

his mistress, all became mixed and associated in his active brain. He did not sleep, but could not be said to be awake; he plunged into a delicious reverie, in that kind of half-existence, where imagination takes the place of reason, and the soul, freed as it were from a part of its earthly dross, seems to throw off the world and its earthly cares, and to admit glimpses of its future immortality. The silver chime of the time-piece, announced midnight. Maurice started at the sound; arose—saluted the baroness, and departed. When he reflected on the silent scene of that evening, he seemed to have a faint recollection that love had been spoken of, that vows and promises of affection had been exchanged. He thought he had been dreaming of Elvira. But the voice recalled not to him those silvery tones, every vibration of which used to thrill through his bosom. He laughed at what he called his foolish dream. It was not a dream!

Between this evening and the dark moment of Maurice's history, several months elapsed;—I who knew him personally, would here willingly resign my pen. The unfortunate youth was overwhelmed with debts. Some delay in his usual allowance had first obliged him to anticipate his income. Debts are in a man's circumstances, what vices are in the character: one becomes the fruitful source of innumerable others. Maurice had never been disgracefully profligate.—Pride, that source of so much that is good and bad in our character, had always hitherto preserved him. It was not the fear of want, or the dread of destitution that withheld him, but a determination never to lower himself in the eyes and opinion of the world. The moment, however, was arrived, when his resources were no longer equal to his wants, and he found himself on the point of suffering that humiliation which he had so long avoided.

In this extremity, he one morning shut himself up in his room, balanced his accounts, and found himself minus 3000 francs. The sum to him was considerable, but as he was not deficient in energy, he did not despair. An old friend of his father had often desired him to apply to him in case of need; he did so. The candour with which he disclosed his situation, and admitted his errors, the promises he made of amendment, of separating himself from the world, and retiring into the country, gained the heart of his father's friend. He treated him as a returning penitent son, furnished him with the necessary sum in bank-notes, talked of his future prospects, and advised his immediate departure from Paris. There was something so cordial in his manners, so affectionate in his advice, that Maurice's self-love was in no way hurt. He took up the notes, put them in his pocket without counting, thanked his generous friend, and departed. Maurice was joyous as an infant; 'a good day's work,' said he to himself, 'and to night the first ball this season at Madame de Maunaires. It must be my first and my last. A year in the country, and I shall return quite fresh. I shall go and live somewhere near my dear Elvira. I shall see her more frequently, and be as happy as a Prince.' In this disposition Maurice advanced, forming plans for the future, which were never to be realized; and in the same frame of mind he reached the baroness's house. There, in one evening, he forgot all his prudent resolves. He found such charms in faces languid from a season's pleasures. He loved so much to gaze upon those graceful necks and shoulders, that dazzling as alabaster, and warmed by exertion, reflected the rays of the lamps like watered marble. He was all joy—all pleasure; he was madly happy. His blood rushed through his veins like a torrent. One might have said he was *fey*, (fated) so anxious did he seem to make the most of his short existence. He crossed the card room without stopping. Some one pushed against him: it was the baroness. 'You have scarcely spoken to me to-night, said she, 'as a punishment, come and make one at my table.' Excited as he was by the dance, unconscious as an infant, and full of his recent success, he followed the baroness, saying to himself, like a fool, 'that pleasures, like misfortunes, never come singly.'

He had changed one of his notes in the morning, and had fifteen louis remaining. He laid down five, and lost,—he doubled his stake, and lost again. His fifteen Napoleons were gone. In the momentary impatience excited by his loss, he thrust his hand into his pocket. He met with what at such an hour is seldom parted with,—the packet of notes he had received in the morning, which he had been unlucky enough to put into the pocket of his dress-coat. The touch electrified the unfortunate youth,—the blood rushed to his head. "Will you have your revenge?" "With pleasure, madam," and he flung upon the table a bank-note. It shared the fate of his former stakes. He rose up, and cast his eyes round the room. A circle had been gradually formed round the players. There were young women there, aye, very young women, who having run the round of pleasure, and found its amusements no longer exciting, had come to the card table to raise agreeable emotions in themselves, by witnessing

the sufferings of others. There were old women also in abundance, creatures much better acquainted with Hoyle than their Bible, who with one foot already in the grave, still hovered round the ecarte-table, identified themselves with the players, and grew alternately pale at their losses, and smiling at their gains. There were also plenty of men, titled aristocrats, earls, marquises, and lords; some few intent upon the game, but the greater part more agreeably occupied in admiring themselves, twisting their moustaches, and quizzing the ladies. Maurice seated himself a second time at the table; he flung down a note, and again he lost.

During this time the dancing continued,—the rattling sound of light feet, the joyous bursts of laughter, the inspiring notes of the music, the hum of conversation, and the constant chinking of gold, all assisted to raise in Maurice that excited and feverish state, which, however pleasurable at night, must, the following morn, be repented of in sack-cloth and ashes. Maurice lost his presence of mind. 'If I lose all,' thought he, 'I must blow out my brains.' He compressed his lips, and drew from his pocket the three remaining notes. He uttered not a word, but with a steady hand and fixed eye, placed them as a stake on the table. The baroness won. 'My dear,' said the young countess, 'it's a pity he's gone. He's quite interesting.' 'Yes,' replied the other, 'he is a good loser; but did you observe his eyebrows?' 'No.' 'Oh! by all means, come and see them;' and off they all went, for Maurice had become an object of curiosity. The elder ladies remained with the baroness to congratulate her, and count over her winnings. She sat there apparently as unmoved as when she began, but an accurate observer would have perceived traces of an emotion stronger than what first met the eye. As to Maurice, when he reached the dancing-room, he eagerly engaged a partner, and joining a *gallupade* which had just commenced, he hurried her round the room with such impetuosity that had he made a false step, the poor girl must have met with some serious accident. Twice did she entreat him to stop: he either heard her not, or, if he did, paid no attention. He was the like man described by the English poet, who, to escape from his agonizing reflections, galloped at full speed, in one hour, over thirty miles of difficult and dangerous road, and who, when his horse drooped from fatigue, continued spurring the jaded animal, till he himself swooned with the exertion. Maurice finally took back his trembling partner to her seat.—He left the ball-room, rushed home as if pursued by the demons of hell, retired, not to rest but to reflection, and towards morning fell asleep. When he awoke the sun was high in the heavens, the streets were filled with busy citizens. He turned from the window. The careless happiness of the passers-by, seemed an aggravation of his own misery. He began to reflect on the events of the past night. The idea that first struck his mind was, his utter ruin; the second, his determination to die! He reviewed his circumstances in the hope, aye, the ardent hope, of finding some means of escaping from the abyss into which he had fallen. Again and again did he turn and re-turn in his own mind the resources he could command. Alas! no means of escape presented itself. He could not deceive himself. His father, a man in straitened circumstances, had already incomed himself to supply his extravagancies at Paris. Besides, his father was too distant,—as to his friends, there were none of them rich,—and if he could borrow from them, must, one day or other, be repaid.—'Death,' said he aloud, 'Death alone remains; and the firm tone, in which he spoke, was sufficient proof that he seriously contemplated carrying it into effect. 'But will that pay my debts?' 'No; and shall I follow the steps of those cowards who get themselves into difficulties, and satisfy their creditors by blowing out their brains?' 'Never. I have courage to quit this life, but not dishonoured.' In the midst of this dreadful uncertainty, a letter arrived. He broke the seal and read it, without casting his eyes on the direction. It was a note from the baroness, requesting him, if disengaged, to spend the evening with her. Maurice had forgotten the baroness, or, if he thought of her, it was merely to curse her, as the person who had done him an irreparable wrong. He tore her letter into fragments, stamped upon them with the heel of his boot, and exclaimed with an ironical smile, 'To take tea with her at eleven. If not too fatigued after the ball, to go again to that infamous hell.' The last part of the sentence he uttered with a different tone of voice, and, apparently, with a different feeling; for, after a few minutes, he dressed himself, left his room, and advanced with hasty steps towards the Faubourg St. Germain. During two days and two nights Maurice was absent from his lodging. On the third morning he returned, and what was very unusual with him very early. His face pale, his eyes heavy, and his whole appearance having evidence of some inward sorrow, that contradicted the resolved and calm expression of his countenance. He drew from his pocket several notes, besides gold and silver. He counted it over,—laid aside

five notes of 500 francs each,—wrapt them up in a cover, wrote a few lines, and directed them. He then turned to the loose money, which he divided into several sums, sealed up carefully and directed. He next proceeded to ransack his drawers, took out all the papers and burnt them without examination. But when he came to a small secret drawer, a visible emotion agitated his countenance. He pushed the spring with a trembling hand, and drew forth a small packet of letters, written in a lady's hand, upon embossed paper. He read them all carefully,—not a turn, not an expression escaped him,—he kissed the packet and replaced it in the secret drawer. Scalding tears began to roll down his cheeks. At last Maurice arose, and seized one of his pistols. It was a splendid weapon of foreign manufacture. The very same his mistress had playfully laid upon his forehead, when she prophetically told him his first infidelity should be punished by it. He rammed down his pistol with part of a letter which he had laid aside for the purpose. He placed the pistol, under the name of Elvira, and in a moment ceased to live. The porter at the hotel heard the explosion, and upon bursting open the door, the unfortunate youth was found extended on the bed, one arm resting on the floor, and the yet smoking pistol at some paces from him. The ball had passed through the brain. He was already lifeless. On the table were found the fragments of a letter, apparently from the baroness, enclosing a check on her banker, recapitulating, in no very delicate terms, the pleasures of their last interview, and anticipating the delights of the succeeding.

Whilst the commissary of police was making his deposition, of the state in which he found the body, a letter arrived by the post for the deceased. It was opened, and added to the *proces verbal* of his suicide. This letter contained, in the most obliging terms, the offer of a loan. If it had arrived a few hours sooner, it would, probably have saved the youth from an untimely fate, and restored him to his friends, perhaps, a useful and worthy member of society.

USEFUL AND ENTERTAINING KNOWLEDGE.

ENGLISH CULTIVATION.—The taste of the English in the cultivation of the land, and in what is termed landscape gardening is unrivalled. Nothing is more imposing than the Park scenery. But what most delights me is the creative talent with which the English decorate the unostentatious abodes of middle life. The rudest habitations, the most unpromising and scanty portion of land, in the hands of an Englishman of taste, becomes a little paradise. The residence of fortune and refinement in the country has diffused a degree of taste and elegance in rural economy, that descends to the lowest class. The very labourer, with his thatched cottage and narrow sloop of ground, attends to their embellishment. The trim hedge, the grass plat before the door, the little flower-bed bordered with snug box, the woodbine trained up against the wall, and hanging its blossoms about the lattice; the pot of flowers in the window; the holly providently planted about the house to cheat winter of its dreariness, and throw in a gleam of green summer to cheer the fireside; all these bespeak the influence of taste, flowing down from high sources, and pervading the lowest levels of the public mind. If ever lover, as poets sing delights to visit a cottage, it must be the cottage of an English peasant.

"Oh friendly to the best pursuits of man,
Friendly to thought, to virtue, and to peace,
Domestic life in rural pleasure passed!"

WASHINGTON IRVING.

ALEXANDER.—The following curious fact is known in this country:—The Emperor Alexander died of Taganrog; it is well known how. He had been a colonel of a regiment of Prussian Guards since the year 1814. The hypocritical grief of the Court of Russia sent, with solemn seriousness, his hat, gloves, boots, spurs, in fact the whole of his uniform, to Berlin. When the Cabinet was informed of its near arrival, a deputation was sent to receive it. They returned with it to Berlin. The uniform was then paraded through the streets of Berlin with sound of trumpet. It was then lowered with due religious pomp, into the tomb of Frederick the Great.

THE COUNTESS GUICCIOLI AND BYRON.—Byron is a strange melange of good and evil, the predominancy of either depending wholly on the humor he may happen to be in. His is a character that nature totally unfitted for domestic habits, or for rendering a woman of refinement or susceptibility happy. He confesses to me that he is not happy, but admits that it is his own fault, as the Countess Guiccioli, the only object of his love, has all the qualities to render a reasonable being happy. I observed, apropos to some observation he had made, that I feared La Countessa Guiccioli had little reason to be satisfied with her lot. He answered, 'Perhaps you are right; yet she must know that I am sincerely attached to her; but the truth is, my habits are not those requisite to form the happiness of any woman; I am