snatches of rude songs would arise; but the listener would be puzzled to tell whether these sounds proceeded from the interior of the building, or from some house in the adjoining street. After listening a few seconds our adventurer approached the door and applied a latch-key, it immediately flew open and he entered. He proceeded to a back room from whence the sounds issued. There were five or six fellows, of the lowest description, sitting around a table covered with mugs, glasses, and slops of spilled ale and porter. As many more of their companions lay wallowing on the filthy floor, while some were sleeping off the fumes of their potations as they lay stretched upon the benches. The remains of what, in the early part of the evening, had been a huge coal fire, still glimmered in the grate, and on a low settle in one corner of the fire-place sat a girl, her chin resting on her hands, and fast asleep. She wore a short jerken of the commonest blue cotton, a petticoat of lindsey-woolsey, and an apron of the same coarse material; she had nothing on her feet but a pair of worn out shoes, which she wore slip-shod; her hair hung in a disorderly manner over her face, her arms were bare above the elbows, and appeared as though but little pains were taken to keep them clean, and her face, where it was visible between her fingers and her locks, showed the same disregard to cleanliness. Still there was evidence sufficient to prove that the being—and she was still young—who had fallen to such a depth of degradation and misery, had once been distinguished for her personal beauty. Her nose and mouth were finely chiselled upon the Grecian model; her cheeks, though begrimed with dirt, and stained with the courses of her tears—for she had cried herself asleep—still bore some evidence of former loveliness; her eyes were overhung with silken lashes, and her forehead was both clear and capacious; her hair was of a bright auburn colour, and though uncombed was profuse, and the symmetry of her form was yet perfect. The intruder changed countenance slightly as he gazed upon the blighted figure before him, it might have been a pang of remorse, or a passing thought of pity, but whatever cause it arose from it was but momentary, for heated with wine, hardened by a long and successful career of crime, and rendered desperate by his recent losses, his heart was too callous to indulge in the softer feelings for any length of time.—O man, what an enigma thou art! ever thirsting for glory, knowledge, and fame, thou pressest onward with energy irresistable—with perseverance unconquerable—with intrepidity which overcomes every obstacle—and grasps at last, *a glittering bauble!* What dost thou expect to find in the prize for which thou hazardest—thou endurest so much?—*Happiness!!* Yes, the happiness of this world, in which we are but passengers—in a state of probation to fit ourselves for a future state. Behold! the happiness for which we contend is almost hourly within our grasp, and we cast it from us, to the right and to the left, at every step; aye, and the "still small voice" within us warns us of it at the moment; but we stifle its cries, flattering ourselves that the honours, the titles, the wealth to which we aspire will be a sovereign balm for every disappointment. Many fail in the wild attempt, and those who succeed find, alas! that they have forsaken the right path until it is too late—that the highest earthly happiness consists in *friendship, love, social intercourse with our neighbours, domestic felicity, and contentment;* and that in casting these aside they have not only forfeited their happiness in this world, but forsaken the path which leads to happiness in a future state. Such is the end of human ambition!

After the flitting shadow had passed from his countenance, he approached nearer, gazing upon her wan cheeks marked with the tears which had dried upon them. "Poor fool!" he muttered, "what has she been crying about I wonder? can it be possible she still remembers *that?* I wish she would die, for demme if I see what use she is to me here! To be sure our men can come here when they like without any danger of her blabbing, but any other girl could be taught to maintain silence as well. Now if she would take care of herself and be tidy, on my recommendation, or the Lieutenant's, I have no doubt but she would be engaged at a hotel, where she might be of some service by communicating with us when any gentlemen were travelling across the Moors with heavy purses, for one does'nt like to risk his life for nothing in these times; but when I hinted the subject to her once she did nothing but upbraid me; d——n her, I wish she would die! Here girl, get up, I say," and lifting a sword from underneath his cloak he gave her a slap with the sheath on the shoulders. The girl started to her feet in evident alarm, and shrunk back with a gesture which could not be mistaken—*she had been accustomed to the lash.* But when her recollections returned she blushed to the very temples, and held out her hand with an exclamation of joy; but before she had given the visitor time either to accept or reject this token of friendship, she snatched it back, the colour left her features, her attitude was changed to that of the most abject despair, and her bosom swelled with hysteric sobs. But this expression also was brief in its duration, for her attitude gradually became firmer, and her cheeks once more became suffused, but this time not with joy, but anger. She then addressed him as follows:—

"What dost thou want with me now, villain—is it not enough to accomplish my ruin, and bring me to this horrible place, without also haunting me hither?"

"Ha, ha, ha! How well she acts her part! as though *I* seduced her!"

"And didst thou not? Ah! surely Frederick thou didst never suspect me of being a mistress to any one but thee, and desert me in consequence of this unjust suspicion?" And as she spoke she laid her hand tenderly upon his arm, with an air which seemed to say, "if an unhappy mistake of this nature has occasioned thy estrangement from me, let me disabuse thy mind of the fallacy, and I am still ready to forgive."

But the brute could not suppress a chuckling laugh as he replied, "No, no, Mary, I did'nt mean that—I have no thoughts of resigning the triumph over a beautiful girl to another, but I meant that thou offeredst but little resistance to my will—I was astonished that I triumphed so easily."

"Oh God!" said the maiden, "that I should ever live to hear words like these!" and she leant against the settle for support. "I wish I were dead!"

"That's just the very thing I was saying—that it would be better if thou wert dead than to be fretting and upbraiding me at every turn,—unless indeed I could persuade thee to be cheerful, and to take proper care of thy person, then thou might'st be of service to us, for we could procure thy admittance into one of the first-rate hotels."

"Oh Frederick, Frederick! is it really come to this! that the only man I ever loved—him for whom I could have suffered a thousand deaths, and who has sworn a thousand oaths ever to love and cherish me—is it possible that *thou* wishest me dead?"

"Why, yes—that is, unless thou wouldst take care of thyself, and——"

"Ay, you told me once before; but suppose that were possible, what services wouldst thou require of me, and what would be my reward?"

"Why, in the first place, Mary, thy beauty is of no ordinary cast, and I must inform thee that keepers of hotels, as well as cigar-shops, groceries, &c., all look out for handsome young women, in order to attract customers; and as all women are naturally vain, the praises thou wouldst hear—the flattering attentions thou wouldst receive from a constant influx of strangers, as well as from some old hangers-on, would be sweet incense to thy woman's soul. But the particular service I should require of thee—and therein thou mayest prove thy love for me, which I promise thee I will by and bye consider favourably—would be to ingratiate thyself with the transient boarders, and travellers, and when thou hast ascertained the amount of their funds—the day upon which they intend to leave—the road they take, &c., thou mayest communicate the same to me."

"So thou dost still follow thy horrid trade—a trade of which I knew not thou wert guilty until I had fallen?—and thou wishest me to become the decoy-duck—the informer—the pander to highway robbers? Hear me, Frederick, I am here an outcast from all society, fallen as low as woman can possibly fall, with the exception of continuing in a career of guilt; I am a slave to those as vile as myself—the drudge of this miserable establishment—forced to perform the most menial services—the most filthy and disgusting work—obliged, in addition to this, to wait upon such company as thou seest are now took drunk to listen to our discourse, and have scarcely four hours rest out of the twenty-four; but that is not all—look at this arm—my neck—my shoulder, (and she laid bare the parts,) behold the stripes! See it bruised—blackened—lacerated!!! Yet would I rather—aye, a thousand times rather—drag on a miserable existence under all these inflictions than be a partuer—nay the *plotter*—of thy career of guilt!"

Her refusal to become an accomplice in his dark schemes hardened his heart against feeling any sympathy for her distress, and he replied sneeringly, "Poor thing! dost thou not wish thyself dead?"

"Aye, do I.—There is not a day passes over my head but I pray for death."

"If thou art so much in love with death, why dost thou not hasten his march?"

"Ha! I have thought of that too!—but villain as thou art thou dost not really wish my death—Oh, Frederick, can that be *possible*!"

"Possible? Aye fool; dost thou think a man likes to be upbraided with every little piccadillo! since thou wilt not assist me I wish thou wert out of my sight."

Here she showed him once more her lacerated flesh, exclaiming "and is not this punishment enough for me—will nothing but *death* satisfy thee?"

"Nothing but death, or implicit obedience to my commands."

"Thou hast said enough—had I but the means of destroying myself I would do so before thine eyes."

"Thou shalt not lack the means then" said the cold-blooded villain, opening a dirk knife and handing it to her. She took the knife, but with its possesion every passion became inflamed. She planted her foot firmly before her, dashed aside her flowing hair, wiped the tears from her eyes, while her lips were compressed and her nostrils extended, and taking the proffered weapon she closed it and put it in her pocket, saying, "Execrable Monster! beware of my resentment! beware of the gallows! thou art hastening to thy end, which I shall wait a little while to witness before putting an end to my own existence.

He cowed before her angry menace, and the fiery glance of of her eye, and then attempted to pacify her by saying it was all a joke. "But come" added he, "we have had enough of this foolery, now tell me if *he* has been here to-night, or whether he is now in the house?"

She merely nodded towards another room, which the visitor immediately entered: at first he could not discern any object, there being no light but that admitted by the door, but when his eyes became accustomed to the darkness he discovered a man lying with his clothes on, upon a straw bed in one corner of the room. He went up to him and shook him by the shoulder, saying "get up here!" The recumbent figure was snoring away merrily, being in the midst of a profound sleep, and it was some time before the other could waken him; at length he grew angry, saying, "confound the fellow, he must have no conscience to sleep so sound, loaded as he is with crime! Grimp, get up here!" He accompanied this summons with a kick so hearty that the slumberer sprung upon his feet and collered him, exclaiming "who be'st thou who pokes thy toe into a man's ribs in that manner? Speak, or I'll let into 'un!"

"Let go fool, it is I."

"Oh! Mounsheer le Capitaine!" said Grimp, with an air in which obsequiousness was strangely mixed up with a sneer, at the same time loosing his hold. He then retired a step or two and muttered to himself "curse his French manners,—my ribs will ache for a week! domned but I've a good mind to wop 'un!"

"Come dont be muttering there. What signifies a rib or two! I've worse than that to think about,—I've lost all my money, my watch, and my horse!"

"Aye you need'nt tell me that—I knew very well what 'ud happen I see'd 'ee sit down with that feller;—he's an old 'un!

The Captain (for I may as well announce that it was the French officer Gauvin) winced to hear that he had been tricked by an old gamester, for man is ever prone to ascribe his misfortunes to chance, rather than to his own lack of skill. So he said with some asperity "if thou knowest him to be an old gamester, why didst thou not convey to me timely warning?"

"No, no; I peeped through the window and see'd it all; but I durst'nt venture in there among them genteel country chaps,—they'd a-broken my ribs in earnest! I just noticed that *they* wur in vor th'night, and knowing how th'game would be up with you I provided a 'oss in place of the one thou'st lost."

"A horse! good. How didst thou manage?"

"Ha, I know how! It takes me!" said Grimp, flattered by the Captain's exclamation of surprise; "I be a cunning 'un, though I say it as should'nt! I'm the lad for doing a sly job! Did you ever hear how I fixed the gamekeeper at Monks Buckland? No! well then I'll tell'ee; we were down there a-poaching one night, when slap the gamekeeper and several of the servants pounced upon us; there wur no change to run, and so we stood fire. Up they came just man to man, and the battle began, but they wur better armed than us, and we soon began to get the worst on't. It happened that th' gamekeeper was my man, and after he had broken off the stock of 's gun he wop'd I with the barrel. I had a lump of a holly club, but 'twas nothing in comparison with his weapon. At last he struck me a wop on th' head which cut my old hat to tatters, and the blood come'd trickling down my face; 'thunder,' thinks I, as the fire flashed before my eyes, 'but this here wont do! The blow would a-knocked almost any body down, but 'twould'nt do to tumble, for I should a-been taken prisoner, and that you know would'nt please th' old 'oman. So what does I do but sing out "murder!" Upon that I 'spose he thought I'd gi' 'en in, for he lowered his weapon, when I hit him a wipe which knocked him stiff, and he was no sooner down than I jumped upon his breast! I then ran for't, and as the others wur all engaged, man to man, I got off, for there wur no one to follow me. Three of our fellows wur taken that night, and wur transported for't—the gamekeeper died, and it went harder with them on account of it, though the witnesses swore that the murderer had escaped—which was true for once—or they'd all a-swung for't.—And here am I yet! Wa'nt that well done, eh Captain?"

"But what about the horse?—tell me that."

"Well, you see I went out around a bit, and coming by the stables near the castle, I saw a man come out, lock the door after 'un, shove a dark lantern under his jacket, and then walk off. 'By your leave measter groom,' said I, so I pulled out *my* dark lantern, and *my* bunch of keys, unlocked the door and in I goes. There I fonnd two very good 'osses saddled, bridled, and *pillioned!* "Beg pardon' said I, 'but I guess measter wants a 'oss by this time, so I must disappoint *one* of the ladies!' "So I examined them both—took the best, and came off!"

"Fool! why didst thou not take both?"

"I thought of that Captain, but you see though I'm never afeard of a thrashing, or the loikes o' that, I doant like to risk my neck:—a hinglishman's 'ead will no more stand up an end arter his neck's broken with th' halter, than Frenchmen's bodies will grow a second crop of 'eads arter th' first is chopped off with th' guillotine! So I took one first and then went back arter t'other. But I was too late; a man was standing near the stable door on the look-out, so I returned; but I had scarcely passed the castle gate when I heard footsteps, and had but just time to creep behind an angle of the wall when they came up. They knocked at the gate, which was opened to them, but while they stood there I turned a ray from my lantern upon their faces—a moment only, but I know'd 'em both, and who do you think 'twas?—No; you'd never guess—Lucy Hicks and Alice Bland!—Here the Captain and Grimp conversed a minute or two in whispers, when they hastily left the house.

The girl had thrown herself upon a bench weeping bitterly as the Captain entered the inner room; but she did not lie there long before, animated by a sudden thought, she stole softly to the door and listened to the conversation. She threw herself on the bench again as they were about to come out, feigning sleep, but they had no sooner left the house than she kicked off her slop-shoes, tied a handkerchief about her head, and muttering, "villains, I'll watch ye for once!" she followed them.

[END OF THE VIII CHAPTER.]

EUROPEAN NEWS.

SUMMARY OF NEWS.

The Ministers, it will be seen by our Parliamentary reports, were defeated in the House of Commons, on Friday night, with reference to the sugar duties bill, an amendment, proposed by Mr. Miles, the member for Bristol, having been carried by a majority of 20. The announcement was received by Sir Robert Peel with evident chagrin, but he soon recovered his serenity, and intimated that he should be prepared to state on Monday what course he should pursue. Reports were very current on Saturday, Sunday and Monday that he had determined to resign, and it was even asserted, that Sir Robert Peel had carried the resignation of the Cabinet to her Majesty, who had accepted it, and "sent for" the Duke of Richmond. This statement was, however, denied by the *Morning Herald*, the only London morning paper which gives the Government decided support.