to confess, that Leonardus, with great propriety, reserved these ideas for students who were sufficiently advanced in years and experience.

I now received a letter from my mother, describing new visions and warnings, such as those to which I had attached so much importance in my conversation with the Prior. She had by this means long since anticipated that the situation of a lay brother would not satisfy my wishes, but that I would make choice of the conventual life. On St Medardus' day, the old Pilgrim from the Holy Lime-Tree had appeared to her, and had led me by the hand, in the habit of a Capuchin monk. The Princess also completely approved of my resolution; which accordingly was carried as rapidly as possible into effect.

I saw both of them once more before my investiture, which (as, according to my earnest request, the half of my noviciate was dispensed with) very soon followed. In conformity with my mother's last letter, I assumed the conventual name of Medardus.

The reciprocal confidence and friendship of the brethren with regard to each other—the internal arrangements of the convent—and, in short, the whole mode of life among the Capuchins, appeared to me for a long time exactly as it had done at first. That composure of spirit, which was universally apparent, failed not by sympathy to pour the balm of peace into my soul; and I was visited often by delightful inspirations, especially by faëry dreams, derived from the period of my earliest years in the Convent of the Holy Lime-Tree.

I must not omit to mention, that, during the solemn act of my investiture, I beheld the choir-master's sister. She looked quite sunk in melancholy, and her eyes evidently shone in tears. But the time of temptation was now past and gone; and, perhaps, out of a sinful pride over a triumph too easily won, I could not help smiling, which did not fail to be remarked by a certain

monk, named Cyrillus, who at that moment stood near me. "What makes you so merry, brother?" said he.—"When I am renouncing this contemptible world," said I, "and its vanities, ought I not to rejoice?"

It was not to be denied, however, that, at the moment when I pronounced these words, an involuntary feeling of regret vibrated through my inmost heart, and was at direct variance with what I had said. Yet this was the last attack of earthly passion, after which composure of spirit gradually gained complete ascendancy. Oh, had it never departed! But who may trust to the strength of his armour? Who may rely on his own courage, if the supernatural and unseen powers of darkness are combined against him, and for ever on the watch?

I had now been five years in the convent, when, according to arrangements made by the Prior, the care of the reliquary chamber was transferred to me from Brother Cyrillus, who was now become old and infirm.

In this room (it was an old grotesque Gothic chamber) there were all sorts of devotional treasures:—bones of the saints, and remnants of their dress—fragments of the cross, &c. &c.—which were preserved in costly glass cases, set in silver, and exposed to view only on certain days, for the edification of the people. When the transfer of duties took place, Brother Cyrillus fully acquainted me with the character of each article, and with the documents proving the miracles which the relics had severally performed.

In regard to talents and literary acquirements, this monk stood next in rank to the Prior Leonardus, for which reason I had the less hesitation in imparting to him freely whatever doubts or difficulties came into my mind. "Must we, then," said I, "absolutely and truly, look upon every article in this collection as that for which it is given out? or, rather, may not avarice and deceit have here foisted in many things as relics of this or that saint, which in reality are base impostures? As, for example, what shall we say if one convent, according to its archives, possesses the whole cross, and yet there are so many fragments in circulation, that (as a brother of our own once

irreverently observed) they might, if collected together, supply our house for a whole twelvemonth with fuel?"

"Truly," said Cyrillus, "it does not become us to subject matters of this kind to profane inquiry; but, to speak unreservedly, my opinion is, that very few of the things which are here preserved really are that which they are given out to be. But in this there seems to be no real or important objection whatever. If you will take notice, Brother Medardus, of the doctrine which the Prior and I have always held on these mysteries, you will, on the contrary, perceive that our religion only beams forth more and more in renovated lustre.

"Is it not worthy of admiration, dear Brother, that our Church endeavours in such manner to catch hold of those mysterious links, which in this world connect together sensual and spiritual existences—in other words, so to influence our corporeal frame, that our higher origin and dependance on the Divinity may be more clearly perceived—that we may enjoy, too, the anticipation of that spiritual life, of which we bear the germs within us, and of which a fore-feeling hovers around us, as if like the fanning of seraph's wings?

"What is this or that morsel of wood—that crumbling bone, or fragment of cloth? In themselves they are, of course, worthless; but it is said, that the one was cut from the real cross, and that the others are from the body or garment of a saint. Hence, to the believer, who, without scrutinizing, takes the relic for what it is *said to be*, is directly supplied a source of supernatural excitement, and the most enviable associations. Hence, too, is awoke the spiritual influence of that saint from whom the relic is derived; and he draws consolation and support from that glorified being, whom, with full confidence and faith, he had invoked. By this kind of excitement, also, there is no doubt that many bodily diseases may be overcome, and in this manner, for the most part, are effected the miracles, which, as they often take place before the eyes of the assembled people, it is impossible to dispute or deny."

I recollected immediately many expressions of the Prior which corresponded exactly with those now used by Cyrillus, and began to look on these things which I had formerly regarded as mere toys and baubles,

with a degree of respect and devotional veneration. The old monk did not fail to perceive this effect of his own discourse, and went on, with increased zeal and energy, to explain, one by one, the remaining relics.

CHAPTER V.

At last, Brother Cyrillus had recourse to an old and strangely carved wooden press, which he carefully unlocked, and out of which he took a small square box. "Herein, Brother Medardus," said he, "is contained the most wonderful and mysterious relic of which our convent is possessed. As long as I have been resident here, no one but the Prior and myself has had this box in his hands. Even the other brethren (not to speak of strangers) are unaware of its existence. For my own part, I cannot even touch this casket without an inward shuddering; for it seems to me as if there were some malignant spell, or rather, some living demon, locked up within it, which, were the bonds broken by which this evil principle is now confined, would bring destruction on all who came within its accursed range.

"That which is therein contained is known to have been derived immediately from the Arch-Fiend, at the time when he was still allowed *visibly*, and in personal shape, to contend against the weal of mankind."

I looked at Brother Cyrillus with the greatest astonishment; but without leaving me time to answer, he went on.

"I shall abstain, Brother Medardus, from offering you any opinion of my own on this mysterious affair, but merely relate to you faithfully what our documents say upon the subject. You will find the papers in that press, and can read them afterwards at your leisure.

"The life of St Anthony is already well known to you. You are aware, that in order to be completely withdrawn from the distractions of the world, he went out into the desert, and there devoted himself to the severest penitential exercises. The Devil, of course, followed him, and came often in his way, in order to disturb him in his pious contemplations.

"One evening it happened accordingly, that St Anthony was returning home, and had arrived near his cell, when he perceived a dark figure approaching him rapidly along the heath. As his visitant came nearer, he observed with surprise, through the holes in a torn mantle worn by the stranger, the long

necks of oddly-shaped bottles, which of course produced an effect the most extraordinary and grotesque. It was the Devil, who, in this absurd masquerade, smiled on him ironically, and inquired if he would not choose to taste of the Elixir which he carried in these bottles? At this insolence, St Anthony was not even incensed, but remained perfectly calm; for the Enemy, having now become powerless and contemptible, was no longer in a condition to venture a real combat, but must confine himself to scornful words.

"The Saint, however, inquired for what reason he carried about so many bottles in that unheard-of manner.

"For this very reason,' said the Devil, 'that people may be induced to ask me the question; for as soon as any mortal meets with me, he looks on me with astonishment, makes the same inquiry that you have done, and, in the next place, cannot forbear desiring to taste, and try what sort of elixirs I am possessed of. Among so many bottles, if he finds one which suits his taste, and *drinks it out*, and becomes drunk, he is then irrecoverably mine, and belongs to me and my kingdom for ever.'

"So far the story is the same in all legends, though some of them add, that, according to the Devil's confession, if two individuals should drink out of the same flask, they would henceforth become addicted to the same crimes, possessing a wonderful reciprocity of thoughts and feelings, yet mutually and unconsciously acting for the destruction of each other. By our own manuscripts, it is narrated farther, that when the Devil went from thence, he left some of his flasks on the ground, which St Anthony directly took with him into his cave, fearing that they might fall into the way of accidental travellers, or even deceive some of his own pupils, who came to visit him in that retirement. By chance, so we are also told, St Anthony once opened one of these bottles, out of which there arose directly a strange and stupifying vapour, whereupon all sorts of hideous apparitions and spectral phantoms from hell had environed the Saint, in order to terrify and delude him. Above all, too, there were forms of women, who sought to entice him into shameless indecencies. These altogether tormented him, until, by constant prayer, and severe penitential exercises, he had driven them again out of the field.

"In this very box there is now deposited a bottle of that kind, saved from the relics of St Anthony; and the documents thereto relating, are so precise and complete, that the fact of its having been derived from the Saint is hardly to be doubted. Besides, I can assure you, Brother Medardus, that so often as I have chanced to touch this bottle, or even the box in which it is contained, I have been struck with a mysterious horror. It seems to me also, as if I smelt a peculiar, odoriferous vapour, which stuns the senses, and the effects of which do not stop there, but utterly rob me of composure of spirit afterwards, and distract my attention from devotional exercises.

"Whether I do or not believe in this immediate intercourse with the devil in visible shape, yet, that such distraction proceeds from the direct influence of some hostile power, there can be no doubt. However, I overcame this gradually by zealous and unceasing prayer. As for you, Brother Medardus, whose fervent imagination will colour all things with a strength beyond that of reality, and who, in consequence of youth, also will be apt to trust too much to your own power of resistance, I would earnestly impress on you this advice,—'Never, or at least, for many years, to open the box; and in order that it may not tempt and entice you, to put it as much as possible out of your reach and sight.'"

Hereupon Brother Cyrillus shut up the mysterious Box in the press from which it had come, and consigned over to me a large bunch of keys, among which that of the formidable press had its place. The whole story had made on me a deep impression, and the more that I felt an inward longing to contemplate the wonderful relic, the more I was resolved to render this to myself difficult, or even impossible.

When Cyrillus left me, I looked over once more, one by one, the treasures thus committed to my charge; I then returned to my cell, and untied the key of the Devil's press from the bunch to which it belonged, and hid it deeply among the papers in my writing-desk.

One temptation, said I to myself, I have already overcome. I have emancipated myself from the thralldom of Therese. Never more shall the Devil, by his insidious artifices, gain ascendancy over me!

Among the professors in the College, there was one, distinguished as an extraordinary orator. Every time that he preached, the church was filled to overflowing. His words, like a stream of lava fire, bore with him the hearts and souls of his hearers, and kindled in every one the most fervid and unaffected devotion.

The inspiration of his discourses animated me, among others, in a pre-eminent degree; and although I certainly looked on this extraordinary man as an especial favourite of Heaven, and gifted with no every-day talents, yet it seemed as if some mighty warning voice spoke within me, commanding me to rouse from my slumbers,—to go and do likewise!

After I had returned from hearing him, I used to preach with great energy in my own cell, giving myself up to the inspiration of the moment, till I had succeeded in arresting and embodying my thoughts in proper words, which I then committed to paper.

The brother who used to preach in the convent now became obviously weaker. Wholly destitute of energy, like a half-dried rivulet in summer, his discourses dragged laboriously and feebly along; and an intolerable diffuseness of language, resulting from the want of thought, rendered his discourses so long and tedious, that most of his hearers, as if lulled by the unceasing clapper of a mill, long before he concluded, fell asleep, and were only roused after he had pronounced "amen," by the sound of the anthem and the organ.

The Prior Leonardus was indeed an admirable orator; but he was at this time afraid to preach, as, on account of his advanced age, the exertion fatigued him too much: and except the Prior, there was no one in the convent who could supply the place of the superannuated brother.

The Prior one day happened to converse with me on this state of affairs, which he deplored, as it deprived the monastery of many pious visitors. I took courage, and told him that I had many times felt an inward call to the pulpit, and had even written several discourses.

Accordingly, he desired to see some specimens from my manuscripts, and was with them so highly pleased, that he earnestly exhorted me, on the next holiday, to make a trial in public, in which attempt I ran the less risk of

failure, being by nature gifted with an expressive cast of features, and a deep, sonorous tone of voice. As to the subsidiary acquirements, of action and of delivery, the Prior promised himself to instruct me.

CHAPTER VI.

The eventful holiday soon arrived. The church was unusually crowded, and it was not without considerable trepidation that I mounted the pulpit. At the commencement, I remained timidly faithful to my manuscript; and Leonardus told me that I had spoken with a faltering voice, which, however, exactly corresponded with certain plaintive and pathetic considerations with which I had begun my discourse, and which, therefore, was interpreted by most of my auditors into a very skilful example of rhetorical *tact*.

Soon afterwards, however, it seemed as if my inward mind were gradually lighted up by the glowing fire of supernatural inspiration. I thought no more of the manuscript, but gave myself up to the influence of the moment. I felt how every nerve and fibre was attuned and energized. I heard my own voice thunder through the vaulted roof. I beheld, as if by miracle, the halo of divine light shed around my own elevated head and outstretched arms. By what means I was enabled to preserve connection in my periods, or to deliver my conceptions with any degree of logical precision, I know not, for I was carried out of myself. I could not afterwards have declared whether my discourse had been short or long—the time past like a dream! With a grand euphonical sentence, in which I concentrated, as if into one *focus*, all the blessed doctrines that I had been announcing, I concluded my sermon; of which the effect was such as had been in the convent wholly unexampled.

Long after I had ceased to speak, there were heard through the church the sounds of passionate weeping, exclamations of heartfelt rapture, and audible prayers. The brethren paid me their tribute of the highest approbation. Leonardus embraced me, and named me the pride of their institution!

With unexampled rapidity my renown was spread abroad; and henceforward, on every Sunday or holiday, crowds of the most respectable inhabitants of the town used to be assembled, even before the doors were opened, while the church, after all, was found insufficient to hold them. By this homage, my zeal was proportionably increased. I endeavoured more and more to give to my periods the proper rounding, and to adorn my discourses throughout, with all the flowers of eloquence. I succeeded always more and more in fettering the attention of my audience, until my fame became such, that the attention paid to me was more like the homage and veneration due to a saint, than approbation bestowed on any ordinary mortal. A kind of religious delirium now prevailed through the town. Even on ordinary week days, and on half-holidays, the inhabitants came in crowds, merely to see Brother Medardus, and to hear him speak, though but a few words.

Thus vanity gradually, by imperceptible, but sure approaches, took possession of my heart. Almost unconsciously, I began to look upon myself as the *one elect*,—the pre-eminently *chosen* of Heaven. Then the miraculous circumstances attending my birth at the Lime-Tree; my father's forgiveness of a mortal crime; the visionary adventures of my childhood;—all seemed to indicate that my lofty spirit, in immediate commerce with supernatural beings, belonged not properly to earth, but to Heaven, and was but suffered, for a space, to wander here, for the benefit and consolation of mortals! It became, according to my own judgment, quite certain, that the venerable old Pilgrim, together with the wonderful boy that he had brought with him, had been *supernatural* visitants,—that they had descended on earth, for the express purpose of greeting me as the chosen saint, who was destined for the instruction of mankind, to sojourn transiently among them.

But the more vividly all these ideas came before me, the more did my present situation become oppressive and disagreeable. That unaffected cheerfulness and inward serenity which had formerly brightened my existence, was completely banished from my soul. Even all the good-hearted expressions of the Prior, and friendly behaviour of the monks, awoke within me only discontent and resentment. By their mode of conduct, my vanity was bitterly mortified. In me they ought clearly to have recognised the chosen saint who was above them so highly elevated. Nay,

they should even have prostrated themselves in the dust, and implored my intercession before the throne of Heaven!

I considered them, therefore, as beings influenced by the most deplorable obduracy and refractoriness of spirit. Even in my discourses I contrived to interweave certain mysterious allusions. I ventured to assert, that now a wholly new and mighty revolution had begun, as with the roseate light of morning, to dawn upon the earth, announcing to pious believers, that one of the specially elect of Heaven had been sent for a space to wander in sublunary regions. My supposed mission I continued to clothe in mysterious and obscure imagery, which, indeed, the less it was understood, seemed the more to work like a charm among the people.

Leonardus now became visibly colder in his manner, avoiding to speak with me, unless before witnesses. At last, one day, when we were left alone in the great *allée* of the convent garden, he broke out—"Brother Medardus, I can no longer conceal from you, that for some time past your whole behaviour has been such as to excite in me the greatest displeasure. There has arisen in your mind some adverse and hostile principle, by which you have become wholly alienated from a life of pious simplicity. In your discourses, there prevails a dangerous obscurity; and from this darkness many things appear ready, if you dared utter them, to start forward, which if plainly spoken, would effectually separate you and me for ever. To be candid—at this moment you bear about with you, and betray that unalterable curse of our sinful origin, by which even every powerful struggle of our spiritual energies is rendered a means of opening to us the realms of destruction, whereinto we thoughtless mortals are, alas! too apt to go astray!

"The approbation, nay, the idolatrous admiration, which has been paid to you by the capricious multitude, who are always in search of novelty, has dazzled you, and you behold yourself in an artificial character, which is not your own, but a deceitful phantom, which will entice you rapidly into the gulf of perdition. Return, then, into yourself, Medardus—renounce the delusion which thus besets and overpowers you! I believe that I thoroughly understand this delusion,—at least, I am well aware of its effects. Already have you lost utterly that calmness and complacence of spirit, without which there is, on this earth, no hope of real improvement. Take warning,

then, in time! Resist the fiend who besets you! Be once more that good-humoured and open-hearted youth whom with my whole soul I loved!"

Tears involuntarily flowed from the eyes of the good Prior while he spoke thus. He had taken my hand, but now letting it fall, he departed quickly without waiting for any answer.

His words had indeed penetrated my heart; but, alas! the impressions that they had left were only those of anger, distrust, and resentment. He had spoken of the approbation, nay, the admiration and respect, which I had obtained by my wonderful talents; and it became but too obvious that only pitiful envy had been the real source of that displeasure, which he so candidly expressed towards me.

Silent, and wrapt up within myself, I remained at the next meeting of the brethren, a prey to devouring indignation. Still buoyed up and excited by the wild inspirations which had risen up within me, I continued through whole days and long sleepless nights my laborious contrivances how I might best commit to paper (without a too candid avowal of my self-idolatry) the glorious ideas that crowded on my mind.

Meanwhile, the more that I became estranged from Leonardus and the monks, the better I succeeded in attracting the homage of the people; and my discourses never failed to rivet their attention.

On St Anthony's day this year, it happened that the church was more than ever thronged—in such manner, that the vestry-men were obliged to keep the doors open, in order that those who could not get in might at least hear me from without. Never had I spoken more ardently, more impressively,—in a word, with more *onction*. I had related, as usual, many wonderful anecdotes from the lives of the saints, and had demonstrated in what degree their examples, though not imitable in their fullest extent, might yet be advantageously applied in real life. I spoke, too, of the manifold arts of the Devil, to whom the fall of our first parents had given the power of seducing mankind; and involuntarily, before I was aware, the stream of eloquence led me away into the legend of the Elixir, which I wished to represent as an ingenious allegory.

Then suddenly, my looks, in wandering through the church, fell upon a tall haggard figure, who had mounted upon a bench, and stood in a direction nearly opposite to me, leaning against a pillar. He was in a strange foreign garb, with a dark violet-coloured mantle, of which the folds were twined round his crossed arms. His countenance was deadly pale; but there was an unearthly glare in his large black staring eyes, which struck into my very heart. I trembled involuntarily—a mysterious horror pervaded my whole frame. I turned away my looks, however, and, summoning up my utmost courage, forced myself to continue my discourse. But, as if constrained by some inexplicable spell of an enchanter—as if fascinated by the basilisk's eyes—I was always obliged to look back again, where the man stood as before, changeless and motionless, with his large spectral eyes glaring upon me.

On his high wrinkled forehead, and in the lineaments of his down-drawn mouth, there was an expression of bitter scorn, of disdain mixed almost with hatred. His whole figure presented something indescribably and supernaturally horrid, such as belonged not to this life. The whole truth now came on my remembrance. It was, it could be no other, than the unknown miraculous painter from the Lime-Tree, whose form, beheld in infancy, had never wholly vanished from my mind, and who now haunted me like the visible impersonification of that hereditary guilt by which my life was overshadowed.

I felt as if seized on and grappled with by ice-cold talons: My periods faltered;—my whole discourse became always more and more confused. There arose a whispering and murmuring in the church;—but the stranger remained utterly unmoved; and the fixed regard of his eyes never for a moment relented. At last, in the full paroxysm—the climax of terror and despair—I screamed aloud—"Thou revenant!—Thou accursed sorcerer!—Away with thee from hence!—Begone! for I myself am he!—I am the blessed St Anthony!"

CHAPTER VII.

From that moment, I remember nothing more, until, on recovering from the state of utter unconsciousness into which I fell with these words, I found myself in my cell, on my couch, and carefully watched by Cyrillus. The frightful vision of the unknown stood yet vividly before mine eyes. Cyrillus, however, laboured to convince me, that this had been but an illusory phantom of my own brain—heated by the zeal and ardour of my discourse.

But the more that he exerted himself for this purpose, the more deeply did I feel shame and repentance at my own behaviour in the pulpit—As to the audience, they, as I afterwards understood, concluded that a sudden madness had seized upon me; for which notion, my last exclamation had, no doubt, afforded them abundant reason.

I was in spirit utterly crushed and annihilated. Shut up like a prisoner in my cell, I subjected myself to the severest penitential inflictions; and strengthened myself by zealous prayer for contention with the adversary, who had appeared to me, even on consecrated ground, and only in malice and mockery had put on the features and garb of the miraculous painter of the Lime-Tree.

No one but myself would acknowledge that he had seen the man in the violet-coloured mantle; and, with his usual kindness, the Prior Leonardus, very zealously spread a report, that my conduct had arisen merely from the first attack of a severe nervous fever, by which I had been so frightfully borne away in my discourse, and confused in my ideas. Indeed, without any pretence, I was, for a long time, extremely ill, and this too for several weeks after I had again resumed the ordinary conventual mode of life.

However, I at last undertook once more to mount the pulpit;—but, tormented by my own inward agitation, and still haunted by the restless remembrance of that horrid pale spectre, I was scarcely able to speak connectedly, much less to give myself up as before to the spontaneous fire of eloquence. My sermons, on the contrary, were now stiff, constrained, and

laboriously patched up from disjointed fragments. The audience bewailed the loss of my rhetorical powers,—gradually gave up their attendance,—and the superannuated brother who had formerly preached, and who was now much superior to me, again took his place; so that I was utterly superseded.

After some time lost in this manner, it happened, that a certain young Count, then on his travels, (under a feigned name,) with his tutor, came to the monastery, and desired to see whatever we had to boast of that was rare and curious. I was accordingly obliged to open the reliquary chamber,—the gleam of a fine sunset shone upon the strange furniture of this ghastly old room, and the visitors, with an ironical smile on their features, marched in. To my vexation, I was left with them alone; for the Prior, who had till now been with us, was called away to attend a sick person in the town of Königswald.

Gradually I had got through all that I intended to shew, and had minutely described every article, when, by chance, the Count's eye fell upon the curious old cabinet, adorned with grotesque carvings, in which was deposited the box with the Devil's Elixir.

Though for some time I dexterously evaded their questions, yet, at last, the Count and his tutor, joining together, urged me so far, that I could not avoid telling them, at once, the legends relating to the contents of this cabinet. In short, I repeated to them the whole story of St Anthony and the devil, nor (unluckily) did I leave out the warning which brother Cyrillus had given me, as to the danger of opening the box, or even the cabinet. Notwithstanding that the Count was of the Catholic religion, both he and his tutor seemed to have little or no faith in sacred legends. They both indulged in an exuberance of odd fancies and witty remarks on this comical devil, who had carried about bottles under his ragged mantle. At last, the tutor thought proper to assume a serious demeanour, and spoke as follows:—

"Do not, reverend sir, be offended with the levity of us men of the world. Be assured, on the contrary, that we both honour the Saints, and look on them as the most admirable examples of mortals inspired by religion, who, for the salvation of their souls, and edification of mankind, sacrificed all the enjoyments of life, and even life itself. But as to legends and stories such as you have just now related, in my opinion, these are, though not always, yet in many instances, (of which this is one,) only ingenious allegories, which, by misconception, are absurdly supposed to be histories of events that took place in real life."

With these words, the tutor had suddenly drawn aside the sliding cover of the box, and taken out the black strangely-formed bottle. Now, indeed, as brother Cyrillus had remarked to me, there spread itself abroad a strong odour, which appeared, however, anything rather than stupifying. It was, in a high degree, agreeable, generous, and refreshing.

"Hah!" exclaimed the Count, "now would I take any bet, that the Devil's Elixir is neither more nor less, than excellent old wine of Syracuse!"

"Unquestionably," said the tutor; "and if the bottle really came from the posthumous property of St Anthony, then, brother, you are more fortunate than the King of Naples, who, on one occasion, expected to be able to taste real old Roman wine; but, from the bad custom among the Romans, of pouring oil into the necks of their bottles instead of using corks, was debarred that gratification.

"Though this bottle," continued he, "is by no means so old as the Augustan age, yet, having been St Anthony's, it is certainly by far the most ancient that we are likely to meet with; and, therefore, reverend sir, you would, in my opinion, do well to apply the relic to your own use, and to sip up its contents with good faith and courage."

"Undoubtedly," resumed the Count, "this old Syracusan wine would pour new strength into your veins, and put to flight that bodily indisposition under which, reverend sir, you now seem to labour."

Hereupon the tutor pulled a cork-screw from his pocket, and, notwithstanding all my protestations to the contrary, opened the bottle. It seemed to me, as if, upon drawing the cork, a blue flame ascended into the

air, which directly afterwards vanished. More powerfully then, the vaporous odour mounted out of the flask, and spread itself through the chamber!

The tutor tasted in the first place, and cried out with rapture—"Admirable, admirable Syracusan! In truth, the wine cellar of St Anthony was by no means a bad one; and if the devil really was his butler, then certainly he had no such evil intentions towards the Saint as people commonly suppose!—Now, my Lord Count, taste the wine!"

The Count did so, and confirmed what the tutor had said. Indeed he took a long draught, instead of a taste, from the bottle. They renewed their witticisms and merriment over the relic, which, according to them, was decidedly the finest in all the collection. They wished heartily, that they could have a whole cellar of such rarities, &c. &c.

I heard all this in silence, with my head sunk down, and with eyes fixed on the ground. The *badinage* of the strangers was to me, in my present mood of mind, abhorrent and tormenting. In vain did they urge me to taste the wine of St Anthony! I resolutely refused, and at last was allowed to shut up the bottle, well corked, into its proper receptacle.

Thus, then, I had *for once* triumphed and escaped. The strangers, indeed, would have endeavoured to prove, that this trial of the wine was but a venial transgression; but even of *venial* transgressions, I had at that time a proper abhorrence, knowing that they formed the sure and ample foundation for mortal sins.

The strangers left the monastery. But, as I sat alone in my cell, I could not disguise from myself, or deny, that I felt a certain cheerfulness of mind, and exhilaration of spirit. It was obvious that the powerful and spirituous odour of the wine had revived me. No trace or symptom of the bad effects of which Cyrillus had spoken did I experience. On the contrary, an influence the most opposite became decidedly manifest.

The more that I now meditated on the legend of St. Anthony, and the more lively that I called to mind the words of the tutor, the more certain did it

appear to me, that the explanations of the latter were correct and well-founded. Then, first, with the rapidity and vehemence of lightning, the thought rushed through me, that on that unhappy day, when the horrible vision broke the thread of my discourse, I too had been on the point of interpreting the legend of St Anthony in the same manner as an ingenious allegory. With this thought another soon was united, which filled my mind so completely, that every other consideration almost faded away.

"How," said I to myself, "if this extraordinary and odoriferous drink actually possessed the secret efficacy of restoring thy strength, and rekindling that intellectual fire which has been so frightfully extinguished? What, if already some mysterious relationship of thy spirit, with the mystical powers contained in that bottle, has been plainly indicated, and even proved, if it were no more than by this,—that the very same odour which stunned and distracted the weakly Cyrillus, has, on thee, only produced the most beneficial effects?"

When already I had at various times even resolved to follow the counsel of the strangers, and was in the act of walking through the church towards the reliquary room, I perceived an inward, and, to myself, inexplicable resistance, which held me back. Nay, once, when on the very point of unlocking the cabinet, it seemed to me as if I beheld in the powerful *alto rilievo* of the antique carvings on the pannel, the horrible countenance of the painter, with his fixed glaring eyes, of which the intolerable expression still penetrated through my heart, and vehemently seized by a supernatural horror, I fled from the room, in order to prostrate myself at one of the altars in the church, and repent of my temerity!

But, notwithstanding all my endeavours, the same thought continued to persecute me, that only by participation in that miraculous wine could my now sunk spirit be refreshed and restored. The behaviour of the Prior and the monks, who treated me with the most mortifying, however well intended, kindness, as a person disordered in intellect, brought me to absolute despair; and as Leonardus granted me a dispensation from the usual devotional exercises, in order that I might completely recover my

strength, I had more time for reflection. In the course of one long sleepless night, persecuted and tortured by my inward sense of degradation, I resolved that I would venture all things, even to death, and the eternal destruction of my soul, in order to regain the station that I had lost. I was, in short, determined to obtain my former powers of mind, or to perish in the attempt.

CHAPTER VIII.

I rose from bed, and glided like a ghost through the great aisle of the church towards the reliquary chamber. I had my lamp with me, which I lighted at the altar of the Virgin. Illuminated by the glimmering radiance, the sacred portraits of the Saints seemed to move and start into life. Methought they looked down upon me with an aspect of compassion. In the hollow murmurs of the night wind, which poured in through the high and partly broken windows of the choir, I heard melancholy warning voices. Among others, I distinguished that of my mother. Though from a far distance, these words were clearly audible:—"Medardus! Son Medardus! What wouldst thou do?—Renounce, oh! renounce, ere it is too late, this fearful undertaking!"

I disregarded them all, however: for my courage was wound up by despair. As I came into the ghastly old chamber of relics, all was silent and tranquil. I walked with rapid and resolved steps across the floor, so that my lamp was almost extinguished. I unlocked the cabinet—I seized the box—opened it—beheld the bottle—drew the cork—and in an instant had swallowed a deep and powerful draught!

It seemed immediately as if fire streamed through my veins, and filled me with a sensation of indescribable delight! I drank once more, (but sparingly,) and the raptures of a new and glorious life began at once to dawn on my perception. In haste, as if from dread of being overlooked, I locked up the empty box into the cabinet, and rapidly fled with the inestimable treasure into my cell, where I placed it carefully in my secretaire.

At that moment, while turning over my papers, the identical small key fell into my hands, which formerly, in order to escape from temptation, I had separated from the rest; and yet, notwithstanding my precaution, I had found, both on this occasion, and at the time when the strangers were with me, the means of unlocking the cabinet! I examined my bunch of keys, and

found among them one strangely shaped and unknown, with which I had now, and without, in my distraction, remarking it, made my way to the relic.

Hereupon I shuddered involuntarily; but my terror soon wore away. As if on the transparent medium of a *phantasmagorie*, one bright and smiling image chased another before the mind's eye—before that mind, which now, for the first time, seemed to be awoke from deep sleep; yet the visions of my youth awoke not—I thought not of the past; but, under the feverish excitement of newly acquired energy, dwelt only (if thought could be said to dwell where all was restless confusion) on the brilliant prospects which awaited me for *the future*. It was ambition that possessed me. I should have once more the power of obtaining that noblest of earthly supremacies, an empire over the minds of others!

I had no sleep nor rest through the night, but eagerly waited till the brightness of the next morning beamed through the high window into my cell, when I hastened down into the monastery gardens to bask in the warm splendour of the rising sun, which now ascended fieryly, and glowing red from behind the mountains.

Leonardus and the brethren directly remarked the change which had taken place in my outward appearance and behaviour. Instead of being, as formerly, reserved and wrapt up within myself, without uttering a word, I was now become once more lively and cheerful, and spoke again in the same tone with which I used to address the assembled multitudes, and with the fervid eloquence which used to be peculiarly my own.

On being at last left alone with Leonardus, he looked stedfastly at me for a long space, as if he would read my inmost thoughts. Then, while a slight ironical smile coursed over his features, he said only, "Brother Medardus has had some new vision perhaps—has drawn fresh energy and new life from supernatural revelations?"

The irony with which the virtuous, the prudent, and immaculate, treat a fallen brother, is seldom beneficial in its influence; seldom indeed is it really consistent with virtue. It commonly proceeds either from selfish coldness of heart, (this utter antithesis of christian charity,) or from that sort of worldly knowledge, which consists in believing that no one is to be trusted. Hanging down my head, and with eyes fixed on the ground, I stood

without uttering a word, and as for Leonardus, he departed and left me to my own contemplations.

I had already been but too much afraid that the state of excitement produced by wine could not possibly continue long, but, on the contrary, might, to my utter grief and discomfiture, draw after it a state of yet more miserable weakness than that which I had already experienced. It was not so, however; with the perfect recovery of my health, I experienced a degree even of long-lost youthful courage. I felt once more that restless and vehement striving after the highest and most extended sphere of action, which the convent could allow to me. Accordingly, I insisted on being allowed to preach again on the next holiday, which after some consideration was granted to me.

Shortly before mounting the pulpit, I allowed myself another draught of the miraculous wine. The effects were even beyond my most sanguine expectations. Never had I spoken more ardently, impressively, or with greater *onction*, than on this day. My audience, as before, were confounded, and the rumour of my complete recovery was with inconceivable rapidity spread abroad.

Henceforward the church was regularly crowded, as on the first weeks of my former celebrity; but the more that I gained the applause of the people, the more serious and reserved did Leonardus appear, so that I began at last with my whole soul to hate him. My object, in acquiring an ascendancy over the multitude, was now fully attained; but in all other respects, my mind was disappointed, disquieted, and gloomy. In the friendship of my brethren I had lost all confidence. As for Leonardus, I believed that he was wholly actuated by selfish pride, and mean-spirited envy.

The grand festival of St Bernard drew near, and I burned with impatience to let my light shine in its fullest lustre before the Lady Abbess; on which account, I begged the Prior to form his arrangements in such a manner, that I might be appointed on that day to preach in the Cistercian Convent. Leonardus seemed greatly surprised by my request. He confessed to me,

without hesitation, that he himself had intended to preach in the Cistercian Monastery; and had already fixed his plans accordingly. "However," added he, "it will no doubt be on this account the more easy for me to comply with your request; as I can excuse myself, on the plea of illness, and appoint you to attend in my place."

I attempted no apology for the indelicacy of such conduct; for my mind was possessed wholly by one object. The Prior changed his arrangements in the manner he had promised. I went to Kreuzberg, and saw my mother and the Princess on the evening preceding the ceremony. My thoughts, however, were so much taken up with the discourse that I was to deliver, of which the eloquence was to reach the very climax of excellence, that the meeting with them again made but a very trifling impression upon me.

I was at the old farm-house, too, in which my early days had passed away like a dream. I walked again through the neglected garden, where the trees were now in their fullest luxuriance. I stood upon the moss-grown terrace, mounted upon the tottering *altan*,^[1] on the top of the old tower, at one end, the better to behold the features of the landscape. Thence I saw the wanderings of the Saale gleaming amid the pine-tree forests; the towers of Kreuzberg and Heidebach on the north, and the Thuringian mountains, with the spires of Königswald, in the distance towards the south. The sunbeams played and shifted over the landscape;—the summer winds breathed fragrance, wafting to my ears the choral anthems from the Monastery, and from the assembled pilgrims. The scenes and their influences were the same, but I saw them with unheeding eyes. I felt them not; the days of innocence were already past, and my heart was agitated with earthly passions.

I felt no reproaching pangs of conscience, however, no sadness, nor regret; I pursued my ONE and *only* object, elated with the certainty of success.

The report had been duly spread through the town, that I was to preach, instead of the invalid Leonardus; and, therefore, an audience, perhaps greater than on any former occasion, was drawn together. Without having

written a single note, and merely arranging mentally into parts the discourse which I was about to deliver, I mounted the pulpit, trusting only to that inspiration which the solemnity of the occasion, the multitude of devout listeners, and the lofty-vaulted church, would of necessity excite in my peculiarly constituted mind.

In this, indeed, I had not been mistaken. Like a fiery lava stream, the torrent of my eloquence flowed irresistibly onward. With many real anecdotes out of the life of St Bernard, I interwove ingenious pictures from my own invention, and the most pious applications of his glorious examples to the conduct of ordinary mortals, till in the looks of all, which were universally directed towards me, I read only astonishment and admiration. Thus my triumph was complete, and methought the trophy would be more brilliant than any that I had before won.

How anxiously were wound up my anticipations as to the reception which I was to receive from the Princess! How confidently, indeed, did I look for the highest and most unqualified expression of her delight! Nay, it seemed to me, as if she, in her turn, must now pay the homage of respect and deference to that individual, whom, but a few years before, she had filled with awe and unlimited veneration.

But in these hopes I was miserably disappointed. Having desired an interview, I received from her a message, that being attacked by sudden illness, she could not speak with any one. This notice was so much the more vexatious, since, according to my proud anticipations, illness should have only inclined her the more to receive consolation and spiritual aid from a being so nobly gifted and so highly inspired.

As to my mother, she seemed oppressed, and weighed down by a secret and overpowering grief, as to the cause of which, I did not venture to inquire, because the silent admonitions of my own conscience almost convinced me, that I myself had brought this distress upon her; although the particular means by which it had been produced, I was unable to define. She gave me

a small billet from the Princess, of which, till my return to the Capuchin Monastery, I was not to break the seal.

For the rest of the day, (which was, as usual, spent in feasting and mirth,) I could think of nothing else, and scarcely was I arrived at home and in my cell, when with the utmost impatience I broke the seal, and read what follows:

"My dear son, (for still must I address you in this manner, the slightest variation of expression is like an external farewell to those whom we love,) by your discourse of to-day, you have thrown me into the deepest affliction. No longer has your eloquence been that of a heart whose affections are turned towards Heaven. Your inspiration was not that which bears the pious soul as if on seraph's wings aloft, so that it is enabled, in holy rapture and by anticipation, to behold the kingdoms of the blest. Alas! the pompous adornments of your discourse,—your visible effort, only to utter that which might be striking and brilliant, have sufficiently proved to me, that instead of labouring to instruct the community, and to stir up among them pious affections, you have striven only to acquire the approbation and wonder of the light and worldly-minded multitude. You have hypocritically counterfeited feelings which have no real existence in your heart. Nay, like a profane actor on the stage, you have practised gestures and a studied mien, all for the sake of the same base meed of wonder and applause. The demon of deceit has taken possession of you, and, if you do not return into yourself, and renounce the sins by which you are beset, will soon bring you to destruction.

"For, sinful, very sinful, are your present actions and conduct; in so much the more, as, by your vows, you are bound to renounce the world and its vanities. May the blessed St Bernard, whom to-day you have so shamefully offended, according to his celestial patience and long sufferance, forgive you, and enlighten your mind, so that you may recover the right path, from which, by stratagems of the devil, you have been thus distracted; and may he intercede for the salvation of your soul!—Farewell!"

As if I had been pierced by an hundred fiery daggers, these words of the Princess struck to my very heart; and, instead of receiving such admonitions gratefully, as a trial of patience and obedience, I burned with rage and resentment. Nothing appeared to me more unequivocal, than that the Prior had taken advantage of the overstrained piety (or methodism) of the Abbess, and sedulously prejudiced her against me. Henceforth I could scarcely bear to look upon him without trembling with indignation. Nay, there often came into my mind thoughts of *revenge*, at which I myself could not help shuddering.

The reproaches of the Abbess and the Prior were to me, on this account, only the more intolerable, that I was obliged, from the very bottom of my soul, to acknowledge their validity and truth. Yet always more and more firmly persisting in my course, and strengthening myself from time to time, with a few drops of the mysterious wine, I went on adorning my sermons with all the arts of rhetoric, and studying theatric gestures and gesticulations. Thus I secured always more and more the meed of applause and admiration.

CHAPTER IX.

The beams of the morning sun broke in roseate deep lustre through the painted windows of the church. Alone, and lost in deep thought, I sat in the confessional. Only the steps of the officiating lay brother, whose duty it was to sweep the church, sounded through the vaulted roof. I did not expect any visitors at such an hour; but suddenly I heard near me a rustling sound; and, behold! there came a tall, slender, but exquisitely proportioned, figure of a young woman, in a foreign dress, with a long veil over her face, who must have entered at one of the private doors, and was approaching me as if for confession. In her movements was indescribable grace—she drew nearer—she entered the confessional, and kneeled down. Deep sighs, as if involuntarily, were heaved from her bosom. It seemed as if, even before she spoke, some irresistible spell of enchantment pervaded the atmosphere, and overpowered me with emotions, such as, till now, I had never experienced.

How can I describe the tone of her voice, which was wholly new and peculiar; but which penetrated even into my inmost heart! She began her confession. Every word that she uttered rivetted more and more my attention, and ruled, like a supernatural charm, over my feelings. She confessed, in the first place, that she cherished a forbidden love, with which she had long struggled in vain; and this love was so much the more sinful, because holy vows for ever fettered the object of her affection. Yet, in this hopeless delirium of her despair, she had many times cursed the bonds, however sacred, which held them thus asunder.—She here faltered—paused—then, with a torrent of tears, which almost stifled her utterance, added, "Thou thyself, Medardus, art the consecrated being whom I so unspeakably love!"

As if in deadly convulsions, all my nerves irresistibly vibrated. I was out of myself. An impulse, till now never known, almost raged in my bosom. A passionate desire to behold her features—to press her to my heart—to perish at once in delight and despair—wholly took possession of me! A moment of pleasure to be purchased by an eternity of pain! She was now silent; but I heard still the deep heaving of her breath. In a kind of wild

despair, I violently summoned up all my strength. In what words I answered her, I cannot now remember, nor durst I look on her as she departed; but I perceived that she silently rose up, and retired; while, with the cloth curtains firmly pressed upon my eyelids, I remained fixed, motionless, and almost unconscious, in the confessional.

By good chance, no one else came into the church, and I had an opportunity, therefore, to escape quietly into my cell. How completely different all things now appeared to me! How foolish—how insipid all my former endeavours! I had not seen the countenance of the unknown; and yet, by the force of my own imagination, her image lived within my heart. She looked on me with her mild blue eyes, in which tears were glistening, and from which glances fell into my soul like consuming fire, which no prayer and no penitential exercises any more could extinguish. Such penitence, indeed, I did not spare; but, on the contrary, chastised myself with the knotted cords of our order, till blood streamed from my mangled flesh, that I might, if possible, escape from that eternal destruction by which I was now threatened.

There was an altar in our church dedicated to St Rosalia; and her picture, admirably painted, was hung over it, representing the Saint at the moment when she suffered martyrdom. In this picture, which had never particularly struck me before, I now at once recognised the likeness of my beloved! Even her dress exactly resembled the foreign habit of the unknown!

Here, therefore, like a victim of the most horrible insanity, I used to lie, for hours together, prostrate upon the steps of the altar, uttering hideous groans, and even howling in despair, so that the monks were terrified, and fled from me in dismay.

In more tranquil moments, I used to walk hurriedly up and down the convent garden. I beheld her well-known form wandering through the misty

fragrant regions of the distant landscape. I saw her emerging from the thickets of the dense wood, rising like a naiad from the fountains—hovering, like some goddess of the olden time, over the flowery meadows. Everywhere I beheld her, and lived but for her alone. Then I cursed my vows, and my now miserable existence. I resolved to go forth into the world, and not to rest until I had discovered her, and purchased happiness, though at the expense of my soul's eternal weal!

At last, however, I succeeded so far, that I could, at least in presence of the Prior and the monks, moderate the ebullitions of my (to them) unaccountable delirium. I could appear more tranquil; yet, by this means, my inward agitations were only the more wasting and destructive. No slumber, no rest by night or by day! Incessantly persecuted and tormented by one and the same phantom, I passed, especially the night, always in intolerable conflicts. I called, severally, on all the Saints; but not to rescue me from the seductive image by which I was beset—not to save my soul from eternal misery—No! but to bestow on me the object of my affections—to annihilate my vows, and to give me freedom, that I might, without *double* guilt, fall into the abyss of sin.

At last, I had firmly resolved, that I would make an end of my torments, by a sudden flight from the convent. For, by some strange hallucination, nothing more than freedom from my monastic engagements seemed to me necessary to bring the unknown within my arms, and to put an end to the passions by which I was tormented.

I resolved that, having disguised my appearance sufficiently by cutting off my long beard, and assuming a lay dress, I would linger and wander about in the town till I had found her. I never once took into consideration how difficult, nay, how impossible, this would prove, or that, perhaps, having no money, I would not be able to live for a single day beyond the walls of the monastery.

The last day that I intended to spend among the capuchins had now arrived. By a lucky chance, I had been able to obtain a genteel dress, like that of an ordinary citizen. On the following night, I was resolved to leave the convent, never more to return.

Evening had already closed in, when, suddenly, I received from the Prior a summons to attend him. I trembled involuntarily at the message; for nothing appeared to me more certain, than that he had discovered more or less of my secret plans.

Leonardus received me with unusual gravity—nay, with an imposing dignity of demeanour, by which I was quite overawed.

"Brother Medardus," he began, "your unreasonable behaviour, which I look upon only as the too powerful ebullition of mental excitement, (but which excitement you have for a long time, perhaps not with the purest intentions, sought to foster,)—this behaviour, I say, has utterly disturbed our community, and torn asunder those peaceful bands by which the society was here united. Such conduct operates in the most destructive manner against that cheerfulness and good humour which, till now, I had successfully striven to establish among the monks, as the surest proof and demonstration of a consistent and pious life.

"Perhaps, however, some peculiar and unfortunate event during your sojourn among us bears the blame of all this. You should, however, have sought consolation from me, as from a friend and father, to whom you might confide all things; but you have been silent, and I am the less inclined now to trouble you with questions, as the possession of such a secret might, in a great measure, deprive me of that mental freedom and tranquillity, which, at my years, I prize above all earthly treasures.

"You have many times, and especially at the altar of St Rosalia, by horrible and extraordinary expressions, which seemed to escape from you in the unconsciousness of delirium, given great scandal, not only to the brethren, but to strangers who happened to be visiting among us. Therefore, according to the laws of the monastery, I could punish you severely; but I

shall not do so, since, perhaps, some evil influence, some demon, or, in short, the Arch-fiend himself, against whom you have not sufficiently striven, is the direct cause of your errors; and I shall only give you up to the guidance of your own conscience, with the injunction to be ardent and faithful in penitence and prayer.—Medardus, I can read deep into thy soul! —Thou wishest for freedom, and to be abroad in the world."

Leonardus fixed on me his most penetrating glances, which I was quite unable to encounter; but, on the contrary, felt myself wholly overpowered, and, conscious of my own wicked designs, remained silent.

"I understand you," said Leonardus, "and believe, indeed, that this world, if you walk through it piously, may contribute more to your welfare than the lonely life in our convent. An occurrence, involving the best interests of our order, renders it necessary to send one of the brethren to Rome—I have chosen you for this purpose; and, even to-morrow, you may be provided with the necessary powers and instructions, and set forward on your journey. You are so much the better qualified for this expedition, being still young and active, clever in business, and a perfect master of the Italian language.

"Betake yourself now to your cell—pray with fervour for the welfare of your soul. I shall meanwhile offer up my prayers for you; but leave out all corporeal chastisement, which would only weaken you, and render you unfit for the journey. At day-break, I shall await you in my chamber."

Like a gleam from Heaven, these words of Leonardus fell upon the darkness of my soul. Instead of the hatred which I had been cherishing, the attachment which I had before felt towards him regained its full sway. I even burst into tears; for it appeared to me as if he indeed read my most secret thoughts, and bestowed on me the free liberty of giving myself up to that imperious destiny, which, perhaps, after granting a few moments of delusive pleasure, might precipitate me into an abyss of irremediable destruction.

Flight and secrecy were now become wholly needless. I could openly leave the convent, and freely give myself up to my own plans of following that being, without whom there could be for me no happiness upon earth, and whom I was resolved, at all risks, to discover.

The journey to Rome, and the commissions with which I was to be charged, appeared to me only inventions of Leonardus, in order that I might, in a becoming manner, quit the monastery.

I passed the night, according to his injunctions, in prayer and in preparation for the journey. The rest of the miraculous wine I put into a basket-bottle, in order to guard it as a precious cordial, and afterwards, going to the relic room, deposited the empty flask in the cabinet.

It was not without astonishment that when, on the following day, I waited on the Prior, I perceived, from his diffuse and serious instructions, that there was a real cause for my being sent to Rome, and that the dispatches to which he had alluded were of considerable weight and importance. The reflection, therefore, fell heavily on my conscience, that, after receiving these credentials, I should yet be determined, from the moment that I left the convent, to give myself wholly up to my own impulses, without the slightest regard to any duty whatever. The thoughts, however, of *her*—the mistress of my soul—failed not to encourage me again, and I resolved to remain faithful to my own plans. The brethren soon after assembled together; and my leave-taking of them, and especially of the Prior Leonardus, filled me with the deepest melancholy. At last, the convent gates closed behind me, and I was equipped for my journey into a far distant land.

CHAPTER X.

I had walked for nearly an hour, and had now come to a rising ground. I looked back to have a last prospect of the convent and the town, whose well-known outlines were already become obscured by distance, and by the white masses of vapour that yet lingered in the valley. But on the eminence to which I had arrived, the fresh morning breezes awoke, and played coolly on my brows. Methought I heard music in the air. It was the pious hymns of the monks that were yet borne up towards me, as if to express once more their parting blessing and long farewell. Involuntarily I joined in the anthem, and lingered on the spot, unwilling to break a train of intricate associations, which it would require volumes to analyse and develope.

But now the sun rose in full glory over the towers of Königswald. The glossy foliage of the trees, already tinged by the first hues of autumn, shone in his dazzling golden light. There was pleasure even in the rustling sound of the dew-drops that fell like showers of diamonds, amid the myriads of insects that danced hummingly through the stilly air of the sheltering thickets. The birds, too, were awake, and fluttered, singing and rejoicing in amorous play, through the woods. To crown all, it was a holiday, and there came a religious procession of peasant lads and girls, in their best attire, up the hill side.

Never had I before enjoyed such a mood of mind. I seemed to myself wholly metamorphosed; and as if inspired by some newly awoke energies, I strode rapidly down the opposite side of the hill.

To the first *bauer* whom I happened to meet, I put the question, whether he knew the place where, according to the route that had been given to me, I was first to pass the night; and he described to me very accurately a footpath leading off from the high road, and winding through the mountains, by which I should reach more rapidly than by any other course, the place of my destination.

I had parted with the *Bauer*, and had walked on for a considerable space in complete solitude, when, for the first time since my setting out, the thoughts

occurred to me of the unknown beauty, and my fantastical plan of going in search of her. But, as if by some new and supernatural influence, her image had now vanished almost quite away; so that it was with difficulty I could trace the pale disfigured lineaments. The more that I laboured to retain this apparition firmly in my remembrance, the more fallaciously it melted, as if into vapour, from my sight; only my extravagant behaviour in the convent, after that mysterious adventure, remained fresh in my recollection. It was now even to myself inconceivable with what patience the Prior had borne with all this; and how, instead of inflicting the punishment I so justly deserved, he had sent me forth into the world.

I soon became convinced, that the visit of the unknown beauty had been nothing more nor less than a vision, the consequence of too stedfast application. Instead of imputing this, as I would formerly have done, to any direct interference of the devil, I ascribed it to the natural deception of my own disordered senses. Nay, the circumstance of the stranger being dressed exactly like St Rosalia, seemed to prove, that the animated and excellent picture of that saint, which, in an oblique direction, I could behold from the confessional, had a great share in producing my delusion.

Deeply did I admire the wisdom of the Prior, who had chosen the only proper means for my recovery; for, shut up within the convent walls, always brooding over my own gloomy thoughts, and surrounded ever by the same objects, I must irretrievably have fallen into utter madness. Becoming always more reconciled to the rational conclusion, that I had but dreamed, I could scarcely help laughing at myself; nay, with a levity which before had been most remote from my character, I made a jest of my own supposition, that a female saint had fallen in love with me; whereupon I recollected also, with equal merriment, that I had once imagined myself to be transformed into St Anthony.

One morning, (it was after I had been already several days wandering amid the mountains,) I found myself amid bold, frightfully piled up masses of rock, and was obliged to proceed by narrow, dangerous footpaths, beneath which the mountain rivulets roared and foamed in their contracted ravines.

The path became always more lonely, wild, and arduous. The autumnal sun (it was in September) rose high in heaven, and burned upon my uncovered head. I panted for thirst, for no spring was near, and I could not reach the torrents, though their voice was audible; moreover, there was yet no sign of my approach to the village, which had been marked for my next resting place.

At last, quite exhausted, I sat down upon a mass of rocks, and could not resist taking a draught from my basket-bottle, notwithstanding that I wished to reserve as much as possible of the extraordinary liquor. I felt instantly the mantling glow of quickened circulation in every vein, and energetic bracing of every fibre, while, refreshed and strengthened, I boldly marched forward, in order to gain the appointed station, which now could not be far distant.

The dark pine-tree woods became always more and more dense, and the ground more steep and uneven. Suddenly I heard near me a rustling in the thickets, and then a horse neighed aloud, which was there bound to a tree. I advanced some steps farther, as the path guided me onwards, till, almost petrified with terror, I suddenly found myself on the verge of a tremendous precipice, beyond which the river, which I have already mentioned, was thundering and foaming at an immeasurable distance below.

With astonishment, too, I beheld, on a projecting point of rock which jutted over the chasm, what appeared to me the figure of a man. At first, I suspected some new delusion; but, recovering in some degree from my fear, I ventured nearer, and perceived a young man in uniform, on the very outermost point of the rocky cliff. His sabre, his hat, with a high plume of feathers, and a portefeuille, lay beside him;—with half his body hanging over the abyss, he seemed to be asleep, and always to sink down lower and lower! His fall was inevitable!

I ventured nearer. Seizing him with one hand, and endeavouring to pull him back, I shouted aloud, "For God's sake, sir, awake! For Heaven's sake, beware!"—I said no more; for, at that moment, starting from his sleep, and at the same moment losing his equilibrium, he fell down into the cataract!

His mangled form must have dashed from point to point of the rocks in his descent. I heard one piercing yell of agony, which echoed through the

immeasurable abyss, from which at last only a hollow moaning arose, which soon also died away.

Struck with unutterable horror, I stood silent and motionless. At last, by a momentary impulse, I seized the hat, the sword, the portefeuille, and wished to withdraw myself as quickly as possible from the fatal spot.

Now, however, I observed a young man dressed as a *chasseur* emerge from the wood, and coming forward to meet me. At first, he looked at me earnestly and scrutinizingly—then, all at once, broke out into immoderate laughter; whereat an ice-cold shuddering vibrated through all my frame.

"*Sapperment!* my Lord Count," said the youth, "your masquerade is indeed admirable and complete; and if the Lady Baroness were not apprized before hand, I question if even she would recognize you in this disguise.—But what have you done with the uniform, my lord?"

"As for that," replied I, "I threw it down the rocks into the water."—Yet these words were *not mine!* I only gave utterance, involuntarily and almost unconsciously, to expressions, which, by means of some supernatural influence, rose up within me.

I stood afterwards silent, and absorbed in thought, with my staring eyes always turned to the rocks, as if from thence the mangled frame of the unfortunate Count would ascend to bear witness against me. My conscience accused me as his murderer; but, though thus unnerved, I continued to hold the hat, the sword, and the portefeuille, convulsively firm in my grasp.

"Now, my lord," resumed the *chasseur*, "I shall ride on by the carriage road to the village, where I shall keep myself *incognito* in the small house to the left-hand side of the gate. Of course, you will now walk down to the castle, where you are probably expected by this time. Your hat and sword I shall take with me."

I gave them to him accordingly.—"Now, farewell, my lord," added the youth; "much pleasure attend you in the castle!"

Hereupon, whistling and singing, he vanished away into the woods. I heard him afterwards untie the horse, that was there bound to a tree, and ride off.

When I had recovered myself in some measure from my confusion, and reflected on the adventure, I was obliged to confess, that I had become wholly the victim of chance or destiny, which had at once thrown me into the most extraordinary circumstances. It was quite obvious, that an exact resemblance of my face and figure with those of the unfortunate Count, had deceived the chasseur; and that his master must have chosen the dress of a capuchin, in order to carry on some adventure in the castle, of which the completion had now devolved upon me! Death had overtaken him, and at the same moment a wonderful fatality had *forced* me into his place. An inward irresistible impulse to act the part of the deceased Count, overpowered every doubt, and stunned the warning voice of conscience, which accused me of murder *now*, and of shameless intended crimes *yet to come*!

I now opened the portefeuille. Letters, money, and bank-bills, to a considerable amount, fell into my hands. I wished to go through the papers, one by one, in order that I might be aware of the late Count's situation. But my internal disquietude, the confusion of a thousand strange ideas, which crowded through my brain, did not admit of this.

After walking a few paces, I again stood still. I seated myself on a rock, and endeavoured to force myself into a quieter mood of mind. I saw the danger of stepping, thus wholly unprepared, into a circle of people, of whom I knew nothing. Then suddenly I heard a sound of hunting horns through the wood, and voices shouting and rejoicing, which came always nearer and nearer. My heart beat with violence—my breath faltered.—Now, indeed, a new life, a new world, were about to be opened upon me!

I turned into a small, narrow footpath, which led me down a steep declivity. On stepping out of the thicket, I beheld an extensive, nobly built castle, lying beneath me in the valley. *There*, of course, was the intended scene of the adventure which the late Count had in contemplation, and I walked courageously onwards. I soon found myself in the finely kept walks of the park, by which the castle was surrounded. At last, in a dark side allée, in a kind of *berçeau*, I saw two male figures, of whom one was in the dress of a lay monk. They came nearer, but were engaged in deep discourse, and never once observed me.

CHAPTER XI.

The lay monk was a young man, on whose features lay the death-like paleness of a deeply corroding and inward grief. Of the other I could only say, that he was plainly, but genteelly dressed, and was considerably advanced in years. They seated themselves on a stone bench, with their backs turned towards me. I could understand every word that they said.

"Hermogen," said the old man, "by this obstinate silence, you bring your nearest friends to utter despair. Your dark melancholy increases; your youthful strength is withered. This extravagant resolution of becoming a monk, ruins all your father's hopes and wishes. Yet he would willingly give up the hopes that he had formed, if, from youth onwards, you had shewn any real tendency of character to loneliness and monachism. In such case, he certainly would not struggle against the fate that hung over him and you.

"But the sudden and violent change in your whole disposition, has proved only too plainly, that some concealed and unfortunate event—some mysterious adventure, at which we cannot guess, is the cause of your melancholy; which cause, however remote, still continues to exercise over you the same destructive influence.

"Your mind in former days was invariably cheerful, buoyant, and disengaged. What, then, can all at once have rendered you so misanthropical, that you should now suppose there cannot be in the breast of any living mortal, counsel or consolation for your afflictions?—You are silent—you stare only with your eyes fixed on vacancy.

"Hermogen, you once not only respected, but loved your father. If it has now become impossible for you to open your heart, and to have confidence in him, yet, at least, do not torment him by the daily sight of this dress, which announces only your perseverance in the most inimical and fantastic resolutions. I conjure you, Hermogen, to lay aside this hateful garb. Believe me, there lies in such outward things, more consequence than is usually ascribed to them. Surely you will not misunderstand, or suspect me of levity, when I remind you of the effect produced by dress on an actor. On

assuming the costume of any character, he experiences in himself a corresponding change of feelings. Are you not yourself of opinion, that if these detestable long garments did not come in your way to confine you, you would be able to walk and run—nay, to skip, jump, and dance, just as readily and lightly as before? The gleam and glitter of the bright dazzling epaulet, which formerly shone upon your shoulders, might again reflect upon your pale cheeks their wonted colour; and the clang of your military accoutrements would sound like cheering music in the ears of your noble horse, who would come neighing and prancing with joy to meet you, bending his neck proudly before his beloved master.

"Rouse yourself, then, Baron!—Away with these black robes, which, to tell the truth, are by no means becoming.—Say, shall Frederick now run and search out your uniform?"

The old man rose up as if to go. The youth detained him, and, evidently quite overpowered by emotion, fell into his arms.—"Alas! Reinhold," said he, "you torment me indeed inexpressibly. The more that you endeavour in this manner to awaken within me those chords which formerly sounded harmoniously, the more forcibly I feel how my relentless fate, as with an iron hand, has seized upon me, and crushed my whole frame, mental and bodily; so that, like a broken lute, I must either be silent, or respond in discord."

"These, Baron," said Reinhold, "are but your own delusions. You speak of some horrible and monstrous destiny which tyrannizes over you; but as to *wherein* or *how* this destiny exists, you are invariably silent. Yet, be that as it may, a young man like you, endowed both with mental energy, and courage which is the natural result of animal spirits, should be able to arm himself against those demons—those invisible foes, with their iron fangs, of whom you so often speak. As if aided by divine inspiration, he should exalt himself above that destiny, which would otherwise crush him into the earth; and, cherishing within his own heart the principles of life, wing his way above the petty torments of this world. Indeed, I can scarcely imagine to myself any circumstances that will not finally yield to a patient, reasonable, and yet energetic inward volition."

Hereupon Hermogen drew himself one step backwards, and fixing on the old man, a dark, gloomy look, almost with an expression of repressed rage, which was truly frightful:—

"Know, then," said he, "that *I myself* am the destiny—the demon, as thou sayest, by whom I am persecuted and destroyed, that my conscience is loaded with guilt, nay, with the stain of a shameful, infamous, and mortal crime, which I thus endeavour to expiate in misery and in despair!—Therefore, I beseech you, be compassionate, and implore, too, my father's consent, that he may allow me to go into a monastery!"

"Hermogen," said the old man, "you are now in a situation peculiar to those who are disordered both in body and in mind—you, therefore, cannot judge for yourself; and, in short, you should, on no account, go from hence. Besides, in a few days the Baroness will return home with Aurelia, and you must of necessity stay to see them."

A smile of bitter mockery coursed over the young man's features. He even laughed aloud, and cried, in a voice at which my heart recoiled and shuddered, "*Must* stay?—*Must therefore* stay?—Ay, truly, old man, thou art in the right—I must indeed stay; and my penitence will be here far more frightful than in the dreariest cloister."

With these words, he broke away, and disappeared in the thicket, leaving the old man motionless, and apparently lost in the most gloomy reflections.

"*Gelobt sey Jesu Christus!*" said I, pronouncing the conventual salutation in my best manner, and advancing towards him. He started, looked at me with surprise, and then seemed to call something to mind that he already knew, but could not *clearly* remember.

At last, "Reverend sir," said he, "it was perhaps to your coming that the Baroness alluded in a letter received by us four days ago; and you are sent hither for the benefit and consolation of this afflicted family."

I answered without hesitation in the affirmative, and the stranger (or Reinhold, as he has been styled) then immediately recovered that cheerfulness which seemed natural to his disposition. We walked on together through a very beautiful park, and came at last to a *boskett* near the

castle, from whence there was a magnificent prospect towards the mountains.

On his giving orders to a servant, who just then appeared near us, a plentiful *dejeuner a-la-fourchette* was immediately served up, with a bottle of excellent French wine.

On joining glasses, and looking at each other, it appeared to me as if Reinhold watched me with great attention, and seemed labouring with some obscure reminiscence.

At last he broke out—"Good Heaven! reverend sir, I must be grossly deceiving myself if you are not Brother Medardus, from the capuchin convent in Königswald: And yet, how is this possible? But, certainly, there can be no doubt!—Speak only, I beg of you, and clear up this mystery."

As if struck to the earth by lightning, I was, by these words of Reinhold, quite paralyzed and overpowered. I saw myself at once discovered, unmasked—accused, perhaps, as a murderer! Despair gave me strength. Life and death depended on that moment.

"I am indeed Brother Medardus, from the capuchin convent in Königswald," said I; "and am now employed on a diplomatic mission as legate from our monastery to Rome."

These words I uttered with all the quiet and composure which I was able to counterfeit. "Perhaps, then," said Reinhold, "it is only chance that brought you hither. You may have wandered from the high road. Or, if otherwise, how could it happen that the Baroness became acquainted with you, and sent you hither?"

Without a moment's reflection, but once more only *repeating* words which seemed by some strange voice to be whispered into my ears, I replied, "On my journey I became acquainted with the Baroness's confessor, and, at his request, I agreed to come hither."

"True," said Reinhold; "now I remember that the Baroness indeed wrote somewhat to this effect: Well, Heaven be praised that it is so, and that you have been induced to come to our assistance. I was, by chance, some years ago, in Königswald, and heard one of your admirable discourses, in which

you seemed to be indeed gifted with divine inspiration. To your piety, your unaffected eloquence, your true calling to be the champion of souls otherwise lost, I can safely trust for the fulfilment of that, which, to all of us, would have been impossible.

"I consider myself particularly fortunate, however, in having met you before you were introduced to the Baron, and will take advantage of this opportunity to make you acquainted with the circumstances of the family, and to be perfectly sincere and undisguised, as is fitting before a man of your sanctity and dignified character. It is indeed requisite, that, in order to give the proper tendency and guidance to your endeavours, you should receive from me hints on many points, on which (for other reasons) I would rather have been silent. I shall endeavour, however, to go through the whole in as few words as possible.

"With the Baron I was brought up from infancy. A certain similarity of temper made us like brothers, and annihilated those barriers which difference of birth would otherwise have raised up betwixt us. I was never absent from him; and, accordingly, after his father's death, and when he had finished his academical studies, he directly appointed me steward over his paternal property in these mountains.

"I continued still to be his most intimate friend and companion; nor were the most secret occurrences and circumstances of the house concealed from me. The late Baron had wished for his son's connection by marriage with an Italian family, whom he had highly respected; and my patron so much the more readily fulfilled his father's wishes, as he found himself irresistibly attracted to the young lady, who was by nature beautiful, and by education highly accomplished.

"Seldom, in truth, are the wishes and plans of parents either so judiciously framed, or so prosperously fulfilled, as in this instance. The young couple seemed to have been born for each other,—and of this happy marriage, a son and daughter, Hermogen and Aurelia, were the offspring.

"For the most part, we spent our winters in the town; but when, soon after the birth of Aurelia, the Baroness began to decline in health, we remained there for the summer also, as she indispensably required the assistance of

physicians. She died just as, on the approach of another spring, her visible amendment had filled the Baron with the most delightful hopes.

"We then fled to the country, and there only time could meliorate the deep-consuming grief by which he had become wholly possessed. Hermogen, meanwhile, grew up to be a fine youth, and Aurelia became every day more and more the image of her mother. The careful education of these children was our daily task and delight. Hermogen shewed a decided turn for the military life, and this constrained the Baron to send him into town, in order that he might begin his career there under the care of our old friend the governor of the fort.

"For the first time, three years ago, we again spent a winter together, as in old times, at the *residenz*; partly in order that the Baron might be near his son, and partly that he might visit his old acquaintances, who had constantly beset him with letters complaining of his absence.

"Universal attention was at that time excited by the appearance of a niece of the governor's, who had come hither out of the neighbouring *residenz* of R ——. She was an orphan, and had betaken herself to her uncle's house for protection; though *there* she had a whole wing of the castle to herself, had also her own private *economie*, and was in the habit of assembling the *beau monde* around her.

"Without describing Mademoiselle Euphemia too minutely, (which is the more needless, as you, reverend sir, will soon see her, and judge for yourself,) suffice it to say, that in all that she said or did, there was an indescribable grace, refinement, and self-possession, by which the natural charms of her beauty were heightened to an almost irresistible degree.

"Wherever she appeared, all that were around her seemed to be animated with new spirit; and every one, with the most glowing enthusiasm, paid her homage. Indeed the more insignificant and lifeless characters appeared in her company to be carried quite out of themselves, and to be so completely warmed with fire not their own, that, as if inspired, they revelled in enjoyments, of which till then they had never been capable.

"Of course, there was no want of lovers, who daily paid their court to this new divinity. They were numerous and indefatigable in their attentions. But

meanwhile, one could never with certainty say, that she distinguished either this or that individual from his competitors; but, on the contrary, with a kind of playful, yet wicked irony, which provoked without giving absolute offence, she contrived to involve them all in a perplexing, but indissoluble, kind of thralldom. They moved about her, completely under subjection, as if within the limits of some enchanted circle.

"On the Baron, this new Circe had gradually and imperceptibly made a wonderful impression. Immediately on his first appearance, she shewed to him a degree of attention, which appeared to be the result of youthful, almost childish, veneration. In conversation afterwards, she displayed her usual skill, proving herself (in his estimation at least) to be possessed of the most cultivated understanding and the deepest sensibility, such as, till now, he had scarcely ever found among women.

"With indescribable delicacy, she sought for and obtained Aurelia's friendship, and took such a warm interest in her fate, that by degrees she began to perform for her all the duties of her untimely lost mother. In brilliant circles especially, she knew how to assist the modest, inexperienced girl; and, without being observed, to set off Aurelia's natural good sense and talents to such advantage, that the latter became every day more distinguished, admired, and sought after.

"The Baron took every opportunity of becoming quite eloquent in praise of Euphemia; and here, for the first time, probably, in our lives, it happened that he and I were completely at variance.

"In society I was generally a spectator merely, rather than an actor, in whatever was going forward. In this way, looking on Euphemia as an object worthy of investigation, I had considered her with great attention. On her part, she had only, in compliance with her system of not neglecting any one, now and then interchanged with me a few insignificant words.

"I must confess, that she was, above all other women, beautiful and attractive;—that whatever she said was marked by sense and sensibility, (in other words, by *tact* and by prudence;) yet, notwithstanding all this, I was conscious to myself of an inexplicable feeling of distrust and aversion. Nay, whenever she addressed her discourse to me, or her looks by chance fell upon me, I could not escape from a certain disquietude and apprehension

that were quite overpowering. Her eyes, especially when she believed herself unobserved, glowed with an extraordinary and quite peculiar light, as if some unquenchable fire dwelt within her, which, at all times with difficulty kept down, had then irresistibly broken forth.

"Besides all this, there was too often on her otherwise finely formed lips, the expression of a hateful irony—the decided indication even of a malignant and fiendish scorn, at which my very heart shuddered.

"In this manner, especially, she often looked at Hermogen, who, for his part, troubled himself very little about her;—but such looks alone were quite sufficient to convince me, that, under a specious and beautiful mask, much was concealed, of which no one but myself suspected the existence.

CHAPTER XII.

"Against the unmeasured praise of the Baron," continued the old man, "I had indeed nothing to offer, but my own physiognomical observations, to which he did not allow the slightest importance; but, on the contrary, perceived in my dislike of Euphemia only a highly absurd species of idiosyncrasy. He even confessed to me, that the young lady would soon become one of his family, as he would do all in his power to bring about a marriage betwixt her and Hermogen.

"The latter happened to come into the room just as we spoke with considerable warmth on this subject, and when I was endeavouring to defend my notions about Euphemia. The Baron, accustomed always to act openly, and on the spur of the moment, made his son instantly acquainted with all his plans and wishes.

"Hermogen very quietly listened to his father's enthusiastic praises of the young lady; and when the eulogy was ended, answered that he did not feel himself in the least attracted towards Euphemia; that he could never love her; and therefore earnestly begged that any schemes for a marriage between her and himself might be given over.

"The Baron was not a little confounded, when all his favourite projects were thus at once set aside, but at the same time, said the less to Hermogen, as he recollected that Euphemia herself had never been consulted on the subject. With a cheerfulness and good humour which are indeed quite his own, he soon began to jest over the complete failure of his endeavours, and said that Hermogen evidently shared in my idiosyncrasy; though, for his part, how a beautiful young woman could inspire such dislike, he was quite unable to perceive.

"His own intercourse with Euphemia of course remained the same as before. He had been so accustomed to her society, that he was unable to spend any day without seeing her.

"Consequently, it soon after happened, that one day, in a careless and cheerful humour, he remarked to her, that there was but *one* individual within her enchanted circle, who had not become enamoured, and that was Hermogen. The latter, he added, had flatly refused to listen to a plan of marriage, which his father had wished to set on foot for him.

"Euphemia, in the same style of badinage, replied, that it might have been as well to consult her also on the subject, and that although she would gladly be more nearly allied to the Baron, yet this must by no means take place through Hermogen, who was for her far too serious, and too particular in his humour.

"From the time that this discourse took place with the Baron, (who immediately communicated it to me,) Euphemia continued, even in an unusual degree, her attentions towards him and Aurelia. At last, by many slight but intelligible hints, she gradually brought the Baron to the idea that a union with herself would exactly realize the *beau ideal* which she had formed of happiness in marriage. Every objection which could be urged on the score of years, or otherwise, she was able in the most convincing manner to refute, and with-all, advanced in her operations so gradually, delicately, and imperceptibly, that the Baron believed all the ideas which she directly put into his head to be the growth of his own feelings and his own ingenuity.

"Still sound and unbroken in health, and by nature lively and energetic, he now felt himself inspired, even like a young man, by a glowing and fervent passion. I could no longer damp nor restrain this wild flight, for it was already too late. In short, not long afterwards, to the astonishment of all the *residenz*, Euphemia became the wife of the Baron!!

"It seemed to me now, as if this formidable being, whom even I had before regarded with such distrust, having thus stepped at last into our very domestic circle, I must now be doubly and trebly on the watch for my friend and for myself. Hermogen attended the marriage of his father with the coldest indifference, but Aurelia, the dear child, who was haunted with a thousand indefinable apprehensions, burst into tears.

"Soon after the marriage, Euphemia longed to visit the Baron's castle here among the mountains. Her wish was gratified accordingly, and I must

confess, that her whole behaviour was, for a long time, so consistent and correct, that she extorted from me involuntary admiration. Thus, two years flowed on in perfect quietness and domestic enjoyment. Both winters we spent in the *residenz*, but even there too, the Baroness shewed towards her husband so much unfeigned respect, and such attention even to his slightest wishes, that even the voice of envy and detraction were at last put to silence, and not one of the young libertines who thought that they would here have sufficient scope for their gallantry, allowed themselves even the least freedom in her presence. During the last winter, I was probably the only one left, who, still influenced by the old *idiosyncrasy*, ventured to cherish doubts and mistrust against her.

"Before the Baron's marriage, a certain Count Victorin, major in the Prince's *Garde d'Honneur*, and only now and then professionally established at the *residenz*, was one of Euphemia's regular suitors, and the only one of whom it could ever have been said, that he at times appeared to be honoured by her particular regard. It had once been whispered indeed, that a much nearer and more intimate acquaintance existed between them, than was yet indicated by their outward behaviour. But the rumour immediately died away, as obscurely as it had arisen.

"Be that as it may, the Count Victorin was again this last winter in the *residenz*, and of course, made his appearance in the circles of the Baroness. He seemed, however, not in the least to concern himself about her, but rather even to avoid her conversation. Notwithstanding all this, I imagined that frequently their looks met, when they believed themselves unobserved; and that in these looks—but I shall not describe more particularly—suffice it to say, that their expression was such, as in my opinion could not be misunderstood, and such as to cause to me the utmost disquietude.

"More especially, it happened one night at the house of the Governor, where a large party was assembled, that I stood crowded and squeezed up into a window, where I was more than half concealed by the furniture drapery, and only two or three steps before me was the Count Victorin.

"Then Euphemia, more than ever brilliant and tasteful in her dress, and beaming in luxuriant beauty, swept up to him as if to pass by. No one, probably, remarked them but myself. He seized her arm, with a kind of

passionate vehemence, but so that it was observed by me alone. Their eyes met; her expressive looks were turned directly and full upon him. She whispered some words, of which I could not seize the import. Euphemia must have seen me. She turned round quickly; but I distinctly heard the words, 'We are observed!'

"I stood as if petrified by the shock of this discovery. Alas! reverend sir, think of my conflicting feelings at that moment—think of my gratitude and respect—of that faithful attachment with which I was devoted to the Baron—and recollect, too, the apprehensions by which I had been so long persecuted, and which were thus so cruelly and unequivocally realized!

"These few words, however unimportant in themselves, had completely revealed to me that there was a secret understanding between the Baroness and the Count! For the present I was obliged to be silent; but I was resolved to watch Euphemia with Argus eyes, and then, as soon as I had obtained *proofs* of her crime, to break asunder at once the disgraceful bands in which she had fettered my unhappy friend.

"Yet who is able to counteract successfully the contrivances of devilish cunning and hypocrisy? *My* endeavours, at least, were all utterly in vain, and it would only have been absurd to impart to the Baron what I had seen and heard. My opponents would directly have found ways and means to represent me as a half-witted, tiresome visionary.

"The snow still lay upon the mountains, when we came, last spring, over to the castle; but I made my usual excursions over all the grounds. One morning I met, in a neighbouring village, *a bauer*, who had something odd in his walk and gestures. Happening to turn round his head, he betrayed to me, on the first glance, the features of the Count Victorin! However, in the same moment he had vanished among the houses, and was no more to be seen.

"Any mistake on my part was here impossible. And what could have led him to this disguise, but the continuance of his old intrigue with the Baroness? Even now, I know for certain that he is again in this neighbourhood, for I have seen his *chasseur* riding past; and yet it is inexplicable to me how it happened that he did not rather attend the Baroness in town.

"It is now three months since we received intelligence that her uncle the Governor was attacked by severe and dangerous illness. Without delay, therefore, she obtained the Baron's consent to visit her relation, and set off, taking only Aurelia with her, indisposition preventing the Baron from accompanying her at that time; and he has since chosen to remain here.

"Now, however, misfortune had begun to make determined inroads into our house; for the Baroness had not been long absent before she wrote home, that Hermogen was suddenly seized by a melancholy, on which no society or advice of physicians seemed to have any beneficial influence; and that this even broke out oftentimes into fits of delirious rage. Day after day he wandered about all alone, cursing and denouncing himself and his cruel destiny; while all endeavours of his friends to recover him from this frightful state had been hitherto ineffectual.

"You may suppose, reverend sir, how painful and distressing was the impression that all this made upon the Baron. The sight of his son under such a fearful malady, would, in his present state, have agitated him too much. I therefore went to town alone.

"By the strong measures that had been adopted, Hermogen was already cured of these violent out-breakings of madness described by the Baroness; but a settled melancholy had fallen upon him, against which the physicians seemed to think that all aid would be unavailing.

"On seeing me, he was deeply moved. He told me that an unhappy destiny, with which it was in vain to struggle, drove him to renounce for ever the station which he had till then held; and that only as a monk could he hope for tranquillity in this world, or rescue his soul from eternal destruction. Accordingly, I found him already in the dress, in which you, reverend sir, may have observed him this morning; but notwithstanding his resistance, I succeeded in bringing him hither.

"He is now tranquil, but never for a moment relinquishes the *one* insane idea which has taken possession of him; and all attempts to extort a disclosure of the event which has brought him into his misery remain fruitless, though the revealing of this secret would probably afford the first means of contributing to its alleviation.

"Some time ago the Baroness wrote, that, by advice of her confessor, she would send hither a monk of his acquaintance, whose intercourse and consoling admonitions would probably have more influence than anything else on Hermogen, as his madness had evidently taken a devotional turn. I am greatly rejoiced, sir, that the choice has fallen on you, whom a chance the most fortunate for us had led to the *residenz*. By attending to the directions that I now give you, I trust that you may restore to a broken-hearted and deeply-afflicted family, that repose which they have so long lost.

"Your endeavours ought, in my opinion, to be directed to *two* especial objects. In the first place, inquire out this horrible secret, by which Hermogen is oppressed. His bosom will be lighter if it is once disclosed, whether in ordinary conversation, or in the confessional; and the church, instead of burying him within its walls, will again restore him to the world.

"In the second place, you should make yourself better acquainted with the Baroness. You know all that I have to communicate—You are probably already of my opinion, though I have not sufficient *proofs* for entering into an open accusation; but I know, that when you see, and become intimate with Euphemia, you will entertain the same conviction that I do. She is, however, by temperament, inclined to religion, at least her imagination is easily roused. Perhaps, therefore, by your extraordinary gifts of eloquence, you may penetrate deeply into her heart. You may agitate and terrify her into repentance of her crimes, and of that treachery against her best friends, by which, of necessity, she must work for herself everlasting torments.

"Yet one remark more, reverend sir, I must hazard. Many times it has appeared to me as if the Baron, too, had on his mind some secret grief, of which he conceals from me the cause. Besides his openly declared anxiety on account of Hermogen, he contends visibly with painful thoughts, which constantly harass him. It has often suggested itself to me, that he may perhaps, by some evil chance, have discovered the Baroness's criminality, and this by traces more certain and unambiguous than those which have occurred to me. Therefore, reverend sir, I must finally recommend also the Baron to your spiritual care and attention."

CHAPTER XIII.

With these words Reinhold closed his long narrative, which had, meanwhile, in a hundred different ways, tormented me. The most extraordinary and irreconcilable contradictions laboured, crossing and re-crossing each other, through my brain.

My very identity, my individuality, was cruelly become the game—the mere plaything, of chance, while as it were, losing myself, and melting away into forms and features not my own, I swam, without hold or stay, upon that wild sea of events, which broke in upon me like raging waves.

I had, indeed, virtually lost myself, for I could no longer recover any power of voluntary action. It was through the interference of my arm that Victorin had been hurled into the abyss; but it was chance, and no impulse of volition, by which I was guided on that occasion. "Now," said I to myself, "I come into his place; but then Reinhold knows Father Medardus, the preacher in the Capuchin Convent, and thus in his estimation I appear only that which I truly am. On the other hand, the adventure with the Baroness, which the Count had in contemplation, falls upon my shoulders, so that in this respect I become again Victorin! To myself an inexplicable riddle, thought becomes a mere chaos. Like the fabulous knight, who fought with his DOUBLE in the dark forest, I am at variance, and combating with myself."

Notwithstanding these internal commotions, I succeeded in counterfeiting tolerably well such composure as is becoming to a priest; and in this mood I came for the first time into the presence of the Baron.

I found him a man advanced in years; but in his now shrunk features, lay yet the evidences of the strength and vivacity which he had once possessed. Not age, indeed, but grief, had ploughed wrinkles in his forehead, and blanched his hair. Notwithstanding this, there prevailed in all that he said, and in his whole behaviour, a cheerfulness and good humour, by which every one must be attracted, and prepossessed in his favour.

When the old steward presented me to him as the monk, whose intended arrival had been noticed by the Baroness, his looks, at first rather doubtful and suspicious, became always more friendly, as, in the meanwhile, Reinhold related how he had heard me preach in the Capuchin Convent of Königswald, and had there convinced himself of my extraordinary gifts of piety and eloquence.

"I know not, my dear Reinhold," said the Baron, "how, or for what reason, the features of this reverend gentleman interest me so much at our first meeting. They certainly awake some remembrance, which yet struggles in vain to come clearly and fully into light."

It seemed to me, as if he would, in that very moment, break out with the name "Count Victorin!"—In truth, however miraculous it may appear, I had now become actually persuaded that I was the Count; and thereby (aided perhaps by the wine at breakfast, not to speak of the draught from the basket bottle,) I felt the circulation of the blood more powerfully in every vein, and colouring my cheeks with a deeper crimson.

I depended, however, upon Reinhold, who indeed knew me as Brother Medardus, though this now appeared to myself a mere fiction! Nothing could untie or unravel those intricate knots, by which the strange web of my destiny was thus bound together.

According to the Baron's wishes, I was immediately to make acquaintance with Hermogen; but he was nowhere to be found. He had been seen wandering towards the mountains; but the family were on that score quite unconcerned, as he had frequently for days together absented himself in that manner. Accordingly, through the whole afternoon, I remained in the society of the Baron and Reinhold, and by degrees recollected myself so completely, that towards evening I became quite calm, and courageous enough to grapple with the wonderful events and difficulties which now seemed to lie in wait for me.

In the solitude of the night, I opened the Count's portfolio, and convinced myself more particularly that it was Count Victorin who had been hurled into the abyss; yet the letters addressed to him were but of indifferent import, and not one of them gave me any very clear insight as to his real circumstances and condition in life.

Without, therefore, harassing my brain any farther about the matter, I resolved to accommodate myself as skilfully as I could to whatever course *chance* might point out for me; especially, it was requisite that I should wait the issue of my first interview with the mysterious Euphemia.

On the very next day, the Baroness, with Aurelia, unexpectedly made her appearance. I saw them alight from their carriage, and, received by the Baron, entering the gates of the castle. Unnerved and disquieted, I stepped restlessly up and down in my chamber, under a tempest of extraordinary anticipations. This, however, did not continue long, ere I was summoned down stairs.

The Baroness came forward to meet me. She was an eminently beautiful woman, still in the full bloom of her charms. There was in her countenance and *tout ensemble* a voluptuous tranquillity, diversified only by the restless gleam of her eyes, which were to an unparalleled degree fiery and expressive.

As soon as she beheld me she seemed involuntarily to start, and betrayed extraordinary emotion. Her voice faltered, she could scarcely command words.

This visible embarrassment on her part gave me courage. I looked her boldly in the face, and, in the conventual manner, gave her my blessing. Hereupon she became all at once deadly pale, and was obliged to seat herself on a sofa. Reinhold meanwhile looked on me as if quite satisfied, and even with smiles of good humour.

At that moment the door opened, and the Baron entered with Aurelia.

As soon as I had set eyes on this girl, it seemed as if a gleam of light from heaven flashed around me, and penetrated to my very heart, kindling up mysterious and long-lost emotions—the most ardent longings—the raptures of the most fervent love. All indeed that I had formerly felt seemed only like obscure and shadowy indications of that which now stepped forth at once into reality and life. Nay, life itself dawned for the first time, glittering,

variegated, and splendid before me, and all that I had known before lay cold and dead, as if under the desolate shadows of night.

It was she herself—the same mysterious unknown whom I had beheld in the vision of the confessional. The melancholy, pious, childlike expression of the dark blue eyes—the delicately formed lips—the neck gently bent down, as if in devout prayer—the tall, slender, yet voluptuous form; all these—they belonged not to Aurelia—it was herself, the blessed St Rosalia! Even the minutest particulars of dress—for example, the sky-blue shawl, which the young Baroness had now thrown over her shoulders, was precisely the same worn by the saint in the picture, and by the unknown of my vision.

What was now the luxuriant beauty of Euphemia compared with the divine charms of this celestial visitant? Only *her*, *her* alone could I behold, while all around was faded into coldness and obscurity.

It was impossible that my inward emotion could escape the notice of the bystanders.

"What is the matter with you, reverend sir?" said the Baron; "you seem agitated in an extraordinary degree."—By these words I was directly brought to myself, and I felt rising up within me a supernatural power,—a courage till then unknown,—to encounter all obstacles, if *she*—if *Aurelia* were to be the prize to reward me for the combat.

"Rejoice, *Herr Baron!*" cried I, as if seized by a sudden fit of inspiration—"rejoice, for a female saint is sent down from heaven among us. The heavens, too, will soon be opened in cloudless serenity, and the immaculate St Rosalia will diffuse blessings and consolation on the devout souls who humbly and faithfully pay to her their homage and adoration. Even now I hear the anthem,—the choral notes of glorified spirits, who long for the society of the saint, and who, calling on her in song, hover down from their resplendent thrones. I see her features, beaming in the divine *halo* of beatification, lifted up towards the seraphic choir, that are already visible to her eyes. *Sancta Rosalia, ora pro nobis!*"

Hereupon I fell on my knees, with mine eyes uplifted to heaven, my hands folded in prayer, and all present mechanically followed my example. No

one ventured to question me any farther. This sudden ebullition was imputed to some extraordinary inspiration, and the Baron gravely resolved to have mass said at the altar of St Rosalia in the *residenz*.

In this manner I had completely rescued myself from my present embarrassment; and I was resolved from henceforward to venture all things, for Aurelia was at stake, who was now far dearer to me than life.

The Baroness meanwhile appeared in a very strange and inexplicable mood. Her looks followed me; but when I met them, quite composedly and unconcerned, she averted her eyes, which then wandered about unsteadily and wildly. As for Aurelia, I could only guess at her agitation; for she had drawn down her veil, and gazed stedfastly on a cross which was hung by a rosary from her neck. At last the family retired into another chamber. I made use of the opportunity, and hastened down into the garden, where, in a state of the wildest excitement, I rushed through the walks, labouring with, and revolving a thousand resolutions, ideas, and plans, for my future life in the castle.

Through this day I did not again meet Aurelia. It was already evening, when Reinhold appeared, and said that the Baroness, who had been deeply affected by my pious and inspired discourse of that morning, wished to speak with me alone in her chamber.

When I had entered the room, and had, by her directions, closed and bolted the door, she advanced a few steps towards me, then taking me by both arms, and looking fixedly in my face, "Is it possible?" said she—"art thou Medardus, the Capuchin monk?—But the voice—the figure—your eyes—your hair,—speak, or I shall perish in this torment of suspense and apprehension!"

"VICTORIN!" replied I, in a whisper; and again this word was not mine, but suggested to me by some unknown and supernatural power;—then, to my

utter astonishment and consternation——

[There is a hiatus in the MS. at this place.]

CHAPTER XIV.

It was in my power, doubtless, to have fled from the castle, but in doing so—in saving myself from new crimes—I must have fled also *from Aurelia*. I had made the resolution (in which I was determined to persevere) to venture all things for *her* sake, and especially for the chance of renewing that conversation which the sanctity of the confessional wholly prohibited.

It was on her account, therefore, that I had now involved myself in enormous guilt; but though conscious of this as the cause, I did not escape the torments of remorse and the bitterest self-condemnation. A kind of horror seized on me when I thought of meeting Aurelia again, which, however, was very soon to happen, namely, at the supper-table. It seemed as if her pious angelic looks would directly accuse me of mortal sin, and as if, unmasked and detected, I should sink into utter disgrace and annihilation. From similar reasons, also, I could not bear to see the Baroness immediately after that interview, and all this induced me, under the pretext of having my devotions to perform, to shut myself up in my room, and remain there, when intimation was sent to me that supper was ready.

Only a few days, however, were required in order to banish all fear and embarrassment. The outward behaviour of the Baroness was in the highest degree guarded and amiable; and the more that, in my character of Count Victorin, I acquired ascendancy over her, the more she seemed to redouble her attention and affectionate solicitude for the Baron.

She confessed to me, however, that she many times laboured under the most fearful perplexity; that my *tonsure*, my long beard, and my genuine conventual gait, (which last, however, I did not now keep up so strictly as before,) had caused to her a thousand indefinable apprehensions; nay, upon my sudden inspired invocation of St Rosalia, she had become almost persuaded that some extraordinary fatality had annihilated the plan which, along with Victorin, she had so admirably laid, and had brought a miserable Capuchin monk into his place.

She admired, however, the extent of my precautions in actually taking the tonsure, in allowing my beard to grow, and in having studied my part so exactly, that, even now, she was obliged often to look me sharply in the face, to avoid falling again into painful doubts.

Meanwhile, Victorin's *chasseur*, disguised as a *bauer*, made his appearance now and then at the end of the park, and I did not neglect to speak with him privately, and admonish him to hold himself in readiness for momentary flight, if any evil chance should render this necessary.

As for the Baron and Reinhold, they seemed, on the whole, perfectly satisfied, yet frequently troubled me with urgent suggestions that I should direct the best energies of my mind to acquire an influence over the deeply pensive and obstinate Hermogen.

On the contrary, however, I had never been able to interchange with him a single word, so sedulously did he avoid every opportunity of being alone with me; and if by chance we met in the society of his father and the steward, he looked upon me with an expression so marked and extraordinary, that I had considerable difficulty in avoiding obvious embarrassment. It seemed almost as if he could read my very soul, and spy out my most secret thoughts; and as often as he was thus forced into my presence, an unconquerable ill-humour, a malicious irony, and indeed rage, with difficulty restrained, were visible on his pale features.

It happened that once when I was taking a walk in the park, I perceived him, quite unexpectedly, coming up to meet me. I held this for the fittest possible moment to clear up the painful circumstances in which I was placed with regard to him; and accordingly, when, as usual, he wished to escape, I ventured to take him by the arm, and my old talent of eloquence enabled me now to speak so impressively, and with so much energy, that at last he could not help being attentive, and shewed, as I thought, some favourable symptoms of emotion.

We had seated ourselves on a stone bench at the end of a walk which led towards the castle. In discourse, my inspiration, as usual, increased. I

maintained, that it was in the highest degree sinful for a man, thus devoured by inward grief, to despise the consolation and assistance of the church, which can raise up the fallen, and might enable him to fulfil all purposes and duties of this life, which, by the goodness of the Supreme Power, were yet held invitingly before him.

I insisted, that even the most depraved criminal need not doubt of the grace and favour of Heaven, and that the indulgence of such doubts might alone deprive him of the temporal happiness, and salvation hereafter, which he would otherwise obtain. At last I demanded that he should directly unload his conscience by confessing to me, promising him, at the same time, on the usual conditions of contrition, penance, and amendment, absolution for every sin that he might have committed.

Hereupon he rose up. His frame seemed to heave and dilate with indignation;—his brows were contracted—his eyes glared—a burning red flew at once over his before pale countenance.

"Art thou," cried he, with a voice, by the depth and wildness of whose tones I was involuntarily agitated,—*"art thou then thyself free from sin, that thou ventur'st, like the most pure—nay, like the Divinity whom thou blasphemest, to look into the secrets of my bosom?—Thou, forsooth, would'st promise me forgiveness—thou, who for thyself wilt vainly strive for pardon, and against whom the regions of the blest are for ever closed!—Miserable hypocrite! soon will the hour of retribution be at hand, and trodden into the dust like a poisonous reptile, shalt thou writhe in misery and death, struggling in vain for aid and release from thy nameless torment, till thou perishest in madness and despair!"*

Hereupon he turned round, and quickly disappeared. I had no power to detain him—I was, indeed, utterly crushed and annihilated. All my composure and courage had fled, and I saw no means by which confidence and safety could again be recovered.

At length I observed the Baroness coming out of the castle, dressed as if for a walk. With her only, in this difficulty, could I hope to find assistance or

consolation. I hastened, therefore, to meet her.

At first she seemed terrified at my disordered appearance—inquired after the cause of it; and I described to her the whole scene which I had just now encountered with the insane Hermogen, expressing also my terror and apprehension, lest he might, perhaps, by some inexplicable chance, have got possession of, and might betray, our secret intercourse.

By all this Euphemia did not appear in the least moved. On the contrary, she smiled with an expression of irony and malice so extraordinary, that I was seized with involuntary horror.

"Let us go deeper into the park," said she, "for here we might be observed, and it might be deemed mysterious if the reverend Father Medardus were to speak to me with such vehemence."

[A few sentences are here left out by the Editor.]

"Be composed then, Victorin," said Euphemia; "you may make yourself perfectly tranquil as to all this, which has brought you into such fear and trouble. Indeed, it is on the whole fortunate, that this adventure has happened with Hermogen; for I have thus an opportunity of speaking to you on many things of which I had too long been silent.

"You must confess, that I wield a strange kind of intellectual supremacy over all those by whom I am in this life surrounded; and to possess and exercise this privilege, is, I believe, much more easy for a woman than for a man. Not only, however, must we for this purpose enjoy that superiority of personal beauty which Nature has granted to us, but also many peculiar attributes of mind. Above all, the individual, who, in such undertakings, expects to succeed, must possess the power of stepping, as it were, out of herself,—of contemplating her *own individuality* from an external point, (that is to say, as it is beheld by others;) for our own identity, when viewed in this manner, serves like an obedient implement—a passive means of obtaining whatever object we have proposed to ourselves, as the highest and most desirable in life.

"Can there be anything more admirable than an existence which rules over that of others, so that we may exert perfect empire over the insipid beings—

the phantom shapes, by which we are here surrounded, and command them, as if by magic spells, to minister to our enjoyments?

"You, Victorin, belong to the few who have hitherto understood me. You had also acquired this power of looking, as if with others' eyes, upon yourself; and I have therefore judged you not unworthy to be raised as my partner on the throne of this intellectual kingdom. The mystery which we were obliged to keep up, heightened the charm of this union; our apparent separation only gave wider scope for our fantastic humour, which played with and scorned the conventional laws of ordinary life.

"Do not our present meetings constitute the boldest piece of adventure, that spirits, mocking at all conventional limitations, ever dared to encounter? Even in this new character which you have assumed, the metamorphosis depends not on your dress merely. It seems, also, as if the mind, accommodating itself to the ruling principle, worked outwardly in such a manner, that even the bodily form becomes plastic and obedient, moulding itself in turns, according to that plan and destination which the higher powers of volition had conceived and laid down.

"How completely I myself despise all ordinary rules, you, Victorin, are already aware. The Baron has now become, in my estimation, a disgusting, worn-out implement, which, having been used for my past purposes, lies dead, like a run-down piece of clock-work, before me—Reinhold is too contemptible and narrow-minded to be worthy of a thought—Aurelia is a good, pious, and simple-hearted child—We have nothing to do but with Hermogen.

"Already have I confessed to you, that the first time I saw this youth, he made on me a wonderful and indelible impression; but of what afterwards passed betwixt us, you have never yet been fully aware. I had even looked on him as capable of entering into those lofty schemes, into that higher sphere of enjoyment, which I could have opened for him; but for once, I was completely deceived. There existed within him some principle inimical and hostile towards me, which manifested itself in perpetual contradiction to my plans—nay, the very spells by which I fettered others, had on him an effect quite opposite and repelling. He remained always cold, darkly reserved, or, at best, utterly indifferent, till at last my resentment was

roused; I determined on revenge, but, above all, I resolved that my former power should not be thus meanly baffled and subdued, and that his indifference should sooner or later be fearfully overcome.

"On this combat I had already decided, when the Baron happened to say, that he had proposed for me a marriage with Hermogen, to which the latter would by no means agree. Like a gleam of inspiration, the thought at that moment rose within me, that I might myself, by a marriage with the Baron, at once clear away those conventional limitations which had hitherto at times disgustingly forced themselves in my way.

"But as to that marriage, Victorin, I have already frequently spoken with you. To your doubts, as to whether it could ever take place, I soon opposed actual performance. In short, as you know, in the course of a few days, I succeeded in transforming the grave old gentleman into a silly tender lover. Nay, he was forced to look on those plans which wholly originated from my agency, (and to which he scarcely dared to give utterance,) as the offspring of his own foolish brain, and the fulfilment of his own heartfelt wishes. Still, in the back ground, concealed indeed, but not less deeply traced, lay the thoughts of my revenge on Hermogen, which would now be more easy, and in execution far more perfect.

"If I knew less of your character, if I were not aware that you are fully capable of entering into my views, I would no doubt hesitate to inform you of what afterwards occurred.

"I took various opportunities of attracting Hermogen's attention. When in the *residenz*, I appeared gloomy and reserved—and afforded, in this respect, a powerful contrast with himself, for he was then cheerful and active in his own pursuits, and, to most people, frank and disengaged in manner. The interval was long and tedious, however, before my designs could be brought into execution.

"During my last visit in town, my uncle's illness forbade all brilliant assemblies, and I was obliged even to decline the visits of my nearest acquaintance. Hermogen called upon me, perhaps only to fulfil the duty which he owed to a step-mother. He found me sunk in the most gloomy reflections; and when, astonished at this sudden revolution, he anxiously inquired the cause, I confessed to him that the Baron's infirm state of health,

which he only with difficulty concealed, made me afraid that I should soon lose him, which idea was to me terrible and insupportable.

"On hearing this, he was obviously affected; and when I went on to paint to him, in the liveliest colours, the happiness of my domestic circumstances with the Baron, entering into minute details of our mode of life in the country—when, moreover, I spoke at greater length of the Baron's admirable disposition, and represented his whole character in the most glowing terms, so that it always appeared more and more how deeply I honoured him, nay, how my very existence depended on his,—then, obviously, Hermogen's astonishment and perplexity increased to an even unexpected degree. He visibly struggled and contended with himself, but I had already triumphed. The principle, whatever it was, that lived within him, and had hitherto so hostilely acted against me, was overcome—he had spoken with me alone, and was deeply moved—he had beheld me in a new light—his indifference was subdued, and his tranquillity lost. My triumph became the more certain, when, on the following evening, he came again to visit me.

"He found me alone, still more gloomy and more agitated than on the preceding night. I spoke as before of the Baron, and of my inexpressible longing to return to the country, and to see him again. Hermogen soon lost all self-possession—he hung enraptured on my looks, and their light fell like consuming fire into his heart.

"In a word, I succeeded. The consequences were more horrible than I had supposed; yet on this account my victory was the more brilliant. The dominion which I had now so unequivocally gained over Hermogen had utterly broken his spirit. He fell, as you know, into madness, though till now you were not aware of the exact reason of this.

"It is a peculiar attribute of madmen, that they can often look more deeply than others into the hearts of those by whom they are surrounded. It seems as if their own minds, being free from rational control, stand in nearer relationship with the spiritual world, and are more liable to be excited

sympathetically by the emotions of another. Thus oftentimes they pronounce aloud our own thoughts, like a supernatural echo, whence we are startled as if we heard the voice even of a second self.

"On these principles, it may indeed have happened that Hermogen, considering the peculiar footing on which we stand, has actually looked through your disguise, and on this account is hostilely disposed toward us; but as to any danger from him on this account, that is by no means to be apprehended. Suppose even that he were to break out into open enmity—should proclaim aloud, 'Trust not this cowed priest—he is not what he seems!' yet who would look upon this as less or more than a delirious phantasm of his malady, more especially as Reinhold has been so good as to recognize in you the reverend Father Medardus?

"In the meanwhile, however, it remains certain, that you cannot, as I had hoped, gain a favourable influence over Hermogen. My revenge, however, is fulfilled, and I now look upon him, even as I regard the Baron, like a broken *marionette*—a worn-out plaything; become, at last, so much the more tiresome, as he probably considers his meeting with me here as an act of penitence, and, on this account, haunts and persecutes me, as you must have observed, with his dead-alive, staring, and spectral eyes.

"In short, he must, in one way or another, be got rid of; and I thought, by your acquiring an influence over him, he might have been confirmed in his notions of going into a convent, and to have contrived, that the Baron and Reinhold should be persuaded of the propriety of this design. Hermogen, to say the truth, is to me, in the highest degree, intolerable. His looks often agitate me, so that I can hardly command myself; and, for certain, he must, by some means or other, be removed.

"The only person before whom he appears quite in a different character, is Aurelia. By means of that girl only, can you gain any influence over Hermogen; for which reason, I shall take care that, for the future, you may to her also obtain nearer access.

"If you find a suitable opportunity, you may communicate to the Baron and Reinhold, that Hermogen has disclosed to you, in confession, a heavy crime, which, according to your religious vows, you are obliged to conceal. But of this, more at another time: act for the best, and only be steadfast and

faithful. Let us reign together over this contemptible world of puppets, which move around us only according to our sovereign will and pleasure. This life must bestow on us its best enjoyments, without forcing on our necks the yoke of its narrow and despicable laws!"

We now saw the Baron at a distance, and went towards him, as if occupied in pious and edifying discourse.

CHAPTER XV.

There had been nothing wanting, perhaps, but this explanation from Euphemia, to render me fully sensible of my own powers and advantages. I was now placed in a situation from which all things appeared in wholly new colours. As to Euphemia's boast of her mental energy and power over the conduct of others, it only rendered her, in my estimation, worthy of utter contempt. At the very moment when this miserable woman believed that she sported in safety with all laws and regulations of this life, she was in reality given up a helpless victim to that destiny, which my hand might in a moment wield against her.

It was, indeed, only by means of that spiritual influence and empire lent to me by the powers of darkness, that she could have been led to look on *that being* as a friend and trust-worthy companion, who, wearing only for her destruction the countenance and figure of her former lover, held her like a demon in his relentless grasp, so that liberation and escape were for her no longer possible.

Euphemia, under the dominion of this wretched illusion, became every moment more despicable in my estimation, and the intercourse which I was obliged to keep up with her, became so much the more disgusting, as Aurelia's image had every day acquired more and more power over my heart;—and it was for her sake only, that I had involved myself in society and in crimes, from which I should otherwise have fled with horror.

I resolved, therefore, from henceforth, to exercise, in the fullest extent, the powers that I now felt were given to me; to seize with mine own hands, that enchanter's rod, of which Euphemia so vainly boasted the possession; and with it, to describe the magic circle, in which the beings around me should move only according to my sovereign wishes.

The Baron and Reinhold were still void of all suspicions, and continued to vie with each other in their endeavours to render my abode at the castle as agreeable as possible. They had not the most distant apprehensions of the circumstances in which I stood with regard to Euphemia. On the contrary,

the Baron frequently became eloquent in expressions of gratitude, even assuring me in confidence, that by my interference her affections had been completely restored to him; whereupon I recollected Reinhold's notion, that the Baron, by some means or other, had received intimation of his wife's former infidelity.

Hermogen I now saw but very seldom. He visibly avoided me with fear and trembling, which the Baron and Reinhold very kindly interpreted into devoted awe and reverence for the sanctity and intuitive energy of my character, of which he could not bear the scrutiny.

Aurelia, too, appeared to avoid me as much as possible; and if, by chance, I spoke with her, she was, like Hermogen, timid and embarrassed. I had, therefore, no doubt that the latter had imparted to his sister those apprehensions by which I had been so much alarmed; and yet it seemed to me by no means impracticable to counteract their evil influence.

Probably by the instigation of the Baroness, who wished to bring me nearer to Aurelia, in order that, through her, I might acquire an ascendancy over Hermogen, the Baron requested, that I would give a share of my time to the instruction of his daughter in the higher mysteries of religion. Thus Euphemia herself unconsciously supplied me with the means of arriving at that wished-for goal, which formed the climax of all my most sanguine prospects, and which imagination had so often painted in the most glowing colours.

I shall pass rapidly over the rest of my adventures during my residence in the Baron's castle, the impression of which remains like that of an hideous dream, on which I have no desire to dwell longer than is requisite to preserve connection in the narrative.

For some days, indeed, I remained influenced, for the most part, by the most sanguine hopes, which were yet constantly liable to disappointment. I had hitherto seen Aurelia only at short intervals, and in the society of others;—then, at every meeting, her beauty appeared more and more heavenly; her voice breathed more exquisite music; and the passionate impressions under which I laboured, were such, that I used, after these interviews, to run forth, if possible, into the park—search out some covert

the wildest and most secluded, where I threw myself on the ground, and gave up my whole soul to the delirium of love.

At other times, I sought in meetings with the Baroness a temporary refuge from agitations, with which I could scarcely contend. I formed a thousand plans for leaving the castle, and of inducing Aurelia to be the companion of my flight; but all were one by one renounced as hopeless.

Now, however, I was to meet her frequently—and *alone*. I summoned, therefore, all my talents of eloquence and energies of mind, to clothe my religious instructions in such language, that I might by this means direct her affections to her instructor, until, overpowered by her own feelings, she should at last throw herself into my arms.

Instead, however, of succeeding in my designs against Aurelia, the only consequence of my endeavours was to augment tenfold my own intolerable disquietude. A thousand times did I say to myself, How is this possible? Can Aurelia be the same Unknown—the visitant of the confessional? Devoutly, with folded hands and downcast eyes, she listened to me; but not one symptom of emotion, not the slightest sigh, betrayed any deeper operation of my words. Even if I dropt obscure hints of our former meeting, she remained unmoved.

I was therefore, of necessity, brought back to the belief and conviction, that the adventure of the confessional was but a dream. Yet if so, what import could be attached to the supernatural liveliness of that vision, except that it must have been an anticipation of what was now to come—the promise of a higher power, that Aurelia—the living realization of that phantom—was yet to be mine?

Baffled, however, in all my attempts,—driven oftentimes to rage and despondency,—I brooded over new plans; and while obliged to counterfeit pleasure in the society of Euphemia, and feeling only hatred and impatience, my looks and behaviour assumed a horrible expression, at which she seemed involuntarily to tremble. Still, of the *real* mystery concealed in my bosom, she had no suspicion, but gave way without a struggle to that supremacy which I exerted over her, and which daily continued to increase.

Frequently the thought occurred to my mind, that, by assuming proper courage, by one decisive step, however violent, I might put an end to the torments of suspense under which I laboured,—that on my very next meeting with Aurelia, I might cast off the mask, and renounce all subterfuge and stratagem. I went to her more than once, *resolved* to carry some plan of this kind into effect; but when I looked at Aurelia, and beheld the calm piety, the energy of innocence in her seraphic features, it seemed as if an angel stood by her, protecting her, and bidding defiance to the power of the enemy. At such times, a cold shuddering vibrated through my limbs, and my former resolutions were completely broken.

At last, the thought occurred to me of joining with her more frequently in prayer.

[One page is here left out by the Editor.]

I had no power to prevent this. I was crushed and annihilated, as if a thunderbolt had struck me to the earth. She fled instantly to the next room. The door opened, and there appeared—Hermogen! He stood glaring upon me with the fixed, horrid look of the wildest insanity. Then, recollecting that such persons are most likely to be tamed by cool, and daring defiance, I collected all my strength, and went up to him.—"Madman," cried I, with a deep commanding voice, "wherefore this intrusion? What wouldst thou here?"

In this plan, however, I was completely baffled. Hermogen stretched out his right hand, and, in a hollow, frightful tone,—"*I would contend with thee,*" said he, "*but I have no sword; and there is blood on thy face! Thou art a murderer!*"

Thereupon he abruptly vanished, slamming the door violently behind him, and left me alone, grinding my teeth with rage and despair. No one appeared, however. It was evident that he had not spread any immediate alarm, so that I had time to recover self-possession, and began, ere long, to feel confident, that I should yet fall on means to avoid any evil consequences of this error.

[The monk here goes on to relate, that he remained yet several days in the Baron's castle, during which he encountered many adventures, which it is thought not advisable to transcribe. Indeed, perhaps the *whole* of this section might have well been condensed, or given but in outline. It is requisite to observe, that these adventures are wound up by the death of the Baroness and of Hermogen; that of the former, by means of poison, which she had prepared for Medardus; and of the latter, in single combat with the monk, who, in self-defence, killed his antagonist.]

[At this point the Editor recommences his transcription.]

When Hermogen fell, I ran in wild frenzy down stairs. Then I heard shrilling voices through the castle, that cried aloud, "Murder! murder!"

Lights hovered about here and there, and I heard hasty steps sounding along the corridor and passages. Terror now utterly overpowered me, so that, from exhaustion, I fell down on a remote private staircase. The noise always became louder, and there was more and more light in the castle. I heard too that the outcries came nearer and nearer—"Murder! murder!" At last I distinguished the voices of the Baron and Reinhold, who spoke violently with the servants. Whither now could I possibly fly? Where conceal myself? Only a few moments before, when I had spoken, for the last time, with the detestable Euphemia, it had seemed to me, as if, with the deadly weapon in my hand, I could have boldly stepped forth, and that no one would have dared to withstand me.

Now, however, I contended in vain with my unconquerable fear. At last, I found myself on the great staircase. The tumult had withdrawn itself to the chambers of the Baroness, and there was an interval, therefore, of comparative tranquillity. I roused myself accordingly; and, with three vehement bounds, clinging by the staircase rail, I was arrived at the ground-floor, and within a few steps of the outward gate.

Then, suddenly, I heard a frightful piercing shriek, which reverberated through the vaulted passages, and resembled that which I had observed on the preceding night. "She is dead," said I to myself, in a hollow voice; "she has worked her own destruction, by means of the poison that she had prepared for me!"

But now, once more, I heard new and fearful shrieks from the apartments of the Baroness. It was the voice of Aurelia, screaming in terror, for help; and, by this, my whole feelings were once more changed. Again the reiterated cry of "Murder! murder!" sounded through the castle. The footsteps approached nearer through a staircase leading downwards. They were bearing, as I conceived, the dead body of Hermogen.

"Haste, haste, after him!—seize the murderer!" These words were uttered in the voice of Reinhold.

Hereupon I broke out into a vehement and horrid laughter, so that my voice echoed through the vaulted corridors, and I cried aloud, "Poor insane wretches! would you strive to interfere with and arrest that destiny, which inflicts only just and righteous punishment on the guilty?"

They stopped suddenly. They remained as if rooted to one spot on the staircase. I wished no longer to fly. I thought rather of advancing decidedly and boldly to meet them, and announcing the vengeance of God in words of thunder on the wicked.

But, oh horrible sight! at that moment arose, and stood bodily before me, the hideous blood-stained and distorted figure of Victorin! Methought it was not *I*, but *he*, that had spoken the words in which I thought to triumph! At the first glance of this apparition, (whether real or imaginary,) my hair stood on end with horror.

I thought no longer of resistance, but of flight. I rushed through the gates of the castle, and fled in delirious terror away through the well-known walks of the park.

I was soon in the free, open country; but I had intuitively chosen the road towards the village where Victorin's chasseur had been stationed. Yet I thought not of this. It was instinct only, or chance, that had guided me thither.

I heard behind me the trampling of horses, and summoned up my whole strength to avoid the pursuit which, of course, awaited me. My speed, however, would have availed little; for, though the moon was up, yet dark shadows crossed over my path. At last I fell against the root of a tree, almost fainting and insensible, to the ground.

Soon after, the horses that I had heard came up to me, and halted. Fortunately, my pursuer retained his senses, though I had lost mine. It was Victorin's chasseur.

"For God's sake, my lord," said he, "what has happened in the castle! There is a cry of murder. Already the whole village is in an uproar."

To this I made him no answer; indeed I was unable to speak.

"Well, whatever the truth may be," continued he, "some good genius has put it into my head to pack up, and to ride hither from the village. Everything is in the small portmanteau on your horse, my lord; for, of course, we shall have to separate for some time. Something dangerous must have happened. Is it not so?"

I raised myself up without a word, and not without great difficulty mounting my horse, I directed the chasseur to return to the village, and there to await my farther commands. As soon as he had disappeared amid the darkness, finding that to ride was disagreeable, I dismounted, and carefully led my horse through the thickets of the pine-tree forest, which now wildly spread itself out before me.

CHAPTER XVI.

When the first gleams of the morning sun broke through the dense wood, I found myself on the borders of a clear rivulet, rapidly flowing over a bright bed of pebbles. The horse, which I had laboriously led through the thicket, stood quietly beside me; and I had nothing better to do, than to search into the contents of the portmanteau, with which he was loaded. Accordingly, having found the keys in the portefeuille, I unlocked the small military equipage, and discovered suits of clothes, linen, &c., and, what was of most importance, a purse well filled with ducats and *Frederichs d'or*.

I resolved immediately to change my dress, and disguise as much as possible my appearance. With the help of scissars and a comb, which I found in a dressing-case, I cut off my beard, and brought my head of hair, as well as I could, into order. I then threw off my monk's habit, in which I still found the fatal stiletto, Victorin's letters, and the basket-bottle, with the remainder of the Devil's Elixir.

In a short time I stood there in a lay dress, which fitted well enough, and with a travelling-cap upon my head; so that when I saw my reflection in the rivulet, I could scarcely recognize myself. Soon afterwards, having packed up the portmanteau, and resumed my journey, I came to the outskirts of the wood, and a smoke, which I saw rising before me, accompanied by the clear sound of a bell, gave me to understand that there was a town or hamlet at no great distance. Scarcely had I reached the summit of a rising ground opposite, when a pleasant well-cultivated valley expanded itself before me, in which there was a large flourishing village.

I struck, forthwith, into the broad carriage-road which wound thither, and as soon as the declivity became less steep, mounted my horse, that I might accustom myself as much as possible to riding, in which I had hitherto had no practice whatever.

My character seemed to have changed with my dress. As for my capuchin robes, I had thrown them into the hollow of a decayed tree, and with them had dismissed and banished from my thoughts all the hideous adventures in

the castle. I found myself once more spirited and courageous. It now seemed to me that the horrid phantom of Victorin had been only a vision of my own fevered brain, but that my last address to the inhabitants of the castle had indeed been an effect of divine inspiration. It seemed as if I had thus unconsciously wound up and completed the purposes of that mysterious destiny which led me to the Baron's house, and that, like the agent of Omnipotent Providence, I had stepped in, inflicting just vengeance on the guilty.

Only the delightful image of Aurelia lived, as before, unchanged in my remembrance; and I could not think on my thus inevitable separation from her, without extreme pain and affliction. Yet oftentimes it appeared to me, as if, perhaps in some far distant land, I should yet behold her again,—nay, as if borne away by irresistible impulse, she must, at one period or another, become mine.

I observed that the people whom I met on the road, invariably stood still to look and gaze after me, so that there must have been something quite unusual and unaccountable in my appearance. I was not interrupted, however, but arrived in due time at the village. It was of considerable extent, badly paved, and composed of poor ill-furnished houses, many of which were more like animated monsters, like gigantic visages mounted on claw feet, after the distorted imagination of Teniers, than dwellings to reside in. The soil on which they stood was damp, therefore most of them were raised on wooden posts, as if on legs, from the ground. The roofs, moreover, had sky-lights like protruding eyes, while the door, with its staircase, might be compared to mouth and chin, and the windows would, in a drawing, have served for cheek-bones. It was a grotesque town; a spot such as can only be found in the retired inland parts of Germany, where trade exists not, husbandry is but indifferent, and where the post-roads are not much frequented.

It was not difficult, therefore, in such a place, to find out the best inn, (where there was but one.) When I pulled up the reins at the door, the landlord, a heavy fat man, with a green glazed night-cap on his head, was so

completely confounded by my looks, that he was evidently struck speechless. He said nothing, but stared as if half petrified by his own apprehensions, or occasionally twisted his mouth into an ironical grin.

Without attending to these symptoms, I desired that my horse should be put carefully into the stable, and ordered breakfast for myself. I was shewn into the public room, where there were several tables, and while I was engaged over a warm ragout, and a bottle of wine, there were gradually a large company of *bauers* collecting around me, that looked occasionally as if half afraid, casting significant glances, and whispering with each other.

The party became always more and more numerous. Evidently not being restrained by the laws of good breeding, they at last formed a regular circle, and stared at me in stupid astonishment. All the while, I endeavoured to preserve the most perfect composure; and when I had finished the ragout and bottle of *vin ordinaire*, I called in a loud tone for the landlord, desiring him to "saddle my horse, and replace my portmanteau."

He came accordingly, and retired with a significant grin upon his visage. Soon afterwards he returned, in company with a tall formal-looking man, who, with a stern official air, and a truly ridiculous gravity, stepped up to me. He looked me directly in the face. I boldly answered his looks, rose up also, and placed myself right before him. This seemed in a considerable degree to disturb his composure, and he looked round rather confusedly on the numerous assemblage.

"Well, sir," said I, "what's the matter?—You seem to have something particular to say to me, and I shall be obliged by your getting through with it as quickly as possible."

After divers hums and ha's, he then began to speak, endeavouring to give to every word and tone prodigious importance.

"Sir," said he, "you cannot go from this place without rendering an account to us, the Judge, circumstantially, who you are, according to all particulars, as to birth, rank, and dignity; *item*, whence you came; *item*, whither you intend to go, with all particulars; *item*, the situation of place, the name of province and town, and whatever is farther requisite to be known and observed. And besides all this, you must exhibit to us, the Judge, a pass,

written and subscribed, and sealed, according to all particulars, as is legal and customary."

I had indeed never once recollected that it would be necessary for me to assume some name or another; and still less had I reflected that the peculiarities of my appearance, so unsuitable to my remains of monastic mien and gesture, and even my extraordinary beard and tonsure, would bring me every moment under the embarrassment of questions and misunderstandings.

The demands of the village Judge, therefore, came upon me so unexpectedly, that I considered for some moments in vain, how I should give him a satisfactory answer.

I resolved, in the first place, to try what decisive boldness would do, and pronounced in a firm voice,—"Who I am, I have reason to conceal; and therefore you will ask in vain for my pass. Besides, I recommend it to you to beware how, with your contemptible circumlocutions, you detain, even for a moment, a person of rank and consequence."

"Ho, ho!" cried the village Judge, taking out a great snuff-box, into which, as he helped himself, the hands of no less than five bailiffs behind him were thrust at once, delving out enormous pinches—"Ho, ho! not so rough, if you please, most worshipful sir. Your excellency must be pleased to submit to the examination of us, the Judge; for, in a word, there have been some very suspicious figures seen here for some time, wandering among the mountains, that look out and vanish again as if the very devil were among us. But we know that these are neither more nor less than cursed vagabonds and thieves, who lie in wait for travellers, committing all sorts of enormities by fire and sword. Now, your appearance, sir, with reverence be it spoken, is exactly that of a portrait which has been sent to us by government, of a most notorious robber and bandit, according to all particulars. So, without any more circumlocutions, or needless discourse, your pass, or you go directly to the tower."

I saw that nothing was to be gained over the man in this way, and prepared myself therefore for a new attempt.

"Mr Judge," said I, "if you would grant me the favour of speaking to you alone, I should easily clear up all your doubts; and in full reliance on your prudence, would reveal to you the cause of my present strange appearance, which seems to you so formidable. There is indeed a mystery—"

"Ha! ha!" replied the Judge, "mysteries to be revealed! I see already how this business is to conclude. Only get away with you there, good people. Watch the doors and windows, and see that nobody gets in or out."

Accordingly we were left alone.

"Mr Judge," said I, "you behold in me an unhappy fugitive, who has succeeded in escaping from a shameful imprisonment, and from the danger of being immured for ever within the walls of a convent. Excuse me for not entering more into particulars of my history, which would only be unravelling a web of the private quarrels and animosities of a revengeful family. A love affair with a girl of low rank was the cause of my misfortune. During my long confinement my beard had grown, and they had also forced me, as you may perceive, to take the tonsure; besides all which, I was, of course, obliged to assume the habit of a monk. It was for the first time here, in the neighbouring forest, that I ventured to stop and change my dress, as I should otherwise have been overtaken in my flight.

"You now perceive whence proceeds that peculiarity in my looks and dress, which appeared so suspicious. You may be convinced, also, that I cannot shew you any pass; but of the truth of my assertions I have here certain illustrations, which I hope will be satisfactory."

With these words I drew out my purse, and laid three glittering ducats on the table; whereupon the assumed gravity of the Judge was involuntarily twisted into smirks and smiles.

"Your proofs, sir," said he, "are sufficiently clear and striking; but don't take it amiss, your excellency, if I remark, that there is yet wanting a certain equality and consistency, according to all particulars. If you wish that I should take the unright for the right, the irregular for the regular, your proofs, at least, must be equally proportioned."

I perfectly understood the rascal, and directly laid another ducat on the table. "Now," said the Judge, "I perceive, indeed, that I had done you

injustice by my suspicions. Travel on, sir, in God's name; but observe (as you are probably well accustomed) to avoid, as much as possible, the high roads, till you get rid of your present peculiarity of appearance."

He then opened the door as wide as he could, and called aloud to the people, "The gentleman here is a man of rank and quality, according to all particulars. He has satisfied us the Judge, in a private audience, that he travels *incognito*, that is to say, unknown; and that you, good people, have with this nothing to do.—Now, sir, *bon voyage!*"

Accordingly, my horse was brought from the stable, and as I essayed to mount, the *bauers*, in respectful silence, took off their caps. I wished to get away from them, and to ride as quickly as possible through the gate; but to my extreme confusion, my horse was restive, and began to snort and rear, while my utter ignorance and want of practice in riding rendered it quite impossible for me to bring him forward. Indeed, I soon lost all self-possession; for he wheeled round in circles, till at last, amid the loud laughter of the peasants, I was thrown off into the arms of the innkeeper and the Judge.

"That is a devil of a horse, sir," said the Judge, with a suppressed grin.

"A devil of a horse, indeed!" answered I, beating the dust from my clothes, for I had slipped through their arms to the ground.

They now joined in assisting me once more to mount; but, for the second time, the horse behaved just as before, snorting and foaming; in short, would by no means be brought through the gate.

At last an old man among the crowd cried out, "See, there! see, there! the old witch *Elise* is sitting at the gate, and won't let the gentleman pass, because he has not given her *groschen*."

For the first time now I perceived an old beggar sitting, coiled up like a ball, in a corner by the gate, and with the grin of idiotcy on her features.

"Will the d—d witch not get out of the way?" cried the Judge.

Hereupon the old woman croaked out, "The bloody brother—the bloody brother has given me no *groschen*!—Do you not see the dead man there

lying before him?—The murderer cannot get over him, for the dead man raises himself up; but I will crush him down, if the bloody brother will give me a groschen!"

The Judge had taken the horse by the rein, and, not minding the old woman, would have led it through the gate. In vain, however, were all his endeavours; and the witch continued to cry without ceasing, "Bloody brother, bloody brother—give me groschen!"

At last I forced my hand into my pocket, and threw her money. Shouting and rejoicing, she then started up—"See the groschen!" cried she, "see the groschen that the murderer has given me—see the beautiful groschen!"

Meanwhile my horse neighed aloud; and on the Judge's letting him go, went curvetting and caprioling through the gate. "Now, sir," said he, "the riding goes on fine and admirably, according to all particulars!"

The *bauers*, who had followed me through the gate, laughed again out of all measure, when they beheld me dancing up and down to the powerful movements of my too lively horse, and cried aloud, "See only, see only—he rides like a Capuchin!"

CHAPTER XVII.

This whole adventure in the village, especially the disgusting and strange words of the mad-woman, had not a little discomposed me. The best rule which I could now adopt, was of course to get rid as soon as possible of every remarkable trait in my outward appearance, and to assume some name or other, under which I might appear unobserved and unsuspected in the world.

Life now lay before me, as if beneath the dark clouds of impenetrable mystery. What was it possible for me to do, but to give myself up to the current of that stream which bore me irresistibly onward? All bonds by which I was formerly connected with certain duties or situations in the world were now broken and dissevered,—so that I could find no hold or stay by which to pilot my course.

The high road became always more lively and populous. I met carriages and horsemen, as well as foot passengers. The country was more cultivated, and the hedge-rows were planted with orchard-trees, some of which were yet loaded with the later fruits of autumn. In short, everything already announced, from a distance, the existence of the rich and flourishing commercial town to which I was now drawing near.

In due time it lay visibly before me. Without being questioned, nay, without even being rudely stared at, I rode at once into the suburbs.

A large house, with bright plate-glass windows, over the door of which there was a golden lion, immediately struck my attention. Crowds of people were here streaming in and out at the gate—carriages arrived and departed, while from the rooms on the ground-floor I heard the jovial sounds of laughter and the ringing of glasses.

Scarcely had I pulled up the reins, being yet undecided, when the *hausknecht* officiously sprung out, took my horse by the bridle, and on my dismounting, led him, without asking any questions, to the stable.

The head waiter, smartly dressed, came bustling and rattling, with his bunch of keys at his girdle, and walked before me up stairs. When we came into the second story, he looked at me with a flitting glance of inquiry, and then led me up an *etage* higher, where he shewed me a chamber of moderate dimensions; then politely asked "if I had any commands;" said that "dinner would be ready at two o'clock, in the great hall, No. 10." &c. &c.

"Bring me a bottle of wine," said I. These were indeed the first words which the officious assiduity of these people had left me an opportunity to interpose.

Scarcely had the waiter left me alone, when there was a knocking at the door, and a face looked in, which at once reminded me of the representations that are seen in allegorical pictures, of a comic mask. A pointed red nose—a pair of small glistening eyes—lips drawn upwards into an exquisite grin—a long chin—and, above all this, a high powdered toupée, which, as I afterwards perceived, declined backwards most unexpectedly into a *Titus*;—for his dress, a large ostentatious frill, a fiery-red waistcoat, under which protruded two massy watch-chains—pantaloons—a frock-coat, which in some places was too narrow, in others too wide; of course did not fit anywhere!—Such was the figure that now stepped into the room, retaining all the way the same angle of obeisance which he had assumed at his first entrance, and talking all the time. "I am the *friseur* of this house," said he; "and beg leave, with the greatest respect, and in the most immeasurable degree, to offer my services!"

There was about this little shrivelled wretch an air and character so irresistibly comical, that I could hardly suppress laughter. His visit, however, was now very *apropos*; and accordingly I told him that my hair had been both neglected, in the course of a long journey, and spoiled by bad cutting. I therefore desired to know, whether he could bring my head into proper order.

He looked at me accordingly with the significant eyes of an artist and *connoisseur*, laid his right hand with an elegant and *gracioso* bend on his

breast, and said—

"Bring into order, forsooth! Oh, heavens! Pietro Belcampo, thou whom malignant enviers and traducers have chosen to call Peter Fairfield, even as that divine military fifer and hornist, Giacomo Punto, was called Jack Stitch,—thou, like him, art in truth calumniated and misunderstood. But, indeed, hast thou not thyself placed thy light under a bushel, instead of letting it shine before the world? And yet, should not even the formation of this hand and fingers, the brightness of genius which beams from these eyes, and colours the nose in passing with a beautiful morning red; in short, should not thy *tout ensemble* betray to the first glance of the connoisseur, that there dwells within thee that spirit which strives after the *ideal*? 'Bring into order!'—These are indeed cold words, sir!"

I begged the strange little man not to put himself into such a flutter, as I had the fullest reliance on his skill and cleverness.

"Cleverness!" resumed he with great fervour; "what is cleverness? Who was clever? He who took the measure at five eye-lengths, and then jumping thirty yards, tumbled into the ditch? He who could throw the grain of linseed at thirty steps distance through the eye of a needle? He who hung five hundred weight on the point of his sword, and then balanced it on his nose for six hours, six minutes, six seconds, and a half?—Ha! what is cleverness? Be it what it may, it is foreign to Belcampo, whose whole soul is imbued by art, sacred art.

"*Art*, sir, *art*! My fancy revels in the wonderful formation, the *creation* of locks—in that moulding of character, which indeed the breath of a zephyr in wiry curls builds and annihilates. There, art (or science, as it may, for variety's sake, be called) conceives, developes, labours, and originates! In this, sir, there is indeed something truly divine; for art is not properly that of which men, under this name, speak so much, but rather springs out of all to which this name has been given.

"You understand me, sir; for I perceive that you have a meditative head, as I conclude from that lock which hangs over your excellency's right temple."

I assured him (however falsely) that I completely understood him; and being diverted with the man's originality of humour, I resolved that, holding

his boasted science in due respect, I would by no means interrupt his eloquence, however diffuse.

"What then," said I, "do you intend to make of this confused head of mine?"

"All, everything that you please or wish," said the man. "If, however, it may be allowed to Pietro Belcampo to give counsel, then let me first contemplate your excellency's head, in its proper length, breadth, and circumference—your whole figure, too, your mien, your gait, your play of gesture; then I shall be able finally to say whether you belong properly to the antique or romantic, the heroic or pastoral, the *grandios* or *ordinaire*, the *naive* or *satyric*, the humorous or severe; then, accordingly, I shall call up the spirits of Caracalla, of Titus, of Charlemagne, of *Henri Quatre*, of Gustave Adolph, of Virgil, of Tasso, or Boccaccio!

"Inspired by them, the muscles of my fingers will vibrate and quiver, and under the sonorous twittering of the scissars, will proceed the masterpiece of art! I shall be the man, sir, who will perfect your leading characteristic, as it should exhibit itself in real life. But now, let me beg of you, sir, to step up and down through the room. I shall meanwhile contemplate, remark, and record. Let me beg of you, sir!"

I must, of course, accommodate myself to the strange man, therefore did as I was desired, walking up and down the room, endeavouring at the same time to conceal, as much as I could, my inclination to the monastic gait, which, however, it is almost impossible for one by whom it has been thoroughly learned, even after many years, wholly to conquer.

The little man contemplated me with great attention, then began to trip about the room. He sighed and shrugged, even panted and sobbed, then drew out his handkerchief, and wiped the drops from his forehead; at last he stood still, and I inquired "if he was yet resolved how he should operate?" Then, with a deep sigh, he broke out—"Alas, sir! what is the meaning of all this? You have not resigned yourself to your natural character. There was constraint in every movement—a conflict of contending principles. Yet, a few more steps, sir."

Hereupon I absolutely refused to set myself up for show any longer in that manner, and told him plainly, that if he could not *now* resolve what to make

of my hair, I must refuse altogether to have anything to do with him or his art.

"Bury thyself, Pietro!" cried the little man, with great fervour; "go to the grave, for in this world thou art wholly and utterly misunderstood. Here is no confidence, no truth any more to be found!

"Yet, sir, you shall be compelled to acknowledge the depth of my perceptions, and do honour to my genius. In vain did I labour to amalgamate together all the contradictions and conflicts in your character and gestures. In the latter there is something that directly points at monachism. '*Ex profundis clamavi ad te, Domine. Oremus. Et in omnia secula seculorum!*'"

With bitter scorn and mockery the man pronounced these words from the Ritual, in a hoarse croaking voice, imitating, at the same time, to the very life, the postures and gesture of a monk. He turned himself as if before the altar, he kneeled, and rose again. At last he stopped, drew himself up, and assumed a proud look of defiance, stared widely, and cried, "MINE is the world! I am more wealthy, more wise, prudent, and intelligent, than all of ye, ye blind moles! Bend, then, and kneel down before me, in humble submission!

"Look you, sir, that which I have mentioned forms the chief attribute and ingredient in your appearance; and, with your permission, I shall, contemplating your features, your figure, and moods of mind, blend together something of Caracalla, Abelard, and Boccaccio; and proceeding on the idea thus gained, shall, like an inspired sculptor, begin the glorious creation of antique, ethereal, classic locks and curls!"

Imperfect and ridiculous as the man's *expressions* were, yet there was so much home *truth* in his remarks, that I judged it best to conceal nothing from him; I therefore confessed that I had indeed been a monk, and had received the *tonsure*, which, for certain reasons, I now wished as much as possible to keep unobserved.

With the most absurd writhing, twisting, grimaces, and extravagant discourse, the man at last proceeded with his operations on my hair. Now he looked cross and gloomy—now smiled—anon stamped and clenched his

fist—then smiled again and stood on tiptoe; in short, it became impossible for me to refrain from laughing, in which I at last indulged very heartily.

After about an hour's work, he had finished, and before he could break afresh into words, which were already on the tip of his tongue, I begged him immediately to go and send up some one who, as a barber, might exhibit the same skill that he had done as a *friseur*.

With a significant grin, he stepped to the door on tiptoe, shut and bolted it, then tripped back into the middle of the room, and began—"Oh, golden age! where still the hair of the head and of the beard, in one plenitude of waving locks, poured itself out for the adornment of man and the delightful care of the artist! But those days are for ever gone! Man has insanely cast away his noblest ornament, and a shameful race have set themselves to work, with their horrible instruments, to raze and extirpate the beard even to the skin! O ye despicable band of beard-scrapers! whetting your abominable knives upon black strops stinking with oil, and, in scornful defiance of art, swinging about your tasselled bags, clattering with your pewter basons, splashing about your scalding-hot froth, and asking your unhappy patients whether they will be shaved over the thumb or the spoon! Luckily there are men still—there is at least one Pietro, who labours against your infamous trade, and who, though lowering himself to your wretched office of rooting out the beard, still endeavours to preserve and cherish that little which is allowed to lift itself from the desolate wrecks of Time!

"What are the numberless varieties of whiskers in their elegant windings and curvatures, now softly bending around the cheek, in the fashion of the delicate oval—now melancholily sinking straight down into the depth of the neck—now boldly mounting up even to the corner of the mouth—anon narrowing modestly into small delicate lines, anon spreading out in full unchastised luxuriance,—what, I say, are all these but the invention of our science, in which the high striving after the sublime, the beautiful, and the *ideal*, is unfolded? Ha, then, Pietro, shew what a spirit dwells within thee! Shew what thou art in reality prepared to undertake for the sacred cause of art, while, to the eyes of the ignorant, you appear to be lowering yourself to a mere beard-scraper!"

With these words, the little man had drawn out a complete barber's apparatus, and begun, with, light and skilful touches, to free me from that remaining incumbrance, which had so much offended the eyes of my old friend the Judge. In truth, I came out of his hands completely metamorphosed; and nothing more was necessary but a proper change of dress, in order to escape all danger of provoking, by my appearance, questions or impertinent curiosity.

Belcampo, having packed up his implements, stood smiling on me with great satisfaction. I then said to him, that I was quite unacquainted with the town; and that it would be very satisfactory if he could inform me, how to procure immediately a suit of clothes, according to the newest fashion of the time and place. To reward his trouble, and encourage him in my service, I slipped a ducat into his hand.

Hereupon he seemed absolutely inspired—cast his eyes to the ceiling, and then ogled the ducat in the palm of his hand. "Worthiest of patrons and masters," said he, "in you I have not been deceived. A guardian spirit, indeed, guided my hand, and in the proud waving of these curls—in the eagle flight of these whiskers—your high sentiments are clearly expressed!

"I have, indeed, a friend, a Damon, an Orestes, who will fulfil upon the rest of the body, that which I have commenced upon the head, with the same depth of reflection, and the same light of genius. You perceive, sir, that the individual whom I mean is an artist of costume; which expression I prefer to the trivial one of tailor.

"He, too, willingly luxuriates and loses himself in the *ideal*; and thus forming in his own mind shapes, characters, and physiognomies, he has planned a magazine, a *depot* of the most exquisite dresses. You behold there the modern *elegant*, in all possible shadowings of character, now boldly and energetically out-shining all competitors—now reserved within himself, and lost to all that is external—now witty and ironical—now melancholy and out of humour—anon bizarre and extravagant, anon plain and citizen-like, according as he wishes to appear, *so* or *so*!

"The youth who, for the first time, ventures to order a coat for himself, without the assistance of mamma, or his tutor,—the man of forty, who must wear powder to conceal grey hairs,—the old man, still vigorous in his

enjoyment of life,—the profound student,—the bustling merchant,—the opulent, retired citizen,—all these varieties of character rise up before your eyes, as on a theatre, when you enter the shop of my Damon. But, in a few moments, the masterpieces of my friend's art shall be presented in this very room, for your inspection."

Accordingly, he hopped away in great haste, and soon after re-appeared with a tall, stout, genteelly dressed man, who, as well in his whole behaviour as in his exterior, made the most perfect contrast possible, with the little *friseur*; and yet, nevertheless, he introduced him to me as his Damon!

Damon sedately measured me with his eyes, and then searched out of a large bale that a boy had carried, several suits of clothes, which exactly corresponded with the wishes that I had expressed. Indeed I then, for the first time, acknowledged the fine *tact* of the *costume-artist*, as the little man had styled him; for he had chosen for me precisely that style of dress, in which, without any hints of reference to rank, profession, birth-place, and so forth, one might glide unobserved through the world. It is, in truth, no easy matter to dress one's self in such manner, that all suspicions of a particular character or pursuit may be avoided. The costume of a citizen of the world should be regulated by the *negative* principle, as, in polite behaviour, more depends on judicious unobtrusive *leaving out*, than on actual performance.

The little man all the while indulged himself in his own absurd and wandering discourse; and as he probably did not meet every day with a listener so willing as I had been, he was, no doubt, unusually brilliant. Damon, however, a grave, and, as it seemed to me, intelligent man, at last cut him short, without mercy; and shaking him by the shoulder, "Fairfield," said he, "you are got again to-day into the old vein—upon the right '*jawing tack*,' as the Dutch mariners say. I would bet any sum, that the gentleman's ears must have ached already with the nonsense which you are pouring out!"

With an air of the deepest melancholy, Belcampo now hung down his head. He then suddenly seized his old weather-beaten hat; and, running quickly to the door, "Such," cried he, "is the lamentable fate—such are the misfortunes

of genius! Thus is the character of Belcampo prostituted and defamed, even by his best friends!"

Damon also then took his leave, and, in retiring, said, "He is a coxcomb quite of his own kind, this Fairfield! Much reading has turned his brain; otherwise he is a good-natured fellow, and clever in his own business, on which account I can bear him well enough, since, if a man has good success in any *one* trade, he may be excused a little extravagance on other occasions."

CHAPTER XVIII.

As soon as I was left alone, I began to look in a large mirror, which hung in the room, and to give myself formal lessons in gait and demeanour. For this purpose, the discovery made by the *friseur* had given me very necessary hints. Monks acquire a peculiar awkwardness of walk from their long dresses, which confine the limbs, and from their attempt at the same time to move quickly, which the rules of our order enjoin. There is also something farther characteristic in a submissive bending forward of the body, and in the carriage of the arms, which must never hang downwards. All this I endeavoured to unlearn as effectually as possible.

Now, however, I derived most encouragement from the idea, that I was completely transformed in mind, as well as in appearance; that the thread of my former life was wholly broken, so that I could look on its adventures as on transactions foreign to myself, which I had now done with for ever. I had entered on a new state of existence, wherein, if recollections still haunted me, these would every day become fainter and fainter, until at last they wore out, and perished altogether.

When I looked out from the window, the tumult of people, the uninterrupted noise of business which was kept up upon the streets—all was new to me, and was exactly calculated to prolong that levity of mind, which the loquacity of the little man, and my being forced to laugh at him, had excited.

In my new dress I ventured down to the crowded *table d'hote*, and all apprehension vanished, when I found that no one observed me, nay, that even my nearest neighbour did not give himself the trouble of looking at me when I set myself beside him.

In the list of strangers, I had entered my name simply as Mr Leonard, and given myself out for a *particulier*, who travelled for his own pleasure. Of such travellers there might be many in the town, and of course I would escape farther questioning.

After dinner, it afforded me a new and incalculable pleasure to wander through the town, where I found streets much broader and better paved, with far finer houses, than any to which I had yet been accustomed. Luckily there were now preparations set on foot for the approaching great yearly fair, which caused an unusual bustle in every quarter; and I had been told at my hotel that a few days later it would have been impossible for me to obtain lodgings. The richness of the booths, which already began to open, exceeded all that my imagination had ever conceived. *There* were the *choicest* goods from all quarters of the globe; from France, Italy, England, the East and West Indies; from Persia, Turkey, Russia, down to the nearer kingdoms of Hungary and Poland; and I became confirmed in my conviction that here no one would observe my dress or appearance, since there were natives of all countries, in their proper costumes, parading the streets, or arranging their merchandize. The air was perfumed by the fragrance of Turkish tobacco, as the natives of Constantinople stalked silently about with their long pipes, in dresses which I had till then only seen in books; and there were Persians, who, from their splendour of attire, might have passed for sultans, had not their present occupations proved the contrary.

But as I found my way at last to the streets more particularly allotted to the dealers in all sorts of *bijouterie*, toys, paintings, engravings, and other works of art, my wonder and delight were increased at every step. Amid the infinite variety of objects conducive to luxury and amusement here exhibited, time passed on like a dream. I did not fail to indulge myself in the purchase of several articles of ornament and convenience. A watch and chain, two seal rings, a large *meerscham* pipe, (which the vender rightly declared to be a *chef d'[oe]uvre*;) a few books and prints, &c.; all which I ordered to be sent home to my hotel.

On arriving afterwards at the Great Square, in the centre of the town, I was confounded by finding it already occupied by caravans and temporary theatres, filled with wild beasts, travelling players, puppet-shows, giants, dwarfs, panoramas, jugglers, &c. &c. &c.

These sights, however, I did not venture for the present to examine more narrowly, but made my way into the public walks and gardens by which the town is surrounded, and which were now gay with genteel parties, enjoying

the afternoon's promenade, enlivened, moreover, with excellent music from harp-players, singers, organists, &c., many of whom, especially of the singers, reminded me of the best music that I had heard in early days, in the house of the choir-master at Königswald.

For a moment, too, I was reminded of his sister, by the countenance, and yet more by the figure, of a girl that passed me, in the midst of a thicket of very dark massive pines, near the Bockenheimer gate; but the recollection was transient; for now, though surrounded by gaiety and music, by sparkling groups and beautiful countenances, (for at Frankenburg, as at Saxe Gotha, almost every female, not in the extreme of old age, is beautiful,) yet by rapid degrees the cheerfulness which I had felt at the commencement of my walk vanished quite away.

All at once I felt within me the solution of the riddle, the explanation of the cause why I was thus changed. I was *alone* in the midst of these happy groups. The trees, the flowers, (withered and yellowed already by the blasts of autumn,) the ruddy gleams of the western sky, and the varieties of the landscape—these, indeed, were like society—these I partook in common with the parties around me—but of all the shapes and forms of men and women, smiling or grave, meditative or gay, that moved about me, I knew *not one*. There was not a single individual in whose breast I could imagine a shadow of apprehension who I really was—what strange chance had brought me hither, or even the least atom of that overpowering load of mystery by which I was weighed down, and which was wholly locked up within my own bosom.

All this, however convenient at the present moment, made on me an impression hostile, destructive, and almost insupportable. As long as I had the gay booths, the paintings, toys, jewels, sparkling dresses, liqueurs, and confections, tobacco-pipes, books, and engravings around me,—such things, however contemptible in the eyes of one accustomed to the world, had, from their novelty, power enough to rivet my attention, and alienate it from *selfish* fears and despondency. But now, amid these rural walks, surrounded only by happy groups, of whom each individual enjoyed mutual confidence with his neighbour—by husbands and wives, lovers and mistresses, parents and children; amid scenes that reminded me of my early days of innocence, methought I was like a condemned spirit—like a

revenant, doomed involuntarily to wander on the earth, from whence all, and every one to whom he had been attached, had long since died away!

If I called to mind how, formerly, every visitant at the Capuchin Convent so kindly and respectfully greeted the pulpit orator, and how the whole neighbourhood, and even strangers from remote countries, thirsted after his conversation, rejoicing even in the opportunity of a few words, then my heart was wrung with the bitterest anguish.

I strove against this, however, as much as possible. "That pulpit orator," said I to myself, "was the Monk Medardus, he who is now dead, buried, and (ought to be) forgotten, in the abysses of the mountains—in the darkness of the far-distant pine-tree forest. With him I have nothing to do, for I am alive and active, nay, life itself has for the first time dawned upon me, and begun to offer its varied and substantial enjoyments."

Thus, when in my involuntary waking dreams I recalled the strange and frightful adventures at the castle, I said to myself, "These things are indeed known to me, yet it is to some one else that they refer; over me they can have no influence." This *other* was again the Capuchin; but I was no longer a monk. It was only the never-dying thoughts of Aurelia that united still, by indissoluble ties, my former with my present existence; but when this feeling was truly awoke, like the torment of an incurable malady, it killed and annihilated that spirit of pleasure which had risen up within me. I was then suddenly torn out of those brilliant circles of glittering forms and fantastic imagery, by which life had begun to surround me. The delusions fled. I despised myself for having been pleased for a moment, like a child, with toys and rattles, and once more sunk down, a prey to the darkest and most rayless despondency.

This evening, on my return from the public walks, I visited, for the first time in my life, a theatre. This was to me another new enjoyment; but before reaching thither, my despondency had gained its full influence. The piece performed happened to be a tragedy, and I thought, during the whole performance, only of Aurelia.

During my residence at Frankenburg, I did not omit to visit some of the many houses of public resort, in which people met to breakfast, *a la fourchette*; to dine, to sup, and enjoy the pleasures of wine, gaming, and conversation. Accordingly, I soon felt a particular preference for a certain hotel in the middle of the town, where, on account of the superior quality of the wines, a numerous society were to be found every night.

At a table, in a room adjoining to the great *salle*, I found regularly, at a fixed hour in the evening, the same persons assembled. Their conversation was always lively and ingenious. Accident at last brought me acquainted with these people, who had thus formed an especial circle for themselves, and who for some time shewed no disposition to bestow on me any share of their attention.

At first, I used to sit quietly in a corner of the room, and drink my wine alone; but on one occasion it so happened that I was able to afford them information on a literary topic which they were discussing, and was in consequence invited to a place at their table, which afterwards was the more willingly kept open for me, as my good address and the extent of my reading and acquirements exactly suited their dispositions.

Thus I obtained, without trouble, some very agreeable acquaintances; and accustoming myself more and more to the world, I became every day more unconcerned, and was able, in great measure, to rub off the rust of my former habits.

For several evenings there had been much talk in this society of a certain painter, (an entire stranger in the town,) who had lately arrived, and during the fair was to hold an exhibition of his works. Every member of the society but myself had seen his pictures, and praised them so highly, that I of course felt anxious for an opportunity of judging for myself, and went accordingly.

The painter was absent when I entered his exhibition-room, but an old man acted as *cicerone*, and named the masters of various old pictures which the artist exhibited along with his own. Among them were many admirable pieces, most of them originals, of celebrated Italian masters, with which I was highly delighted.

At last, I came to a series of pictures which the man said were copies from certain large *frescoes*, designed many years ago. What was now my astonishment, when involuntarily the recollections of my youth here began to dawn upon me, every moment acquiring more distinct forms and livelier colours! These were obviously copies from the Convent of the Lime-Tree. Above all, I recognized most unequivocally, in a holy family, the features of the old pilgrim who had come to us with the miraculous boy! At this sight, the levity in which I had for some time indulged, once more completely declined; and, sunk into the deepest melancholy, I stood long gazing at the group. But when my sight next fell on a portrait (large as life, and admirably done) of my adoptive mother, the Princess, I could not forbear a loud outcry of wonder. This portrait exhibited a most accurate resemblance, (such as Vandyke never failed to give to all his pictures,) the costume was the same in which she used to walk before the nuns in their procession through the church, and the painter had seized the moment, when, having finished her private devotions, she was leaving her room in full dress, in order to join in that solemnity. The perspective behind shewed the interior of the church, crowded with the expectant congregation.

In the looks of this admirable woman, was fully developed that expression of a mind wholly devoted to Heaven, which was so pre-eminently her own. It now seemed to me as if she implored forgiveness for that unhappy sinner, whom his own crimes had torn from her maternal embraces. I felt once more all the bitterness of contrast between what I now was, and what I *had been*! Feelings long lost and estranged gained their full influence over my heart, and I was borne away by an unspeakable longing after the scenes and impressions of my youth.

Methought I once more heard the south wind sigh through the dark yew-hedges and tall beech-trees of the old manor-house, and traced again the bright wanderings of the Saale, but *not*, as on the occasion of my last visit there, with coldness and indifference! The delusion for a moment was perfect, only to be followed by the bitterness of reality and remorse. Anon, it seemed as if I were again with the good priest of the Cistercian Convent, a cheerful, free-minded, and courageous boy, wandering at will through the wild country, losing himself in rocky recesses of the Thuringian mountains, or shouting and rejoicing because the grand festival of St Bernard was drawing near!

That well-known form of her whom I so deeply revered, was again presented, as if living, before me. Methought, too, I heard her voice.—"Medardus," said she, "hast thou been good and pious?" The well-known tones, deepened by anxiety and love, floated like soft music around me. "Hast thou been good and pious?" Alas! what must now be my answer? The beautiful picture, traced by the pencil of Innocence and Hope, is clouded and defaced for ever—the vernal skies are darkened—the cold tempest winds of grief and remorse desolate the landscape. I have heaped up crime on crime. On the first breach of my monastic vows followed murder; and *now*, is not my daily life of dissipation and deceit, but the certain commencement of crimes yet to come?

These thoughts, and many more, that it would require a volume to delineate, rushed at once upon me, so that, completely overpowered, I sunk, half-fainting, into a chair, and burst into tears.

The old man was terrified. "For God's sake, sir," said he, "what's the matter? what has happened to you?"

"That picture," said I, in a hollow suppressed voice, "resembles with such accuracy a near relation whom I lost by a cruel and untimely death, that it has deeply affected me." With these words I arose, and assumed as much composure as possible.

"Come, sir," said this man, "such recollections are far too painful, and should be avoided. There is yet one portrait here, which my master considers his best, and which you have not seen. It is painted after the life, and has only just now been finished. We have hung a curtain before it, that the sun might not injure the fresh colours."

The old man placed me carefully in the proper light, and then drew up the curtain—IT WAS AURELIA!

CHAPTER XIX.

At first, a kind of horror seized upon me; for I knew not if this could be reality, or the mockery of that relentless Fiend, that would lure me on to destruction. But, with a violent effort, I summoned up courage; an entire revolution again took place in my mind; new hopes and feelings began to break through the gloom and melancholy, which for a space had gathered around me.

With eager eyes, I devoured the charms of Aurelia, which from the enchanted canvass now gleamed out in full splendour before me. Yet, alas! did not these childlike pious looks seem only to complain against the murderer of her brother? The mystery of his guilt, however, which had been deposited in my bosom, gave me confidence; and even a malicious spirit of scorn and irony rose within me. I only regretted now, that in that fatal night of Hermogen's death, Aurelia had not become mine. His appearance had then frustrated my plans; but with death he had expiated the rashness of his attempts against me.—"Aurelia," said I, "yet survives; and this alone is sufficient to encourage my hopes of one day possessing her. From the destiny in which she is involved, it is impossible for her to escape; for am not I myself the living impersonization of the fate to which she is subjected?"

All the sadly-cherished dreams of youth, all feelings of piety which the Abbess's portrait had inspired, were thus banished; and, still gazing on Aurelia, I encouraged myself to the commission of deliberate and premeditated crime. The old man was astonished at my conduct. He drawled out a long string of words, about drawing, tone, colouring, &c. &c.; but I heard him not. The thoughts of Aurelia, the hopes that I might yet fulfil some one of those many plans, which had only been delayed, absorbed me so completely, that I walked away, as in a dream, from the exhibition-room, without once asking for the painter—thus losing, perhaps, the best opportunity of learning what sort of connection there existed betwixt myself and these pictures, which seemed to comprehend in that magic circle the chief impressions of my whole life.

Once more, I was now resolved to venture all things for Aurelia. Nay, it seemed almost as if the clouds of mystery would soon be broken—as if, elevated to a station from which I could overlook all the characters and events connected with my life, I could have from them nothing to fear, and therefore nothing to risk. I brooded, as formerly, over a thousand plans and resolutions, in order to arrive nearer to my object. In the first place, I perceived that I should, no doubt, learn much from the strange painter, and, by conversation with him, develop many trains of evidence, of which the possession was to me most important. At last, I had nearly resolved that I would return, in my present state of complete disguise and metamorphosis, to the Baron's castle. Nor, to my excited feelings and disordered imagination, did this appear as an act of extraordinary hazard and daring.

In the evening, I went, as usual, to the club-room, where I had trouble enough to restrain the vehemence of my emotions, and to prevent the ebullitions of my overheated phantasy from being observed. I heard much of the strange painter's productions, especially of that wonderful power of expression which he had displayed in his portraits, above all in that of Aurelia. I had now the means of joining in this approbation, and, with a peculiar splendour, and strength of language, (heightened, too, by a kind of scorn and irony, for I felt my own superiority in speaking of this picture,) I described the nameless graces, the angelic charms, which were spread over that saint-like countenance. Hereupon, one of the party declared his intention of bringing the painter himself to the club on the following evening, adding, that, though advanced in years, he was still an interesting and agreeable companion, and that he would be detained here for some time longer, having been employed professionally by several rich families in the town.

Agitated by a tempest of conflicting feelings and indefinable apprehensions, I could scarcely summon up resolution for the encounter which I had so much wished, and, on the following night, went at a later hour than usual to the club-room.

On my entrance, I perceived at once which was the stranger, though his countenance was not turned towards me. A conviction of the truth immediately flashed on my mind; and, when I went round, and took my place opposite to him—then, oh Heaven! there glared out upon me the never-to-be-forgotten features of that horrible Unknown, the same who, on St Anthony's day, had leaned against the pillar of the church, and filled me with abhorrence and consternation!

Now, too, even as then, he looked at me with the same fixed solemnity of aspect—the same cold spectral self-possession. But the mood of mind which I had so recently been cherishing, the thoughts of Aurelia, and my determination to brave all things for her sake, gave me courage and stability to bear up against his inspection, apparently unmoved. I could no longer suppose that I but dreamed. The enemy had now visibly started into life; and I was necessitated to venture the combat.

I resolved, however, not to begin, but wait for his attack; and, should he attempt to tear off the mask by which I was now concealed, to beat him back with weapons, on the strength of which I flattered myself that I could rely.

After a short interval, however, the stranger appeared to take no particular notice of me, but, turning his looks another way, continued the conversation in which he had been engaged at my entrance. The party began, at length, to speak of his own works, and bestowed especial praise on the portrait of Aurelia. Some one among them maintained, that, although this picture was, even at first sight, evidently a portrait, yet it might serve for an imaginative study, and be taken for the *beau* (or *belle*) *ideal* of a female saint. As I had, on the preceding evening, been so eloquent in praise of this work, they now asked my opinion, and, almost unconsciously, I said that I coincided with the last speaker, and that I could not imagine to myself the blessed St Rosalia otherwise than as a counterpart of the female here represented.

The painter seemed scarcely to notice my words, but again broke in—"Indeed, that young lady, whom the portrait, whatever may be its merit as a work of art, very faithfully resembles, is a real and immaculate saint—who, in the spiritual combat, exalts herself even to supernatural excellence. I have painted her at the moment when, under the influence of the most

overwhelming griefs, she yet placed her hope and trust in religious consolation,—in the aid of that Divine Providence which unceasingly watches over us.

"The expression of this hope, which, in a perfect degree, can dwell only in a mind elevated above all that is terrestrial, I have endeavoured to give to my picture—I cannot flatter myself that I have adequately succeeded, but the principle, '*in magnis voluisse*,' seems to me to have rendered it at least one of the most tolerable of my productions."

The conversation now wandered away to other subjects.—The wine, which to-day, in honour of the stranger-guest, was of a better sort, and drunk more freely than usual, soon did its good office in enlivening the party—Every one of them at last found something diverting to relate, or some comical song to sing. The painter, meanwhile, seemed only to laugh inwardly. If any change was produced in his countenance, it was to be observed in his eyes, which were lighted up occasionally with a certain mysterious lustre,—yet, by means of a few striking and powerful words occasionally thrown in, he was able to play his part, and to keep the whole company in admirable good humour.

Although, whenever the stranger happened to fix his looks on me, I could not repress a certain feeling of apprehension, yet I gradually overcame that still worse mood of mind into which I had been brought, on my first *reconnaissance* of his features. I even told stories of the absurd Belcampo, who was known less or more to all the party, and, to their great amusement, gave such a lively account of his behaviour on the day of my arrival, (with imitations of his voice and gesticulations,) that a good-humoured fat merchant who sat opposite to me, declared, with tears of laughter in his eyes, "That was the most delightful evening he had ever spent in his life!"

When the merriment that I had raised had begun to decline away, the stranger suddenly inquired—"Gentlemen, has any one among you ever seen the Devil?"

This question was received but as the prelude to some new and comical story. Of course, every one assured him, in turn, "that he had never yet had that honour."

"Well," said the stranger, "it so happened, that I was very lately within a hair-breadth of attaining myself to that honour, and this, namely, at the Castle of the Baron von R——, among the Thuringian mountains."

I now trembled in every limb; but the others laughed aloud, crying out, "Go on—go on!"

"Gentlemen," said the painter, "you probably all know that wild district in the Thuringian mountains, through which every one must pass, who travels in that direction northwards. But there is especially, on a by-road, one romantic spot, where, if the traveller emerges out of the dark pine-tree forests, and advances to the height of the rocky cliffs, he finds himself suddenly, to his amazement, on the extreme verge of an awful, deep, and, indeed, bottomless abyss. This is called the devil's ground, and the projecting promontory of the rock the devil's chair.

"Of the devil's chair it is related, that once, when a certain Count Victorin, with his head full of wicked projects, had sat down upon this rock, the devil suddenly appeared beside him; and because he was himself resolved to carry the Count's wicked designs into execution, he incontinently hurled Victorin down into the unfathomable gulf.

"Thereafter, the devil appeared as a capuchin monk, at the castle of the Baron von R——; and when he had taken his pleasure with the Baroness, he first sent her out of the world, (no one knew how,) and then, because the Baron's son, a madman, would by no means allow of this masquerade, but always called out, 'The devil, the devil is among us!' he strangled him. However, by that persevering *annonce* of the madman, *one* pious soul at least was saved from the destruction which the devil had intended for them all; and this was the young Baroness Aurelia, the subject of the picture, which you have this night been commending.

"Afterwards, the capuchin, (or the devil,) in an inconceivable manner, vanished; and it is said, that he fled, coward-like, from Victorin, who had risen like a bloody spectre from the grave against him.

"Let all this be as it may, I can assure you, in plain truth, that the Baroness died mysteriously—probably by poison; and that Hermogen (the madman) was assassinated. The Baron himself, shortly afterwards, died of grief; and

Aurelia, the pious Saint, whose portrait I painted, at the very time when these horrible events had taken place at the castle, fled as a desolate orphan into a distant Cistercian Convent, of which the Abbess had been in terms of friendship with her father.

"You have seen and admired in my gallery the likeness of this admirable and unfortunate young lady. But as to other circumstances, this gentleman (pointing to me) will be better able to inform you than I am, since, during the whole of the adventures to which I have alluded, he was an inhabitant of the castle!"

All looks, full of astonishment, were now directed towards me. Quite unnerved, and lost to all self-possession, I started up—"How, sir!" exclaimed I, in a violent tone—"What have I to do with your absurd stories of capuchins, and devils, and assassinations? You mistake me—you mistake me completely, I assure you; and I must beg that, for this once, you will leave me completely out of the question."

Considering the tumult of my mind, it was difficult for me to give my words even this much of connection and propriety, or to assume any degree of composure. The powerful influence of the painter's narrative, and my excessive disquietude, were only too visible. The cheerful tone which prevailed through the party rapidly declined; and as the members of the club gradually recollected that I was a complete stranger, and had only by accident obtained my place among them, they began to fix on me mistrustful and suspicious glances.

Meanwhile, the painter had risen from his chair, and, standing opposite, transfixed me once more with his dead-alive glaring eyes, as formerly in the Capuchin church. He did not utter a word; he stood cold, stiff, and, but for the expression of his eyes, as if lifeless.

But at those ghostly looks, my hair rose on end; cold drops gathered on my forehead, and, seized by the most intense horror, I trembled through every fibre. "Avaunt!—away with thee!" I exclaimed, out of myself with agitation; "for thou thyself art Satan! Thou art the murderer—yet over me thou hast no power!"

The whole party instantly left their seats.—"What's the matter? Who is that?" was heard from all quarters; and out of the adjoining *salle*, the people, terrified by my voice, having left their amusements, came thronging into our room.—"A drunk man!—A madman!—Turn him out!" cried several voices.

Meanwhile, the painter stood there steadfast, and immovably staring upon me. The power which he thus (I know not how) exerted over my very mind and thoughts—the whole train of consequences which the discovery he was determined to force out would bring upon me—the wretched thralldom in which I should remain at present, and the destruction which must ensue—all these ideas conflicted together in my mind. But even without their aid, the looks of the spectral painter alone were more than I could endure. Methought his detestable features at length enlarged, moved, and were writhen in mockery and scorn. At last, driven to the uttermost paroxysm of rage and despair, I drew forth the stiletto with which I had, in self-defence, killed Hermogen, and which I always carried in my breast-pocket.

With this weapon in my hand, I now fell upon my enemy; but his quick eye had caught every movement, and one blow of his powerful arm brought me to the ground. Methought I heard him laugh aloud, in hideous and scornful triumph, so that his voice resounded through the chamber.

"Brother Medardus!" said he, "Brother Medardus, play no longer this false game! Go, return to the sanctuary of thy convent, and humble thyself to the dust in shame and repentance!"

I now felt myself seized by the people in the room; and allowing them to raise me up, pretended at first to be quite exhausted; then, all at once, rousing my whole strength, I drove and struck like a raging wild beast against my assailants; and this so unexpectedly, that several of them fell to the ground, and I made myself a passage towards the door; but had scarcely rushed into the corridor, when a small side door opened, and I felt myself seized on by an invisible arm, by which I was drawn into a dark chamber. To this I made no resistance, for the multitude of pursuers were raging behind me.

Into this dark room I had been drawn just as I turned round a corner of the corridor, and the mob of people, imagining that I had run onwards and

escaped down stairs, passed by the door and left me for the moment unmolested. My invisible companion listened to their proceedings, and in a few moments led me by the arm down a dark, private staircase, into a back court, and then through the buildings behind into the open street. By the light of the lamps I here recognised as my deliverer the absurd Belcampo!

CHAPTER XX.

"Your excellency," said Belcampo, "appears to have laboured under a strange fatality with regard to this painter. I was drinking my wine in an adjoining room when the uproar began, and resolved, if possible, to rescue you, for I alone am the author of all this disturbance."

"How can that be?" said I; "what share could you possibly have in the disaster?"

"Who can resist momentary impulse?" said the little man, in a tone of great pathos; "who can withstand the influences of that unseen, but predominant Spirit, that rules over and inspires all our thoughts and actions?"

"When I arranged your excellency's hair, my mind was, as usual, lighted up by the sublimest ideas. I resigned myself up to the unbridled impulse of wild phantasy, and accordingly I not only forgot to bring the lock of anger on the topmost curls into a state of proper softness and roundness, but even left seven-and-twenty hairs of fear and horror upon the forehead.

"The twenty-seven hairs that were thus left, raised themselves erect at the stern looks of the painter, (who is, in truth, neither more nor less than a *revenant*,) and inclined themselves longingly towards the lock of anger on the toupée, which, in return, hissing and rustling, became dishevelled. All this I could perceive with my own eyes.

"Then, roused to extreme rage, your excellency pulled out a stiletto, on which I distinguished that there were already drops of blood. But it was a vain and needless attempt to send to hell him who to hell already belongs. For this painter is Ahasuerus, the Wandering Jew, or Bertram de Bornis, or Mephistopheles, or Benvenuto Cellini, or Judas Iscariot; in short, a wicked *revenant*, and, in my opinion, to be banished by no other means than by burning-hot curling-irons, which shall twist away into annihilation that idea in which he properly consists; or, by the dexterous and energetic use of electrical combs, against those thoughts which, in order to his own existence, he must suck up and imbibe.

"Your excellency perceives that to me, *phantast* and artist by profession, such things are, as the French say, *veritable pomade*, which proverb, borrowed from our science, has more meaning than one would otherwise suppose, as soon as the pomade is known to contain genuine oil of cloves."

This mad and unintelligible gibberish of the little man, who, meanwhile, ran along with me through the streets, had for me, in my present mood of mind, something truly horrible; and yet, when I looked now and then at his incredible leaps and springs, his grotesque gestures, and comical countenances, I was forced, as if by an involuntary convulsion, to laugh.

At last we were in my own chamber, in the inn of the suburb, and beyond the town gates. Here Belcampo assisted me to pack up my clothes, &c. and in a short time all was ready for my departure. Thereafter, I slipped not one only, but several ducats, into his hand, whereupon he jumped up into the air for joy, and cried aloud, "Hurrah!—hurrah!—now I have got gold, indeed—honourable gold, dyed in heart's-blood, streaming and beaming with its red effulgence! Excuse me, sir," (for at these words I looked at him with amazement,) "'twas but a passing thought, and now 'tis gone!"

He then offered his services to give to the "lock of anger" the proper degree of roundness, and cut away the "twenty-seven hairs of horror," requesting also that he might be allowed to choose for himself a small "love-lock," to keep as a remembrance. This I accordingly granted, and with indescribable gestures and grimaces, he fulfilled his task.

After this, he seized the stiletto, which, on undressing, I had laid upon the table, and taking the position of a fencer, made with it divers cuts and thrusts into the air.

"Ha!" said he, "now shall I make an end of your adversary, for he is but an idea, probably he may also be extirpated by a thought. Let him die, then, by this thought of mine, which, in order to render more powerful, I accompany with suitable gestures of the body—*Apaga, Satanas!—apaga, Ahasuerus!—Allez vous en!*—Now, that was something like! That was working to some purpose," said he, laying down the stiletto, breathing hard, and wiping his brows, like one that has exerted his utmost to get through some great labour.

Luckily I now got possession of the stiletto, and, wishing to conceal it, groped with it into my sleeve, forgetting that I no longer wore my capuchin robes. This gesture the man seemed to remark, and slyly to laugh at. Meanwhile the postilion (for I had ordered horses) began to blow his bugle before the house.

Then Belcampo suddenly changed his posture and tone. He drew out a small pocket-handkerchief, bent himself several times with deep reverence, at last kneeled before me, and entreated in a lamentable voice—

"Two masses, reverend father, I beseech you, for my poor grandmother, who died of a surfeit; four for my father, who died of involuntary fasting; but for myself, one every week when I am dead. Above all, however, and in the first place, an indulgence for my many faults and sins now, while I am yet living!

"Alas! sir, there is an infamous wicked fellow that lurks concealed within me, and says, 'Peter Fairfield, be no longer an ass, and believe that thou existest; for *I* am properly *thou*, and am called Belcampo—moreover am a genial idea; and if thou dost not believe this, I will strike thee down to the earth with an acute thought, finely pointed as a hair!'

"This damnable fellow, sir, commits all sorts of sins and wicked pranks. Oftentimes he doubts of the Real Presence—gets drunk—falls into quarrels and pommelling matches, and commits gross indelicacies against pure virgin thoughts. This Pietro Belcampo, sir, has made me, Peter Fairfield, quite confused and dissipated; so that I frequently jump about in an absurd and unbecoming manner, and defile the spotless garb of innocence, when, with white silk stockings, and singing *dulce jubilo*, I splash unawares into the dirt. Forgiveness, then, venerable father, for both, for Peter Fairfield and Pietro Belcampo."

He continued prostrate, and pretended to sob violently. The folly of the man became tiresome to me. "Be reasonable at least," said I to him, "and give us no more of this." The head-waiter now came in to take my luggage. Belcampo sprung up, and resuming at once his mirthful humour, he assisted, talking, however, all the time, to collect together whatever property of mine was in the room. In a few moments I found myself seated in my cabriolet.

"That fellow is a most complete puppy," said the waiter, in a low voice, and pointing to Belcampo; "the less one has to do with him the better."

The door was closed, and the postilion mounted. Belcampo waved his hat, and began, "Even to the last breath of my life—" but with a significant look, I laid my finger on my lips, and he was silent. Anon the postilion drove off, blowing the *Tyroler-lied* on his bugle as we clattered along the *chaussée*, and I was once more, emancipated from all ties, whether hostile or friendly, thrown upon the world.

When the morning began to dawn, the town from which I had fled lay far behind me; and as I contemplated with some interest the new scenes through which we passed, the form of that frightful man, who pursued and haunted me like a visible impersonization of the guilt and mystery by which my life had been darkened, had again almost vanished away. On setting out, I had merely desired to be driven to the first stage on the high road leading southwards; but at every new station, the questions of the postmaster, "*Whence and whither?*" revived to my mind how completely I was now separated and cut off from every relationship in life; and like the wandering Ahasuerus, of whom Belcampo had spoken, was utterly given up, a prey to the stormy waves of chance, that bore me like a powerless wreck along.

But had not my ruling destiny drawn me thus out of my former relationships and dependencies, only that the internal efforts of my spirit might be exerted with greater life and vigour? Something must be accomplished, in order to still those yearnings of the soul, by which I was convinced that a great and important result was before me. Restless I travelled on, through a beautiful and flourishing country. Nowhere could I find repose, but was driven irresistibly onward, always farther and farther, towards the south. I had hitherto, without any consciousness or attention on my own part, scarcely made any important deviation from the route recommended to me by Leonardus; so that the impulse which he had given to me at first setting out, seemed to work always in a straight-forward direction, and with an influence wholly uninterrupted.

It happened, one very dark night, that I travelled through a dense wood of pine and beech-trees, which was said to extend as far as the next station, on which account the postmaster had advised me to remain with him till the next morning; but from an impatience, to myself unaccountable, as I was unable to put a name on any goal or object which I wished to reach, I peremptorily refused his proposal.

Already, at the time of my departure, lightning, which is not usual at that season of the year, gleamed on the distant horizon; and very soon, clouds, collected by the approaching storm, rolled together, darker and darker, in threatening volumes. The postilion observed what sort of weather we should of necessity encounter; pointed to the clouds, and asked if he might return? To this I gave a peremptory answer in the negative. We entered accordingly that long, interminable, and tangled forest which stretches between Holzenheim and Rosenthurm, where the wood alternately consists of tall beech-trees and dense thickets of Norway and Scotch fir. Having laid aside his tobacco-pipe, he began here, for his diversion, to play "Malbrook" on his bugle; but anon the thunder began to roll, and even to crack above our heads, with numberless reverberations; while, far as the eye could reach, there was nothing but the crossing and re-crossing of red lightnings on the horizon. Such a tempest I have never witnessed, neither before nor since. During a thunderstorm, the air is generally calm, but now there were unaccountable gusts of wind, such as usually occur only in the depth of winter. The tall fir-trees, shaken to their very roots, groaned and crashed. The rain poured down in torrents. Every moment we ran the risk of being killed by the falling of the trees, and the horses constantly reared, and ran back from the flashes of lightning.

At last, after a long struggle, and many vicissitudes, we were "beat to a *stand still*," for the carriage (as a climax) was overturned, on a piece of rough road, so violently, that one of the hinder wheels broke in pieces. Thus we had no alternative, but must remain on the spot, till the storm should abate, and the moon break through the clouds.

The postilion now remarked, that, on account of the darkness, and the rain driving in his face, he had quite wandered away from the right road, and

had fallen into an avenue of the forest. There was now no other method, but to follow out this avenue as far as it would go, and thus perhaps to arrive at some woodman's hut or village.

Though the darkness continued, yet we contrived to prop up the carriage with a kind of wooden leg, and thus it was dragged gradually onwards. We had not gone far, till, marching in the van, I perceived now and then the gleaming of a light, and thought that I could distinguish the baying of dogs.

I had not deceived myself; for we had not persevered in our laborious progress above a few minutes longer, before I distinctly heard the dogs' voices; and in due time we came to an opening in the wood, where the road became more passable. At last we arrived at a large respectable-looking house, though, as far as the dim light enabled us to perceive, old, gloomy, and surrounded by the high walls of a regularly-built square court.

The postilion, without hesitation, knocked loudly at the outer gate. The dogs immediately grew outrageous, and sprang out from their kennels against us. In the house, (or *keep*,) however, all remained quiet and dead, till the postilion had recourse to his horn, (lending me a spare one, that we might play a duet,) and blew "Wilhelmus von Nassau" with such vehemence, that the old vaulted building re-echoed to the notes.

Then a window in the upper story, from which I had before seen the light, was opened, and a deep, rough voice called out, "Christian! Christian!"—"Ay, ay, sir," cried a voice from below. Then we knocked again, and blew our horns.

"There is a knocking and blowing of bugles at our gate," said the voice from above, "and the dogs are raging like devils. Take the lantern down, with the blunderbuss number three, and see what is the matter."—Soon after, we heard Christian's voice, quieting the dogs, and saw him at last come with the lantern.

CHAPTER XXI.

The postilion now found out where we were. Instead of going straight forward, he had quitted the road, and driven almost in a retrograde direction, so that we were now at the Prince von Rosenthurm's *forst-haus*, distant only about a league to the right of the station which we had quitted.

As soon as we had explained to Christian the mischance that we had met with, he directly opened both wings of the gate, and let the carriage pass into the court. The dogs, who were now pacified, came fawning and snuffling about us; and the man above, who was still stationed at the window, cried out incessantly, in a voice by no means of good-humour, "Who's there?—who's there? *What for a caravan* is that?" to which neither Christian nor I returned a word in answer.

At last I stepped into the house, and was walking up stairs, when I met a powerful tall man, with a sun-burnt visage, a large hat, with a plume of green feathers, on his head, (which was oddly contrasted with the rest of his figure, for he appeared in his shirt and slippers,) and a drawn stiletto (or hunting dagger) in his hand. In a rough voice, he called out to me, "Whence do you come? How dare you disturb people in the dead of night? This is no public-house; no post station. Here no one lives but the *Ober-revier-forster*, and for want of a better, I am he. Christian is an ass, for having opened the gates without my permission."

In a tone of great humility, I now related the story of my mischance, explaining that nothing but necessity had brought me hither. Hereupon the man was somewhat conciliated. He said, "Well, no doubt, the storm was very violent; but your postilion must be a stupid rascal, to drive out of the road, and break your carriage in that manner. Such a fellow should have been able to go blindfolded through these woods. He should be at home among them, like any one of us."

With these words, he led me up stairs into a large hall, furnished with a long oak table and benches; the walls adorned with stag's antlers, hunting

weapons, bugle-horns, &c. An enormous stove was at one end, and an open *kamin*, where there were yet the warm embers of a wood-fire, at the other.

The *Ober-revier-forster* now laid aside his hat and dagger, and drawing on his clothes, requested I would not take it ill that he had received me so roughly; for, in his remote habitation, he must be constantly on his guard. All sorts of bad people were in the habit of haunting these woods—and especially with poachers, he lived almost always in open warfare—"However," added he, "the rogues can gain no advantage over me, for, with the help of God, I fulfil my duty to the prince conscientiously and faithfully. They have more than once attacked my house by night; but, in reliance on Providence, and my trusty dogs and fire-arms, I bid them defiance."

Involuntarily, and led away by the force of old habits, I here thrust in some common-place words about the power and efficacy of trust in God.—However, such expressions were not lost on the forester, but seemed to gain for me his confidence and good opinion. He became always more cheerful, and notwithstanding my earnest entreaties to the contrary, roused up his wife—a matron in years, of a quiet, good-humoured demeanour, who, though thus disturbed from her sleep, welcomed, in a very friendly manner, her unexpected guest, and began, by her husband's orders, to prepare supper.

As for the postilion, he, by the forester's decision, was obliged, for a punishment, that night, to drive back (as he best could) to the station from which he had come,—and on the following morning I should be carried on by the forester to the place of my destination. I agreed the more readily to this plan, as I found myself now much in want of repose.

I therefore said to my host that I would gladly stay with him even till the middle of the following day, as, by constant travelling, I had been greatly fatigued, and would be much the better for such refreshment.

"If I might advise you, sir," said the forester, "you had better remain here through the whole of to-morrow—After that, my son, whom I must at any rate send to the *residenz*, will himself take you forward in my carriage."

I was, of course, well contented with this proposal; and by way of conversation, while supper was placed on the table, began to praise the solitude and retirement of his house, by which I professed myself to be greatly attracted.

"It is remote, sir, no doubt," said the forester; "at the same time, our life here is the farthest possible from being dull or gloomy, as a townsman would probably conclude it to be.—To such people every situation in the country appears both lonely and stupid;—but much depends on the temper and disposition of the party by whom a house like this of ours is inhabited.

"If, as in former years in this castle, an old gloomy Baron were the master,—one who shuts himself up within the four walls of his court, and takes no pleasure in the woods or the chase—then, indeed, it would be a dull and lonely habitation—But since this old Baron died, and our gracious Prince has been pleased to fit it up as a *forst-haus*, it has been kept in constant liveliness and mirth.

"Probably you, sir, may be one of those townspeople, who know nothing, unless by report, of our pleasures, and therefore can have no adequate idea, what a joyous pleasant life we hunters lead in the forest—As to solitude, I know nothing either of its pains or pleasures—for, along with my huntsmen lads, we live all equally, and make but one family. Indeed, however absurd this may seem to you, I reckon my staunch wise dogs also among the number—And why not? They understand every word that I say to them. They obey even my slightest signals, and are attached, and faithful even to death.

"Mark there, only, how intelligently my Waldmann looks up, because he knows already that I am speaking about him!

"Now, sir, not only is there every day something to be done with the huntsmen and dogs in the forest—but every evening before, there is the pleasure of preparation, and a hospitable well-supplied board, (at which we enjoy ourselves with a zest, that you townsmen never experience;) then, with the first dawn of day, I am always out of bed, and make my appearance, blowing all the way a cheering *réveille* upon my hunting-horn.

"At that sound every one directly starts up—The dogs, too, begin to give tongue, and join in one great concert, of barking and rejoicing, from their delight at the anticipation of the coming sport. The huntsmen are quickly dressed—They throw the game-bags and fire-arms on their shoulders, and assemble directly in this room, where my old woman (my wife, I mean) prepares for us a right stout hunter's breakfast, an enormous *schüssel* of hot ragout, with a bottle of vin-ordinaire, a reaming flagon of home-brewed ale, with another of *Stettiner beer*, sent us from the *residenz*; then, after a glass of *schnaps*, we all sally forth in the highest possible spirits, shouting and rejoicing.

"Thereafter, we have a long march before us—(I speak of our employments at this present season)—but at last we arrive at the spot where the game lies in cover—There every one takes his stand apart from the rest; the dogs grope about with their noses on the ground, snuffing the scent, and looking back every now and then to give notice to the huntsman, who, in his turn, stands with his gun cocked, motionless and scarcely daring to breathe, as if rooted to the ground. But when at last the game starts out of the thicket, when the guns crack, and the dogs rush in after the shot, ah! then, sir, one's heart beats—every fibre is trembling with youthful energy; old as I am, I thus feel transformed into a new man.

"Moreover, and above all, there are no two adventures of this kind exactly like each other. In every one is something new, and there is always something to talk over that never happened before. If it were no more than the variety of game at different seasons of the year, this alone renders the pursuit so delightful, that one never can have enough of it.

"But setting aside these diversions, I assure you, sir, that the mere superintendence and care of the woods is an employment which would amply fill up my time from January to December. So far am I from feeling lonely, that every tree of the forest is to me like a companion.

"Absolutely, it appears to me as if every plant which has grown up under my inspection, and stretches up its glossy waving head into the air, should know me and love me, because I have watched over, and protected it. Nay, many times, when I hear the whispering and rushing of the leaves in the wind, it seems as if the trees themselves spoke with an intelligible voice,

that this was indeed a true praising of God and his omnipotence; a prayer, which, in no articulate words, could so well have been expressed.

"In short, sir, an honest huntsman and forester, who has the fear of God before him, leads, even in these degenerate times, an admirable and happy life. Something is yet left to him of that fine old state of liberty, when the habits of men were according to nature, and they knew nothing of all that conventional artifice, parade, and frippery, wherewith they are now tormented in their walled-up garrisons and cities. *There*, indeed, they become totally estranged from all those delightful influences which God, in the midst of his works in this world, is ready to shower upon them, by which, on the contrary, they ought to be edified and rejoiced, as the free sylvan people were in former ages, who lived in love and friendship with nature, as we read in the old histories."

All this (though his style was somewhat rambling and methodistic) the old forester uttered with a *gusto* and emphasis, by which one could not fail to perceive that he felt whatever he had said deeply in his own heart; and I truly envied him his station in life, together with his deeply-grounded quiet moods of mind, to which my own bore so little resemblance, or rather presented so painful a contrast.

In another part of the building, which was of considerable extent, the old man shewed me a small and neatly-fitted-up apartment, in which was a bed, and where I found my luggage already deposited. There he left me, with the assurance that the early disturbance in the house would not break my sleep, as I was quite separated from the other inhabitants of the castle, and might rest as long as I chose. My breakfast would not be carried in until I rung the bell, or came down stairs to order it. He added, that I should not see him again till we met at the dinner-table, as he should set out early with his lads to the forest, and would not return before mid-day.

I gave myself no farther trouble therefore, but being much fatigued, undressed hastily, and threw myself into bed, where I soon fell into a deep sleep. After this, however, I was persecuted by a horrible dream. In a

manner the most extraordinary, it began with the consciousness of slumber. I said to myself, "Now this is fortunate, that I have fallen asleep so readily; I shall by this means quite recover from my fatigue, and, for fear of awaking, must only take special care to keep my eyes shut."

Notwithstanding this resolution, it seemed to me as if I must, of necessity, open my eyes, and yet continued at the same time to sleep. Then the door of my room opened, and a dark form entered, in whom, to my extreme horror and amazement, I recognised *myself* in the capuchin habit, with the beard and tonsure!

The monk came nearer and nearer to the bed, till he stood leaning over me, and grinned scornfully. "Now, then," said he, in a hollow sepulchral voice, and yet with a strange cadence of exultation—"now, then, thou shalt come along with me; we shall mount on the *altan*^[2] on the roof of the house beside the weather-cock, who will sing us a merry bridal-song, because the owl to-night holds his wedding-feast—there shall we contend together, and whoever beats the other from the roof of the house is king, and may drink blood!"

I felt now that the figure seized upon me, and tried to lift me up from the bed. Then despair gave me courage, and I exclaimed, "Thou art not Medardus!—thou art the devil!" and as if with the claws of a demon, I grappled at the throat and visage of this detestable spectre.

But when I did so, it seemed as if my fingers forced their way into empty skeleton sockets, or held only dry withered joints, and the spectre laughed aloud in shrilling tones of scorn and mockery.

At that moment, as if forcibly roused by some one violently wrenching me about, I awoke!

The laughter still continued in the room. I raised myself up. The morning had broken in bright gleams through the window, and I actually beheld at the table, with his back turned towards me, a figure dressed in the capuchin habit!

I was petrified with horror. The abominable dream had started into real life! The capuchin tossed and tumbled among the things which lay upon the

table, till by accident he turned round, and thereupon I recovered all my courage, for his visage, thank Heaven, was *not mine*! Certain features, indeed, bore the closest resemblance, but I was in health and vigour; he was, on the contrary, worn and emaciated, disguised too by an overgrown head of hair, and grizzly black beard. Moreover, his eyes rolled and glared with the workings of a thoughtless and vacant delirium.

I resolved not to give any alarm, but remain quietly on the watch for whatever he might do, and not interrupt him unless he attempted something formidably mischievous, for my stiletto lay near me on the bed, and on that account, together with my superior strength, I could soon be completely master of this intruder.

He appeared to look at, and to play with, the things that lay upon the table, as a child would do with toys; especially, he seemed delighted with the red *portefeuille*, which he turned over and over towards the light of the window, at the same time making strange grimaces, and jumping up like a patient in the dance of St Vitus.

At last, he found the bottle with the rest of the Devil's Elixir, which he directly opened and smelt at; then he seemed to tremble convulsively through every limb. He uttered a loud and indescribable cry—"He, he, he! —He, he, he!" which echoed in faltering reverberations through the room, and passages.

A clear-toned clock in the house just then struck three (but the hour must have been much later.) Thereupon, to my great annoyance, he lifted up his voice, and howled as if seized by some horrible torment; then broke out once more into the same shrill laughter that I had heard in my dream. He heaved himself about into the wildest attitudes and caprioles, concluding with a long draught from the bottle with the Devil's Elixir, which (after having exhausted the last drops) he then hurled from him against the wall, and ran out at the door.

I now instantly rose up and looked after him, but he was already out of sight, and I heard him clamping and clattering down a distant staircase; and, lastly, the violent hollow clank of a door, as he closed it after him.

I then carefully locked and bolted that of my own room, that I might be secured against any second intrusion, and threw myself once more into bed. I had been too much excited to be able for some time to sleep again; but at last slumber fell heavily upon me, and I did not awake till a late hour, when, refreshed and strengthened, I found the bright warm sun beating into my apartment.

CHAPTER XXII.

Having dressed, I found a bell in the corridor, which I rung, to give notice that I was awake. The forester, according to what he had said, had gone out early with his huntsmen; but a very blooming, and indeed beautiful girl, his youngest daughter, appeared, and served me with breakfast, while her elder sister, as she told me, was busied with her mother in household concerns.

The girl was frank and unembarrassed. She described to me, very prettily, how the inhabitants of the *forst-haus* all lived on the best terms together, and that only now and then, their usual quiet routine was interrupted when the Prince came to hunt in this district, who on such occasions frequently staid through the night with the forester.

Thus a few hours glided away. Then it was mid-day, and the mirthful sounds of shouting and bugle-horns announced that the forester was on his return. He appeared soon after, attended by his four sons, (of whom the youngest was about fifteen,) all blooming, handsome young men, and three servants. They were all dressed uniformly, in dark green and gold, with complete accoutrements for the *chasse*.

The forester directly inquired how I had rested in the night, and if the early alarm in the court had not awoken me. I did not like to relate to him the adventure which had befallen me; for the living appearance of the horrible monk had joined itself so closely to the phantom of my dream, that I could scarcely distinguish that point at which the vision had passed onwards into reality.

The long oak table was spread. Two large dishes smoked at head and foot;—the old man took off his cap in order to say grace. Then the door suddenly burst open, and the emaciated, grizzly capuchin, habited precisely as I had seen him in the night, marched in. The wildness of insanity had

indeed somewhat relaxed upon his visage; but he still looked gloomy, discontented, and scowled around him.

"Welcome, reverend sir," cried the forester. "You are come in good time. Do you say grace for me, and then take your place with us at the dinner-table."

Hereupon the monk's eyes kindled with furious rage;—he looked wildly on every one; and, in a frightful tone, cried out, "May the devil fetch you, with your reverend sirs, and your damned hypocritical graces! Have you enticed me hither, in order that I might be the *thirteenth*, and that you might allow me to be butchered by the strange murderer? Have you stuck me into this tunic, that no one might recognise the Count, who is thy lord and master? But beware, thou miscreant!—beware of my just anger!"

With these words, the monk seized a heavy earthen bottle, which stood upon the table, and hurled it at the old man, who, only by his professional quickness of eye, and a very clever turn of his head, escaped the blow, which otherwise must have been his instant destruction.

At that moment, the three servants started up, seized the madman, and pinioned his arms.

"What!" cried the forester, "thou cursed, blasphemous wretch, is it thus that, with thy old bedlamite pranks, thou ventur'est to come into the society of honest Christians? Thou ventur'est again to aim against my life—against me, by whom thou wert raised from the condition of the beasts of the field, and from the certainty of everlasting perdition?—Away—away with thee to prison!"

The monk now fell upon his knees. He prayed—even wept—moaned, and howled for mercy. But in vain. "Thou must and shalt go to prison," said the forester; "and never shalt thou dare to come hither again, until such time as I know that thou hast renounced the Satan that thus blinds thee; and if not, thou shalt die!"

Hereupon the maniac shrieked out in the hopeless agony of grief. He was seized, however, and led away by the huntsmen, who, returning soon afterwards, announced to us, that he had become quieter as soon as he was deposited in his dungeon. They added, that Christian, who generally watched over him, had said, that the monk, through the whole preceding

night, had been restless, and tumbling about through the walks and corridors of the castle; and that, more especially towards the morning, he had been heard often to exclaim—"More wine, and I will give myself up wholly to thee!—More wine—more wine!" Besides, it had seemed to Christian as if the man absolutely rolled about like a drunken person, though it was impossible for him to conceive how he could have got at any kind of intoxicating liquor.

Now, therefore, I of course did not any longer hesitate to relate my adventures of the night; nor did I forget the circumstance of his drinking out of my basket-bottle.

"Ha, worthy sir," said the forester, "I owe you indeed many apologies. You must have been cruelly disturbed. But you seem a pious good man, and therefore courageous. Another might have absolutely died of terror."

I begged him to tell me, somewhat minutely, what was the real history of his connection with the monk. "At another opportunity, sir, if you please," said the forester; "it is too long a narrative to begin during dinner; and indeed it is bad enough that this abominable man has disturbed us in such manner just as we were about to enjoy, gratefully and tranquilly, that which the goodness of God bestows upon us. However, let us lose no farther time."

Thereupon he took off his hat, and said the grace, with much emphasis and devotion. The conversation became animated and cheerful, as if nothing had happened;—the dishes, though served in a rustic style, were plentiful, and admirably cooked; so that I had never partaken of a more refreshing and agreeable repast. There were excellent strong soup, and boiled meat; afterwards, a course of venison and other game, prepared in different ways, (of which I preferred the *sour braten*,) salmon, &c. In honour of his guest, the old man produced some bottles of noble old wine, which was drunk, according to patriarchal custom, out of a magnificent goblet, and passed round the table.

While the wine thus went round, the dishes were cleared away. The huntsmen then took their bugle-horns from the wall, and, by way of concert, blew a loud, inspiring *jager-lied*;^[3] first without accompaniment, but, at the second repetition, they blew more softly, and the girls joined in with very

sweet voices. Then, at the third and concluding part, the forester's four sons also joined, and finished the performance with a grand chorus.

My heart was in a wonderful degree lightened and expanded. For a long period, I had not felt myself in so genial a mood of mind as now, among these honest, simple-hearted people. There were afterwards many songs, very musically and effectively given, by the girls, assisted by the young men, till at last the forester rose up, and with the toast, "Long life to all brave men who love the noble art of hunting," he emptied his glass. We all followed his example; and thus the agreeable banquet, which, on my account, had been enlivened with wine and with song, was concluded.

"Now, sir," said the forester, "I shall sleep for half an hour, or thereabouts; but after that, we go once more to the wood; and if you are pleased to accompany us, I shall, on the way, relate to you how the monk came to my house, and all that I know of him. We must wait till the twilight, however. Then we go to our appointed station, where *Franz* has informed me, that there are a noble covey of partridges. You shall have a gun also, if it is agreeable to you, and try your fortune."

The thing was new to me; for though I had, as a *seminarist*, many times practised shooting at a mark, yet I had never tried at living game. I therefore accepted the forester's offer, who appeared quite delighted that I did so; and even before going to sleep, instructed me in various rules and precautions, by means of which he thought that I would make sure of booty.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Accordingly, I was in due time accoutred with a huntsman's bag, and a fowling-piece slung over my shoulder, and, in company with the old man, marched away through the woods, while, in the following manner, he began the story of the monk.

"This harvest, it must be now about six months since, my lads first announced that they heard oftentimes a tremendous howling in the forest, which, though the noise could not well be called human, yet my *Franz* always insisted it must be the voice of a man. Francis, indeed, seemed to be particularly aimed at, as the *butt* or prey of this howling spectre, for, when he went to a good station, the howling always frightened away the game; and, at last, whenever he wanted to shoot at a deer or hare, he saw a large bristly human monster burst out of the thicket, against whom he did not venture to draw the trigger.

"This youth had his head full of all the ghostly hunting legends which his father, an old *chasseur*, had related to him;—and he was inclined to hold that strange intruder for the devil himself, who wanted to destroy his sport, or entice him to destruction.

"The other lads,—even my own sons, to whom also the same devil had appeared,—at last joined with Francis, and my desire to obtain an explanation of all this mystery, was so much the greater, as I held it for a contrivance of the poachers, to frighten away my people from the proper covers.

"Consequently, I gave strict orders that the next time they met with the devil, they should stop and question him; and if he would not answer, they should, without hesitation, according to the rules of the forest, shoot him dead on the spot.

"Francis happened once more to be the first who encountered him.—Recollecting my orders, he commanded him to stand, at the same time presenting his fowling-piece—Thereupon the spectre rushed away into the

thicket; Francis thought to send a thundering shot after him, but the gun missed fire; and now looking on this as supernatural, he ran homewards more horrified than ever. Of course, he told every adventure of this kind to his companions, who became all convinced that it was the devil who thus, frightened away the game, and frustrated his attempts in shooting—for it was quite true, that ever since he was persecuted by this demon, he had killed nothing, though, before that time, he had been an excellent and successful marksman.

"The rumour of the devil being in our wood spread itself abroad, and in the nearest village the people had got long stories, how Satan had come to Francis, and offered him *freikügeln*, (enchanted balls,) with a deal of other absurd nonsense. I resolved, therefore, that I would myself make an end of all this, and watch at the places where he was usually found, for the monster, who had hitherto never once appeared to me.

"For a long time, my endeavours were unsuccessful, but at length, when I was at the station where he had first appeared to Francis, there was heard a rustling in the thickets—softly I raised up my gun, expecting a wild boar, or some other animal, but to my utter astonishment, there started up a horrible human figure, with flaming red eyes, bristly black hair, and his body hung (I cannot say clothed) with rags.—The spectre glared on me with his fiery eyes—uttering at the same time the tremendous howlings, which had been before now so faithfully described to me.

"In truth, sir, that was a moment which might have inspired terror even into the most courageous heart. I must confess I thought it was the devil who thus stood visibly before me,—and felt a cold sweat involuntarily burst from every pore—But in a powerful energetic prayer, which I uttered aloud, I completely recovered my courage. While I thus prayed, and pronounced audibly the name of Christ, the monster howled more outrageously than ever, and at last broke out into horrible blasphemies and execrations.

"Then I cried out—"Thou cursed, wicked, lubberly fellow, desist from these blasphemous words, and resign thyself into my power, otherwise I shall instantly shoot thee through the head!"

"Hereupon, with moans and lamentations, the man instantly fell upon the earth before me, and prayed for compassion. My servants came up—we

seized the wretch, and led him home, where I shut him up in the prison of the tower, at the corner of the court, and next morning I intended to give notice of what had happened to the magistrates.

"As soon as he came into the tower, he had fallen into a state of almost utter insensibility.—When I went to him next morning, he was sitting on a bed of straw, which we had prepared for him, and wept violently. He fell at my feet, and begged that I would take compassion on him.—He told me that he had already lived several weeks in the woods, eating nothing but roots and wild fruit. He was a poor Capuchin from a distant convent, and had escaped out of the prison, in which, on account of his madness, he had been shut up.

"The man was, to say the truth, in a most miserable condition—I had compassion upon him, and desired that food and wine should be administered for his restoration, after which he visibly recovered. He begged of me in the most earnest and abject manner, that I would bear with him for a few days in the house, and that I would, if possible, get him a new dress of his order. He would then alone, and of his own accord, walk back to his convent.

"I complied with his wishes, and his madness seemed visibly to leave him. The paroxysms were more rare, and far less vehement. In the exasperations of his madness he uttered horrible cries, and I observed, that when on this account I spoke to him harshly, and threatened him with death, he fell into a state of almost utter annihilation, threw himself on the earth, chastised himself with a knotted rope, and called on God and the Saints, to free him from the torments and terrors of hell which awaited him.

"At such intervals he seemed to look on himself as St Anthony, and at other times, in his violent paroxysms, affirmed that he was an *herrgraf*, and supreme Prince, adding, that he would have us all put to death as soon as his servants appeared to rescue him.

"In his lucid moments, he begged of me for God's sake not to turn him out of this house, as he felt that his cure depended on his residence with me. Only once I had another disagreeable adventure with him, and, as luck would have it, it befell just at the time when the Prince was hunting in our forest, and spent the night in my house.

"The monk, after he had beheld the Prince with his brilliant train of attendants, was completely changed. He remained gloomy and reserved. When we went as usual to prayers, he retired abruptly. If he heard even a word uttered in the spirit of devotion, there was a trembling through all his limbs, and at the same time, he looked on my daughter Anne with an aspect so strange and ambiguous, that I resolved to get him directly away from the house, in order to prevent all sorts of misdemeanours, which of necessity would ensue.

"In the course of the very night preceding the day on which I had intended to pack him off, I was alarmed about one o'clock by a piercing cry, which vibrated along the corridor. I sprung out of bed, got a light, and ran towards the room where my daughters slept. The monk had contrived to break from the dungeon in which I always kept him shut up, and giving the reins to his abominable impulses, had betaken himself directly to the door of my daughters' room, which he had burst in with his foot.

"By good luck, the lad Francis had been awoke by extreme thirst, and was going to get water in the court, when he heard the monk's heavy step in the corridor. He ran up to him accordingly, and seized him from behind, just at the moment when he was entering the room; but the lad was too weak to get the better of the madman. They wrestled together, and both fell out of the room again into the corridor, the girls, meanwhile, screaming loudly.

"Just at this time I came up. The monk had got Francis on the ground, and was grappling him by the throat in such a manner that he would very soon have made an end of his victim. Without losing a moment, therefore, I seized the maniac, and tore him away. Then suddenly, before I could understand how he could accomplish it, I saw a knife gleaming in his clenched hand, with which he directly struck at me; but Francis, who had now recovered, seized his arm, and, as I am a strong man, we succeeded in pinning the wretched man to the wall, in such manner, that his breath was almost squeezed out of his body.

"The noise had by that time roused all my people from their sleep, and they came running to the spot. We bound the monk with ropes, and threw him into the tower; then I brought a horse-whip, and inflicted on him such a castigation, that he sobbed and moaned most lamentably.

"Thou incorrigible miscreant!" said I, 'this is all far too little for thy deserts. Thou, who wouldst have seduced my daughter, and hast, with thy knife, aimed at the life of thy preserver, were I to do justice, death itself would be too little for thee!'

"Hereupon he howled aloud with horror; for the apprehension of death seemed always quite to annihilate him. The following morning we found that he could not be removed; for he lay there as if dead, in the most miserable depression and exhaustion, so that involuntarily I could not help once more taking compassion upon him.

"Consequently I made a bed be prepared for him in a better apartment, where my wife nursed him with strong soups, and gave him from our domestic dispensary whatever drugs were requisite. Moreover, you must know, sir, that my wife, when alone, has the good Christian habit of singing to herself some pious hymn or favourite anthem, in which she sometimes desires my daughter Anne to join with her. This happened to take place several times near the bed of the sick man. Then he began to sigh heavily, and to look at my wife and Anne with an aspect of the deepest melancholy, and frequently tears forced their way over his cheeks. Sometimes he moved his hand and fingers as if he would cross himself; but could not succeed in it, his hand fell down powerless; many times, too, he uttered low and imperfect tones, as if he were about to join in the anthem; in short, he began perceptibly to recover.

"Then, according to monastic habits, he crossed himself very often, and prayed in a low voice. At last he began to sing Latin songs, the words of which my wife and daughter, of course, did not understand; but their music, their admirably deep, solemn cadence, penetrated so deeply into their hearts, that they could not express how much they had been, by the sick man's conduct, moved and edified.

"The monk was now so far recovered, that he rose from bed, and could walk about the house; but his appearance, and whole manner were completely changed. His eyes now looked mild and tranquil, whereas before they had gleamed with a malicious fire. According to conventual rules, he now walked about softly, and with clasped hands, in an attitude of constant devotion. Every trace of madness had vanished from his aspect and

conduct. He would take nothing for food, but vegetables, bread, and water. It was only of late that I had forced him to sit at my table; to eat our ordinary provisions, and to allow himself, now and then, a small draught of wine. At these times he said grace, and we were delighted with his discourse, which was often unusually eloquent.

"Frequently he went alone, walking through the woods, where it chanced that I met him one day, and, without attaching much importance to the question, I asked him whether he now thought of returning to his convent. He seemed much affected. 'My friend,' said he, 'it is to you that I am indebted, under Heaven, for the rescue of my soul. You have saved me from eternal destruction. Even now I cannot bear to part with you; let me, therefore, remain here. Alas! have compassion on me, whom the devil has thus enticed and misled, and who would have been for ever lost, if the guardian saint, to whom he yet prayed in hours of terror, had not brought him, in his madness, to this forest.

"'You found me,' continued the monk, after a short pause, 'in a condition altogether depraved, and therefore cannot have guessed that I was once a promising youth, gifted by nature with many excellent endowments; whom nothing but an enthusiastic love of solitude, and of deep meditation, led to a convent. My brethren there all looked on me with regard and affection, and I lived as happily as any one within the walls of a cloister can possibly do. By piety and exemplary conduct I gained a high reputation, and already people beheld in me the future prior.

"It happened, unfortunately for me, that one of the brethren returned home from distant travels, and brought with him to our convent various relics, which he had carefully collected on his journey. Among them was an extraordinary sealed-up bottle, which, it was said, St Anthony had one time taken from the devil. This relic was, like all the rest, preserved with great reverence, though there appeared to me something in the nature of it wholly opposite to the true spirit of devotion, and indeed ludicrous and absurd. However, by commencing in this manner, my attention was gradually directed more and more to the subject, till at last an indescribable longing took possession of me to know what was actually in the bottle. I succeeded at last in getting it into my possession, opened it, and found therein a strong

drink, which exhaled a very delightful perfume, and tasted very sweetly, and which, therefore, I drank out, even to the last drops.

"In what manner my spirit and disposition were now at once wholly changed,—how I felt a burning thirst for the pleasures of the world,—how vice, in seductive form, appeared to me as the very highest object of pursuit in this life, I can only hint at, but cannot adequately describe. In short, my life became a continued chain of shameful crimes, till at last, notwithstanding my devilish artifice and cunning, I was betrayed to the prior, who, accordingly, sentenced me to perpetual imprisonment in the dungeons of the convent.

"When I had passed several weeks in a damp dark prison, I cursed myself and my existence—I blasphemed God and the Saints. Thereupon the devil came to me in a glowing atmosphere of red flame, and said to me, that if I would turn away my soul wholly and utterly from the service of the Most High, and swear allegiance to him alone, he would set me directly at liberty. Howling, I fell upon my knees, and cried out, 'There is no God whom I serve!—Thou alone art my master; and from the fervour of thy fire stream forth all the pleasures and enjoyments of this life!'

"Scarcely had I uttered these wild words, when there arose a roaring wind like a hurricane, and my prison walls groaned and cracked, as if agitated by an earthquake. An indescribable voice, like the piping shrill tone of the wind in autumn, vibrated through the air. The iron bars of the window fell down, broken into fragments; and, hurled out by some invisible power, I found myself standing in the court of the convent.

"At that moment the moon gleamed clear and powerful through the clouds, and in her light shone above me the statue of St Anthony, which was erected at a fountain in the middle of the court. An inexpressible horror now seized on me; my frame shook with the agony of conscious guilt. I threw myself prostrate and annihilated before the Saint, renounced the devil, and prayed for mercy. But then dark clouds rose up into the sky, and again the hurricane roared around me. My senses were lost, and I recovered myself, for the first time, in the forest, where I raged about, delirious with hunger and despair, out of which situation you rescued me.'

"Such," continued the forester, "was the Capuchin's story, and it made upon me an impression so deep, that, even after the lapse of many months, I am able thus to repeat it, word for word. Since that time the monk has behaved himself with so much piety and consistency, that we all conceived an affection for him; and on this account it is to me the more inexplicable how his madness during the last night should have broken out so violently again."

"Do you not know, then," said I, "from what Capuchin convent the fugitive has come?"

"He has been silent on that head," said the forester; "and I am the less inclined to ask him regarding it, because it is probable this may be the same unhappy man, who, not long ago, was a constant subject of discourse at our Prince's court. Yet there was no knowledge of his being in this neighbourhood; and for the monk's sake, I by no means wished that my suspicions should be changed into conviction, as I should then have been compelled to announce the truth at the *residenz*."

"But I at least may hear your suspicions," said I; "for, being a stranger, I am not involved in the consequences; besides, I shall solemnly promise not to repeat what you may communicate."

"You must know, then," said the forester, "that the sister of our reigning Princess is Abbess of the Cistercian Convent at Kreuzberg. The Abbess had taken under her care the son of a poor woman, (betwixt whose husband and our Prince's family some mysterious connection subsisted,) and provided for his support and education. By his own desire, he became a Capuchin monk, and acquired, as a pulpit orator, great reputation. The Abbess frequently wrote to her sister in praise of her chosen *élève*; but not long ago her style on this subject became completely changed, and she deeply deplored that she had irrecoverably lost him. It was rumoured that, on account of the misuse of a certain relic, he had been banished from that convent, of which he had been so long the chief ornament. All this I learned from a conversation of the Prince's physician with another gentleman of the court, at which I happened, not long ago, to be present. They mentioned some other very remarkable circumstances, which, however, have escaped me, as I did not hear the whole distinctly, and durst not trouble them with

questions. I am, therefore, not prepared on all particulars of the story, which in part remains to me inexplicable.

"Yet, though the monk, who is now in our house, describes his leaving the monastery in a different manner, this may be the work of his own imagination. He may have dreamed all that he tells about his escape; and, in short, I am persuaded that this monk is no other than Brother Medardus, the Capuchin, whom the Prioress educated, and whom the devil enticed to all sorts of crimes, until Heaven at last punished him with the infliction of utter insanity."

CHAPTER XXIV.

When the forester pronounced the name of Medardus, my whole frame violently shook, nay, the story throughout had even, physically and corporeally, tormented me, so that at every word I felt almost as if daggers were piercing to my heart; and it was with great difficulty that I prevented my agitation from being observed by my companion. I felt convinced that the monk had spoken only the truth, both with regard to the relic and direct agency of the devil; nay, that it could have been nothing else but a repetition of the same infernal drink that had now renewed in him this horrible delirium.

But my own situation had again become degraded. I found myself more and more confirmed into the mere plaything of that mysterious and malicious destiny, which had so effectually wrapt its indissoluble toils around me, so that, while I madly believed myself free, I was, in truth, only beating about, like a captive bird in a cage, within barriers, from which I could find no outlet.

The good and pious lessons of my old friend Cyrillus, on which I had bestowed no attention; the appearance of the young Count and his volatile tutor, all came back on my memory. I was now clearly instructed whence had proceeded that sudden alteration which I had experienced both in mind and body. I was utterly ashamed of the delusions to which I had been subjected, and of my criminal conduct. But, alas! this shame, which was the emotion of a selfish worldling, rather than a penitent, appeared to me at the moment as equivalent to the deep repentance, the self-annihilation which I ought in my inmost heart to have felt and cherished.

Thus I had sunk into deep reflection, and scarcely listened to the old man, who once more recurred to his hunting stories, describing to me various adventures which he had encountered with poachers, &c. &c.

The twilight had now drawn on, and at last we stood opposite to the covert in which it was said that there were black game or partridges. The forester placed me in a proper station and attitude, admonished me once more that I

was not to speak nor move, but, with the utmost care, to hold my gun on the cock, and ready to fire.

The huntsmen softly glided away to their several places, and I was left standing alone in the dim light, which always became more obscure. Seldom have I known visions more strange than what arose to my bewildered senses at that moment. Forms and features, imagery and adventures out of my past life, stepped out vividly, like the illusions of a phantasmagorie, amid the gloom of the dark forest, before me. Among them were visions even of my earliest years. I beheld alternately my mother and the Abbess. They looked at me with a severe and reproving aspect. Euphemia, too, habited in luxurious splendour, came floating and rustling up, as if to salute me. But her visage was deadly pale, and I liked not the gleam of her darkly-glaring eyes. I shrunk, therefore, from her proffered embrace, whereupon she lifted up her hands, in a threatening attitude, against me. "They are steeped in blood," cried I, "that drops reeking to the earth. They are died in the life-blood from Hermogen's wounds!"

Instantly, as I uttered aloud these delirious words, there came over my head a great whirring of wings, so that by the noise I was quite stunned and confounded. It was a large covey of partridges. I directly put my gun to my shoulder, and shot, blindfold and at random, into the air, whereupon two birds fell directly to the ground.

"Bravo!" cried one of the huntsmen, who had been standing at a short distance, while at the same moment, as the stragglers of the covey started up, he fired, and brought down a third partridge. Shots afterwards reverberated all round us. The air was filled with smoke, and the *chasseurs* at last assembled, every one bearing his own proper booty.

The lad to whom I had been stationed nearest, related, not without sly side-looks at me, how, when the partridges rose on the wing, I had cried out aloud, as if in great affright, and then, without once taking aim, had shot blindly into the midst of them, though he was obliged to allow, that I had at the same time killed two birds. Nay, he insisted that, in the twilight, it had appeared to him as if I held the gun in a direction totally wrong; yet the birds were struck, by which result he seemed to have been brought into great perplexity.

The old forester was mightily diverted, and laughed aloud at the notion that I could be frightened in such manner by a covey of partridges, and that I had then only shot at random among them. "However," added he, "I shall nevertheless trust that you are an honest Christian hunter, and no *freischutz*—no devil's marksman—who can hit whatever he likes, whether he aims at it or not." This unpremeditated jest of the old man struck my inmost heart, and even the good luck attending my random shot, at that moment filled me with horror. More than ever discontented, and torn by conflicting impulses, I became wholly involved in doubt and mystery, which, by their destructive influence, continued to darken my whole existence.

On our return to the *forst-haus*, Christian announced that the monk had kept himself quite quiet in his prison, had not spoken a word, and would not accept of any nourishment.

"It is impossible now," said the forester, "that he can remain any longer with me; for who can say that his madness, which is obviously incurable, might not break out again, and, in consequence, some horrible misfortune be brought upon our house? To-morrow, therefore, he must, as early as possible, be sent off with Christian into the town. The deposition that I thought it best to draw up, as to my whole adventures with him, has been long since ready, and in town he may be at once taken to the mad-house."

This night, when I was again left alone in my chamber, the same frightful visions that had haunted me in the wood, once more regained their full influence. More especially Hermogen, like a horrible ghastly spectre, stood, in the dimness of the half-lighted room, before me, and when mustering courage to dare the worst, I tried to look fixedly on the apparition, it was changed into that of the delirious monk. Both seemed, according to my confused perceptions, to be melted into one, and thus perhaps impersonized the warning influence of a higher power, which interposed to save me just as I stood upon the very brink of destruction.

While undressing, I stumbled over the basket-bottle, which still lay upon the floor. The monk had drained it even to the last drops; thus I was protected completely from any temptation to drink more. But even the bottle itself, from which there exhaled a strong stupifying odour, I hurled away through the open window, over the wall of the court, in order to annihilate at once every operation of this damnable Elixir.

By degrees I became more tranquil, and found at last some consolation in the belief, that in point of intellect, I must be greatly elevated over that monk, who, by a scanty draught out of my bottle, had been roused into furious madness. I felt also that the present dangers had passed over me, for the forester believed that his maniac monk was the Capuchin Medardus; and, from all this, I inferred the favourable warning of Providence, whose purpose it was not that I should utterly perish.

Irresistibly I felt myself drawn towards the Prince's *residenz*. There it was possible that an introduction to the sister of the Abbess, who was said to bear a great resemblance to the latter, might restore to me my long-lost disposition towards a life of simple piety, and to those pure enjoyments which had attracted me in youth. In order to reanimate the most vivid recollections of that period, even a sight of the Princess was, in my present tone of feelings, all that would be requisite; but as to the means by which an interview with her might be obtained, I resolved to submit myself wholly to chance.

Scarcely was it day-break when I heard the voice of the forester in the court. I had agreed to set out early with his son, and therefore dressed as quickly as possible. When I came down stairs, there was a rough *leiterwagen* at the door, prepared for departure. The three servants now brought out the monk, who, with a deadly-pale and distorted countenance, allowed himself to be led, without uttering a word. He would answer no questions—he would accept of no food; indeed, scarcely seemed to notice those who were around him. Accordingly, they lifted him upon the carriage, and bound him with ropes; for his present condition appeared very doubtful, and no one could be secure against the sudden breaking out of his malady.

As they bound his limbs, his visage was convulsively writhen, and he heaved a deep sigh, with an expression so piteous, that his situation wounded me to the heart. Between him and me there subsisted some mysterious relationship, as to the nature of which, I could not yet even guess; but to his misery and probable destruction I owed my present hopes of safety.

Christian, and one of the huntsmen, took their places beside him in the carriage. It was not till they were driving away that his looks happened to fall directly on me, whereupon his features immediately assumed an expression of wonder and perplexity. As the carriage receded, his eyes still remained intently gazing on me.

"Mark you," said the forester, "how strangely he watches you. I do believe that your presence in the dining-room contributed very much to his frenzy; for even in his lucid intervals he has always been timid, and has cherished the suspicion that a stranger was to come who would put him to death, of which he always entertains an unbounded horror. Being aware of this, I have often, when in the wildest of his paroxysms, by threatening to shoot him, produced perfect calmness and submission."

I now felt lightened and relieved by the consciousness that this monk, who seemed to present a horrible and distorted shadow of myself, was effectually removed from my presence. I rejoiced, too, in my anticipation of the *residenz*, believing that the load of that gloomy and obscure fate by which I had been oppressed, would at last be taken from my shoulders,—that I should be gifted with new energies, and acquire strength to tear myself from the grasp of that malicious demon, to whom I had hitherto been subjected.

After breakfast, the handsome travelling equipage of the forester drove up to the door; I could not prevail on his wife to accept of a little money in requital for the hospitality that she had shewn to me; but to his daughters I was luckily able to give some articles of *bijouterie* which I found in my portmanteau, having purchased them at the fair in Frankenburg. The whole family took leave of me as affectionately as if I had been for a long time resident among them; but the old man did not let me go without some

farther jokes upon my peculiar genius and success as a sportsman. Under the bright golden gleams of a fine autumnal day, we at last drove off.

CHAPTER XXV.

The *residenz* of the Prince presented a complete contrast to the trading town which I had left. In extent, it was much smaller, but was more regularly and handsomely built. Several broad streets, planted with double rows of flourishing trees, seemed more to belong to the laying out of a park, or English garden, than to a town. There was here no bustle of trade; all was, on the contrary, still and solemn—an impression perhaps deepened by the kind of atmosphere peculiar to that season of the year (the decline of autumn) when I arrived at the capital. The quiet was only now and then interrupted by the rattling course of some coroneted carriage. In the dress and demeanour even of the lower ranks, there was an attempt at the polite and ornamental, yet without vain ostentation; while, as I walked through the streets, although a perfect stranger, yet my appearance probably being approved of, I was saluted with a respectful bow, and wave of the hat, from every passenger.

The palace of the Prince was by no means large, nor even built in a grand style; yet, with regard to elegance and just proportions, it was one of the finest buildings that I had ever seen. Around it was a very beautiful park, which, by the possessor's liberality, was thrown open to all the world, while, as usual in Germany, not a single flower was plucked, nor an ornament displaced or disfigured, not even a blade of grass injured by passengers quitting the gravel walks.

At the hotel where I had put up, I was told that the Prince frequently enjoyed an evening promenade with his family through the park; and that many inhabitants of the town watched that opportunity of paying their respects to, or seeing, *en passant*, their respected sovereign.

Accordingly, at the proper hour, I hastened to the grounds, and observed the Prince, with his consort and a small train of attendants, step out from the *vestibule* of the palace. Very soon, as they drew nearer, my whole attention was directed to the Princess, whom I should have instantly recognised, only by her resemblance to the Abbess, which was striking and extraordinary.

The same height and dignity; the same grace in every gesture; the same intellectual gleam of the eyes, and the free, unclouded forehead and fascinating smile. Only she appeared younger in years, and in shape fuller and rounder than the Abbess. She came close past me, so that I heard also the tone of her voice, as she spoke with some ladies who happened to be in the *allée*, while the Prince walked behind, seemingly absorbed in deep discussion with a grave, formal-looking man.

The looks and behaviour of this noble family, and the simplicity of dress, the total absence of display evinced both by them and their immediate train, were all in harmony. One could easily perceive that the good manners and spirit of respectful order which prevailed through the town, had their origin in the example of the court. By chance I had my station near a lively little man, who gave me answers readily to all the questions that I was inclined to put to him, adding spontaneously many remarks of his own, which to me were very opportune and interesting.

When the Prince and Princess had passed by, he proposed to me, as a stranger, to take a walk through the park, and to point out to me the various objects which, as works of art, were there most to be admired.

This was an offer precisely such as I had wished for, and I gladly availed myself of his politeness. As we proceeded through the grounds, beneath dark shadowy rows of beeches, elms, and poplars, I expressed with great sincerity my admiration of the delightful soil and climate of the *residenz*, and the luxuriant growth of the noble trees.

But as to the numberless buildings in imitation of ancient temples, where pillars, that should have been of gigantic height, could be measured at an arm-length from the ground;—Gothic chapels, for example, where the attention of the builder had been concentrated on trifling ornaments, instead of the construction of a grand and intellectual *whole*;—of all *these* I expressed freely my decided disapprobation; consequently, he endeavoured to defend these erections by the usual argument, that they were in a park *indispensable*, if it were no more than to guard against the inconvenience of a sudden shower. To this I replied, that simple buildings, such as romantic cottages, root-houses, &c. would be equally useful, and free from that

blame of bad taste which I attached to the now existing temples, mosques, and chapels.

"To say the truth, I am quite of your opinion," said the stranger; "but, meanwhile, you must know, that the design of all these buildings, and of the whole park, proceeds from our Prince himself; and this circumstance, of course, softens down, at least to us, who are under his dominion, all tendency to severe criticism or censure.

"The Prince is, in truth, one of the best of men. He has acted always on that admirable principle, that his subjects are not there to serve and minister to him, but that he is appointed guardian over them, and is responsible for their comfort and welfare. The liberty of speaking freely and aloud whatever one thinks; the low rate of taxes and consequent cheapness of provisions; the extreme lenity, nay, invisibility, of the police, (who, though always watchful, never make their appearance except on occasion of some flagrant misdemeanour,) the removal of all troublesome and superfluous soldiery, the calm regularity with which affairs of business and merchandize are carried on; all these circumstances must make a residence in our capital very agreeable to a stranger.

"I would lay any bet, that you have never yet been asked after your name and rank; nor has the innkeeper at your hotel, as it happens in other places, marched in with a great book under his arm, in which one is obliged, *nolens volens*, with an abominable stump of a pen, and ink made of soot and water, to enter his name and condition in the world.

"In short, the whole economy and arrangements of our small kingdom, in which there prevail a real prudence and wisdom, proceed directly from our excellent Prince; whereas, *formerly*, at this very town, people were tormented by the pedantic formality of a court, whose only aim was to represent the expenses and parade of a neighbouring government of far greater power and wealth, in a *pocket-edition*.

"Our Prince is a sincere and unaffected lover of the arts and sciences. Therefore, every good artist, and every man of real learning, is welcome to him; for, as to rank in life, he lays on that no stress whatever. He considers only the degree of intellectual acquirements which a stranger actually does

or does not possess; and accordingly shews or withdraws his favourable countenance.

"But even in the accomplishments of our Prince, it is impossible to deny, that something of an alloy of pedantry has crept in, which is partly owing to errors in his early education, and which expresses itself in his improvements, by an overstrained and slavish adherence to this or that particular school or fashion. He himself drew out, with the most laborious minuteness, the plans for every building in the park; and even the slightest departure of the workmen from the given models, which he had searched out and put together from an hundred antiquarian repositories, vexed him in the highest degree. Every pillar, portico, tower, and cupola, must have its representative, however ludicrous the imitation in point of height and dimensions must of necessity be.

"By the same disposition to carry one or other favourite system to an *extreme*, our theatre now suffers, where the principles that he has once laid down, must on no account be departed from, although, in order to retain them, sometimes the most heterogeneous incongruities are forced together. In short, the Prince has a boundless variety of *hobbies*, which (to keep up the metaphor) he rides alternately; yet not one of them is of a description calculated to give offence, or do any real injury to his subjects. When this park was laid out, then he was architect and gardener *à la folie*. After that, some new fantasies about music wholly absorbed his attention; to which inspiration, however, we owe the fitting up of a most admirable and unrivalled choir and opera. Then painting took the *pas*, and occupied him so entirely, that, as an artist, he is no mean proficient.

"Even in the daily amusements of the Court, he shews the same disposition to extremes, and the same variability. Formerly, dancing was kept up almost every evening; *now*, there is on company-days a Pharo-Bank, and the Prince, without being in the least what is properly called a gamester, delights in watching and calculating all the intricacies of chance. But the pharo-table has continued already long enough; and there is wanting only some very trifling occurrence or impulse to bring something altogether new again on the carpet.

"This versatility has sometimes drawn upon our good Prince the reproach of a weak understanding. There are people who insist, that the mind of a wise man should always be like a still and waveless lake, reflecting the same images with calm and unchangeable fidelity. But, in my opinion, injustice is done him; for it is merely from an extraordinary vivacity of spirit, that he thus gives the reins at all times to some favourite and passionate impulse. Hence no expense is spared on establishments contributing to the amusement and intellectual improvement of his subjects. These grounds, for example, whatever may be their defects, are always kept in the nicest order; our opera, chapel choir, and theatre, are munificently endowed; and our collection of pictures is at every opportunity augmented. As to the court amusements of gaming, &c. these are recreations, which, considering the Prince's sedulous application at other times to business, surely cannot be refused to him."

During this conversation, we passed by many very beautiful and picturesque masses and groups of trees, of which I renewed my expressions of admiration, praising also the fine varieties, which, from rising grounds, the eye commanded in the landscape.

"I ought not to forget," said my companion, "that although the Prince designed every architectural ornament, and had generally the superintendence of the park, yet he was indebted for the position of every thicket, group, or *allée* of trees, to the taste of our admirable Princess. She is indeed a complete landscape painter, after which, natural history, especially botany, is her favourite study. Hence you will find the rarest and most curious foreign plants and flowers, not arranged as if merely brought hither for show, but growing in artificial parterres as if on their native soil. The Princess, however, expressed an especial disgust to the awkwardly cut gods and goddesses in freestone, naiads and dryads, with which the park, in former days, was filled. These statues have therefore vanished; and you find only a few copies after the antique, which the Prince, on account of certain cherished remembrances, would not part with."

It was now late in the evening, and we left the park. My companion readily accepted an invitation which I gave him to my hotel, where he at last announced himself as the *Inspector* of the Prince's picture-gallery.

After supper, and a bottle of excellent wine, when we had become better acquainted, I mentioned to him my earnest wish to obtain an introduction at court; whereupon he assured me, that nothing could be more easy than this, as every well-educated stranger was welcomed in the circle of his sovereign. I had only to make a visit to the Court-Marshal, and beg of him to present me to the Prince.

This diplomatic mode of introduction, however, by no means suited me, as I could scarcely hope to escape certain troublesome questions of whence I had come—what was my rank and profession, &c. I therefore resolved to trust to chance, which would soon throw a favourable opportunity in my way; and, accordingly, this soon after occurred.

One morning, as I was taking an early walk in the yet solitary park, the Prince, dressed in a simple blue surtout, and quite alone, came along an *allée*, directly meeting me. I saluted him *en passant*, as if he had been some one of whom I had no previous knowledge. Hereupon he stood still, and began a conversation with the question, "Whether I was a stranger here?" I answered in the affirmative, adding, "that I had arrived only a few days before, with the intention of passing directly through; but that the charms of the situation, with the tranquillity, good order, and spirit of calm enjoyment, which everywhere seemed to prevail, had induced me to stay longer. Quite independent, and living merely for literature and the arts, I had now resolved to make this place my residence for some time, as everything by which I was surrounded had become to me more and more delightful and attractive."

By these expressions the Prince seemed obviously flattered, and he even offered himself as my *cicerone*, to explore the beauties of the park. I took special care not to betray that I had already seen everything, but availed myself of my previous knowledge, in order to throw in apt remarks and exclamations. I allowed myself to be led through all the temples, grottos, chapels, and pavilions, patiently listening to the Prince's long lectures about every building. He regularly named the ancient models after which every

structure had been imitated; made me attend particularly to their minutest details; then referred, ever and anon, to the grand *morale*, the intellectual system which prevailed through the whole plan of the park; that harmony in confusion, "where all things differ, and yet all agree," which he thought should be adopted as the leading principle in laying out grounds of this sort.

The Prince then desired my opinion. I approved very cordially the natural charms of the place, and the luxuriant vegetation also of the well-disposed masses and groups of wood, with the shadowy *berceaux*; but as to the buildings, I expressed myself just as freely as I had before done to the gallery inspector. He listened to me attentively; seemed not altogether to reject my remarks, but at last cut all discussion short, by saying, that my notions were very good in theory, but that as to the actual practice, it was a different affair, of which I seemed to have but very little notion.

The conversation then turned upon the arts. I soon proved that I was a tolerable *connoisseur* of painting; and, as a practical musician, I ventured many observations, in opposition to his ideas, which, though ingeniously and precisely delivered, only served to shew that he was far more studied than persons of his rank generally are; but, at the same time, that of the *real attributes* of musical genius he had no comprehension whatever. On the other hand, my objections only proved to the Prince that I was a *dilletante*, one of a class who are generally not much enlightened by the actual practice of their theories. He instructed me, however, in the proper characteristics (or what, according to him, ought to be the proper characteristics) of a sublime picture, and a perfect opera.

I heard much about colouring, drapery, pyramidal groups; of serious and of comic music; of scenes for the *prima donna*; of choruses; of effect, *chiaro oscuro*, light and shade, &c. &c.; to all which medley I listened quietly, for I perceived that the Prince took a pleasure in his own discourse.

At last he abruptly cut short his own eloquence with the question, "Do you play pharo?" to which I answered in the negative.—"Well, sir," said he, "that is a most admirable game. In its lofty simplicity, it is the true and proper pastime for a man of genius. One is thereby carried out of himself; or, to speak better, if he is possessed of due powers of mind, he is lifted up to a station from which he can contemplate all the strange complications

and entanglements which are (otherwise invisibly) spun by the mysterious power which we call Chance. Loss and gain are the two points on which, like pivots, the grand machine is moved; and by this machine we are irresistibly carried onward, while it is impelled ceaselessly by its own internal springs. This game, sir, you must absolutely learn. I will myself be your teacher."

I assured him that I had hitherto felt no particular turn for gaming, and that I had always understood the inclination for it to be highly pernicious and destructive. The Prince smiled, and fixing on me his bright, penetrating eyes, resumed; "Ay, there are indeed childish superficial minds, who maintain that argument; and, consequently, you will suppose that I am a gamester, who wishes to draw you into his nets; know, then, that I am the Prince! If you are pleased with your residence at my capital, then remain here, and visit at my palace, where you will find that we sometimes play pharo. Yet I by no means allow that any one under my roof shall subject himself to loss, though the stake must of necessity be high in order to excite interest; for fortune herself is lazy and stupid as long as nothing but what is insignificant is offered to her arbitration."

Already on the point of leaving me, the Prince turned round, and asked, "With whom have I been speaking?"—I answered that my name was Leonard; that I lived as a literary man, *particulier*; for the rest, I was by no means a *nobile*, nor a man of rank; and, therefore, perhaps did not dare to make use of the advantages which his highness had thus offered to me.

"What the devil," said he, "has nobility to do with it? You are, as I have clearly convinced myself, a very ingenious and well-informed man. Literature, science, and the arts, confer on you nobility, and render you fully qualified to appear in our circles. Adieu, Mr Leonard!—*Au revoir!*"

CHAPTER XXVI.

Thus my wishes were far more readily, and more early than I could have expected, fulfilled. For the first time in my life I should appear as a courtier. All the absurd stories, therefore, which I had read in romances, of cabals, quarrels, intrigues, and conspiracies, floated through my brain. According to the most received authorities among novel writers, the Prince must be surrounded and blindly led by all sorts of impostors; especially, too, the Court-Marshal must be an insipid, proud, high-born coxcomb; the Prime Minister a malicious, miserly villain; the lords in waiting gay and unprincipled libertines. Every countenance must artificially wear the most agreeable expression, while in the heart all is selfishness and deception. In society they (the courtiers) must profess to each other the most unbounded friendship and attachment. They must bend to the very earth in apparent humility, while every one endeavours to trip up his neighbour's heels in the dark, so that he may fall unpitied, and his pretended friend come into his place, which he may keep only till some one else plays off the same man[oe]uvre against him. Finally, the court ladies must be ugly, proud, revengeful; glistening with diamonds, nodding with feathers, painted up to the eyes, but withal, amorous, constantly engaged in venal intrigues, and laying snares for the unwary stranger, which he must fly from as he would from the devil.

Such was the absurd picture which, from the books I had read at college, had remained vividly on my recollection. The conversation of the Prior, indeed, might have afforded me more rational ideas; still it seemed to me that a court must be the sphere, of all others, where the Arch-Enemy of mankind exerted his pre-eminent and unresisted dominion. Hence it was not without timidity that I looked forward to my promised introduction; but an inward conviction, that *here* my lot in life was finally to be decided, and the veil of mystery withdrawn, drove me still onwards, so that, at the appointed hour, with a palpitating heart, but struggling as manfully as I could with my disquietude, I found myself in the outer hall of the palace.

My residence at the commercial town of Frankenburg had done much to rub off the rust of my conventual habits. Being by nature gifted with a graceful and prepossessing exterior, I soon accustomed myself to that free and unembarrassed demeanour, which is proper to the man of the world. That paleness, which generally disfigures even handsome features among the inhabitants of the cloister, had now vanished from my countenance. I was at that time of life when our mental and bodily energies are generally in their zenith. Conscious power, therefore, gave colour to my cheeks and lustre to my eyes, while my luxuriant dark hair completely concealed all remains of the *tonsure*. Besides all this, I wore a handsome full dress suit of black, a chef-d'[oe]uvre of Damon, which I had brought with me from Frankenburg.

Thus it was not to be wondered at that I made a favourable impression on those who were already assembled in the outer hall, and this they did not fail to prove, by their polite advances and courteous expressions. As, according to my romantic authorities, the Prince, when he revealed his rank to me in the park, should have thrown back his *surtout*, and discovered to my sight a brilliant star, (which he had failed to do,) so I had expected that every one whom I should meet in the palace should be clad in the richest silks and embroidery. How much was I surprised, therefore, to find that, with the exception of ribbons and orders, their dresses were all as plain as that in which I myself appeared.

By the time, therefore, that we were summoned to the audience-chamber, my prejudices and embarrassment had worn off; and the manners of the Prince himself, who came up to me, with the words, "Ha! there is Mr Leonard," completely restored my courage. His highness continued for some time in conversation with me, and seemed particularly diverted by the freedom and severity with which I had criticised his buildings in the park.

The folding doors were now opened, and the Princess, accompanied by some of her ladies, came into the room. Immediately on her appearance, as the glare of the lustres fell on her features, I recognised, more forcibly than ever, her exact likeness to the Abbess. The ladies of the assembly surrounded her for some time, but at last I was summoned, and introduced, after which ceremony her eyes followed me, with a gaze obviously betraying astonishment and inward emotion. Then turning to an old lady

who stood near her, she said a few words in a whisper, at which the latter also seemed disquieted, and looked on me with a scrutinizing aspect.

All this was over in a moment, for other presentations took place; after which the assembly divided into groups, and engaged in lively conversation. One recollected, indeed, that he was in the circle of a court, and under the eye of the sovereign, yet without feeling on that account constrained or embarrassed.—I scarcely recognised a single figure that would have been in keeping with the caricatures that I had previously drawn. The Court-Marshall was a lively and happy-looking old man, without any particular attributes, either of pride or formality. The lords in waiting were sprightly youths, who, by no one symptom, betrayed that their characters were depraved and vicious. Two ladies, who immediately waited on the Princess, seemed to be sisters. They were uninteresting, insignificant, and, as luck would have it, dressed with extraordinary plainness.

There was, however, one little man in the room, with a comical visage, long nose, and sparkling eyes, who irresistibly engaged my attention. He was dressed in black, with a long steel-mounted sword, and wound himself, with incredible dexterity, like a serpent through the crowd, appearing now here, now there, but resting never, and apparently raising laughter (whether with him, or at him, I knew not) wherever he went. This person (having ventured an inquiry) I understood was the Prince's physician.

The old lady with whom the Princess had spoken had kept her eyes on me, and contrived to manoeuvre so skilfully, that, before I was aware of her plans, I found myself alone with her in a window recess. She began a conversation with me, in which, guardedly as it was managed, I perceived very clearly that her only object was to gain a knowledge of my situation and circumstances in life. I was prepared for some occurrence of this kind, and being convinced that the simplest story was always the safest, I told her that I had formerly studied theology, but that having received from my father a competent fortune, I now travelled about for my own pleasure and improvement.

My birth-place, I said, was on the Polish frontiers of Prussia; and I gave it by the way such a horrible unpronounceable name, that the old lady made no attempt to repeat it after me. "Well, sir," said she, "you have a

countenance which might here raise many, and not altogether pleasant recollections; and you are, perhaps, as to rank, more than you wish to appear, for your demeanour by no means resembles that of a student of theology."

After refreshments had been handed round, we went into another room, where the pharo-table was in readiness. The Court-Marshal was the banker; but I understood afterwards that his agreement with the Prince allowed him to retain all his winnings, while the latter indemnified him against every loss, so that the bank remained always in the same state.

The gentlemen now assembled themselves round the table, with the exception of the physician, who never played, but remained with the ladies, who took no interest in the game. The Prince desired that I would station myself next to him, while, in a few words, he very clearly explained to me the rules and principles of pharo, at the same time selecting my cards, as I was here completely a novice.

But there was not a single card chosen by the Prince for himself, that was not attended by the worst possible luck; and as long as I followed his counsel, the same fate attended mine. Besides, I was suffering considerable losses. A louis d'or was the very lowest point; my limited exchequer was fast ebbing away, and this painfully brought back on me the question that had often occurred, "What was I to do in the world, when my last ducat was expended?"

A new *taille* was begun, and I begged of the Prince that he would now leave me to myself, as it seemed that I was born to be unlucky, and was drawing him into the same fatality. The Prince agreed, with a smile of perfect good humour. He said, that the best way to recover my loss would, in his opinion, have been, to follow the lead of an experienced player; however, that he was very curious to learn how I would behave when alone, having in myself such confidence.

I had not said that I had any such confidence; and now blindfold and at random, I drew out a card from my hand; it was the Queen. It may seem

absurd, but is nevertheless true, that I thought the caricature features on this card had a resemblance to Aurelia! I stared at it accordingly, and became so lost in my own reflections, that it was only the call of the banker, "All's ready," that awoke me from my reverie.

Then, without a moment's hesitation, I drew out the five louis d'ors, all that I had left, and staked them on the Queen. Beyond my expectations this succeeded! Then I always staked more and more on the Queen always higher as my gains increased, and I never lost a single round.

At every new stake my antagonists and the by-standers cried out—"No; it is impossible! This time she must prove unfaithful!" But, on the contrary, I won, and the cards of every other player turned against him—"Now, this is unheard of—this is miraculous!" resounded from all quarters, while, completely reserved, and wrapt up within myself, with my whole thoughts fixed only on Aurelia, I scarcely noticed the *rouleaux* of gold, which the banker shoved one after another over to me.

In short, the Queen had, in the four last *tailles*, invariably gained, and I had my pockets full of gold. I had won about two thousand louis d'ors; and though I thus found myself suddenly freed from all pecuniary embarrassment, yet I could not repress a strange feeling of perplexity, and inward self-condemnation.

Of course, I perceived an exact coincidence between my success at pharo, and my good fortune in shooting, with eyes closed and at random, the two partridges when in company with the forester. It was obvious that the result on both occasions was not owing to any superior skill or management of mine, but to some higher power to which I was wholly subservient. This constant recurrence too, and reflection of Aurelia's form and features, could be nothing but an abominable scheme of the devil to draw me into wickedness, and the misuse which I had now made of that truly sacred and beloved image filled me with horror and aversion!

In the most gloomy mood of mind, and utterly at variance with myself, I was gliding about in the morning through the park, when the Prince, who was accustomed to take a walk at the same hour, joined me.

"Well, Mr Leonard," said he, "how do you like my game of pharo? What think you of the humours and caprices of Fortune, who kindly excused your absurd conduct, and flung the gold into your hands?" I was not ready with an answer, and the Prince therefore resumed—"You had luckily stumbled on the *carte favorite*, but you must not trust to your luck again in this manner. You might carry the principle too far."

His highness now went into a long discussion, founded on this idea of the *carte favorite*, imparted to me various rules as to the doctrine of chances, and concluded by expressing his conviction that I would no doubt follow up zealously this commencement of my *bonne fortune* at play.

On the contrary, I assured his highness, "that it was my firm resolution never more to touch a card!" The Prince looked at me with surprise. "Even my yesterday's wonderful luck," said I, "has been the natural cause of this resolution; for all that I had formerly conceived of the pernicious and ruinous tendency of this game, has truly been realized and confirmed. In truth, there was in my very success something repugnant, and even horrible to my feelings. I drew out a card, blindfold, and unawares. That card awoke in my mind painful, though cherished remembrances, of which I could not resist the influences. I went on accordingly, venturing stake after stake, as if some demon had placed it in my power to *command* fortune, though I had no real and moral right to the gain which thus fell to my share."

"I understand perfectly," said the Prince, "what you mean by painful and cherished remembrances. You have been an unfortunate lover, and the card brought to your recollection the image of the lost fair one; though, begging your pardon, Mr Leonard, when I think of the pale complexion and flat features of your favourite Queen, this seems not a little capricious. However, you thought on your lost mistress, and in that game of pharo, she was perhaps more true and faithful than she had been in real life. But what you are able to discover in all this that is horrible and frightful, I cannot possibly conceive. On the contrary, you should rejoice that Fortune, even on any grounds, is so much inclined to favour you. Besides, if you are really vexed, this is not to be imputed to the pharo-table, but to the individual moods, the idiosyncrasies of your own mind."

"All that your highness has stated," said I, "may be perfectly correct; but I feel deeply that it is not merely the fear of loss on which my present dislike to gaming is founded. Gain itself, which only brings us more and more under a state of slavery to a mysterious fate, which would one day lead us to destruction, is equally dangerous. Yet, sire, I confess that I was yesterday on the point of seeing my travelling exchequer completely drained, which, considering my present distance from home, would have been to me no slight misfortune."

"Nay," said the Prince, "I should have infallibly learned this occurrence, and would have taken care that the loss should have been to you threefold repaid, for I certainly do not choose that any one should be ruined, in order to contribute to my amusement. Besides, any real evil of this kind cannot happen under my roof, for I know my players, and do not trust them out of my own sight."

"Yet, with submission," said I, "may not these very precautions take away all that freedom from the player, and thereby annihilate those fine involvements of chance, in which your highness takes delight? Or may not some individual, on whom the passion for play has violently seized, break out of such trammels, and rush on, unobserved, to his own destruction? Forgive my candour, sire. I believe also, that those very methods which your highness would adopt to prevent evil consequences, would, from the perverse nature of mankind, be looked upon by many as a disgusting and intolerable restraint."

"Say no more, Mr Leonard," said the Prince, "it is obvious, that from every opinion or idea of mine you are resolved to dissent." With these words he hastily retired, adding only an unceremonious and careless "adieu."

CHAPTER XXVII.

I knew not myself how I had been led to speak so freely on the subject, never having till now thought of gaming or its consequences; but the words, as on former occasions, seemed to be prompted for me by some invisible power, after whom I only repeated them. However this might be, I believed that I had now lost the favour of the Prince, and with it, the right of appearing on any future occasion within the walls of his palace.

In this belief, however, I was mistaken, for, on the same day, I received a card inviting me to a concert; and the Prince, whom I once more met in the park, said, *en passant*, with much politeness, "Good evening, Mr Leonard! You are to be with us to-night, and it is to be hoped that my *capelle* may gain some credit, and please you better than my park and my pharo-table have done."

The music was indeed very commendable. All was performed with great accuracy; but, at the same time, the pieces appeared to me not well chosen; for one destroyed, by contrast, the effect of the other; and, especially, there was one long act, which seemed to have been got up with particular care, and which, nevertheless, produced in me a hearty fit of *ennui*.

I took good care not to express my opinion audibly; and in this respect acted, for once, with prudence, as I was afterwards informed that this same long act, or scene, was one of the Prince's own composition.

When the music had concluded, I found myself unawares in the innermost circles of the court, and would have been willing even to take a hand at pharo, in order to reconcile myself wholly with the Prince. But, on entering the room where pharo had been played, I was not a little surprised to find no preparations for that game. On the contrary, small parties were seated at ordinary tables, over hands of Boston-whist, while the rest of the company kept up lively conversation. Even a regular course of story-telling was introduced. Old bon-mots were revived, and fresh anecdotes attentively listened to, provided they were agreeably delivered, even though not intrinsically of much importance.

Here my old gifts of loquacity and eloquence came opportunely to my aid; and, under the guise of romantic and poetical legends, I contrived to narrate many events out of my own life.

Thus I attracted attention and won applause from many listeners. The Prince, however, liked best whatever was cheerful and humorous; in which respects, the physician was not to be equalled. He was indeed inexhaustible.

This kind of pastime was at last carried so far, that individuals were chosen to read from their own MS. compositions, whatever they considered best suited for the present society. A kind of regular *esthetical* club was thus formed, where the Prince presided, and every one contributed as he best could. Among the rest, there was a certain professor from the *gymnasium*, who chose to read a very long paper on some new discoveries; and precisely in proportion as the few who knew anything about his science were interested and delighted, the others were *ennuyés* and restless. Among this majority was the Prince, who was evidently rejoiced when the physician very judiciously seized this time to introduce one of his stories, which, if not very original and witty in themselves, yet, from the drollery of his manner, were irresistible, and had at least a *naïveté* and facility which were highly acceptable, after the tiresome lecture of the professor.

"Your highness knows," said the physician, turning to the Prince, "that I never failed, when on my travels, to enter into my memorandum-book, portraits (in writing I mean) of all the strange characters and odd adventurers that fell in my way; and from this journal I am now about to repeat some notices to which I have hitherto not alluded, on account of their being perhaps too common-place, yet they seem to me not altogether undiverting.

"On my way home, about a year ago, I came to a large handsome village, about four German miles from Berlin; and being much fatigued, resolved to rest there, instead of going on to the capital. The landlord directly shewed me to a good room, where, after supper, I threw myself into bed, and directly fell asleep. About one in the morning, however, I was suddenly awoke by a noise, which, assimilating with a fearful dream with which I had just then been haunted, I imagined to be either the shrieking of an owl at the window, or the cries of a person in distress, for I had dreamed of both.

"It was, however, the sound of a German flute, which proceeded from a room very near me; but in my whole life, before or since, I have never heard such an attempt at music. The man must have had monstrous and gigantic powers of lungs; for in one loud shrill cutting key, he went on without mercy, so that the character of the instrument was perfectly annihilated. What added, if possible, to this enormity, was, that he blew everlastingly the same identical passage over and over, not granting me the slightest relief, by an endeavour at a tune, so that nothing could be conceived more abominable.

"I raved at, cursed, and abused this infernal musician, who so cruelly deprived me of needful rest, and by whom my ears were so barbarously outraged; but, like a wound-up piece of clock-work, the diabolical flute continued to utter the same notes over and over, until I thought the devil himself must be the player, for no one else could have had physical strength to hold out so long. At last I heard something thrown with great violence, and a loud crack, against the wainscot; after which there was dead silence, and I could for the rest of the night sleep in peace.

"In the morning I heard a great noise of quarrelling and scolding in the lower floor of the house. In the *row* I could now and then distinguish the voice of mine host, who was scarcely allowed, however, to throw in a word, by a man who roared without ceasing, in broken German—'May your house be damned! Would that I had never been so unlucky as to cross the threshold! The devil himself must have brought me hither, where one can neither drink, eat, nor enjoy himself—where everything is infamously bad, and dog dear. There, sir, you have your money; and as for your rascally gin-shop, you shall never more see me again within its walls!'

"Having just then finished my toilet, I was in time to behold the author of all this disturbance. He was a little, withered man, in a coffee-brown coat, and a round *fox-red* wig, on which, with a martial air of defiance, he stuck a little grey hat; then ran out of the house towards the stable, from which I soon afterwards saw him re-appear, with a horse fully as odd-looking as himself, on which he mounted, and, at a heavy, awkward gallop, rode off the field.

"Of course I supposed he was like myself, an entire stranger, who had quarrelled with the landlord, and had now taken his final departure. I dismissed him, therefore, from my thoughts; but, at dinner-time, (having been induced to remain another day at the village,) how I was surprised, on taking my place at the *table d'Hote*, to perceive the same absurd coffee-brown figure, with the fox-red wig, who, without ceremony, drew in his chair opposite to mine!

"He had one of the ugliest, and most laughable visages that I had ever beheld. In his whole demeanour, there was a kind of grave and solemn absurdity that was irresistible. During dinner, I kept up a monosyllabic dialogue with my host, while the stranger continued to eat voraciously, and took no notice whatever of any one.

"At last, the innkeeper, with a sly wink at me, led the discourse to national peculiarities, and asked me, whether I had ever been acquainted with an Irishman, or knew what was meant by Irish bulls, for which that country was celebrated? 'Unquestionably,' said I; 'I have heard many such;' and a whole string of these blunders came at once into my head. I then told the story of the Irishman, who, when asked why he wore stockings with the wrong side out, answered, 'Because there was a hole in the other side;'—of the still better anecdote of another disciple of St Patrick, who was sleeping in the same bed with a choleric Scotch Highlander. An English wag, who was lodged in the same room, by way of a practical joke, took one of the Irishman's spurs, and, perceiving that he was fast asleep, buckled it on his heel. Soon after, the Irishman happening to turn round, tore the Scotchman's legs with his spur; whereupon the latter, in great wrath, gave his companion a violent box on the ear, and the Englishman had the satisfaction of hearing betwixt them the following ingenious discourse:—

"'What devil,' said the Irishman, 'has got possession of you? and why are you beating me?'—'Because,' said the other, 'you have torn me with your spurs.'—'How is that possible? I took off my clothes.'—'And yet it is so—see only here.'—'Damnation!—you are in the right. The rascally waiter has pulled off my boots, but left on the spurs!'

"The story, however old, was new to the innkeeper, who broke out into immoderate laughter; but the stranger, who had now wound up his dinner

with a great draught of beer from a glass as high as a church tower, looked at me gravely, and said—'You have spoken well, sir. The Irishmen certainly do make these bulls; but this by no means depends on the character of the people, who are ingenious and witty, but on the cursed air of that damp country, which infects one with them, as with coughs and catarrhs. I myself, sir, am an Englishman, though born and bred in Ireland, and therefore am, on that account, subjected to the vile propensity of making bulls.'

"Hereupon the innkeeper laughed more and more, and I was obliged to join him heartily, for it was delightful that the Irishman, gravely lecturing on bulls, should *unconsciously* give us one of the very best as a specimen.

"The stranger seemed not in the least offended by our laughing. 'In England,' said he, with his finger on his nose, and dilating *his* eyes—'in England, the Irishmen are like strong spices added to society to render it tasteful. I am myself, in one respect, like Falstaff; I am not only witty in myself, but the cause of wit in others, which, in these times, is no slight accomplishment. Could you suppose it possible, that in the empty leathern brain of this innkeeper, wit, generated by me, is now and then roused? But mine host is, in this respect, a prudent man. He takes care not to draw on the small capital that he possesses of his own, but lends out a thought now and then at interest, when he finds himself in the society of the rich!'

"With these words, the little original rose and left us. I immediately begged the innkeeper to give me something of his history.

"'This Irishman,' said mine host, 'whose name is Ewson, and who, on that account, will have himself to be an Englishman, has now been here for the short period of twenty-two years! As a young man, I had just set up in the world, purchased a lease of this inn, and it happened to be on my wedding-day when Mr Ewson first arrived among us. He was then a youth, but wore his fox-red wig, his grey hat, and coffee-brown coat, exactly as you saw him to-day. He then seemed to be travelling in great haste, and said that he was on his return to his own country; however, hearing the band of music which played at my wedding feast, he was so much delighted with it, that he came into the house and insisted on making one of the party.

"'Hereupon, though he approved our music, yet he swore that it was only on board an English war ship that people knew how to dance; and to prove his

assertion, gave us a hornpipe, whistling to it all the while most horribly through his teeth, fell down, dislocated his ancle, and was, of course, obliged to remain with us till it was cured.

"Since that time he has never left my house, though I have had enough to do with his peculiarities. Every day through these twenty-two years, he has quarrelled with me. He despises my mode of life, complains that my bills are over-charged; that he cannot live any longer without roast-beef and porter; packs up his portmanteau, with his three red wigs one above the other, mounts an old broken-winded horse, and rides away.

"This, however, turns out nothing more than a ride for exercise; for at dinner-time he comes in at the other end of the town, and in due time makes his appearance at my table, eating as much of the despised dishes as might serve for any three men!

"Once every year he receives from his own country a valuable bank-bill. Then, with an air of the deepest melancholy, he bids me farewell, calls me his best friend, and sheds tears, which I do also; but with me they are tears of laughter. After having, by his own account, made his will, and provided a fortune for my eldest daughter, he rides away slowly and pensively, so that the first time I believed he certainly was gone for good and all.

"His journey, however, is only four German miles, viz. into the *residenz*, from whence he never fails to return on the third or fourth day, bringing with him two new coffee-brown coats, six new shirts, three wigs, all of the same staring and frightful red, a new grey hat, and other requisites for his wardrobe; finally, to my eldest daughter, though she is now eighteen, a paper of sugar-plums.

"He then thinks no more either of residing in the capital, nor of his homeward journey. His afternoon expenses are paid every night, and his money for breakfast is thrown angrily at my head every morning.

"At other times, however, he is the best-tempered man in the world. He gives presents every holiday to all my children, and in the village has done much real good among the poor; only, he cannot bear the priest, because he learned from the schoolmaster that the former had changed a gold piece that Mr Ewson had put into the box, and given it out in copper pennies! Since

that time, he avoids him on all occasions, and never goes to church, and the priest calls him an atheist.

"As before said, however, I have often trouble enough with his temper. On coming home just yesterday, I heard a great noise in the house, and a voice in furious wrath, which I knew to be Ewson's. Accordingly I found him in vehement altercation with the house-maid. He had, as usual with him, thrown away his wig, and was standing bald-pated in his shirt-sleeves before her, and holding a great book under her nose, wherein he obstinately pointed at something with his finger. The maid stuck her hands in her sides, told him he might get somebody else to play his tricks upon, that he was a bad wicked man, who believed in nothing, &c. &c. &c.

"With considerable difficulty I succeeded in parting the disputants, and bringing the matter under arbitration. Mr Ewson had desired the maid to bring him a wafer to seal a letter. The girl never having written or sealed a letter in her life, at first did not in the least understand him. At last it occurred to her that the wafers he spoke of were those used at mass, and thought Mr E. wanted to mock at religion, because the priest had said he was an atheist. She therefore refused to obey him. Hereupon he had recourse to the dictionary, and at last got into such a rage, that he spoke nothing but English, which she imagined was gibberish of the devil's own inspiration. Only my coming in prevented a personal encounter, in which probably Mr Ewson would have come off with the worst.'

"I here interrupted mine host with the question, 'Whether it was Mr Ewson also who tormented me so much in the night with his flute-playing?' 'Alas! sir,' said he, 'that is another of his eccentricities, by which he frightens away all my night-lodgers. Three years ago one of my sons came on a visit here from the *residenz*. He plays well on the flute, and practises a good deal. Then, by evil chance, it occurred to Mr Ewson that he had also in former days learned to blow the flute, and never gave over till he prevailed on my son to sell him his instrument for a good round sum, and also a difficult concerto which he had brought with him from town.

"Thereafter Mr Ewson, who has not the slightest pretensions to a musical ear, began with furious zeal to blow at this concerto. He came, however, only to the second solo of the first allegro. There he met with a passage

which he could by no possible means bring out; and this one passage he has now blown at, through these three years, about a hundred times per day, till at last, in the utmost rage, he throws his flute and wig together against the wall.

"As few instruments can long hold out against such treatment, he therefore frequently gets a new one, and has indeed three or four in use at the same time. If any of them exhibits the smallest flaw in one of the keys or joinings, then, with a 'God d—n me, it is only in England that musical instruments can be made!' he throws it out of the window.

"What is worst of all, however, is, that this passion for blowing the flute of his, seizes him in the night, and he then never fails to diddle all my guests out of their first sleep.

"Could you believe it, however, that there is in our town another foreigner, an Englishman, by name Doctor Green, who has been in the house of the *Amtmann* about as long as Mr Ewson has lived with me, and that the one is just as absurd an original as the other? These two are constantly quarrelling, and yet without each other could not live. It has just now occurred to me that Mr Ewson has, for this evening, ordered a bowl of punch at my house, to which he has invited Doctor Green. If, sir, you choose to stay here till tomorrow, you will see the most absurd trio that this whole world could afford.'

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"Your highness will readily conclude," continued the physician, "that I was very willing on this account to delay my journey, as I had thereby an opportunity of seeing Mr Ewson in his glory. As soon as the morning drew on, he came into my room, and was so good as to invite me to his bowl of punch, although he regretted that he could only give me that contemptible drink which, in this country, bore the honoured name of a far different liquor. It was only in England where good punch could be drunk, and if ever I came to see him in his own country, he would convince me that he knew how to prepare, in its best fashion, that divine panacea.

"Not long afterwards, the two other guests whom he had invited, made their appearance. The *Amtmann* was, like Ewson, a little figure, but round as a ball, happy and contented, with a red snub nose, and large sparkling eyes. Dr Green, on the contrary, was a tall, powerful, and middle-aged man, with a countenance strikingly national, carelessly, yet fashionably dressed, spectacles on his nose, and a round white hat on his head.

"'Give me sack, that mine eyes may be red,' cried this hero, (marching up to the innkeeper, whom he seized by the breast, shaking him heartily,) 'Speak, thou rascally Cambyses, where are the princesses? There is here a base odour of coffee and Bremen cigars, but no fumigation yet floats on the air from the ambrosial drink of the gods.'

"'Have mercy, oh champion! Away with thy hands—relax thy potent grasp,' answered the host, coughing; 'otherwise, in thine ire, thou might'st crush my ribs like an eggshell.'

"'Not till thy duties are fulfilled,' replied Dr Green; 'not before the sweet vapour of punch, ambrosial punch, delights our nostrils. Why are thy functions thus delayed? Not till then shall I let thee go, thou most unrighteous host!'

"Now, however, Ewson darted out ferociously against the Doctor, crying, 'Green, thou brute, thou rascal!—Green shalt thou be, beneath the eyes,—

nay, thou shalt be green and yellow with grief, if thou dost not immediately desist from thy shameful deeds.'

"Accordingly, I expected a violent quarrel, and prepared myself for departure; but I was for once mistaken. 'In contempt, then, of his cowardly impotence, I shall desist,' said the Doctor, 'and wait patiently for the divine drink which thou, Ewson, shalt prepare for us.'

"With these words he let go the innkeeper, (who instantly ran out of the room,) seated himself, with the demeanour of a Cato, at the table, lighted his pipe, which was ready filled, and blew out great volumes of smoke.

"Is not all this as if one were at the play?' said the good-humoured *Amtmann*, addressing himself to me. 'The Doctor, who generally never reads a German book, borrowed from us a volume of Schlegel's Shakespeare, and since that time he has, according to his own expression, never ceased playing old well-known tunes upon a strange instrument. You must have observed, that even the innkeeper speaks in measured verse, the Doctor having drilled him for that purpose.'

"He was interrupted by the appearance of the landlord with his punch-bowl, ready filled with liquor, smoking hot; and although Green and Ewson both swore that it was scarcely drinkable, yet they did not fail to swallow glass after glass with the greatest expedition.

"We kept up a tolerable conversation. Green, however, remained very silent, only now and then falling in with most comical contradictions of what other people had said. Thus, for example, the *Amtmann* spoke of the theatre at Berlin, and I assured him that the tragedy hero played admirably. 'That I cannot admit,' said Dr Green. 'Do you not think if the actor had performed six times better, that he might have been tolerable?' Of necessity I could not but answer in the affirmative, but was of opinion, that to play six times better would cost him a deal of unnecessary trouble, as he had already played the part of Lear (in which I had already seen him) most movingly. 'This,' said Green, 'quite passes the bounds of my perceptions. The man, indeed, gives us all that he has to give. Can he help it, if he is by nature and destiny inclined to be stupid? However, in his own way, he has brought the art to tolerable perfection; therefore one must bear with him.'

"The *Amtmann* sat between the two originals, exerting his own particular talent, which was, like that of a demon, to excite them to all sorts of folly; and thus the night wore on, till the powerful ambrosia began to operate.

"At last Ewson became extravagantly merry. With a hoarse, croaking voice, he sung divers national songs, of which I did not understand a word; but if the words were like the music, they must have been every way detestable. Moreover, he threw his periwig and coat through the window into the court, and began to dance a hornpipe, with such unutterable grimaces, and in a style so supernaturally grotesque, that I had almost split my sides with laughing.

"The Doctor, meanwhile, remained obstinately solemn, but it was obvious that the strangest visions were passing through his brain. He looked upon the punch-bowl as a bass fiddle, and would not give over playing upon it with the spoon, to accompany Ewson's songs, though the innkeeper earnestly entreated of him to desist.

"As for the *Amtmann*, he had always become more and more quiet; at last he tottered away into a corner of the room, where he took a chair, and began to weep bitterly. I understood a signal of the innkeeper, and inquired of this dignitary the cause of his deep sorrow. 'Alas! alas!' said he, 'the Prince Eugene was a great, very great general, and yet even he, that heroic prince, was under the necessity to die!' Thereupon he wept more vehemently, so that the tears ran down his cheeks.

"I endeavoured as well as I could to console him for the loss of this brave hero of the last century, but in vain.

"Dr Green, meanwhile, had seized a great pair of snuffers, and with all his might drove and laboured with them towards the open window. He had nothing less in view than to clip the moon, which he had mistaken for a candle.

"Ewson, meanwhile, danced and yelled as if he were possessed by a thousand devils, till at last the under-waiter came, with a great lantern, notwithstanding the clear moonlight shone into the apartment, and cried out, 'Here I am, gentlemen. Now you can march.'

"The Doctor arose, lighted his pipe, (which he had laid aside while the enjoyments of the punch-bowl lasted,) and now placed himself right opposite to the waiter, blowing great clouds into his face.

"'Welcome, friend,' cried he; 'Art thou Peter Quince, who bearest about moonshine, and dog, and thorn-bush? 'Tis I that have trimmed your light for you, you lubber, and therefore you shine so brightly!

"'Good night then! Much have I quaffed of the contemptible juice here denominated ambrosial punch. Good night, mine honest host—Good night, mine Pylades!"

"Ewson swore that he would instantly break the head of any one who should offer to go home, but no one heeded him. On the contrary, the waiter took the Doctor under one arm, and the *Amtmann*, still weeping for Prince Eugene, under the other; and thus they reeled along through the streets, towards the *Amthaus*.

"With considerable difficulty, we carried the delirious Ewson to his own room, where he raged and blew for half the night on his flute, so that I could not possibly obtain any rest; nor did I recover from the influences of the mad evening, until I found myself once more in my travelling carriage."

The physician's story was (more, perhaps, from the *naïve* quaintness of his delivery, than the *materiel* of his narrative,) interrupted frequently by peals of laughter, louder and longer than are usually to be heard in a court circle. The Prince himself appeared particularly delighted.

"There is only one figure," said his highness, "which, in the punch-bowl scene, you have kept too much in the back-ground, and that is your own—for I am fully persuaded, that you must have been the means of leading the Doctor and Ewson to a thousand extravagancies, and that you were, in truth, the exciting principle of mischief, for which you would have us take the poor devil of an *Amtmann*."

"I assure your highness," said the Doctor, "that the club was, on the contrary, so rounded and complete in itself, that every addition would have been both discordant and superfluous. The three originals were tuned up, and adapted, one to the other, each on his proper key, so as to produce a most perfect trio. The host added thereto what we musicians call a *septime*."

In this manner the conversations and the readings were kept up till the hour when the Prince's family retired to their private apartments, after which the numerous assembly all separated in the greatest good humour.

I now found myself, day after day, moving happily and cheerfully in a world entirely new. But the more that I learned to accommodate myself to the quiet pleasant mode of life in the town, and at the court, the less I thought of the past, or troubled myself with reflections that my situation here was held by a very frail tenure. A place was gradually opened for me, which I could hold with honour and credit. The Prince seemed to take particular pleasure in my society, and from various hints, I could very easily perceive that he thought of retaining me permanently at his court.

It was not to be denied, that to many individuals the restraint imposed by the constant presence of the sovereign, and the necessity of accommodating one's pursuits and opinions to those which prevailed at court, might have been very disagreeable. But here I possessed the peculiar advantage of having been already accustomed to the formal restrained life of the convent; so that I suffered less than any other stranger would have done.

One circumstance, however, was exceedingly irksome to me. I perceived that, although the Prince always distinguished me by the most unequivocal tokens of his favour, yet the Princess invariably remained, in her manner towards me, cold, haughty, and reserved. Nay, my presence seemed often to disquiet her in an extraordinary degree, and it seemed to cost her a great effort to bestow on me now and then, for form's sake, a few words of ordinary politeness.

With the ladies, however, by whom she was surrounded, I had better fortune. My appearance seemed to have made on them a favourable impression; and as I was often with them, I succeeded at last in acquiring the arts of gallantry, that is to say, of accommodating myself to the notions of the ladies, whoever they were, among whom I happened to be thrown, and of talking on subjects, in themselves trifling and contemptible, as if they were of some importance.

Is not this oftentimes a key to the female heart? It is not difficult to possess one's self of the ideas that usually prevail there, and if these ideas, commonly not very deep nor sublime, are repeated and embellished by the eloquence of a handsome lover, is not this far better than downright flattery? It sounds, indeed, to female ears, like a hymn of self-adoration. The beauty, hearing her own slender ideas thus improved, is as delighted as if she beheld herself (dressed with elegance and splendour) in a mirror.

I was satisfied that my transformation was complete. Who could now have recognised in me the monk Medardus? The only dangerous place for me now was the church, where I could scarcely avoid mechanically betraying the force of old habits.

Among the constant hangers-on of the court, the physician was almost the only one, except myself, who seemed to have any decided character of his own. He was, therefore, partial to me, and approved highly the boldness of my expressions, by which I had strangely succeeded in banishing from the Prince's parties, the pleasures of the pharo-table.

It thus happened that we were often together, and spoke now of literature and the arts—now of the goings on of those that were around us. For the Princess, the physician had, like myself, a high veneration; and assured me, that it was only through her influence that the Prince was restrained from many other follies. It was this only that could charm away that kind of restless *ennui* by which he was tormented; and it seemed often as if she were obliged to treat him as a child, and put into his hands some harmless plaything.

I did not lose this opportunity of lamenting that I seemed to be out of favour with the Princess, without being able to explain to myself any cause for it.

The Doctor immediately rose, and, as we happened to be in his room, brought a small miniature picture from his writing-desk, desiring me to examine it with great care. I did so—but how was I confounded when I perceived that the features of the male figure whom it represented were precisely my own! It was only the old fashion of hair-dressing and of garb in the portrait, and the luxuriant whiskers (Belcampo's chef-d'*oeuvre*) on my part, that presented any difference.

Without hesitation I imparted my astonishment to the physician. "Well, sir," said he, "it is neither more nor less than this resemblance which now terrifies and disquiets the Princess as often as you come into her presence; for your appearance never fails to bring to her mind the recollection of a tremendous adventure, which formerly happened at this court, and which I knew not whether I ought to relate.

"My precursor in the duties of physician, who has been some years dead, and of whom I was a pupil, entrusted me with the particulars of that event, and at the same time gave me this picture, which represents a former favourite in the Prince's family, known here by the name of Francesco. You perceive, by the way, that the miniature itself is a masterpiece of art.

"It is one of the numerous works of that celebrated foreign painter who was then at our court, and became a principal actor in the tragedy to which I have alluded."

On contemplating the picture, my mind was overpowered by confused and stupifying apprehensions, which I vainly endeavoured to arrange into some definite shape. This only was certain, that some mystery, in which I was myself involved, would now be cleared up; and I entreated the physician to wave his scruples, and acquaint me with the adventure to which he had alluded, as it probably might account to me for the extraordinary likeness between my features and those of Francesco.

"Truly," said the physician, "I cannot wonder at your curiosity being thus awakened; and though I speak very unwillingly of these circumstances, on which, to this day, there lies a veil of mystery which I have never been able to lift up, yet you shall now hear all that I know of the matter. Many years have now passed since that occurrence, and the principal actors have retired altogether from the stage; yet the mere recollection of them is here so hazardous, that I must beg of you not to repeat to any one what I may now communicate."

Of course I promised secrecy, and the physician went on as follows:—

"It happened just at the time of our Prince's marriage, that his brother the Duke of Neuenburg returned from his travels in the society of a man whom he called Francesco, though it was known that he was not an Italian, but by

birth a German. They brought with him also a painter, said to have acquired, as an artist, the highest celebrity.

"The Duke of Neuenburg was one of the handsomest men that have ever lived; and, on this account alone, would have outshone our sovereign, even if he had not also excelled him both in vivacity and energy of mind.

"On the young and newly-married Princess, therefore, who was then very lively, and for whose disposition her consort was not very well suited, the Duke made an extraordinary impression. Without the slightest shade of criminal intentions, of any premeditated crime, the parties were gradually and almost unconsciously involved in an attachment, at first more distinguishable to by-standers than to themselves, and from which they would, on *timely* reflection, have fled with terror.

"It was the stranger Francesco alone, who, both in talents and in personal beauty, could be compared to the Duke; and as the Duke interested our reigning Princess, so Francesco completely acquired the affections of her elder sister, who was then an inmate of our court.

"Francesco soon became aware of his good fortune, and did not fail to lay the craftiest plans for profiting by the advantages then put within his power. Meanwhile, although our sovereign was perfectly convinced of his wife's virtue, yet the overstrained attentions of his brother, and the satisfaction with which they were received, gave him considerable vexation, and Francesco alone, who was become a great favourite, was able at certain times to keep him in good humour. On this man he wished to confer some distinguished situation; but the foreigner was contented with the advantages derived from the system of favouritism, and the affection of the Princess's unmarried sister.

"Such was the situation of affairs for some time. No particular event occurred to disturb the family; but it was easy to perceive that some among them were in no enviable state of mind. At this very juncture, by the invitation probably of the Duke, there appeared with great splendour at our court a certain Italian Countess, to whom, it was said, that, in the course of his travels, he had at one time been greatly attached, and who had even been spoken of as his betrothed bride.

"Be this as it may, she is said to have been wonderfully beautiful, to have concentrated in her person and manners the very *belle ideal* of grace and elegance. Indeed these attributes speak for themselves in her portrait, which you may see in the gallery. Her presence at first greatly enlivened the court, where a kind of languor had begun to predominate. She outshone every lady, even the Royal Princesses not excepted.

"Francesco, however, after the arrival of this Italian beauty, became most unfavourably changed. It seemed as if he were preyed upon by some inward grief, which wore away the fresh bloom that had been formerly on his features. Moreover, he became peevish, reserved, and melancholy. He neglected even the society of his noble mistress, to whom he had before shewn such obsequious attention.

"After some time, too, the Duke became morose and meditative, seemingly carried away by some new passion, which he was unable to resist. But, above all, it was on Francesco's mistress, the unmarried Princess, that the strange lady's arrival had the most painful influence. Being naturally inclined to enthusiasm, and to feel in extremes, it seemed to her, that with the loss of Francesco's love, all the hopes and joys of this life were, for her, withered for ever.

"Amid these dark clouds of disappointment and melancholy, by which all were more or less affected, the Duke was the first to recover an outward show of cheerfulness. That his attentions formerly to the reigning Princess had been perfectly innocent, there can be no doubt; but these were now changed for a vehement revival of his old attachment to the Italian Countess, so that he lay once more under the same fetters, which, but a short time before he came hither, he had successfully broken!

"The more that the Duke gave himself to this passion, the more remarkable for gloom and discontent was the behaviour of Francesco, who now scarcely ever made his appearance at court, but wandered about through the country alone, and was often for weeks together absent from the *residenz*.

"On the other hand, the painter, who, as I have mentioned before, had also accompanied the Duke from Italy, and who at first had been so shy and reserved, that he was almost invisible, now made his appearance very frequently in society, and laboured with great success and industry in a

large room, which the Italian Countess had fitted up for him in her house, and where he took many portraits of her and of others, with matchless fidelity and strength of expression.

"To the reigning Princess, meanwhile, he seemed to cherish a decided aversion. He absolutely refused to paint her portrait, while, at the same time, of her unmarried sister he took a most perfect likeness, without her having allowed him a single sitting. Many other strange stories are told of this painter's capricious and unaccountable conduct, which I do not think it necessary to detail. Suffice it to say, that though for the most part employed sedulously in his own profession, he seemed to be utterly careless of what others said or thought of his productions. One day, however, when the Duke had made some remarks which did not suit with the stranger's particular humour, an irreconcilable and violent quarrel took place betwixt them; and the artist only requested, that, before retiring from the court, he might be allowed to bestow some finishing touches on a favourite picture of the Italian lady, which he was then painting for his patron. This being agreed to, by two or three masterly strokes of his pencil, he converted in a few seconds the countenance which had been so beautiful, into the most hideous monster of deformity, on which no one could bear to look. Then, with the words, 'Now art thou for ever lost,' he slowly and solemnly left the apartment.

"This happened when the Italian Princess was already become the betrothed bride of the Duke, and the marriage was appointed to take place in a few days. As to the painter's strange conduct, less notice was taken of it, as he was, by prevalent report, liable frequently to madness. He returned, as it was said, to his own small and confined apartments, where he sat staring at a great piece of stretched canvass, without, as the by-standers believed, making any progress, though he himself said that he was engaged on magnificent works. So he completely forgot his attendance at court, and was himself forgotten.

"The marriage of the Duke with the Italian lady, was solemnly celebrated in the palace. The reigning Princess had, of course, accommodated herself to circumstances, and if she really loved her brother-in-law, had renounced a passion which was without legitimate object, and which never could have been gratified.

"Her unmarried sister once more seemed in high spirits, for her lover, Francesco, now re-appeared at court, more blooming and joyous than ever.

"The Duke, with his consent, was to inhabit a wing of the palace, which our Sovereign had ordered to be prepared for them. The Prince was, indeed, at that time, quite in his element. He was never visible, without a crowd of architects, painters, and upholsterers around him, turning over great books, and spreading out on the table plans, sketches, and outlines, which he partly devised himself; and which, among them all, turned out sufficiently incommodious and absurd.

"Neither the Duke nor his bride was allowed to see any of these arrangements, till on the eve of their marriage-day, when they were led by the Prince, in a long solemn procession, into the rooms, which were really decorated with great splendour; and on the evening of that day, the festivities were concluded by a ball, given in the great banquet *salle*, which was made to resemble a blooming garden.

"The nuptials were regularly solemnized on the following day; and all was conducted as usual on such occasions; till about midnight, when, from the Duke's wing of the house, there was heard a strange disturbance, of which the noise became always louder and louder, till it reached our Sovereign's ears, who, in great alarm, started from his bed.

"Having dressed himself hastily, and attended by his guards, he reached the distant corridor of his brother's apartments, just as the servants were lifting up the dead body of the Duke, who had been found murdered, and lying at the door of the bridal chamber!

"I make the narrative as short as possible. It is easier to conceive than describe the horror of the sovereign, the affliction of his consort, and the whole court.

"Of course, the first inquiries of the Prince were, how and by whom the murder had been committed? Watches were placed in all the corridors. How, therefore, was it possible, that an assassin could have got admittance, or how could he escape if he had once got in? All the private passages were searched, but in vain!

"The page who usually waited on the Duke, related that he had assisted his master to undress, who was for a long while agitated by fearful and undefinable apprehensions, and had walked up and down, greatly disquieted, in his dressing-room, then, carrying a large wax candle, he had accompanied him to the anti-room of the bridal chamber. The Duke had there taken the light out of his hand, and sent him away.

"Scarcely was he out of the anti-room, when he heard a hollow stifled cry, the noise of a heavy fall, and the rattling of the overthrown candlestick. He then ran directly back, and, by the gleam of a lamp, which still burned, beheld the Duke stretched, dying or dead, before the door of the bridal chamber, and near him he saw lying a small bloody stiletto. Thereupon he directly gave the alarm.

"On the other hand, the Italian Duchess gave a totally different, and quite inexplicable account. She said, that directly after her maids had left her, the Duke had hastily come into her room without a light, and had directly put out the other lights, so that the apartment was left in darkness. He had

remained with her a good half-hour, and had then risen and departed. According to her statement, it must have been only a few minutes after this that the murder was perpetrated.

"In short, people wore themselves out with conjectures as to who could have been the murderer, while not a single trace of him was to be obtained. But at this juncture, there stepped forward a certain waiting-maid of the Princess's unmarried sister, who had been accidentally and privately a witness of the scene between the Duke and the painter, when the portrait was destroyed. After hearing her opinion and evidence, no one doubted that the painter was the man who had found his way secretly into the palace, and become the murderer.

"Orders were of course given to arrest this man; but ere the waiting-maid's evidence was given, he had found time to escape, and not the slightest tidings of him were to be found.

CHAPTER XXIX.

"After this horrible tragedy," continued the physician, "the court remained sunk in the profoundest melancholy, which was shared by all the inhabitants of the town; and it was only Francesco, (whose attachment continued unabated to the unmarried Princess,) who still seemed cheerful, and, by sympathy, spread a gleam of satisfaction through the otherwise melancholy circles.

"I have stated only such facts as I can vouch for on my own knowledge. As to the conjectures and rumours that were now abroad, they were, of course, many and various, and, especially, a strange story was told of some individual, who, on the marriage night, had played, in the dark, the part of the bridegroom.

"Be that as it may, the Italian Countess afterwards retired to a distant castle belonging to our Prince; and as to her mode of life there, it was kept entirely secret, all that was made known being that her extreme grief had disgusted her with the world.

"Notwithstanding the influence of this horrible misfortune, Francesco's intercourse with the sister of our reigning Princess became always more and more intimate, and the friendship of this Sovereign towards him more publicly confirmed. The mystery, whatever it was, that hung over this man's birth and fortunes, had now been fully explained to him; and at last, after many consultations and entreaties, he agreed to a private marriage between Francesco and his sister-in-law. The former was to be raised to a high rank in the army, under another government, where our Prince had influence; and not till that event took place, was his marriage to be made public.

"The day of the solemnization arrived. The Prince and Princess, with two other confidential witnesses, of whom my predecessor was one, were the only persons present at this occasion. One page, who was also in the secret, kept watch at the chapel-door.

"The couple were kneeling before the altar. The Prince's confessor, a venerable old man, after an appropriate prayer and lecture, began the ceremony, when, to the astonishment of every one, Francesco grew suddenly pale as marble, staring at some object which as yet none but himself beheld. 'What would'st thou have?' cried he, in a deep hollow voice, and letting go his bride's hand.

"Following the direction of his looks, they now observed, leaning against a pillar of the church, in his Italian dress, with a dark violet-coloured mantle drawn closely round him—the painter! He continued to fix his dark glaring eyes on Francesco, who seemed transfixed with some inexplicable apprehension.

"The Princess nearly fainted, and every one but the priest was too much astonished to speak—'Why should the figure of this man affright you?' said he, to Francesco. 'It is true that his presence here was unexpected; but if your own conscience is at rest, wherefore should you tremble before him?'

"Then Francesco, who had till now kept this kneeling posture at the altar, started up, and, with a small stiletto in his hand, rushed towards the painter. But before he reached him, he himself fell, with a frightful cry, to the ground, and in the same moment the painter vanished behind the pillar.

"The marriage ceremony, of course, was thought of no more. All started up as from a dream, and ran to the help of Francesco, who had fainted, and lay on the ground as if dead. To avoid risk of publicity, the two witnesses, with the page's help, carried him into the Prince's apartments. When he recovered from his faint, he demanded vehemently that he should be conveyed to his own lodgings, and left there alone. To the Prince's questions as to his strange conduct in the church, he would make no answer whatever.

"On the following morning, Francesco had fled from the *residenz*, taking with him all the valuables which the favour of the late Duke, and of our Sovereign, had bestowed upon him. The latter used every possible means to unravel these mysteries, and, above all, to explain the ghostly apparition of the painter. The chapel had only two entrances, of which one led from the rooms of the palace to the seats near the high altar; the other, from the great corridor into the aisle of the chapel. This last entrance had been watched by the page, in order that no prying observer should gain admittance. The other

had been carefully closed, so that it remained inexplicable both how the painter appeared in, and vanished from, the chapel.

"Another circumstance very remarkable was noticed by the page. This person had been the confidential attendant of the late Duke, and he declared himself convinced, that the stiletto which Francesco had continued to grasp convulsively during his faint, was the same which he had seen lying by the body of his master on that fatal evening, and which had soon afterwards been unaccountably lost.

"Not long after Francesco's flight, news came of the Italian Duchess. On the very day when the former should have been married, she had been delivered of a son, and soon after her accouchement had died. The Prince deplored her untimely fate, though the circumstances of the bridal-night had weighed so heavily on her, that her future life must, of necessity, have been unhappy. Nor were there wanting individuals malicious enough to raise against her evil rumours and suspicions. Her son never appeared here, but was educated in distant countries, under the Italian title of Count Victorin.

"The Princess—I mean the sister-in-law of our Sovereign—being reduced to utter despair by these horrid events following like links of a chain so closely on one another, determined on devoting the rest of her life to the cloister. She is, as you already know, Abbess of the Cistercian Convent at Kreuzberg.

"But, between these adventures which happened in our court, there has lately been traced a wonderful, and almost supernatural coincidence, with others which occurred very lately at the castle of the Baron von F——, in the Thuringian mountains, and by which his house was thrown precisely into the same state of distraction and misery under which ours had suffered. You must know that the Abbess, who had been moved with the distress of a poor woman with a child in her arms, who came to her from a pilgrimage to the Convent of the Lime-Tree"—

Here the entrance of a visitor put an end to the physician's narrative; and hastily taking my leave, I succeeded tolerably well in concealing the tempest of emotions which now raged within me.

Scarcely a doubt remained on my mind that Francesco had been my father. He had murdered the Duke with the identical stiletto with which, in self-defence, I had afterwards killed Hermogen! Here, then, was the origin of that hereditary guilt, of which the darkening clouds hung like a curse upon my existence, and which it should have been my earnest endeavour to expiate, by a life of voluntary suffering, of penance, and exemplary piety.

Hence, therefore, I resolved instantly to follow the Prior's injunctions, and betake myself to Italy; thus breaking out at once from that dangerous circle into which I had been seduced by the malicious powers of darkness.

On that very evening, however, I had been engaged to a party at court, and went accordingly. The assembly was as numerous and varied as that which I have described on a former occasion; but, through them all, there prevailed *one only* subject of conversation, viz. the extraordinary beauty of a young lady who had arrived only the day preceding at our court, and had been appointed one of the maids of honour to the Princess.

At last the folding-doors were thrown open, the Princess, as usual, stepped in, but not with her usual attendant. The stranger was with her, and in that stranger I recognized at once—AURELIA!!

END OF VOLUME FIRST.

[1] Balcony or Platform.

[2] Balcony.

[3] Hunting-song.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE DEVIL'S
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