

THE DIAMOND NECKLACE,

OR

THE ISLAND RECLUSE:

A TALE

Of Interesting Incidents and Adventures,
connected with the Life of a Young
Nobleman, in pursuit of his Birth-
Place and Parentage.

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THE DIAMOND NECKLACE,

OR THE

ISLAND RECLUSE.*

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"The heart beats joyously in spring,  
When earth and all its scenes are new;  
And hope is out upon the wing,  
While all is rapture to the view."

### CHAPTER I.

It was early in the summer of 1847—, that with my companion, I left the din and dust of our city home for a journey into the fresh, balmy and invigorating country.

Our course for many miles, lay along the rough and rocky boundary of the broad Atlantic, where, on either hand, new and beautiful scenes, were ever unfolding to our view, like a grand panorama of all that was picturesque and sublime.

Far to the north, towered the grey misty mountains, in lofty grandeur, until they seemed to rend asunder the massive clouds that rolled upward and onward, like a host of giant warriors, in the might of their steel clad armour.

On the right, the Atlantic spread out its silver sheen as far as the eye could penetrate, upon which the sun-light sparkled and smiled through the feathery spray, until it seemed a vast plain of polished

silver, inlaid with gems and precious stones of rare and beautiful magnificence. Then the grand old forests would intervene, that had withstood the blasts of centuries; where the creeping vine and flowering shrubs interlaced their pliant stems, to deck the old oaks' knarled and fretted trunks; while from their leafless branches hung suspended gorgeous festoons of mosses, which the hand of time and nature had woven there.

Nature's own sweet orchestra was chanting her richest strains; awakening to life and cheerfulness the dark shadowy vistas of the old forest, and mingling harmoniously with the more sober tones of the ocean wave.

Smiling hills, fertile vales, fragrant shrubs and bursting flowers; music and sunlight cheered us on every hand.

Early twilight was throwing around us

her gossamer drapery, as we, after several days' journey, weariedly wended our way through the beautiful and romantic little shore-town of F—, where we unexpectedly met a friend of other days, who gave us a cheerful and cordial welcome to his pleasant and elegant home, where the remainder of the evening was spent in recalling the happy scenes of our halcyon school-days, and the pleasant associations of later life.

Early the following morning we expressed our intention of resuming our journey. "But," said our friend B—, "You must not take your departure until you have visited some of our pleasant localities; or explored some of our pleasant little Islands, and taken an excursion over the sparkling waters of this smooth broad Bay, which seems so smilingly to invite you—oh, yes; you must visit Glenisle; it is so beautiful, with its glens and grottos, cascades and coves; birds and flowers; with its hard smooth beach, where the white feathery spray, mingles with shells of every hue and form; and over all, the sunlight throws such a magical web of enchantment. Oh! it is so beautiful, I call it the fairies' retreat."

"And is it not," I enquired, "inhabited, save only by fairies and sea-nymphs?"

"Oh, yes; there are several wealthy families, residing there, a few wreckers, and an old hermit."

"A hermit?" I exclaimed, delighted with the intelligence; (for I had never seen a hermit); "then I will accompany you to Glenisle, for, perhaps, I may learn his history, and get a subject for a fine story."

"And perhaps you may not," answered our friend, "for he is as crusty and impenetrable as the granite hills of our own sister State. Many have visited him from curiosity, and have returned home none the wiser, so far his history was concerned."

"Nevertheless," I answered, "I will visit Glenisle, for his venerable locks, his long grey beard, his woe-begone visage and tattered garments would be a rich subject for an artist's pencil; why not for an author's pen?"

"But he never allows any one to enter his domicile; he guards that as sacredly as a miser does his chest of gold; moreover, it is situated in a remote and obscure part of the Island, overlooking a fearfully rocky coast; where many a brave heart has found a watery grave."

We were soon, however, equipped for the excursion. The broad blue Bay was as calm as the rest of a sleeping infant; not a ripple marred its surface, save only, where the boatmen's heavy oars sent the dancing spray to play wild freaks of coquetry amongst the wooing sunbeams.

No sound broke the hushed tranquility of the scene, but the monotonous dash of the oar, and the low hum of the boatmen as they chanted their favorite boat-song. A charm was o'er the sea; around us, above us: and the dreamy revery into which I had fallen, was only broken by the violent concussion of the boat against the piers of our opposite landing.

The gentlemen of our party were intent on a fishing excursion; for which they made immediate preparations, while I was kindly conducted by my lady friend to the only Inn, or rather place of entertainment on the Island; where we received a hearty welcome; particularly, Mrs. B—, who, our hostess informed, had come just in time to be of invaluable service to her, as a large party had unexpectedly arrived from the city; and, in consequence of the illness of her domestic, she was unavoidably without assistance."

Mrs. B— readily and cheerfully tendered her assistance; for they had been, for years, on terms of the most intimate friendship. "And while you are performing the part of the good Samaritan here," said I, addressing Mrs. B—, "I will spend a few hours in reconnoitering your charming little Isle." To which, she expressed many fears, on having me go unattended, telling me to wait until the gentlemen returned to accompany me. "I have no fears," I answered; "while my faithful watch-dog is by my side. But, if I do lose myself, you will probably find me somewhere on the Island, dreaming, perhaps, in some fairy's retreat; or, within the old Hermit's sanctum."

On reaching the shore, I saw, in the distance, the little fishing craft, just turning around a point of land which jutted out into the Bay, and making directly for the open sea.

In the same direction a noble bluff attracted my vision, crowned with the dark foliage of graceful trees; and thither I wended my way. On reaching its summit, which was lofty and grand, my eyes admiringly rested on a scenery more picturesque and sublime than the imagination,

in its most fanciful colorings had ever conceived.

There, lay at my feet the calm waters of the Bay, basking in the glorious effulgence of the summer sun. Here and there, the white sails fluttered, and sped over the smooth surface, all gracefully, as a bird on the wing. There too, lay the grand old ocean, like a giant in repose; where the heavy ships rocked on its heaving bosom, like a tiny feather, borne along by the whispering zephyr.

There, toward the rugged cliffs of granite, whitened and bleached by the dashing spray of centuries, upon whose lofty brow of adamant seemed written, "Thus far shalt thou come, and no farther."

A few paces in advance of where I had been standing, and, which before had been unobserved, a small cemetery was enclosed, save only, where time had crumbled the grey mouldering walls; for on spelling out the almost illegible inscriptions, I found that many of them had been erected a century ago. Where the damp rank grass had mingled with the moss and mould, until they had despoiled the rough rude carving of much of its ancient beauty. It seemed a fit receptacle for the peaceful dead; and my thoughts assumed a more saddened train from the elaborate gloom of the dark heavy foliage, that hung over those ancient graves, like a mourning shroud.

I involuntarily stopped beside an humble slab, upon which was simply inscribed,—"A stranger's grave;" and my saddened feelings found relief in a gush of tears. For it vividly brought to mind the fate of our own valued ones—the loved and cherished brothers, who were sleeping thus, beneath a stranger's soil; where no sister's tears had ever fallen to their sacred memory.

The slight rustling of the shrubbery, caused me to turn in the direction from whence it proceeded. But the object that met my vision sent the warm blood from my cheek and brow, tardily, and chilled through every vein. I quickly started to my feet as that haggard form, with unshorn locks, and beard, white as the fleecy snow, approached me. For fear, at that moment, was paramount to every other emotion.

"Fear not lady," he said, in a low tremulous voice, as if divining my thoughts, "I am no spectre, as you may suppose, from those ancient graves; for I have not

yet thrown off this mortal coil; but daily wander thither, invited by the sublime beauty and tranquility of the scene, for contemplation. Your tears called forth my sympathy; for I am never deaf to sorrow."

"Have you friends mouldering beneath these silent shades?"

"I have not, sir," I answered; "I am a stranger here; and it is only by accident that I have visited this spot, consecrated to the silent dead."

"Then," he continued, "you have drank from the cup of sorrow?"

"Aye, deeply, deeply, and many of that household band, unbroken in my childhood, are sleeping thus," I answered, pointing to the stranger's grave. "For-saken and alone." "No matter," he said, "where the casket is broken; if we but possess again the gem it contained."

"Mine too, has been a life of sorrow. The sport of fate, dark, mysterious and unfathomable. They call me the Hermit, but when heart answers to heart, and soul to soul, I mingle with my fellow men."

Where sorrow, misfortune, or cries of distress arrest my ear; my heart gushes with sympathy, and my hand is ever extended in kindness. But when the eyes of curiosity, pride, or scorn are peering upon me, I am the Recluse of Glenisle.

Not from choice, I will own, for I have loved the world; or rather, the things that pertain to it. Aye, and love them yet, with almost idolatrous devotion.

But the winds and the waves, the cunning and vicious devices of men; the smiles or frowns of fate; or a dark mysterious Providence has placed me here; I have only awaited their bidding to return."

"Singular old man;" I mentally exclaimed, as I glanced fearfully towards him. But his dark and almost painfully piercing eye savoured not of insanity, for the expression was lofty, animated and highly intelligent, as if lit up by the fires of youth, contrasting strangely with the white flowing locks and venerable beard; which consealed with such pleasing grace, the furrows of time and sorrow upon his haggard brow.

"There," he continued, pointing to an humble grave, upon which a carefully cultivated moss rose tree was in full bloom; "there, for many long years, I have daily knelt, and prayed, and wept. Believing

that beneath that turf, the beautiful idol of my heart was mouldering."

"Ah," he said, as I anxiously bent forward in a listening attitude, while my eye, lighted up with expectancy, "you would learn my history; but that, Madam, is not yet completed. Nevertheless, I will detail to you some of the events of the past; and Heaven alone knows what the future has in store for me."

## CHAPTER II.

"'Tis but a dream! 'tis but a dream! yet one I would not change

For any bright reality, within this wide world's range,  
Except its own — and that to know — I should be too much blest.

A silent voice still whispers me — Oh! Heaven's decrees are best!"

I was born; ah! I cannot tell you where I was born. But I have a faint recollection of a magnificent castle, with marble floors and polished mirror ceilings; of halls, where sculptor and art had placed their choicest works, until they seemed hung with living, breathing images, divinely and transcendently beautiful.

A youthful looking gentleman, with noble mien, often led me through those galleries of art and beauty, so enchanting to my childish fancy, accompanied by a mild gentle lady, with a graceful sylph-like form, almost ethereal, and a face upon which it seemed an angel had placed its signet. They called me their child, their cherished idol, as they fondly caressed me with parental tenderness.

One day, I recollect, — ah! I shall never forget that day, — my father presented my mother with a magnificent diamond necklace. I was already dressed for a stroll in the pleasure grounds and park with my nurse; but the dazzling brilliancy of that diamond chain tempted me so powerfully, that I desired my mother to twine it around my neck until I returned. But she did not seem inclined to gratify my wishes, until my tears and caresses, with the intercession of my father, prevailed; and with many admonitions to the nurse for my safety, she gave me the parting caress.

We wandered through the broad avenues, where gorgeous flowers were smiling in the sunlight, and nodding gracefully to

the gentle zephyrs, which sighed around us, laden with the sweet fragrance they had borrowed from shrubs and flowers of aromatic beauty.

Soon, we had reached the border of the grand old park, where a clear crystal fountain sent its sparkling jets above us, dancing in the sunlight, until its pearly drops rivalled, in matchless brilliancy, the glittering diamonds my childish tears had won.

So charmed and delighted was I with the magnificent scene before me, that I knew not that my nurse had carelessly wandered away, until a rough hand was laid upon me, and I felt myself raised from my seat, and borne along with frightful rapidity, through the dark, shadowy windings of the gloomy park.

I dared not struggle to free myself, for the dark visage and fierce expression of her, within whose grasp I was firmly held, deprived me of strength and utterance, and I tremblingly buried my face within the folds of my rich and jewelled drapery. Many long, weary days I was carried through gloomy forests and stealthy covert. One dark, stormy night, they stopped for rest. It was the first they had dared to take since I had become their captive, and it was within the silent depths of a vast wilderness, where the foot of man had never before left its impress; far, far away from where my father's castle towered in lofty grandeur to the skies.

Here that gipsy band held a long consultation, and after depriving me of the diamond chain, which I struggled hard to retain, they laid me upon a hard, rough couch for repose, telling me that with the morrow's sun, they should resume their weary march.

At early dawn, I was awakened from a profound slumber, by the wild, noisy mirth of that strolling band, and requested to survey myself in a glass which they held before me; but I quickly turned away in horror and disgust, from the object that met my sight, and buried my face in the rags that had served for my pillow, and wept as though my little heart would burst with grief and indignation.

They had completely changed my whole appearance, and so successful had been their art, that my own parents would never have recognized their delicate flaxen-haired boy, in the dark, sooty, disfigured visage that met my startled vision.

I besought them with childish artlessness to take me back to my parents, telling them that my father would give them many, very many beautiful things, if they would give him back his boy.

But they answered, scornfully, that we were many leagues from my father's castle, and the proud Earl of Lavarre would never again behold the noble heir of his vast domains. And many other things they said which I have forgotten, and many more which I could not understand, as they struck their tents, and took up their line of march through gloomy forests and dark ravines, where the rays of the glorious sunlight rarely ever penetrated, to light the dismal scene.

One evening, after a long and fatiguing journey, and many months from the time that they took me from my father's crystal fountain, a contention arose between them concerning the diamond chain, of which my gipsy mother claimed herself the sole possessor, which neither their fawning flatteries, nor menacing threats, would cause her to relinquish, and for which she and myself were rudely ejected from that hateful group.

We crossed the deep and broad waters, and landed on the American shore, in a large, beautiful city, where for many days she begged from the strangers' door, to satisfy the cravings of want and hunger.

One dark winter evening, when the cold blasts of frozen sleet swept rudely by, chilled and benumbed by hunger and exposure, we sought the friendly enclosure of a rich man's door, to shield us from the ruthless blasts of winter.

On the cold marble step that gipsy wanderer seated herself, and covered me with the scanty garments that shrouded her form, and wept. Aye, she wept as I had never seen her weep, before, and hushed my low, feeble moanings for food, until at last, I fell into a sweet and quiet slumber. On the following morning, I was aroused from a sweet, dreamy repose, by a soft, musical voice, and on drowsily opening my eyes, saw a form of almost surpassing loveliness bending over me, while the pearly tear drops sparkled in her eyes, falling like glittering diamonds upon the frozen sleet that crested the marble stone upon which I was reclining.

I looked wildly and anxiously around me, but she that had screened me from the cold winter's blast was not there. She had gone, I knew not whither.

My eyes were filled with the gushings of sorrow, and my little heart throbbing with pain of distress, when a servant who had been summoned made his appearance, and carried me within the warm, congenial apartments of a rich man's home.

Here I was divested of the rags and filth which had served for my clothing, and dressed in garments of a soft and beautiful texture, and when again that kind and gentle lady beheld me, her eyes beamed with tenderness, and her delicate arms embraced me with almost maternal affection.

But I wept many a day for my dark eyed gipsy mother, and wondered if she would not again return to claim me; for I had learned to love her, as if she had in reality been the mother of my life and being.

Years flew happily by, within that home of affluence, that had sheltered me, a poor, friendless boy, from the griping hand of hunger and starvation, and the pitiless blasts of winter. And the past was forgotten, or remembered only as a dream of my childish fancy. But before I had arrived at maturity, my kind guardian had gently passed away to the spirit world, leaving me a handsome competency, free from any claim or cumbrance of legal heirship.

## CHAPTER III.

"Surely as drop the sands of time,  
Misfortunes will come,  
And disappointment, and purifying trial."

AGAIN I became a wanderer, but not the poor, friendless outcast, the filthy, starving wanderer of other days, but a wanderer in high life, where servants came at the bidding, and masters bowed obsequiously to wait my pleasure.

The halls of wealth and grandeur were thrown open for my reception, and from courts and palaces I was not ejected. My passport was wealth, a never failing sesame to pride and royalty.

I was not, in reality, in possession of great wealth; but I had assumed its appearance, and taken this course in order to find my parents, if, indeed, the recollection of the past were not a dream of wild and fanciful imagery; and I felt that they

were not so, for they had grown with my growth; and so vividly did the scene of my childhood, with the loved ones that so fondly smiled upon and caressed me, open to my glowing vision, that I felt that I should not be deceived, if Providence should again direct me to their locality.

And for that purpose I visited many portions of Europe, its lordly halls and towering palaces. I have sailed over the noble Thames, where castle and dome on either hand, rose loftily and frowningly above me.

I have visited the Lowlands and the Highlands of Scotland, have traversed all wearily its bonna Burns, and rested on the banks of the winding Dee and silvery Don. I have climbed the summit of Lammermuir, and quaffed the nectarine of its odorous zephyrs.

I have wandered beneath the smiling skies of Italy, where the Mediterranean's wave laves the spicy, vine-clad shore. I have threaded the course of the beautiful Arno, and laved my burning brow in the flowing Tiber's wave, and sat dreamily beneath its golden moonlight, when castle and cottage, forest and glens, rivers and lakes, seemed bathed in a flood of golden lava, listening to the enchanting melodies of the Gondoliers as they rested upon their oars, until the present was forgotten, and I was a child again at my father's fountain, toying with the diamond chain that sparkled midst the folds of my jeweled drapery.

But in all my travels I could never find any trace of my noble parentage. No one had ever heard of the Earl of Lavarre, or his princely castle.

I, therefore, reluctantly abandoned my fruitless search as an idle dream, a wild fanciful romance of childhood, and came to the determination to return again to the land of my adoption, with the conviction that the dark-eyed wandering gipsy, who deserted me on that cold winter's morning, was the mother of my being, as well as the author of my sad misfortune.

One evening I had travelled far away from the beautiful city of Florence in a thoughtful mood, deliberating on my best future course to pursue, noticing neither time nor the distance I had travelled, when I suddenly found myself overtaken by night-fall in the midst of a dense forest, which, for many years, had been infested by a band of bold and daring Banditti.

I was just reigning in my noble steed

to retrace my homeward course, when the rumbling of carriage wheels rapidly approaching, arrested my ear and caused me to look in the direction from whence it proceeded. Through the overhanging branches where the moonbeams fitfully penetrated, I could discern, not far in the distance, an elegant coach and horses richly caparisoned.

I was congratulating myself on my good fortune, in having a companion through the wild dense forest, when the sharp click of pistols reverberated through its gloomy shadows, immediately followed by a tall athletic form from his stealthy covert, whose sinewy arm grappled, with giant strength, the bridles of the frightened horses, and with a stentorian voice, demanded the money, or life of those benighted travellers.

In a moment I comprehended all; and as quick as thought hurried the spurs deep into the flanks of my noble steed and flew to the rescue. But before I had arrived another report of his murderous weapon resounded through the gloom of night, followed by a deep groan, and the wild pleadings of despair from the soft silvery tones of a female voice.

"Stand, coward," I cried, as I reached the scene of action, laying one hand heavily upon the shoulders of that daring outlaw, while with the other, I held my well-poised pistol over the nodding plume.

"Stand coward; who art thou that darrest intercept the peaceful progress of benighted travellers." As I spoke he turned quickly towards me, and confronting me with a look of contempt and scornful rage, he answered,

"I am Biraldo, the Banditti's Chieftain; and many a braver heart than yours has quailed beneath the weight of my sinewy arm."

As he spoke he raised his glittering sword with a haughty menace, above my head.

"Stay," I reiterated, as I drew my polished steel from its place of safety.—"Stay, Brigand Chieftain; I will teach thee that my own good arm has power to wield a weapon as well as thine own,"—and I parried successfully his well aimed thrust, and drove him with infuriated rage at bay.

At this defeat he became fearfully infuriated, while I seemed transformed into the image of a sporting tiger.

Thrust after thrust was given on either

side, and for a while the contest seemed equally sustained. But in parrying a blow, which was aimed directly at my heart, my own good sword gave him a thrust which sent him reeling to the ground.

"Curses upon thee, thou son of a plebeian race," he muttered, "know that thy doom is sure. Brave men await the bidding of their master, and his death will be fearfully revenged." He raised a whistle to his lips and was in the act of sounding it, when, with the quickness of thought, I sprang forward and wrenched it from his grasp.

Foiled in his last expectation, and incited to desperation, he sprang like a maddened demon from the bloody turf,—but a sudden faintness overpowered him, and he fell back a hideous corpse at my feet.—For a moment I bent tremblingly over him, but life was already extinct; the mighty heavings of that dauntless heart laid still and silent in the cold embrace of death.

A stifled sob from the carriage, aroused me from the fearful stupor into which I had fallen, and I hastily proceeded to the scene of suffering and sorrow.

The moon was shining out all radiantly beautiful from a clear overarching sky, displaying the form and figure of a young girl of angelic loveliness, with a cheek and brow pale as marble, upon which innocence sat enthroned in her beautiful attire, contrasting strangely with the fearful, loathsome scene I had just witnessed.

She seemed like a guardian angel, as she bent tearfully and droopingly over the senseless form of an aged gentleman, upon whose brow was the palor and semblance of death.

As a glimpse of my shadow crossed her vision she uttered a thrilling prayer for mercy, pointing pleadingly and disparagingly to the bleeding senseless form which she was vainly striving to support.

"Fear me not, lady," I said in a soothing voice. Providence has sent me to your assistance, and he who would have wantonly deprived you of life, lies himself a bleeding, mangled corpse upon yonder turf."

"God be praised," she said, as she reverently raised her beautiful eyes to Heaven, "and He will surely reward the generous deeds of your valiant arm. But I fear he has deprived my dear and only parent of his precious life; his wound bleeds profusely, and if aid is not imme-

diately procured, Heaven alone knows what may be the result. I have been lying in a swoon ever since the first encounter, and you, my dear, dear father," she said, pressing her white lips upon his pallid brow, "you have been passing unattended to the spirit world."

"Fly, fly Marcus," she continued, as if inspired by a sudden thought, to the coachman; who having secreted himself, in the first encounter, just then made his appearance, "speed thee to my father's villa, to Oswald Hall; the distance is not great after we leave this infested forest. Speed thee, Marcus," she reiterated, for he stood like a senseless idiot, gazing on the frightful scene before him.

"Speed thee, Marcus, or those forest hounds will scent the blood of their master, and revenge his death upon us with four-fold cruelty. Can nothing be done for my father?" she anxiously enquired, as I bent over him, vainly endeavoring to staunch the profusion of blood which flowed from a deep hideous wound.

"Not much, I fear lady," I answered, "until a surgical operation is performed to extract the ball. It is a frightful wound, and God grant it may not prove fatal; we will, at least, hope for the best."

"Take courage lady, I said; "we have cleared the forest, and shall soon be at Oswald Hall?" For I remembered having passed a grand old baronial seat, on my way to the forest, and I doubted not it was the same. Another half hour's ride of rapid driving, brought us to the Villa; where surgical aid was immediately procured, and the wound skilfully dressed.

But there he lay, through the long silent vigils of the night; pale, senseless and still; as though death had already placed his signet upon his heart and brow. I was bending over him, when the first rays of the morning's sunlight, stole softly through the crimsoned oriel windows, that lighted the grand old baronial apartment; and as their shadows fell upon the richly embroidered velvet that draped his gorgeous couch, I felt a slight tremulous motion of his feeble pulse; and as the heavy lids, slightly parted from his pallid cheek; he whispered, scarcely audible: "Fransolina, beloved daughter; where art thou?"

Fransolina was kneeling, bathed in tears, by his bedside. I gently placed her hand in that of her parent, and whispered, "she is safe, she still lives to nurse and comfort you."



Fransolina pressed her cheek, pale as the parian marble to that of her father's, and breathed softly into his ear words of sweet, holy and affectionate encouragement.

A smile of paternal love and thankfulness overspread his calm features; and he sank into a sweet, gentle and quiet slumber.

#### CHAPTER IV.

"When love fails to give life, it consumes its possessor,  
Robed in humility, it knows not gold.

True love is a fever,  
Which knows no antidote but death;  
Say not that it is transitory,—for  
God himself is Love.

It gloweth in eternal realms,  
Its lyre breathes out a music that can never die."

FRANSOLINA, pale as a drooping lily, wearily bent her head far down upon the magnificent couch where her father was gently reposing; and the long rich masses of dark brown hair fell negligently from her pale smooth brow, mingling witchingly with the heavy fringes and tassels of gold and silver which glittered 'mongst the deep heavy folds of the rich drapery, until it seemed to my young, ardent and glowing imagination, a place of enchantment,—and she the peerless fairy queen, in her robes of royalty, with the crown regal sparkling with gems and diamonds upon her pure and matchless brow.

Hour after hour, I watched the quiet repose of the invalid father as a fond mother guards the peaceful slumbers of her only child. When I looked upon the peerless and almost ethereal beauty of his cherished daughter, her pure lips parted with a heavenly smile, and the long drooping lashes resting heavily upon her soft pale cheek, gemmed with the tears of hope and love, my eyes grew dim with admiration, and my heart throbbed with emotions strange and perplexing.

A love, deep, inspiring and holy, pervaded my heart and soul, for the fair unconscious being before me, in all the modest purity and matchless grace of innocence and youth. It was a rash, wild passion; and the winds that sighed audibly through the frowning battlements above me seemed to whisper ominously in my ear. But they were soon forgotten, or expelled from my throbbing heart, as I looked upon that

beautiful form which seemed itself an emanation of divinity.

I felt that I could hazard a thousand lives, could I but restore to her the life of her venerable parent; could I but restore to that angel of purity and loveliness, the gushings of hope and joy as in other days. If she was matchless in the beauty of her pensive sadness, what must she be when her large beautiful eyes were lighted up with the bright rays of innocent joy, and her heart gushing from the fulness of youthful emotions.

And, oh, could I but call that combination of all that was beautiful my own; could I but press her to my throbbing heart and feel the answering echo of her own truth-loving heart answering to mine. But no;—that cannot be. A barrier is raised high above us which neither love, nor despair can level.

She, within whose veins the blood of royalty is freely coursing, and upon whose fair brow has been placed its regal title; myself the son of mystery, or, perhaps, the unholy offspring of a gipsy mother. The thought was maddening. My soul was burning as though the scorching lava of a thousand eruptions had entered it. I paced despairingly the carpeted floor of titled royalty, whose soft, yielding texture scarcely sent back the sound of my impatient footsteps.

I resolved; aye vowed, from the depths of my rent and anguished heart to pursue my travels, and if I was the son of aught but the hated gipsy race; if my father, my mother, their ancestry, or posterity lived, I would search them out, if I traversed the broad expanse of the universe. I sent up a mental, though heartfelt prayer to Heaven's throne, that my efforts might be speedily accomplished and surely rewarded.

A low murmur from the Baron aroused me from my reverie. I hastened to his bedside, and pressed to his parched and burning lips a goblet of wine and water, which greatly revived him.

He looked wildly around him, enquired for his daughter, and after surveying me steadily for a moment, enquired,—“To whom am I indebted for this kind attention?”

But before I could answer, Fransolina, who had been aroused by her father's voice, pressed her lips gently to his, and while tears of joy and thankfulness gushed forth from her beaming eyes, answered,

“To our preserver, and next to high Heaven our thankfulness is due to him for the timely aid of his valiant arm, and our miraculous escape from the Banditt's power in the lone forest.”

“But you forget, Fransolina, in your excess of joy, that he deserves greater and more substantial remuneration than merely the heart and lip's empty tribute of gratitude.”

“Far be it from me, most noble sir,” I answered, “to accept the least remuneration for discharging my duty to a fellow-man, and saving, through the God in whom I trust, the lives of innocent beings, and of ridding the world of one who was obnoxious and hateful to the race of men. I am amply rewarded for my weak services, in seeing you thus rapidly recovering from the effects of your wound, and beholding the light of joy and gladness illuminating the fair brow of purity and innocence.”

“Will you favor me with your name, sir,” asked the Baron, “that I may better know to whom I am so gratefully indebted.”

“My name, sir Baron, is Frederic Harclay, or rather,” I continued hesitatingly, “it is the name my adopted father bestowed upon me.”

“Then,” continued the Baron, “you are an orphan.”

“And that I cannot answer you correctly, sir; there is a mystery about my birth and parentage, which I have never been able to solve.”

“Ha!” said the Baron, half musingly, as his keen eye rested enquiringly upon me. But a glance told him that he had touched on a painful subject,—and then as if wishing to change the subject, so painful to my feelings, he enquired my present pursuit, and how it happened that I so providentially saved them from the Banditt's power.

I answered him, “that I was travelling, and the beauty of the evening had invited me forth from the city, to a ride in the pleasant country; and having given my mind to the sweet, soothing inspirations, which surrounded me, I heeded not the distance until I found myself far advanced in the gloomy forest, with the dark shadows of evening closing rapidly around me.

I had just reined in my steed to return, when the sound of your carriage wheels attracted my attention, quickly followed by the report of a pistol. I felt the danger of your situation, and resolved, in the

strength of Heaven, to assist you, or die in the endeavor.”

“And Heaven did assist you,” said the Baron, “and may it reward you more effectually than the wealth or power of man can do. But,” he continued, “you said you were travelling,—may I ask for what purpose?”

“Partially for pleasure, sir,” I answered. “But I have an object in view.”

“Then,” he continued, his noble brow lighting up with true benevolence, “I may yet hope to be of service to you. But for the present it is my wish that you make Oswald Hall your home and residence.—Remain with me, kind sir, until I recover from this unfortunate disaster, or, if the Lord wills it, until I go to rest with my noble ancestors. This old baronial seat abounds with works of curiosity and art, where you will find much to amuse and divert your mind from the dreariness which ever attends the dull monotony of an invalid's chamber.

I am weary now,” he continued, languidly, as he turned restlessly upon his pillow, “and will rest awhile,—but remember, sir, it is my wish that you remain at the castle. No hand like yours, and that of my loved Fransolina's can so gently smooth my pillow, or sooth the dreariness of these restless hours. Fransolina, daughter mine, go to the cabinet and bring from thence my sketch book for our friend's perusal; it may serve to while away pleasantly the otherwise dull hours of my repose.”

“But you forget, my dear father,” said Fransolina, “or rather you do not know that he has taken neither refreshment nor repose since he entered the castle, and it is now past mid-day.”

“Is it possible,” enquired the baron, with deep emotions of gratitude. “Noble sir,” he continued, pressing my hand warmly within his feeble grasp, “the goodness of your generous and virtuous heart far surpasses the valor of your dauntless arm. Go Fransolina,” he said, again addressing his daughter, “order an attendant to direct him immediately to the chamber adjoining my own. Thither let the choicest refreshments be carried and there let him find a sweet and tranquil repose. Ah, my children you both need repose,—leave me with an attendant and seek weary nature's sweet restorer.”

“Oh, no!” quickly responded Fransolina, her voice soft and tremulous with

emotion, "I have already enjoyed several hours of undisturbed repose, while our friend has kept his lonely vigils by your bedside; I would in my turn enjoy the felicity of administering to the necessities of a loved and only parent."

"Ah!" said the baron, his eyes dim with the emotions that welled up from his gushing heart. "God must, He will reward the filial devotion, the disinterested love you have manifested, my children; and may He, in rewarding that devotion, restore me to health to complete your happiness."

## CHAPTER V.

"But shall not hearts united here,  
In strongest ties of love,  
Still meet when all life's ills shall close,  
In brighter worlds above."

For several weeks the baron seemed steadily and surely recovering, so much so that at the expiration of that time, he was able, with the assistance of my arm, to take daily turns on the balcony; and often he would repair with me to the pleasant grounds which adorned his magnificent castle.

But when the autumn winds came revelling through the rich deep foliage of the grand old park, changing its sombre hue to the rich dyes of the gilded rainbow, and touching here and there, all so delicately the deeply blushing flowers that drooped, all pale and withered, upon the parent stem,—then the baron sought no more the trellaced walks of his fragrant grounds.

For a more deadly palor was on his cheek, save only when the hectic flush mantled it with fearful brilliancy. Consumption was there, for the low hollow cough told the fearful tale.

One day, after I had been reading to him for several hours, he requested me to close the book and take a seat by his side. He pressed my hand tenderly as I took the proffered seat, and said, with a look full of undisguised sympathy,

"Young friend, I have taken a strange and uncontrollable interest in your welfare; an interest which a tender father might proudly cherish for an only son.—And yet, there is a mystery about you which I would have you unravel, if it would not cause you too much pain. Be-

lieve me, sir, it is not from motives of mere curiosity that I ask this; but I would have you confide in me as though I were indeed your father and rightful adviser.—You recollect our conversation the morning after my misfortune; you hinted the uncertainty of your parentage, and have ever since then studiously avoided any approach to it. You have, I will own, excited my curiosity, but I have more powerful and weighty reasons for learning your history.

I have wealth at my command, and my influence is extensive; I may do much for you. Will you unreservedly give me the full and true history of your life, from your earliest recollection until the present time?"

The hot blood rushed to my temples,—I stammered and hesitated, for I did not wish to deprive myself of the good opinion the baron had manifested towards me, and I feared I should do so were I to trace back my lineage to a noble house.

It was the height of presumption, absurdity and folly; for as yet I had never been able to find the least trace of the Earl of Lavarre, or his noble estate. But a look full of meaning from the baron, aroused me from my reflections, and I answered,

"Most noble sir, my hesitation has not been from a desire to withhold from you my confidence, my entire confidence, for you have a just and perfect right to claim it. I will withhold nothing from you in relation to the mysterious events of my past life, although you may deem them the mere fabrications of fancy, the effects of presumption, absurdity, or any thing else you please. But one thing I ask of you, that you will hear me patiently to the conclusion; that you will not withdraw from me the good opinion with which you have been pleased to honor me, nor condemn me as an imposter, as one seeking for the favors and honors of nobility, devoid of legal pretensions.

It is to you alone that I unfold the mysteries of my life, and in the sacred depository of your own heart I pray they may ever remain."

"And upon my sacred honor they shall," answered the baron, "unless I can benefit you by a disclosure."

For a few moments after I had brought my story to a conclusion, the baron sat in deep thought. At length he said with an air of cheerfulness,

"My young friend, I think your story a very plausible one and not the mere fabrication of childish fancy; that I think would have been impossible, or not very probable, surrounded as you were by only the lower grades of humanity.

Had it not been a reality you never could have so accurately fancied and described the gorgeous interior of a lordly castle, its galleries of art, its cabinets of curiosities, its noble halls, its spacious apartments, its parks and fountains.

Believe me, sir, there was artifice deep and revengeful at the bottom, in which I should think the old nurse with whom you were intrusted, was deeply complicated.—But I think there is a probability of your being mistaken in the name of your father, the Earl, you being so very young at the time of your capture.

I have never been familiar with that name, and I have known many lords and nobles; but the scenery you have described seems to me like a half forgotten dream. Ah! I do recollect," he continued, after a moment's silence, "while travelling some few years since in the western part of Scotland, of visiting an old castle, which was then, and had been for several years, unoccupied by the master. But think you that you would recognize the scenes of your childhood, if Providence should ever again direct you to their locality?"

"Indeed, sir," I answered, "I think I should. They seem so indelibly stamped upon my memory, that I could not be mistaken. Oh! that I could once more behold them; that I could once more embrace the true authors of my existence were they of humble or noble birth,—I could fall down and worship them with the deepest and holiest veneration and love."

"And Heaven grant that you may again behold them," answered the baron. "My purse is at your disposal whenever you choose to leave Oswald Hall. But I request, as a favor, that you will remain with me a little longer. My health and strength is rapidly declining, and I have a foreboding that my time is short. You shall lose nothing by the delay, for I will make ample amends for your generosity and kindness."

"Noble sir," I answered, "I demand no recompense; I am already under a thousand obligations to you for the interest you have taken in my welfare, which I can never repay, save only by a life devoted to your will and pleasure. That, sir, is

yours with the truthful devotion of my heart; talk not to me of recompense when I alone am the debtor."

"Your heart is noble," answered the baron, "and I prize its devotion, and may God reward you as you deserve, and restore to you again the fond embrace of parental love and happiness."

Some few weeks after the above conversation, I was taking my usual walk around the castle grounds, with my mind unusually depressed from emotions of a conflicting nature. Now, recalling the varied and mysterious scenes of the past; now dwelling on the present of sorrow and gloom. For sorrow deep and truthful pervaded my soul with the conviction that a few weeks more and my friend, the baron, my father, and counsellor, must bid adieu to the scenes of earth for the gloomy and lasting repose of death.

And Fransolina, my heart bled afresh, as her angelic form, her face of pure and matchless beauty rose up before me, drooping and pale, from the intensity of her deep and heart-felt sorrow.

The time was approaching when I could no longer worship her at an humble distance from the silent depths of a heart gushing with love and adoration.

I had never dared to breathe my love to the peerless being who had awakened it from the deepest and holiest recesses of my heart. I could never dare aspire to the hand of Fransolina, the descendant of a noble house; but I could never forget, or cease to love, such a combination of all that was so beautiful and lovely. I must love on hopelessly and disparingly; but forget—never.

Then a faint glimmering of hope would cheer my gloomy imaginings, that I might yet be restored to my noble parentage; that I might yet, with equal claims to royalty and nobility, ask the hand of the loved and fair enchantress of my heart and soul.

While my mind was thus agitated with these conflicting emotions, a servant appeared and announced to me that the baron desired my presence. I immediately obeyed the summons and when I entered his apartment he was feebly reclining upon his luxurious couch, and by his side sat Fransolina, tearful and pale, as a drooping lily. He took my hand and pressed it with all the tenderness of an affectionate father, as he said,

"I have a strange request to make to you Frederick, which may seem beyond

the bounds of right and honor, and which you may think will draw largely upon your confidence and credulity. Nevertheless I wish you to answer me truly, as though the salvation of your soul rested upon the result. And this is the request,—do you love my daughter Fransolina?"

"My noble lord," I ejaculated, as I, scarcely knowing what I did, fell upon my knees by his side, "spare me this, I beseech you; in naught else have I withheld my confidence; in all else I will serve you, but spare my heart's sorrows and the idols which I have sacredly worshipped within my own bosom."

"I do not wish to trifle with your feelings, with the sacred emotions of your heart, my young friend," continued the baron.

"Yet I would have you answer my question unreservedly, which I solemnly repeat,—do you love Fransolina of Oswald?"

"Love her, sir," I answered, "nay, I adore her, in the sacred and silent recesses of my heart; and who can behold an angel of celestial beauty and grace, and not bestow upon them the heart's adoration.—It is only thus that I have dared to love the peerless maiden of Oswald; it is only thus that I have dared to look into the painful and hopeless future. If I have erred, chide me not; mine was not the fault.—And yet she must ever be the sacred idol of my heart, the beautiful enchantress of my soul, which can never be supplanted by another."

"Fransolina, my daughter," continued the baron, with evident emotion, "you have witnessed his confession of love, of hopeless love; and now, my child, I must ask you a similar question, and I wish you to answer me with the same sincerity and truthfulness which he has manifested.—For many months this young gentleman has been an inmate of our home; I think you have not been blind to his merits, and have often spoken of our obligations to his valor and generosity. Now tell me, my daughter, if you approve of him so highly as to receive him for your companion through life. I think he is worthy of my Fransolina. But far be it from me to desire her to give her hand where she cannot bestow the sacred love of her virtuous heart. My daughter it remains for you to decide this point."

For a moment Fransolina pressed her cheek to the pale brow of her noble father;

and when she again raised it, it was with blushing modesty, and with some degree of embarrassment and confusion. In a soft tremulous voice she answered,

"My honored father, it gives me pleasure to comply with your wishes; for your wishes I know they are. Without doing violence to my own feelings and inclination, next to God I am indebted to him for the life which I now enjoy. The pure sacred love of my heart is given in exchange for his. Shall I withhold my hand from him to whom alone, from all the world, I can ever bestow the sacred love of my heart. Love levels all distinctions; I would freely renounce titles and royalty for the happiness of one to whom we are so sacredly indebted."

"Heaven bless you, my daughter," said the baron, as he took her trembling hand and placed it within that of my own.

"Fredric Harclay," he said, with all the solemnity of a dying man, "to your keeping I commit a sacred charge. Receive her as the gift of Heaven, love and cherish her next to the salvation of your soul, next to the God whom you profess to serve. To her I leave the legal heirship of Oswald; where, it is my wish, that you may lovingly and happily remain."

So suddenly and unexpectedly was this announcement broken upon me, that my mind could scarcely comprehend its true import.

I was in a delirium of joy and uncertainty. I pressed her hand convulsively to my lips, and bathed it with my gushing tears, till the conflicting emotions of my heart overpowered me, and I sank fainting at her feet.

When I recovered, the man of God, in his clerical dress, was bending over me. I was vainly striving to collect my thoughts, when the voice of the Baron aroused me.

"My son," he said, "this will be a gloomy bridal for the daughter of a Peer. I would it were otherwise. But God, in his own good pleasure, overrules all things for the best."

"I am desirous to witness your happiness, my children; and to bestow upon you my dying blessing. When the anniversary of this day arrives celebrate your nuptials, as becomes your rank and station in life; but until then, let it be kept a profound secret from all the world, save him, who pronounces you legally united. It is my wish, nay,—command, that you re-

sume your travels, and continue them until the anniversary of this day approaches. While my daughter, in the meantime, avails herself of the protection of Lord Fitzhenry, a distant relative of mine. May God bless you, my son; and restore you in safety to your bride, with equal claims to birth and fortune with her own."

Not long after our lonely bridal the good old Baron took his peaceful exit from the scenes of life, and was carried to rest with his noble ancestors.

But it was long ere I could summon strength to quit the castle; which had become sacred to my heart, from the joys and sorrows I had known beneath its friendly roof.

It was torture to think of leaving my beautiful bride,—Bride of my heart, life of my soul; to leave her,—delicate as a fragile flower, sensitive as the quivering aspen, to a stranger's care.

A dark, fearful foreboding took possession of my whole nature; which neither the smiles of my bride, nor the bright prospects of an unclouded future, which she so glowingly described, could dispel. But the command was imperative; the command of my more than father; it was his last injunction, and must, and should be obeyed.

## CHAPTER VI.

"Yet, midst this scene of mirth and glee,  
I marked a frown of villain smile;  
Like Eden's serpent, artfully,  
By blandishment, who lured to gulf."

At last I took a tearful adieu of the shades of Oswald; and accompanied Fransolina to the seat of her relative, Lord Fitzhenry; where she was received with every demonstration of joy; much more, I thought, than the circumstances and occasion of her visit demanded.

They condoled with her on the death of her venerable parent, the Baron; but to me, their condolence seemed more of the lips than the heart.

Lord Fitzhenry was father of a numerous family, who were vainly endeavoring to make an advantageous display of a small fortune. His sons were proud, arrogant and conceited. The daughters vain, frivolous and heartless.

But Fitzhenry did not, or rather did not appear to see their inferiority and defects; for whenever he could gain a hearing from Fransolina, he would speak of his sons in glowing terms; expatiate on the superiority of their talents, their noble merits, the chivalry of their exploits; and he hoped that she would participate in the innocent sports of his gay family, and mingle with them in the scenes and pleasures of fashionable life.

A deeper shade of sadness overspread Fransolina's brow, as she answered,—

"Sir, I am not here a seeker for pleasure; save that which I can derive from the strictest seclusion and retirement. It was for that purpose, in compliance with my lamented father's wishes, that I sought the protection of your mansion. And while I remain your guest, I pray you will excuse me from mingling in the scenes of mirth, and heartless pleasures; which, at present, is most foreign from my wishes and inclinations."

Fransolina would have gladly returned again to the loneliness of Oswald; for she already partook somewhat of the dark forebodings which had shrouded my mind, so gloomily, at her Father's villa; and which had not been lessened by an acquaintance with the family of Lord Fitzhenry.

That he was artful and intriguing was plainly evident, and to unite his name and fortune with that of Oswald was the first wish of his heart we could see beyond the shadow of a doubt.

But he could never compel Fransolina to a union with any of his family, we well knew, for too well was she secured for his avaricious designs. But if he should gain the information that she was my legal bride, he might do much to thwart the future happiness of each.

I remained several weeks at the estate of Fitzhenry before I could summon courage to leave Fransolina in the care of his artful family. But she urged the necessity of my speedy departure to which I reluctantly complied.

Before bidding her adieu, I presented her with a chain to which was attached a miniature likeness of myself; and as I twined it around her snowy neck, I said laughingly, "My dear, I hope this may not prove as fatal to your happiness as my mother's diamond necklace has to mine."

"Never fear that," she cheerfully replied, "for I shall be more coy of dis-



playing it to the eyes of the curious than you were, in the days of your childish vanity."

We pledged ourselves to correspond often and faithfully with each other, of all which might occur in our separation; and after mingling together our tears of regret, and our prayers for the welfare and safety of each, we separated, with the fond hope of meeting again on our bridal anniversary, to part no more until called by death to our final repose.

After leaving the estate of Fitzhenry, I directed my course for Scotland. But owing to many unavoidable delays, it was several months ere I reached its romantic borders. And here, an unexpected pleasure awaited me. My faithful Fransolina had anticipated me, and a letter from her pen, awaited to welcome me to its shores.

It was written in an easy and happy style, congratulating me on the ease and safety of my expedition; and the fond hope of my speedy return.

She spoke in glowing terms of the family of Fitzhenry, of their kindness and assiduous attentions to her every wish, and the unlooked for happiness she had derived in their society. And she hoped that I would think of them more favorably than I had previously done.

She said that she had confided to them the secret of her marriage. "Indeed," she added, "the delicacy of my situation demanded an explanation. But I am confident the secret is safe with them. I have only withheld the name of my cherished husband."

But I half-suspect they already conjecture, for they rally me pleasantly of my tourest husband; and narrowly watch every expression of my countenance, when they speak your name; to which they always add something complimentary to your virtues and praiseworthy valor; which, you must know, is very gratifying to the ear of your faithful Fransolina. Do not indulge any fears," she added, "respecting me; for I shall receive all the kind care and attentions necessary for my speedy recovery."

This letter seemed to awaken within me new energies, and I joyfully proceeded on my journey. I resolved to bend my course directly and speedily for the western part of Scotland, learn the history of the old castle the baron had described to me, and then return immediately to my anxious and faithful Fransolina. And fortune fa-

vored me; for every day seemed to bear me with greater rapidity towards the place of my destination.

One circumstance only impeded my progress for a few days. It was the illness of my faithful servant, which rendered it impracticable for him to proceed further. But I procured another who offered his services gratuitously, being desirous of travelling through Scotland, the land of beauty and romance. I accepted him on the same terms of my former servant, and we proceeded pleasantly on our journey and soon found ourselves amongst the hills and moors of western Scotland. Here for many days we travelled without meeting the object of our search.

At last one evening just as the sun was sinking quietly to rest upon his pillow of misty spray, which gathered around the mountains like a gossamer web of magic beauty, I espied through the dim shadows the frowning turrets of an old castle not far in the distance. I pointed out the site to my servant, telling him that I would repair thither while he went to ascertain if there were any letters from my friends. I hastily wended my way to the castle grounds; I entered the massive gate and strode along the broad walks with indelible emotions. The overarching trees with their branches of thick foliage laced and interlaced by the hand of nature into graceful and gorgeous festoons, awakened vividly to my mind the scenes of my childhood. I knew the direction of the old park, and I hastily sought the fountain; it was there as in the days of my childhood.

My emotions overpowered me. I threw myself down upon the same seat where I had reclined long ago, in the dreamy innocence of childhood, and wept as though I were a child again at my mother's knee.

Darkness was approaching which I knew would render it impracticable for me to visit the interior, until the morning, as the castle was uninhabited. But I resolved not to quit its friendly shadows until I had visited its old halls and apartments, which erst rang with the sportive glee of my childish prattle.

## CHAPTER VII.

"My day is closed; the gloom of night is come;  
A hopeless darkness settles o'er my fate."

While I was indulging in the joyful

emotions of my fortunate adventure, Maurice, my servant, arrived, with a small package, which I eagerly grasped, as if it were the crowning joy to my earthly felicity.

"And where did you get this, Maurice?" I enquired, not seeing the usual post-mark upon it.

"A gentleman gave it me, sir."

"Ha! A gentleman, say you?"

"I did sir; he enquired if I were not the servant of Fredric Harclay, Esq., and when I answered him in the affirmative, he told me to deliver this to you; with the request that you would honor him with an interview this evening, at the vessel, which lays at her moorings near by; in which he is a passenger."

"Who can it be?" I enquired, as I looked at the superscription, but that was in a strange hand. I turned to the massive seal, it was ominous of ill.

With a trembling hand I broke it; but when I had hastily glanced over a few lines, a faintness came over me, and all seemed shrouded in the darkness and gloom of night.

Maurice bathed my temples with the cool water from my father's fountain, which sent forth its dancing spray so joyously above me, and I revived. Ah, yes; but it was only to the anguish of despair.

"God of Heaven," I ejaculated, "dead, dead; my Fransolina, my bride, my angel of beauty and grace. Idol of my heart, life of my soul; can it be thou art no more. Oh!—why, why did I survive you? Why did I leave thee, in pursuit of vain glories, of empty honors and perishing wealth? Would to God it had not been the command of thy noble parent."

"Had we not better repair to the vessel sir?" asked Maurice, who stood pale and trembling before me.

"The night is closing around us; shall we not go immediately, sir?"

"Yes, yes," I answered, "lead the way; I would know the worst. Oh!—why have I lived to feel the poignant pangs which rend assunder the life chords of my bleeding and desolate heart."

Fransolina, why did I survive you, only to know the utter hopelessness of despair and desolation."

When we arrived at the vessel, I was met by a man, who grasped my hand with cordial warmth.

"Friend Harclay," he said, "I fear that letter has been the messenger of sad

tidings to you; but we must learn to bow to the rod that smites us, my friend. I sympathize with you truly; it is an afflictive dispensation to us all, and may God help us to bear it with Christian resignation!"

"Fitzhenry," I said, as soon as I could command myself. For it was him that stood before me. "Tell me, tell me all; I could not read the letter you forwarded."

"But you look worn and haggard, my friend," he answered in a kindly tone; "repair with me to the cabin, where I will order a cordial to revive your sinking nature, you need refreshment and repose. Come with me to the cabin, and I will tell you all."

He took my hand, and led me passively as a weary child. I threw myself upon a luxuriant couch; for my trembling limbs seemed scarcely able to support me; and Fitzhenry seated himself by my side; seemingly agitated with grief, while he vainly endeavored to offer to me words of condolence and sympathy. He said, "that Fransolina had died in accouchment; her illness was short," he continued, "and she had left no pledges of love, or tokens of friendship to any one; nor even divulged the name of her husband, as her lamented father did not give her permission to do so until the time specified by him should arrive."

"But," he added, "we were suspicious that you were the one; from the fact that a miniature likeness of yourself was found to have been in her possession, and as there were none other, excepting those of her parents, we felt secure in addressing you, as such, with the information of her death. Were we right, sir, in our conjectures; were you not her lawful companion, with the consent and sanction of the lamented baron?"

"I was, I was, Fitzhenry, the happiest of husbands, with an angel for a bride."

"Oh! death, how couldst thou thrust thy withering dart at the fairest of earth's flowers; the cherished idol of my heart? Would to God I had died for thee, Fransolina, angel of purity, and —"

"Compose yourself, my dear sir," said Fitzhenry, as he held a goblet to my lips. "Take this cordial, it will revive you."

But more dead than alive, I could not command strength, either to refuse, or receive the cordial, which he strenuously forced into my mouth, saying, "you

must remain my guest for the night, friend Harclay. You need repose; yield thyself to its gentle influence."

A dreamy sensation had already come over me, and his voice seemed receding far away, in the dim, dreamy distance. It was high noon the following day, ere I woke to consciousness.

But language cannot describe the painful, desolate, hopeless sensations of my heart, as with a wild, uncertain glance I surveyed the apartment, which seemed wrapt in the silence and gloom of death.

The scenes of the preceding day rushed vividly to my memory. I sprang from my couch, and called wildly for Fitzhenry, for Maurice; but they were gone, they were not there; and the echo of my voice sent back alone an answer of taunting mockery. I grasped the bell-rope, as a drowning man grasps at a floating feather, and after a few moments had elapsed, which, to my impatience seemed an age, a low, cowardly, cringing menial unfastened the heavy bolts which secured the door of my apartment, and protruded his thick skull into my presence.

"Where is Fitzhenry?" I enquired. "And Maurice," I added with bitter impatience. "tell them I desire their presence immediately."

But he only answered me with an idiotic grin, which sent the hot blood to my bursting temples.

"Cowardly idiot," I exclaimed, as I rushed vehemently towards him, and brought him with one bound upon the cabin floor.

"Answer me truly, or —"

"He gave me that," he said, as he held up to my view a golden coin, "if I would not tell you."

"And I will give you another," I answered, "if you will, and a blow if you refuse; which will send you reeling to the lowest depths of Davy Jones' Locker."

"Well then," he answered, "he is gone."

"Gone where?" I enquired, scarcely able to control my impatience.

"Gone to his estate, sir."

"And Maurice?" I again enquired.

"The one that brought you to the vessel, you mean? Well, he was just no servant, at all, at all; he is the son of my Lord Fitzhenry, who has just returned from abroad, and would have married the beautiful Lady of Oswald, had she not

have died so suddenly, before the nuptials could take place."

The whole truth rushed like a fearful tornado over my agonized soul.

I was a prisoner, and the victim of his cool duplicity. And Fransolina the innocent and helpless victim of his persecution, even to the death.

"Fransolina," I exclaimed, "would to Heaven, I could share with thee thy peaceful and quiet repose. Why do I live, thus ever to be the sport of fate? One moment wooing me with her brightest smiles and choicest favors; the next, crushed by her capricious frowns into the inextricable ravines of sorrow and woe."

"And shall I submit thus tamely?" I asked myself, "I, who have braved a thousand dangers, shall I not wield my own good arm, for the right of liberty and freedom?"

I looked for my pistols, for at that moment I felt that I could crush a battalion of armed fiends; but my pistols had been taken from my belt; my sword, which had served me as a faithful friend in many scenes of danger and outrage, was also removed, and I felt that I was a prisoner indeed; with no means of escape or defence.

I looked through the window of my gloomy prison, and found that we were far out to sea; tossed upon the bosom of the treacherous ocean; beyond the faintest discernable outlines of a friendly shore.

And whither bound, I knew not; and little cared, whether to the icebergs of the frozen north, or to the scorching rays of a tropical clime.

Despair was already throwing around me her mantle of sombre gloom; and I felt that life was not worth an effort. Whither the winds and the waves carried me, I would passively and unresistingly yield myself to their sway.

## CHAPTER VIII.

"There is a divinity that shapes our ends,  
Rough hew them as we will."

THREE weeks I had been a prisoner, upon the wild waste of waters; when one evening, as I was standing gloomily, by the little window, which sometimes emitted

a gleam of sunlight into my dreary room, I observed, far away in the distance, great masses of dark clouds, rolling up from their watery bed; shutting out from my view the bright glances of the faithful stars that met me ever at even-tide, to hold their nightly vigils, like guardian spirits, around my cheerless couch.

The mournful wail of the invisible sea-bird, came over the angry wave, like notes of evil omen; the lightning flashed vividly over the wild, dark bosom of the deep, and the heavy peals of thunder, like the fearful and deafening roar of clashing artillery, boomed over the dark-swelling wave.

Soon, the storm burst upon us, with fearful and terrific fury; the thunders roared in awful peals, above and around us; the giant wave came hissing and foaming, with maddened rage, against the quivering timbers of the plunging ship, which seemed like a tiny feather in the whirlwinds' furious grasp.

A vivid flash of lightning lit up the surrounding gloom, and disclosed to my view a rocky island, not far in the distance, upon which the vessel was rushing with maddened and fearful velocity. The next moment a crash, mingled with the wild, terrific yell of the despairing seamen, completed the fearful scene.

When consciousness again returned to me, I was laying, bruised and shivering, upon the rocky shore. The storm had passed; but the waves were still dashing and foaming with restless violence against the crags and reefs of the rock-bound shore.

Darkness, gloomy and impenetrable, spread her broad wing over the wild waters, shutting out from my anxious view the surrounding scene.

I knew not whether I had been cast upon a desolate shore to die from famine and suffering; or whether the island was inhabited by a race of savages, or by beings of humanity and civilization. But I knelt upon the cold dark beach with emotions of gratitude for my mysterious preservation, and committed myself anew to the care of Him who was able to guard the future life which He had preserved from the wild rage of the clashing elements and from the darker and deadlier designs of depraved humanity. For many hours I sat upon the cold hard beach, recalling the mysterious events of my life, so replete with sorrow and suffering.

At length the morning sunbeams gilded like burnished gold the floating spray far out upon the wild restless deep.

I strained my eyes anxiously for the vessel and crew that had conveyed me hither; the vessel lay a perfect wreck upon a reef of rocks not many yards from where I had found safety from the storm; and many of that hapless crew were lying, mangled and distorted, upon the rocky shore, cold and silent, in the sleep of death.

It was not long before many of the islanders came to the scene of devastation; for it was upon this island that I had been cast; and soon we laid them to rest beneath the silent turf, in this sacred repository of the dead.

All the money and valuables taken from the vessel's wreck, they cordially and kindly accorded to me, as I had signified my intention of remaining upon the island, where the winds and the waves had driven me. Here I lived, alone and in sadness, mourning over the untimely death of my heart's idol, and regretting the fates that had snatched me from my father's lordly halls, when happiness seemed already wreathing my brow with her dazzling coronet, as a reward for my assiduous and persevering efforts of the past.

But I had no desire again to renew my travels; for my parents, if living, had long since ceased to weep for their darling boy, and for titled wealth and lordly honors, I had neither ambition or desire, since the pride of my heart and soul no longer remained to share them with me. One evening, about two years from my last adventure, I was standing moodily by the shore, upon the very spot where I had been cast from the vessel's wreck, leaning pensively against a broken crag, watching the angry clouds that loomed up portentously from their ocean-bed, when I observed far out to sea, the white sails of a noble ship, steering directly for the friendly harbor of our quiet bay.

I involuntarily sent up a prayer for its safety, as the clouds swept fiercer and darker over the angry wave, shutting out from my view the gallant ship which sped so nobly over the swelling tide.

The lightning flashed vividly, and the heavy peals of thunder, mingling with the wild, unearthly screams of the frightened sea-birds, sent a thrill of fearful horror through every fibre of my heart. For they brought to my recollection the fearful

scene in which I had participated, and from which I had so providentially escaped.

I remembered the dangerous reef of rocks upon which many a gallant ship had been shattered.

I hastened to my cabin, which was not many yards in the distance, and procured a torch, which I raised high above me, to warn them of their danger.

It availed them but little, for soon I heard the despairing cry of voices in that direction, rising fearfully above the howling of the blast.

The storm passed quickly and hurriedly away; and I heard the plashing of oars, and the voices of seamen, from the opposite shore, and I knew that brave hearts and dauntless arms were hastening to the rescue.

I was turning with a joyful and thankful heart, to seek the solitude of my lonely home, when a light substance floating upon the wave, and borne steadily onward by the flowing tide, attracted my attention. I hastily reached forth my hand to grasp it from a heavy wave; and to my surprise, found it to be the body of a child, drenched and chilled by the cold spray, and apparently lifeless.

I bore it tenderly to the light and warmth of my humble home, and procured every available means to restore it to life.

I had nearly abandoned my long and fruitless endeavors, when her tiny lips parted with a smile, and her eyes, of azure hue, looked out from beneath the heavy lids, like a ray of soft sunlight, to my desolate heart.

I again renewed my exertions with greater avidity, and was soon rewarded for my labor, in the complete restoration of life and activity.

She looked timidly and fearfully upon me, as if she would flee my presence, for the long beard and rough exterior of a lone hermit, was repulsive to a child who had never seen ought but wealth and beauty. But I pacified her as best I could, giving her cordials to warm and refresh her, and wrapping her in warm garments. I soon lulled her into a sweet and quiet repose. I laid her gently upon the best couch which my hermitage afforded; thanking the Father of mercies, from the fulness of my overflowing heart, that He had placed me here for some good purpose, by relieving the sufferings of the destitute and homeless.

I busied myself for a long while, in

separating her rich garments, and placing them to dry around my glowing fire, when a glittering chain, which had become entangled in some of the rich embroidery, attracted my curiosity.

I immediately applied myself to the task of extricating it, hoping that it might impart to me some information respecting the parentage of the rescued child. As I disengaged it, I found that a locket was attached to it; and on placing it in the light for closer examination, to my indescribable surprise, I beheld my own likeness; which I had presented to my bride on the morning of our separation.

For a few moments, I seemed transfixed to the spot where I was standing, while every fibre of my heart seemed completely paralyzed. I knew not how to solve the mystery, unless that heartless villain Fitzhenry, had played me false.

He had done so in my capture, and in spiriting me away from the scenes of my bridal joys. Why should he have followed my footsteps, and exiled me from the land if Fransolina was no longer an inhabitant of earth?

Many circumstances suggested themselves to my memory, to confirm my suspicions, and the thought that she had lived and had followed me hither, and in all probability had found a watery grave, nearly maddened me almost to desperation.

I, who had stood like a trembling craven, secure upon the shore, while she, the idol of my heart, the faithful and dauntless participator in my exile, had perished within hailing distance, upon the yawning reefs, while I supposed her peacefully reposing with her noble ancestors.

I bent fondly over the innocent cherub, in her unconscious repose.

The sweet, angelic expression, and every feature of her beautiful face, confirmed the truth of my conjectures.

It was her child, and mine; yes, mine; and the pure pledge of our faithful and mutual vows.

The scalding tears which fell from my haggard cheek, drenched the pillow upon which she was sweetly reposing.

I knelt and prayed as never before my heart had found utterance.

I prayed that the cherished wife and mother might again be restored to the loved ones of her heart, in peace and safety. I prayed that Heaven would

speedily send relief to my torturing, insupportable anguish.

The bright rays of the morning's dawn was peering cheerfully through my little window, ere I arose from my kneeling posture. I looked through the little casement, upon the broad ocean, which lay calm, peaceful and smiling, in the sunlight, as though no treachery had ever lurked beneath its placid wave.

The wreckers were already at their task; grasping greedily whatever might float from the unfortunate wreck.

I saw them drag the body of a female from the shore, and were already divesting it of its rich attire.

Maddened to desperation, I flew with a menacing air to the scene of sacrilegious outrage. I clasped the body frantically to my embrace.

The face which had once been surpassingly beautiful, was fearfully mangled and distorted. But the soft, wavy hair, the rich attire, I had seen them before decorating the beautiful form and features of my loved and cherished Fransolina.

The wreckers were fleeing from me in dismay; for they believed me, as well they might, frantic with insanity.

But I besought them to assist me in conveying the lifeless form to my humble cot; and to procure for me a shroud that I might decently bury my dead.

Language is too faint to portray my emotions, as I bent fondly and despairingly over that once beautiful form, cherished ever in the holiest sanctuary of my now desolate heart.

I laid her, with the kind assistance of the Islanders, quietly to rest, beneath the cold turf, and have daily bedewed it with the tears of unfeigned and heart-felt sorrow. They marvelled at the deep grief which seemed to break up the bitter fountains of my innermost soul. But I never told them that she was aught to me, more than a friend of other days.

My child was now the only object of my care and solicitude. I bent my whole, even all of my energies to the pleasing task of rearing her for the high station to which her birth entitled her.

And nobly has she repaid my efforts; for now, at the age of ten years, she is far advanced in her studies; and a few days since, I took her to a neighboring city, for the purpose of placing her under the care of one of the best teachers the country can boast.

The principal teacher was absent; enjoying a short vacation from the tediousness of the school room; but her assistant assured me that my little Fransolina, would receive the strictest attentions that kindness and affection could bestow, from the principal lady, whom they all loved and revered.

Again I returned to the solicitude of my dreary home; I missed the cheering smile that sent a thrill of pleasure to my stricken heart, and the light silvery laugh that vibrated gladsomely through the isolated walls of my humble dwelling.

I missed the affectionate embrace, and the sweet kiss, as she bade good night ere she retired to her happy slumbers.

The loneliness of my home was insupportable; and I spent my leisure in traversing the beach for diversion and forgetfulness.

## CHAPTER IX.

"And I have marvelled deeply, how  
A thing in human form can have  
The power and will to work such wo,  
And journey calmly to the grave."

Yesterday, as I was taking my customary walk, I espied, not far in the distance, two gentlemen walking leisurely towards me, deeply engaged in conversation.

Just then, I stooped to pick up some curious looking shells which had floated to the beach; and while I was thus engaged they passed me, and seated themselves only a few yards in the distance.

They continued their conversation without seeming to notice me; and I still busied myself in my childish occupation. Soon, to my surprise, I heard my own name pronounced in connexion with that of Fransolina, heiress of Oswald.

I cast a stealthy look at them, without seeming to do so, and to my inexpressible surprise and consternation, beheld the villain Fitzhenry, and my servant Maurice, or rather, the son and counterpart of my hated betrayer. A sudden faintness came over me, and I should have fallen had not pride and curiosity prevailed to sustain me. But they appeared not to notice me; and continued their conversation undisturbed.

"I think," said the elder, "that it must be somewhere in this vicinity that Sir

William Seymour met your cousin so unexpectedly a year since."

"But," said the younger, "he might have been —."

"No, he said he was sure of her identity. He said that he followed her through several streets; but somehow, she mysteriously eluded him; and for several days after he searched with vigilance; but could find no clue to her retreat. We will commence the search in a few days; and if fortune favors our efforts, I think she will readily accede to our proposals."

"We have nothing more to fear from that plebeian Harclay, for the few that escaped that terrible storm and shipwreck asserted that they saw him sinking beneath a yawning wave; and we are safe enough from his interference."

"And that brat, too, of a plebeian father; how singular, that she too, should find a watery grave; leaving our road to fortune and affluence unrestricted."

"And now, if Fransolina, of Oswald, does not consent to an honorable alliance with the House of Fitzhenry, she will feel its vengeance more fearfully than she has heretofore."

"I will crush her as a thing not worthy of existence. I will spurn her as a thing of nought into oblivion. I will —"

"But stop, my father; you must recollect that we have not yet discovered her retreat."

"But I will discover it," he answered with vehemence, "and if she is an inhabitant of earth, she shall feel my power and vengeance too — if —"

I could bear no more; my soul was burning with the fire and energy of other days. I raised myself erect; though trembling in every limb like a quivering aspen. Like a chafed tiger, I was ready to spring with a deadly bound upon my hated prey. I felt at the moment, that I could annihilate them from my presence; and crush them with scornful indignation beneath the dust they had polluted.

But a sudden thought restrained me. Fransolina might yet be restored to me; and I could never pollute her presence with my hands reeking with the blood of her kinsmen.

No, — they might pass on, unmolested, to bide the justice of a higher tribunal. I passed unnoticed to my hermitage, and there gave vent to the various emotions of my heart in prayers of thankfulness and tears of joy.

Again I am going forth to mingle with the world. And if Fransolina still lives, He, in whom I trust unreservedly, will guide me to her.

I must save her from the power and revenge of her designing kinsmen; and protect her from a fate more fearful than ten thousand deaths.

To-day I take my leave of that humble grave, where my tears and prayers have daily mingled over the unconscious sleeper. With the first boat, I shall proceed to the city; and after placing my daughter under the strict guardianship of Mrs. Elston, the principal instructress, proceed immediately on my travels in search of a cherished and faithful wife.

My history of the past is ended, and I see you have relieved the tediousness of its long recital by noting it in your sketch-book.

But it is yet incomplete; I have yet another part to act in the drama of life; the result of which is known only to Him who ordereth all things aright for our good."

"And Heaven grant that the loved and lost may yet be restored to you; and may the dark clouds which have so gloomily shrouded your past mysterious life, be dispersed by the brilliant and never-changing rays of prosperity and happiness which may cheer your declining life, undisturbed to the tomb."

"We may never meet again," I continued, as I took his proffered hand, "but to me the Island recluse, and the sorrows of his mysterious life will ever be held in sacred remembrance."

"And may we meet again," he answered, with a cheerful smile, "and I may then add something to the narrative you have been sketching, which may give it a happier finale; till then, adieu."

I saw him drop a tear over the humble grave and its unconscious sleeper; as though his love and devotion still lingered amidst those sacred shades.

I returned to the Inn, and met the little fishing party, which had just returned in safety, and were anxiously awaiting my return; for it was long past the hour of noon.

"She has seen the Hermit," said our lively friend B —, "the animation of her countenance betrays her; and learned his history too," he continued, as his eyes rested enquiringly upon the scroll I held in my hand.

"Indeed I have," I answered, as I held the manuscript up to his view, "but for the present it is sealed to the eye of curiosity."

## CHAPTER X.

"Thou beautiful! thou beautiful! my thoughts again on thee  
Are wandering, and sweet visions of thy loveliness I see:  
A fairy dream of hope is here to cheer me with its joy,  
Oh! when I wake it must not this illusion all destroy."

Several years passed away; but they brought to my ear no tidings of the Island Recluse. And he was remembered only with a sigh, for his past misfortunes; and a desire to know the result of his last adventure.

One day as I was walking leisurely through the crowded thoroughfares of our own populous city; leading by the hand my little boy, of scarce two summers, who was roguishly pointing to the many glittering toys and showy fabrics which filled, so gaudily, the large windows where we passed; and which my own mind compared most ungraciously to Bunyan's Vanity Fair, in his Pilgrim's Progress, till I had lost myself in following the various directions which the pilgrims of a later day have sought out, by many cunning inventions, not so dreary or laborious to pursue as those which he so ably described; and where many of them could turn aside, at their pleasure, to mingle in the scenes of Vanity Fair; without seemingly retarding the progress of their pilgrimage, notwithstanding the additional weight they have received from those scenes of vanity.

I was moralizing a little, when a clear, silvery shout of admiration from my little boy, caused me to turn my eyes in the direction which he pointed.

We were just passing the — House, where a carriage was drawn up, and a tall, handsome and elegantly formed gentleman, was alighting with a lady of symmetrical form and face dazzlingly beautiful; and a young girl of scarce sixteen summers, with an eye like the skies' deep azure, and a cheek which vied with the vermillion's hue, and with flowing tresses

which fell, like waves of sunlight, over a neck and brow of transparent beauty. They were clad in the richest attire; and through many a voluptuous fold of lace and satin sparkled the dazzling light of pearls and diamonds of rare and costly beauty, and which had called forth that shout of admiration from my little boy.

As we were passing, the gentleman fixed his dark, piercing eyes enquiringly upon me, and I thought, all too rudely; which caused my cheek to burn with indignation, and my eye to sparkle with a brilliancy more repulsive than the lustrous glow of the diamond settings which adorned the beauty of his lovely companions.

He advanced a step, with an air and look of assurance which it seemed would have better graced a brainless coxcomb, than a gentleman and companion of such peerless, matchless beings who seemed to claim his attention and protection.

"Do you remember the Recluse of Glenisle?" he whispered, in a low tone, as he bent gracefully and respectfully forward; with a merry twinkling in his dark, piercing eye, which, a moment before, I had supposed looked with such impudent familiarity upon me. But my resentment vanished speedily, on hearing the name pronounced in which I had taken such a lively interest.

"Indeed I do sir," I answered quickly, "do you know aught of him? Have the loved and the lost been restored to his?" I hesitated; it was a stranger with whom I was speaking. Already I might have betrayed the sacred trust which the Hermit had reposed in me.

For I knew not, but the graceful stranger before me might be the hated foe and pursuer of the unfortunate Harclay.

He quickly perceived my embarrassment, and with a smile continued.

"We stop here, only for the night: if you would learn more of the Recluse, call here this evening, at my room, No. —, and you shall receive the desired information."

I readily assented, for the interest I had taken in the history of the unfortunate recluse surmounted every barrier. He bowed gracefully as he gave me his card of address, and then hastened to conduct the ladies to their own apartments.

A thousand emotions agitated my mind during the remainder of the day; but my curiosity to learn more of the hermit's history predominated, and as the clock an-



nounced the hour of seven, I hastened unhesitatingly to the — house, which was not far from my own residence, and the host being a gentleman of unimpeachable honor I had no fears whatever.

I ascended lightly the richly carpeted stairs and rapped gently at the door, No. —, which stood slightly ajar, through which I could perceive the splendidly attired ladies, and the gentleman who had so unceremoniously accosted me a few hours before, deeply engaged in conversation. I was, however, ushered in by the gentleman who very politely gave me an introduction to the ladies, at the same time requesting us to excuse him for a few moments.

The ladies were in fine spirits, entertaining me with some lively sketches of their travels, in his absence, when the door slowly opened and to my great surprise the veritable hermit himself made his appearance. I arose quickly from my seat with an exclamation of joy, and cordially extended my hand to meet his trembling grasp.

He looked the same as when we met and parted in the Island grave-yard; the same haggard and wo-begone visage; the same stooping trembling form; the same dark and painfully piercing eye all unchanged.

"And this, sir," I said, as I grasped warmly his trembling hand, "is a pleasure, as great as it was unexpected. How fares it with thee my friend of Glenisle?"

But before I had uttered the last syllable the hermit's garb lay quietly at my feet—the cowl, the long white locks and beard which had given to his whole face such a venerable appearance, and before me stood calm and erect the gentleman by whom I had been invited with the same graceful and youthful form and the same merry twinkle in his dark lustrous eye.

For a moment I stood in mute consternation perplexed and bewildered.

"And what am I to infer from this?" I enquired, as soon as I could find utterance.

"That I am the hermit of Glenisle, the whilom son of the gipsy wanderer, the Frederic Harclay of wild adventures and fruitless travels.

But be seated madam, and I will commence the thread of my narrative where it was so unsatisfactorily broken off several years since when I was the lone recluse of the isle. I was then leaving the hermit-

tage to commence my travels in search of my Fransolina whom I had twice mourned and lamented as dead.

My first course was to visit the school, or rather the teacher, under whose especial care I wished to place my idol daughter in my uncertain absence. It was late when I arrived in the city, but impatient of delay I hastened immediately to the residence of Mrs. Elston, the principal teacher under whose protection I wished to leave my little Fransolina, and desired of the maid in attendance an interview with her mistress, which she frankly denied me, after having satisfied her curiosity by rudely surveying my whole appearance, telling me that her mistress had, only a few hours before, returned from the country, and was too greatly fatigued to see company at that hour.

She told me, however, that she would procure me an interview in the morning; and with a feeling of disappointment and chagrin, I returned in search of lodgings for the night. My old companions, the fates, already seemed on the alert, and I now feared their frowns and caprices as much as in former days I had sought their smiles and favors; but they had often played me false, and left me the disappointed victim of their wild coquetish freaks. At that moment I almost dreaded again to come in contact with the cold unsympathizing world.

Had I known that my heart's idol was peacefully at rest with her noble ancestors, that she was free from the dark designing villany of her ungrateful kinsmen, I would have gladly sought before I slept the gloomy though friendly shelter of my Island home, and buried myself from the cold gaze of men in its retired seclusion.

However, I at last procured a shelter and lodgings for the night, and after having committed myself to divine care, I fell into a calm, dreamy repose, from which I did not awake until the morning.

As soon as propriety and etiquet would permit, I hastened again to the teacher's residence. My mind was more than usually depressed, for it was torture to think of leaving my little daughter in the care of strangers, for a pursuit which promised me so little reward.

I was permitted an interview, but my heart, more than once, misgave me for the sacrifice I was about to make for a visionary uncertainty.

As I was passing through the hall, I

heard the clear silvery tones of my little Fransolina in an adjoining apartment, and as I entered with an exclamation of joy, she flew into my arms, saying, as she did so, "this, kind lady, is my father, my dear, dear father." I followed with my eyes the direction which she eagerly pointed, and caught a glimpse of a face and form which seemed to paralyze every pulsation and emotion of my heart and soul.

A thick heavy mist gathered around my vision, the scene before me vanished like the meteor's dazzling light, and all seemed shrouded in the silence and darkness of death. When I awoke to consciousness a rich musical voice was whispering in my ear which seemed like the low soft tones of angel voices. A soft hand was chafing my throbbing temples, while she whispered in my ear of faithful love and a joyful future.

"She lives,—your Fransolina lives," again sounded, half dreamily in my ears, "and faithful still my Frederic. Heaven be praised that thou art again restored to me as a reward for my long and hopeless love and devotion."

We will pass briefly over the joyful scene of our unexpected meeting—for words are inadequate to the description—and give you a short sketch of Fransolina's history.

Soon after my departure from the estate of Fitzhenry, his oldest son returned from his travels, a fearful wreck in wealth, and all the nobler qualifications of principle and honor, but a finished libertine, a heartless, dissipated, self-conceited man of the world. He had not formed an alliance in his absence, as his father had anticipated, with the affluent nobility; and to make amends for his disappointment, Fitzhenry resolved to secure to him the title and estate of his deceased relative, the baron of Oswald. For several weeks and months after my departure, Fransolina received the most affectionate attentions from them; for well they knew how to conceal their artifices.

His profligate son, after having, as he supposed, captivated the heart of Fransolina, was sent to watch my proceedings, and to give an account of them to his father, who was artfully acting his part of villainy at home. I recollect, after having arrived in Scotland, of hinting to my servant Maurice, my intention of returning shortly to Italy, which I suppose he faith-

fully communicated to his father, warning him of the dangers of delay.

It was about that time that the persecutions of my Fransolina commenced. He told her that I had deserted her, that I had fled with another, to my American home, (for indeed he did not intend that I should ever return,) and many other things, as false as the heart that conceived them. But all this availed him nothing, for Fransolina's heart trusted to the truthfulness of my own love and fidelity.

At last he grew desperate, and menaced her with threats, until she dared no longer to remain under his roof. With the assistance of her faithful maid, she stealthily sought the friendly retreat of a neighboring convent, where she could remain unharmed and secure from farther persecutions, until my return.

At this, Fitzhenry was maddened to desperation. He vowed to revenge himself fearfully upon me; and the success of his villainy, I have given an account in a former chapter. Fransolina remained in the quietude of the cloister's retreat, slowly recovering her health, after having given birth to a beautiful daughter, daily wishing and anticipating my return; yet fearing that I might be the victim of his villanous revenge.

## CHAPTER XI.

"Where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me."

Months passed away, yet no tidings came to cheer her, from her absent husband. Still, she would never yield to despair, but continued to hope against hope.

One day, a little more than a year from the time of the events which I have just described, a pale, haggard, wo-begone wreck of humanity, sought an interview with Fransolina at the convent.

She had taken no vows, and was at liberty to receive and converse with any one, if she chose, although until this time, she had kept herself in the strictest seclusion. He was admitted as one that bore tidings from her absent husband.

He confessed that he was bribed by Fitzhenry, with the promise of a rich reward, to convey me to my native shores, or to dispose of me in some other way, so that I might never again intercept his path



and interest. He accepted the proposals of Fitzhenry to spirit me away, although he said he never intended to do me the harm which his master had hinted.

He described to her the voyage, the storm at sea, the fearful wreck, and loss of many of his comrades.

He told her that he saw me, when the lightnings flashed vividly over the foaming waters, borne rapidly along by a mountainous billow, and cast upon the rocky shore of a lonely isle.

He gave her an account of Fitzhenry's villainy, in fabricating the story of her death, and enticing me to the vessel, under pretence of giving me farther particulars; his villainy in forcing me to take the opiate he had previously prepared, and then deserting me in the hour of my deep affliction, and leaving me to the mercy of the winds and the waves.

He described to Fransolina, the locality where we had been wrecked, as accurately as possible, telling her if I were yet alive, he was sure I would never again visit their shores, believing as I did, that she was peacefully resting with her kindred in the sweet repose of death.

"But," he added, "I scorn and refuse the reward of the heartless Fitzhenry, and I would even sacrifice my life in your service, if that would atone for the guilt of my past life. If you wish to escape from farther persecutions, to seek your husband across the treacherous deep, and will trust yourself to my protection, I pledge myself to serve you faithfully, with the last pulsation of my penitent life."

To resolve, with Fransolina, was to execute; there was yet a hope that I lived; indeed, the gushing truthfulness of her heart told her as much; and with all the devotion of faithful love, she made immediate preparations for her departure. Her faithful maid voluntarily offered to accompany her, which offer was joyfully received.

Nothing of consequence occurred to interrupt or retard their passage, until they had nearly gained our friendly shore, when they were overtaken by the storm I have previously described, where I so providentially rescued my little Fransolina from a watery grave, who, with the faithful maid, had been precipitated from the vessel by a mountainous wave which swept violently over it. The maid sank cold and lifeless, beneath the ocean's foam,

while a friendly wave bore my helpless child to the arms of a desolate father.

It was the cold, lifeless form of the faithful maid, whom I laid with such religious devotion, beneath the quiet shades of Glenisle. Peace to her ashes! for she was faithful to the last.

Many others perished, and among them, he who had so faithfully executed the trust reposed in him by my own Fransolina. She was now alone, a stranger in a strange land, with no friend to appeal to for protection and assistance; for nearly all of her gold and jewels had been washed away, with many other valuable articles, so that on reaching a place of safety, she found that she had scarcely enough left for subsistence until she could compose her mind for farther efforts. But Heaven provided for her in a strange land, kindly friends and benevolent hearts, in this her hour of need and sorrow. Again she threw off the weight of sorrow which pressed so heavily upon her young and sensitive mind, and aroused herself to action. She, who had ever reposed in the lap of luxury, now sought with her own hands, to raise herself from the dependence of strangers; for she had no desire to return to the land of her birth, until she had found him whom her soul loved, that we might together enjoy the wealth which her lamented father bequeathed to us; for she fully believed that the day was not far distant when we should be restored, all faithfully, to each other's embrace. Our little daughter, she had not the least doubt, was quietly sleeping beneath the ocean wave. She soon offered herself as governess to the children of a wealthy family, who kindly procured her the situation of principal teacher in a respectable and flourishing school for young ladies—which trust she had ever filled with becoming dignity and honor. Every vacation she took excursions into the neighboring, and sometimes in the distant towns, with the fond hope of meeting her husband, who had been so cruelly deceived by her artful kinsman, Fitzhenry.

You will recollect that it was while she was taking one of those excursions; (and the last) that I took my daughter to the city, for the purpose of placing her under the instructions of Mrs. Elston, for that is the name she assumed for her greater security, immediately after her arrival to our shores.

On her return the following morning,

she was informed by her assistant, that a little girl had been left to her care, by a strange looking man, who was rather desirous of seeing Mrs. Elston, the principal teacher, of whom report spoke so favorably; that he might place his daughter under her especial protection.

Mrs. Elston desired to have the little stranger admitted immediately to her presence.

As she entered, the first glance of her rare and dazzling beauty, and noble dignity, prepossessed her affections immediately in her favor.

"And what is your name, my little maiden?" she enquired; as she drew her caressingly to her fond embrace.

"Fransolina Oswald Harclay," was answered, in a soft, silvery voice, which seemed to vibrate through the deepest recesses of her throbbing heart, almost paralyzed with emotions of overflowing joy.

"What is the matter, my dear, dear lady? Are you ill? shall I not call assistance?" enquired the little girl, as she beheld her cheek fearfully pale; and her eyes fixed with a wild, glassy stare upon her.

That voice aroused her. "No, my dear," she answered, as she recovered a little from her sudden faintness.

"I, who have borne firmly and alone the heaviest weights of sorrow and desolation, need not the assistance of an ordinary attendant when my heart is bursting from the fulness of its overflowing joy.

"But come to my arms; and tell me all about your home, the name of your father, and how it happened he placed you hear under my instructions."

"My home; the home I mean, where my father lives," answered the little girl, with artless simplicity, "is not so grand as this; neither is it ornamented with so many fine and beautiful things as this; but oh! I wish you could see how beautiful it looks in a summer's morning, all covered with the white, foamy spray, which the fairy zephyrs have placed there during the night, sparkling like the glittering coral in the broad sunbeams that sweep so brilliantly over the bosom of the deep, blue sea.

My father, his name is — O, I cannot tell what is his name. I have heard people sometimes call him the old Hermit; but I was always so indignant that I would run away before I heard any thing more.

"And he does look old; because he always wears a something on his head which droops down so, — over his face, as if it was trying to conceal his long, white hair, which hangs so loosely all over his chin and neck; but I am sure he is not old either.

"I will tell you what I did see once, it was when a terrible storm swept over the ocean, and cries of distress were plainly heard in our cottage, from a vessel's crew. My father was rushing out of the door to render them all the assistance he could; when a sudden gust of wind blew off the — something from his head, and the long, white hair fell too; and his forehead looked so white and fair with glossy black hair lying in thick, rich, curling masses over his smooth temples.

"Oh! he did look so young and handsome — just like this;" she continued, as she drew slowly from her bosom, a rich miniature case, to which was attached a gold chain of exquisite workmanship.

"But you will not tell my father; for indeed he has never shown it to me. I found it, carefully laid away, in the corner of a box; and it looked so much as he did, on the day of the fearful storm; and I love it so — see! is it not beautiful?" She asked; as she held it up to her view.

"Fredric, my own, my cherished and long-lost husband. Father in heaven, I thank thee, for these manifestations of thy preserving care and merciful love.

My treasures are again restored to me; my cup of joy and thankfulness is filled to overflowing. And you, my little Fransolina, are my own idolized and long-lost daughter. Heaven be praised, for the preservation of thy life, and for thy restoration to a mother's fond embrace; and naught but death shall part us more."

It was at this interesting period that I arrived; with a mind so sadly depressed, and was ushered into her presence. When I had recovered from the swoon into which I had fallen, on beholding so unexpectedly, the living, and still beautiful form and features of my heart's idol, I found that all the false fixtures, with which I had so successfully deceived the eyes of curiosity, had been most ungracefully torn from their unbecoming positions, and I stood before them the Fredric Harclay of other days; the happy husband and father, of a faithful and devoted wife and an affectionate and loving daughter.

We were not long in making preparations to return to Europe, where, after our arrival, which was heralded with joy by our former friends and acquaintance, we took immediate possession of the old Baronial estate, and publicly celebrated our nuptials, with all the pomp and display befitting our rank and station; and in accordance with the last wish and injunction of our father, the Baron.

As we were about starting on our bridal tour, I proposed to my lady the idea of taking Scotland in our way, and of visiting the old, deserted castle, from which I had twice before been so artfully spirited away, to which she readily acquiesced, laughingly adding,

"That I might now dispel all my fears as to further intrigues; for our past, though painful experience had been to us a faithful instructor, and one lesson surely we should never forget. That is, never to trust too credulously to the syren voice of vaunting friendship, which has so often thrown her glittering wand around us, only to dazzle and betray."

## CHAPTER XII.

"I feel almost at times as I have felt  
In early childhood."

After a long and pleasant journey we gained in safety the shores of Scotland and proceeded immediately to the vicinity of the ancient castle.

We stopped for repose at a neighboring inn, where I learned with joy that the castle had recently been undergoing extensive repairs, and was already fitted up in a most magnificent style for the reception of its masters, the earl of Allandorf, who had not visited it for many years, and who had now come up from his beautiful castle on the Rhine to celebrate the nuptials of his only daughter.

"And," added my host, "if you desire it, sir, I will inform the earl of Allandorf that there are persons of distinction stopping at my house, and I doubt not he will cordially receive you as a welcome participant in their bridal joys."

I gave him my card of address, and awaited anxiously the result of his mission. He soon returned however, his honest face glowing with the pleasure of success, and

in another hour we found ourselves approaching the castle, up the avenue, beneath the shadows of the overhanging branches. We were ushered obsequiously into a gorgeous saloon, already filled with beautiful ladies and titled peers, where we were welcomed and cheered to our heart's content.

After the sports of the day had subsided the company separated in groups, as inclination or fancy suggested. A respectable number, however, remained with the earl, congratulating him on his good fortune, in possessing such a noble estate, when a friend enquired,

"How it happened that he had so long neglected and deserted it?"

To which the earl replied,

"It is a painful story which is so intimately connected with this venerable castle where we enjoyed the first five years of our wedded felicity. We were young, full of ardent hopes and bright and joyful anticipations when we took possession of this castle, little expecting that a fearful blight would so soon shroud them all in gloom and darkness, but so it was."

About a year after our happy bridal, a son was given us as the fond pledge of our holy and faithful vows. We enshrined him in our hearts as our idol, and worshipped him as such, forgetful, in our blinded happiness, that our best and holiest love should be given to the great Author and Bestower of the many and unbounded blessings which we were so ungratefully enjoying. One day when our son was about four years of age, the nurse, who had taken him out into the castle grounds for recreation, came running into our apartment with looks which betokened the wildest frenzy of alarm, wringing her hands and weeping bitterly, making gestures, for she could not speak, for us to follow her, which we did immediately, yet scarcely knowing why. Some terrible accident had happened to our boy we were sure, yet of what nature we could not devise. She led us rapidly over the walks to the fountain; on reaching it she exclaimed with a fearful shudder,

"There, there, he has fallen. Oh! save him from a death so fearful."

We immediately called assistance and exerted every effort, but to no purpose.—We drained the fountain, but his little lifeless form could no where be found."

I had sat thus far, through the recital anxiously catching every word that fell

from his lips, my whole frame trembling like a quivering aspen. Several times I made an effort to speak, but my tongue refused to do its office.

At this moment, with a voice scarcely audible, I enquired,

"Did your son have upon his neck a diamond chain of great value?"

"He did," answered the earl, with an emotion which seemed to rend asunder every fibre of his heart, "and as our son was no where to be found, we supposed that the nurse, or some other had disposed of him for the purpose of securing the treasure; but the nurse protested her innocence in the most solemn manner. Yet notwithstanding her protestations, we dismissed her from our presence immediately and had her secured in the county jail for further investigation. Are you ill, sir?" enquired the earl, as he saw my pale lips quivering with a vain attempt to utterance.

"Father," I said, as with one powerful effort, I threw my nerveless arms around his neck, "behold in me your son,—the long lost, but never forgotten son of your mutual and faithful vows."

The scene which followed is beyond description. Suffice it to say when at last we did recover to some degree of composure, the ladies were called in, when another indescribable scene of joyful surprise ensued, in which my own sweet and affectionate mother, my faithful Fransoliná, my beautiful and happy sister, were the most conspicuous participants.

Congratulations to each happy party were poured in from every side, from the lordly guests who crowded around us with smiling faces; while tears of joy gushed unrestrained from the fulness of their sensitive and kindly hearts.

A strain of music soft, rich and melodious, swept through the high arched galleries and halls of the old castle from a hidden orchestra, which gave to the scene a semblance of enchantment; and I even then feared that this was only some wild freak of my former companions; the fates, which had so often in former days led only "to bewilder, and dazzle to blind."

The guests kindly departed, one by one, to seek their own apartments, and left us a happy family so providentially united to enjoy uninterruptedly the bliss of that happy meeting, in pouring out to each the joys, the sorrows and heart yearnings of years that had passed. After the guests had all retired, my father, the earl, resum-

ed his story, which I had so suddenly interrupted,—

"After satisfying ourselves that our dear boy had not fallen into the fountain, vigilant search was made throughout the old park and the grounds in the vicinity of the castle, but still unsuccessful. Servants, friends and strangers explored the adjacent towns, and even the whole county, but they could gain no clue to our lost boy, and at last the search was relinquished as a fruitless one. A dark, gloomy despair seemed to overshadow us, and every thing connected with the castle where we had been the happy recipients of so many blessings."

Indeed these noble apartments became insupportable to us; and when all hope had vanished of ever recovering our lost boy, I purchased an estate in Germany on the banks of the beautiful Rhine, and removed from the scenes which every day recalled more vividly to my mind the loss I had sustained. Before leaving, however, I made another visit to the nurse, who renewed her protestations of innocence, telling me that she had carelessly wandered away a few yards for the purpose of gathering a few wild flowers with which to deck her young master's cap, and when she returned he was gone, and as she had left him at the fountain she supposed he must have fallen in.

She was sure," she said, "that she would have risked her own life to have saved that of her dear little master's, for had she not nursed him and carried him in her own arms many a day, and lulled him to repose upon her own bosom, as though he were her own sweet babe?—and do you think that I would have deprived my little angel of his happy life, for the gaudy trinket that glittered around his pearly neck?"

"Tears choked her utterance, and she wept bitterly. I felt that she was innocent, and I gave her her freedom and prayed to God to forgive me for the wrong I had unintentionally done her."

Several years passed away, and yet they brought no tidings of our idol boy.

One evening my lady was sitting within her vine-clad bower, overlooking the beautiful Rhine, watching the shadowy rays of the setting sun, as they gilded so daintily the silver sheen of the placid water, when a quick rustling of the shrubbery aroused her from a thoughtful reverie, and raising her eyes, she saw before her a wretched,

haggard shadow of humanity, her eyes gleaming wildly from beneath the tangled and disheveled masses of dark hair which fell loosely and carelessly over a face and neck browned by exposure, yet frightfully rigid, as though the pallor of death had already been stamped upon its shadowy outlines.

My lady arose quickly from her seat and advanced a few steps in the direction of the castle. But the phantom (for so she seemed) intercepted her, and grasped her hand with the frenzy of despair.

"Stay one, only one moment, and hear my guilty confession. I have wandered many a weary mile, for this one moment, to confess my crimes, receive your forgiveness and to die.

You do not know me; I see it in that bewildered and inquiring glance, that Lisette, your former waiting-maid, is forgotten. But no matter; you remember that you dismissed me from your service, and sent me in anger from your castle for some offensive misdemeanor, for which I vowed revenge, a fearful revenge.

I connected myself with a band of wandering gipsies the better to accomplish my purpose; and many a day I have screened myself beneath some stealthy covert, contiguous to your lordly castle, watching for the nimble footsteps of your darling boy, that I might allure him from your tender embrace and gorgeous home.

One day I saw him at the fountain scattering the pearly spray 'mongst the glittering diamonds that encircled his beautiful neck. The nurse had only a moment before stepped aside into another path, the thick umbrage hid her from my view, and bounding like a wild antelope I grasped him in my arms, smothered successfully his cries and bore him far away to a distant clime; but the curse of an All-seeing eye followed me. Want, degradation, guilt and despair were my constant attendants whithersoever I went, until they became fearfully insupportable; I could no longer provide for the child whom I loved, but could not restore. Strange faces met me on every side, but all turned away from my importunities with disgust, as though the mark and curse of Cain were visible upon my haggard and care-worn brow.

Late one cold, stormy night, half perishing with cold and hunger, I seated myself upon the marble steps of a rich man's

door, with the hope that I might perish there before the morrow's dawn.

I wrapped my own thin garments around the shivering form of that innocent child, and lulled his low and feeble moanings into a quiet repose. But rest was denied me; tears only, bitter and repentant, was my portion, through that long, dreary and pitiless night.

When the morning dawned, I pressed my guilty lips to his smooth, placid brow, and left him to the mercy of strangers, or to die alone in a strange land.

I proceeded through several streets, little caring whither they led me, until at last I found myself upon a wharf, where a vessel was just launching out to sea. I prevailed on the crew to take me on board, for I cared not whither I went, so that I could flee from the weight of guilt which pressed so heavily upon me. It proved to be a European vessel, homeward bound. Again I reached my native shore, and proceeded immediately to your castle in Scotland. But there I only saw the desolation that my own guilty hand and blood-stained heart had wrought.

They told me that you had long since left the country, and were now living on the banks of the beautiful Rhine. I have sought you, here, confessed my crime; and all that I can, I will restore again. It is this: the Diamond Necklace. I have preserved it through all my wanderings and sufferings. Receive it, again, as a pledge of my penitence and heartfelt contrition. My story is told; only one thing yet remains—your forgiveness. Can you, gentle lady, forgive one who has so willfully and deeply wronged you? Say that you do forgive me, and I die in peace."

"My lady hesitated; her heart was struggling with rebellion against one who had so cruelly wronged and injured her. But a deathly pallor was gathering around that face of woe, and she exclaimed, "As the pure, holy and just God in Heaven forgives you, so freely do I. Your punishment is already sufficient for your crimes."

A smile of joy overspread her dark countenance, and she fell lifeless upon the dewy turf. Attendants were summoned, who conveyed her to the castle; but she never spoke again. Her spirit had taken its flight the moment her crimes were forgiven her.

The Necklace we have ever preserved, as a sacred memento of our first, only and idol boy. To Fransolina of Oswald,

your faithful companion, I entrust it, as a bridal present, with the strict injunction that it shall be preserved by you and yours, as an heirloom, for many generations, in the family of Allandorf; and to you, my son, I present this castle and estate; as it is the place of your birth and happy restoration, with its title also, receive them as your right, for yourself and heirs hereafter. It is only a small portion of my possessions, in the which you shall share more bountifully at some future day."

When I related to them the events of my own life, they wept as only parents can, for the sufferings of a cherished child. And when I told them of the fond, faithful and devotional love of my Fransolina, they strained her to their hearts with tears and caresses, and invoked the blessings of High Heaven to rest upon her, for her pure, holy and devotional love.

The scene was truly affecting, for all hearts were gushing alternately with joy and sorrow. Yet notwithstanding, I managed for a moment to slip away unnoticed, but soon returned and introduced myself as the Hermit of Glenisle; for I have ever taken this disguise with me in all my travels, as an old and cherished friend, which has served me faithfully through my long, long years of exile and sorrow.

Here the scene changed from one of deep interest, to surprise and mirthfulness, in which my beautiful sister took the most conspicuous part, for she alone had suffered the least for the heir of Allandorf. She was a wild, mirthful creature, almost ethereal in her form, and bearing a striking resemblance to my mother, in the days of my innocent and happy childhood.

On every anniversary of our nuptials, we hold a family trist at our beautiful castle in Scotland, where we spend the summer months in joyous sports and excursions with our noble and happy guests, while we invariably recall the scenes of the past, with their joys and sorrows; the happy termination of all our wanderings, and our providential restoration to the home

of our childhood and tender embraces of parental affection.

The nurse is still living, and has been reinstated as a sort of privileged character, in the old castle, where, on some particular occasions, she assumes airs of great importance over the lower order of domestics, telling them "that it was herself that nursed the young master; and if he was stolen away for many a year, he had grown up to be a fine, handsome gentleman, and she was as proud of him as if he were indeed her own darling son."

And Fitzhenry, when he returned and found that we were still living, and had preceded him, and taken possession of the old baronial estate, his chagrin and mortification was indescribable.

For his own personal safety, however, he and his hopeful son soon after took passage for a distant port, from whence, it is supposed they have continued their travels to parts unknown, as they have never since been known to hoist their sails for a homeward-bound trip.

The remainder of the family are living in obscurity, mourning over their unwise and unjust ambition, which has so suddenly plunged them from affluence to beggary.

Again the history of the past is ended. The dark clouds which formerly closed around us so portentously, have all disappeared; bright and smiling prospects only greet us in the future.

I have been with these, my faithful wife and cherished daughter, again to visit the hermitage, and the scenes which have been made sacred by our long, long years of sorrow, and our blissful re-union, to part no more, until the stern hand of death sunder the silken cord which binds so closely the love and devotion of our faithful hearts.

Soon we sail for our native land; but it is not without a tear of regret and a heartfelt invocation for its prosperity, that we bid adieu to the "land of the free and the home of the brave."