

THE
CAMISARD;

OR, THE

PROTESTANTS OF LANGUEDOC,

At an appointed day, the flocks, which were destined to perform their annual emigration in company, assembled at a small distance from the village, where a large open space allowed room for their being united. It was no longer the age of Estelle, at least, it was no longer the age of romance, and every occurrence in this working-day world wears a homely appearance, when contrasted with the poet's vision. Yet the ancient customs were in some measure preserved, and the half stifled emotions of the young men about to part for a[^]season from their fair mistresses, and the more openly expressed grief of these forsaken maidens, were still to be met with. There was an endeavour, also, to give the appearance of a fete to the scene. The flocks were marked with the ciphers of their respective masters ; the shepherd-boys and their favourite lambs were decked with wreaths of flowers and gaily coloured ribbands ; the rustic hautboy played its well known farewell, and the echoes still repeated the legendary chorus, with which the two parties bade each other a sad farewell, till the lengthening distance prevented the faint notes from reaching the ear. Then, and not till then, the disconsolate fair ones returned to the village, which now appeared so desert in their eyes, and prepared to linger away the summer months in expectation of the return of those they loved. /

In the cool of the same evening, Madame Durand left her temporary abode, mounted, as well as Rose, on sure-footed mules, as no wheel-carriage could possibly pass along the road she intended to pursue. Isidore escorted them on foot, and an honest thick-headed peasant also accompanied them, to serve as a protector, when his attention to the care of his flock should oblige him to absent himself. The feeling of removal is always painful, except

to some few restless spirits, who taste no pleasure but in novelty, and each of the party had peculiar subjects for silence and thoughtfulness.

The approaching night, therefore, compelled them to seek a shelter before they had interchanged many words, and early the next morning they again resumed their way, though with rather more sociability, as the act of travelling became more familiar, and the increasing beauty or sublimity of the scenery called for their admiration.

They entered, before long, upon the range of the Lower Cevennes, and wandered through scenes so silent, that it appeared as if the foot of man had never polluted the ground, inhaling at the same time such a perpetual succession of sweet odours as almost intoxicated the senses ; reposing at noon, under the thick shade of the beech, the chestnut, the lime, the lotus-tree, and the evergreen oak, and fanned by the fairy wings of thousands of fluttering butterflies, that glanced their rainbow colours in the sun. To complete the enchantment, the nightingale roused them from sleep in the morning, and lulled them to repose at night, and his song, though sweeter far than all, did not silence the other choristers, that made the woods resound with their notes.

After a journey of some days, they reached the village of St. Florent, and Madame Durand determined on taking-up her abode there, as the inhabitants appeared obliging and honest; and its vicinity to St. Jean du Gardonneuque, celebrated for its cleanliness, and the pureness of the streams which flow near it, rendered it in many respects desirable. It was not long before they were as commodiously situated as circumstances could admit, in a small house, distant about a quarter of a league from the village, and occupied by a peasant and his family, whose chief subsistence was derived from an immense quantity of silk-worms, that at this period particularly required their attention, and were soon to yield a produce which forms the riches of the Lower Cevennes, whence the manufactories of

great part of France are supplied. The mulberry-trees stripped of their leaves for their nourishment, offered the strange and dreary appearance of winter, in the midst of the freshness and gaiety of spring ; but the country round presented so many other beauties, that their loss was the less regarded.

His countenance presented the remains of manly beauty, but it was weather-beaten and inflamed from excess, and unpleasant from a peculiarly sly sarcastic look, which compelled the observer involuntarily to stand on his guard, while a bold daring manner and speech awed the timid, and disgusted the fearless. The old faded uniform he wore seemed to have belonged to some German regiment, an enormous sabre was suspended from a rusty black leather belt, a pair of pistols hung from his ragged sash, and a fiercely cocked hat and green feather completed his military costume.

" Come, my son," cried the old man, " we have far to go this day, and the sun already shames your sloth. Those are happy who can sleep, but the prime of life and of the morn are not to be thus wasted." Isidore, quickly springing up, was soon prepared to follow his conductor ; and after taking leave of the Hermit and the Soldier, they set out, accompanied by Pierre. The sun, though it had not attained its meridian height, and was tempered by a low hanging mist, had, even at this early hour, heated the air in an unusual degree, and an oppressive feeling overcame the spirits, which it was impossible to resist. The birds sat mute on the motionless branches, save the mournful stockdove, which ceased not to utter its low lamenting cry. The few peasants they met, instead of singing a cheerful carol as they proceeded to their toil, dragged along their heavy limbs, as if still weary with the yesterday's labour, and the very dogs crept after them with lolling tongue and drooping eye, heedless of the game that every now and then sprang up close to the path.

Our travellers felt the weather's influence, and the listless discourse hardly served to beguile the tedious way. Their road lay over some of the most unfrequented parts of the Mountains ; and as

habitations were thinly scattered, they took their frugal meal and siesta under the spreading branches of a venerable chestnut, and again resumed their journey, though the heat had become still more oppressive, and black clouds, which in the morning hung loosely on the horizon, were now drifting to one point and threatening to pour their united weight of waters on the parched earth. Pierre, accustomed to the signs by which the mountaineers can prophecy an approaching storm, warned them to find a shelter for the night. As the sun sank, the air was not cooled, and low rolling thunder was heard at a distance like the pealings of artillery, or the dashing of the hoarse cataract against the rocks that oppose its passage : no other sound broke the stillness, not a leaf was now stirring, and it became difficult even to breathe in the oppressive atmosphere. If for a moment a slight breeze sprung up, it seemed to proceed from the fiery heat of a furnace, and added fresh fever to the inflamed veins. It was happy for the weary travellers when the smoke ascending with difficulty from a few cottage chimneys, gave them the hope of a refuge ; and that hope might almost be called a certainty, since there was the mountaineer, however poor, who would turn a stranger from his door in such a night as this? They, therefore, quickened their steps, and soon arrived at the small hamlet of Millac, where a most friendly greeting answered their knock at the first house they reached, which was that of a miller. For the sake of his business, his habitation was placed near the bed of a small mountain river, whose stream reduced by long droughts to a narrow channel, had left on either side a wide expanse of gravelly shingles, called in that country the " grslove," and useful as a bleaching-ground to the fair maidens of the environs. Across this stretched a long row of deeply-worn stepping-stones, which by " their wearisome and needless length," might have excited a stranger's smile, had he not reflected what an immense deluge of waters must at times pour down to render them necessary, and pictured to himself the desolation that must accompany it. From the border of this stream, the hamlet, consisting of several narrow streets or lanes, ascended a slightly-rising ground, that was overlooked by the dark frowning

mountains behind; and on its opposite bank a small church, surmounted by its bell and cross, arose amidst the bare craggy rocks which formed an iron barrier to that side of the river. There was little vegetation near them, and even round the hamlet the patches of corn and pasture-land were intermixed with huge masses of the same rocks, that seemed to have been hurled at random by a giant arm.

The Miller, an honest hard-working man, with his wife and young family, had just finished supper ; and while she prepared to supply the wants of their guests, he joined a party of village philosophers before the door, who were intently studying the appearance of the sky, and uttering their wise prognostics. The shoemaker, a fat, jolly, puffing, little fellow, declared such a night had not been seen for the last twenty years; the publican feared it would spoil all the wine; and the baker that it threatened hail, and if it cut the ripening corn the price of flour must be raised: all united in thinking something extraordinary was about to happen, and none of the crowd thought of seeking their homes at the usual early hour. At first the joke, the song, the tale, went round ; but as the thunder became louder, and the lightning flashed more vividly across the heavens, the merriment gradually ceased, and none spoke but of past disasters, tremendous whirlwinds, and overwhelming torrents. From time to time, the cautious Miller would enter to communicate his fears to the party within, or direct his man to carry such articles as might be in danger to a neighbour's house, situated far beyond the reach of calamity.

In an instant all were alive to fear and anxiety. — It came nearer and nearer : with the rapidity of thought, the waters rolled their dark and turbid floods along the channel of the river, and rising as they advanced, soon transformed the level country into one immense sea, roaring and foaming as if to announce its threatened vengeance. The shouts were redoubled ; real or apprehended danger set every one in motion; lights hung out from the windows cast a feeble glare upon the dismal scene. The women

eagerly catching up their children from the cradle, flew to that part of the village which was usually free from danger, but which, from the immense body of water now approaching, was each instant lessening in space. The men, enraged at their own folly which had led them, though foreseeing the peril, to neglect providing against it, were carrying to places of safety all their moveables, and driving to the heights their mules and other cattle, made more stubborn by fear and the confusion of discordant sounds about them.

Everywhere was darkness and dismay. People pushed against each other as they hurried to and fro, shuddering to feel the water gradually reaching higher and higher round their naked limbs ; and many articles of furniture which in the haste could not be carried off, and which, when the flood had forced open the doors, were borne along the streets, added to the difficulty of the passage.

At the moment of alarm, the Miller, who, from his situation, was the first assailed, had removed his family and guests to a high point, from whence as the faint rays of morning broke, the eye could stretch over the whole scene of devastation. The water still kept increasing, and by degrees expelled from their retreats many who thought themselves secure. As it carried along with it the soil of an immense tract of land, it was thick and discoloured, and on its surface floated down, swift as the sight could follow, whole trees with all their leafy honours thick upon them, the thatch of ricks and cottages, hurdles, trusses of hay, and vines. On seeing how destructive had been its course, the mind sickened at each approaching object, from the apprehension that some unhappy victim of its rage might be drifted along by its resistless force. The houses appeared like islands in the watery waste, and even the high rocks on the opposite side were scarcely above its reach. On perceiving this, Isidore sprang forward; the friendly Miller, seizing him by the arm, called out that he was mad.

On the following morning, the Pilgrim, though still weak as an infant, was much

more rational, and Isidore sallied forth, to ascertain if the state of the country would permit of their returning to the village. How different was the scene that now presented itself, from that of the preceding day. The stream, purified by its own velocity, now poured its clear current along the channel which human industry had marked for it ; and as it rolled over its pebbly bed, its murmurs resembled the pettish sobbings of a child, when its impotent rage has been restrained. Sparkling in the sunbeam, it seemed to throw up myriads of diamonds, wherever a stone or rock checked the rapidity of its career ; and as it dashed over the opposing mill-dam, the light foam rose like wreaths of snow upon the brilliant surface. There was a brightness on the ground still covered with the wet deposit from the flood, that twinkled and glittered like the deceitful mirage ; and across the deep blue sky, the changeful fleecy clouds were drifting before a soft western breeze, and sweeping their dark shadows over the mountains. To increase the liveliness of the scene, what a noise, what a cheerful bustle greeted the freshness of the morning and the returning sunshine ! Troops of idle urchins were seen flinging the large drop-net, to entangle the myriads of young fry which had been forced along by the current ; others were sporting in the clear wave, with limbs deeply bronzed like a troop of young Indians. The men were clearing away the mud which had filled every street, and defaced every garden ; and the women, not displeased with the bustle, though rating at the labour, were joyously employed at the river's brink, in restoring their household goods to their pristine cleanliness, and eagerly relating the events of the night, to those at least as well acquainted with them as they were themselves.

In the lists of the present year, therefore, the name of Isidore Delorme was placed, and it was also the first drawn. By what secret of office such things were formerly effected it is not for us to inquire, but rather to rejoice that it has died with its authors. It was in vain for his poor mother to urge the exemption of only sons, on whose labour the care of his little paternal property depended ; it was in vain several of the

neighbours ventured to second her petition; and Isidore, while ministering to the health of his aged parent, was thus to be forced into a career for which, notwithstanding his unquestioned bravery, he felt no inclination, and doomed at the will of an enemy to part from all to whom love, gratitude, and esteem bound him. The triumphant Consul commanded his instant appearance ; and, as his absence from Vallerargues prevented his compliance, two of the military quartered in the nearest town were despatched in search of him, with orders to take him immediately to head-quarters, without even suffering him to return to his native village, and soften, by one farewell, the bitterness of his widowed parent's feelings. Those who heard the orders, execrated the needless severity, and an increased interest in the fate of the young man was the natural consequence of every attempt on the part of Vidal to oppress and degrade him.

The woods around St. Florent were intersected with those numerous and immense caverns which, during the religious wars, had served at once for hospitals and magazines, arsenals and granaries. The memory of past events had hallowed these retreats with an almost religious feeling amongst the descendants of those valiant martyrs ; and many were the tales which they had to relate of the scenes these strong holds of nature had witnessed ; the

devotion with which even timid women had braved every risk to carry assistance and consolation to the sufferers laid up there by their glorious wounds : and never, perhaps, were compassion and tenderness, united with courage and zeal, carried to greater heights than by those who thus exposed themselves to every peril, not in the ardour of the battle, but by the dying couch of the helpless and forlorn. They told, too, of the barbarity with which the Miquelets, as the troops serving against the Protestants were sometimes called, had often tracked them to their dens, and completed the work of slaughter. In some of them, the blackened rocks still bore marks of the rude manufacture of gunpowder, an article so essential to the safety of the little army, and which, unable to procure in sufficient quantities in

the low lands, they contrived to fabricate by intense labour in these recesses. Remains of broken casks, stocks of old guns, blood-stained swords, old hand-mills, and rusty mortars were often found concealed, and recalled the spectator's thoughts to the times of warfare and confusion, when life was one continued struggle, and the giant strength of despair alone prevented slavery from polluting that hard-fought land. Nor was the spirit yet laid; nor did the eye of the mountaineer flash less brightly, as he grasped the blade some hero of old had wielded, and felt that the oppressor would find as strong a barrier as of yore in the breasts of men who prized their freedom more than life, and their religion above either.

Again they were silent, till the tolling of a distant bell flinging its dull sound upon the air, gave notice that a fellow mortal had passed the veil which separates the seen from the unseen world, and time from eternity. Straggling groups appeared, returning silently down the pathway, and the dark clouds overshadowing the moon's, bright surface, threw a gloom around every object, which induced Madame Durand to return slowly home, followed by the unconscious Maniac. They had scarcely reached the edge of the wood, when the approach of footsteps excited their attention, and their landlord, who had ran to meet them, informed Madame Durand, that two strangers had arrived at the house during her absence, and expressed great anxiety to speak with her. This intelligence caused the whole party to quicken their steps, and Rose, engrossed with one object, improbable as the expectation was, already anticipated a meeting with Isidore. On their arrival at home, she entered with Madame Durand into the little parlour occupied by the strangers, and by one glance, perceived that they were indeed such to her. The younger, already known to our readers, as the shepherd Pierre, was leaning his strong muscular form against the open casement, and the passing rays of the moon fell full upon his fine sunburnt features and rude attire. The elder stranger seated at the farther end of the room, resting his thin hands on his trembling knees, was at first scarcely to be discerned in the shade ; but his eyes were fixed on Madame Du-

rand as she entered, and it seemed as if he feared he should not be able to support the feelings which the first sight of her would occasion.

The tract of country over which they travelled, lay between two chains of hills, in the diocesses of Alais and Vizes, which are watered by the Gardon ; a continued range of low mountains, covered with chestnut-trees, bounded the view, and their rich foliage, no longer enlivened by its gay blossoms, formed a deep and impenetrable shade. At some distance, the lofty summits of Aigoal and L'Espirou towered above the rest, attracting the soft clouds which often fell in showers upon the valleys beneath, and fed the numerous streams, which, issuing from their rocky caverns, increased the waters of the Gardon. One part of this district has received the name of Host Dion, or garden of God; so fondly does man associate with every scene of more than usual beauty, the idea of the Eden from which he has been banished. It is watered by a thousand rills that glitter in the sun, and the variety and fragrance of the daffodils, violets, tulips, jonquils, narcissus, jasmine, and other flowers that embalm the air, equal, if not exceed those in that field

Amongst other places that lay on the road our travellers took, and which had thus been rendered famous by the struggle of the Protestants, was the Mas de Cauvi, on the borders of the meadows of Alais, remarkable in the annals of the Camisards, for the combat which the intrepid Cavalier, bold in a good cause, and his devoted, though undisciplined troops, sustained against the well-armed Burgesses and gallant Nobles, who, under the Chevalier de Guines, burned to encounter an enemy they despised, but from whom those fled who could escape the avenging sword. Not far distant was the Devois de Martignargeres, where the same chief defeated an army of marines and dragoons, under the command of Vonquieres. Crouching on the ground, they seemed to present an easy prey to the foe ; but no sooner did the royalists advance in a furious charge, than the little Camisard band rose as by one impulse, and the hymn of devotion sounding along their

line, they rushed to battle and to victory. Dear to the heart is the spot where our forefathers have bled in the cause of liberty ! To the careless eye of the stranger, the grass waves as mournfully, and the rocks rise as bleak as those around ; but every object near it speaks to the heart, that can say it was here they fell who have transmitted to me the freedom {they fought for, and from whom I inherit the ardour which led them to triumph over danger and difficulty.

CHAPTER VII.

After a journey thus slowly performed of several days, the scenery became by degrees wilder, and their way drew nearer to the banks of the winding Gardon, which rolled its clear blue tide over a stony bed, worn smooth by incessant friction, while its waters were dark from the deep overhanging shadows of the rocks that bordered it.

Evening was drawing on, while they completed these arrangements, and as they proceeded, the hollow murmur of a distant water-fall became distinctly heard. A few scattered stars were gradually appearing in the dark blue of the unclouded firmament, and along the western horizon the faint crimson glow announced that the beams of day had not long departed. In this soft light — this hour when all is hushed and still as an infant's sleep, Isidore for the first time approached the Pont du Gard v/ith the admiration of unsatiated enthusiasm. A triple row of arches sprung in majestic, yet fair proportion, stretching with giant span from one huge mass of rock to the other, and filling up the valley through which ran the river, now dwindled by the summer heats to a small stream. Ages had rolled their silent course over this changeful globe, since first this mighty structure rose in the solitary waste. The wildness of the scenery around, so calculated to strike the mind with awe : the absence of every other trace of human grandeur ; the gloom that overshadowed the scene, suited well with the sublimity of the pile. It scarcely seems the effort of mortal strength, and

the imagination might almost conceive some potent spirit soaring in mid air, and by his voice commanding it into being, to mock the puny attempts of man. But wondrous as it appears, it was achieved by the genius and perseverance of Rome, as a lasting monument of her fame, proclaiming the majesty of days gone by, and challenging the admiration of succeeding generations to its imperishable greatness. Who can behold this stately fabric, and not feel his heart beat high with rapture ; who can examine its firm construction, its massy stones and strong-connecting links, and not confess how like a breath is the life of man, when compared with what his genius plans, and his hand executes.

Isidore, as the most alert, climbed to the summit of the rocks, and at length discovered at a distance a glimmering light, to Avhichthey immediately made their way. It proceeded from the window of a baraque, an inferior kind of inn, in which several lamps diffused their cheerful rays, while peals of merriment reaching the ear at a considerable distance, and scraps of low popular songs, gave notice what description of guests were revelling within. Both paused at the threshold of the house ; the Pilgrim was at best little inclined to mirth, and the feelings to which the lovely scene he had been gazing upon gave rise, even more than usually disgusted Isidore at the thoughts of such associates. He would gladly have awaited the return of day, wrapt in his cloak on a bed of lavender and other aromatic herbs that everywhere yielded their rich perfume as they were trodden under the foot of the traveller ; his eye watching the stupendous shadows of the aqueduct, and his thoughts flying far away to her who was associated with every pleasure ; but Father Bernardine's recent recovery from so severe an illness, forced him, though reluctantly, to give up this wish, and he knocked loudly at the door. A sudden silence ensued, followed by the barking of a little cur dog, and the authoritative voice of the master, inquiring who demanded admittance with such an air of command. Isidore made him understand their want of food and shelter, and relapsing again into the obsequious landlord, he opened the door, and ushered them into the common room adjoining the kitchen, where all travellers of every description were wont to

assemble. The landlord, a portly, quick-eyed, obsequious publican, conducted his new guests to the place of honour, a seat near the huge chimney, which was now gaily decorated with boughs of the gum listus. He remarked under the simplicity of Isidore's dress an air of superiority to which he naturally yielded respect, and his habitual reverence for the ministers of his religion procured for the Pilgrim the same attention. But, in order to effect this arrangement, two men had been removed from their places, and with looks of displeasure at the intrusion, they sauntered to the lower end of the room, and stood for some time in eager conversation with the other guests, while around the several tables all heads were drawn close together, and whispers circulated, which, from the glances stolen from time to time at the Pilgrim and Isidore, seemed to have their arrival for their subject.

again, turning to the Pilgrim -

" I had information of a number of Camisards w^ho intended to hold a prayer meeting ; I think it was called at the mill of Cognac, no matter now where that is - I set off with a few of our choicest spirits.

The night was dark as a funeral pall, and if we could have trembled, we should have done so then, for there is no knowing what is abroad at such a time. However, soft, soft we went on, and could plainly hear their voices as they yelled forth their hymns with a noise that would have stunned you. Each had his sword by his side, pistol in belt, and gun ready cocked in hand, when suddenly the singing ceased. We began to swear as loud as we durst, fearing the prey had escaped, and sure enough it had; when we reached the mill, there was nothing to be heard but the wheel going click clack, click clack, and an old bel-dam lullabying her grandchild. ' Hell and furies,' I exclaimed, ' did these fools sink into the earth, or fly off like the witches upon a broomstick!' With one blow I burst open the door, and those within began to huddle together with fear. There was a crowd of them ; an old man, just ready for the grave, he could not wish to live longer, his wife, some five or six daughters, young boys, an infant in the cradle, some for every taste, and I had a

taste for all. We asked how the meeting had broken up so suddenly? the pretty innocents stared; they could not understand us ; not a soul had been near them that night. Just by way of jogging their memory, a quick-handed cadet gave one of the women a prick with his bayonet ; she set up a shriek, all joined her, so there was but one way to silence the hubbub. The old man fell first ; when once we had drawn blood, there was no stopping. The old woman clung round me to save her youngest babe, who laughed as my sword glittered in its eyes ; perhaps I might, but in giving her a kick, to loose myself from her hold, she stumbled, and I believe never spoke again. All was the work of a moment ; in turning to see how my companions sped, a heavy blow fell upon my left arm; I looked about, and by a secret door, concealed by a quantity of brushwood, came sallying forth the troop we expected to meet less prepared for us. It was then no time for mercy ; swords clashed - shots were fired - the dead and the dying fell together, and I fell too, from loss of blood. The room seemed to swim before my eyes, and suffocating with the smoke and the pressure, I remember no more, but the face of the man who thought he had given me a death stroke, and that I shall never forget. When I came to myself, I shook off the bodies that weighed me down ; there were only a few of our's, and they looked fierce even in death ; I cannot say I liked their company so much as when they were alive. The women and children, too, were strangely pale, and covered with blood and wounds ; I could almost have fancied they turned their eyes reproachfully upon me, for it was morning, and every thing was clearly seen: one fair lass, with long flaxen hair fallen from under her cap."

The wind had risen, but soft and gentle as the breath of love ; it drove the white clouds along the sky without darkening the face of the moon, that sailing along in the deep azure reflected her image in the trembling stream, and whose light, flung in broad lines upon the rocks and massy arches of the aqueduct, deepened their dark shadows on the ground.

water,

" that man who is formed for noble purposes should delight to defile this fair world by his passions and his rage ; still more strange, that religion, which is meant as a light to purify every heart, should so often prove the fatal torch of discord. Are we not the children of one common parent? Is not that lovely sky a canopy for all? Does not the same sun shed warmth and comfort alike on all? and we seek, for a difference of opinion which our Heavenly Father tolerates, to exterminate each other from the possession of a few yards of the earth's surface. How is his image effaced from our souls, by which we should recognise one common kindred? Is there not enough of woe in the world without causing for those thunders which his mercy suffers to sleep? No, it is clear that a persecuting religion can never be the true one, since how can we have a right to exclude any from the number of our brethren, when the orthodox Jew was commanded to acknowledge as such even the poor ignorant outcast Samaritan."

Curiosity tempted Isidore to draw near and lift up the horseman's cloak with which it was covered, but he as quickly turned away in horror on perceiving it to be the body of the old soldier, whose dreadful language and insolent behaviour had so much disgusted him the night before, stiff in death, and the cloak, which some friendly hand had thrown over him, wet with the blood which flowed from a deep wound in his side. His face was swollen and black ; his eyes seemed starting from their sockets and his own neck handkerchief, twisted like a rope, had apparently been used as one means to assist in his destruction. Still, even in death, there was the same vindictive look, the same air of unsubdued courage that had distinguished the hardened villain to the last hour of his existence ;

: so perfectly convinced was the sapient landlord at last of his guilt, and his own penetration, as he denominated the look he had chanced to give, that he winked to his ostler to seize the culprit. But Isidore, roused by the sudden attack, with one blow sent him reeling to the other end of the room; a

second opponent shared the same fate, and a third, advancing, would have followed his companions, had not the whole party, exclaiming that he was resisting justice, rushed upon him, and at length got him on the ground, holding him down with knees and arms, till a strong rope was brought, and being tied round his wrists, deprived him of all power of opposition. The alert pedlar had insisted on being the person to fix it, and taking his opportunity while he bent over him under pretence of straining the cord, slipped a small knife into the pocket of his waistcoat, at the same time saying in a scarcely audible whisper, " Use it, and escape if you are innocent ; you know you have no cause for fear."

no tidings of the Pilgrim reached him, the hope of whose return he would not yet give up, and the silence of so lonely a place, seldom interrupted, but by the crowing of a cock, calling his favourites to a sunny dunghill, or the thoughtless whistle of the ostler as he pursued his customary employments in the yard, was not calculated to dissipate his gloom.

There were several loiterers still about the door, attracted by the sight of the well-acquainted horses belonging to the soldiers, and amongst them Isidore recognised the same officious pedlar, who seemed busily occupied in fixing on his saddle. As he mounted, he leant a little towards him, and the pedlar, in his former tone of mystery, lamented bitterly the arrival of these men, which, he said, had frustrated the prettiest plan that ever the head of man had framed. " But fear not," he added, " there are those who can serve you yet." " We must have no whispering," cried the elder guard, prancing his horse up, so as to make the pedlar start with fear from its trappings.

" I was only offering the young gentleman," he cried in a whining voice, " something in the way of my trade ; I thought linen might run short upon such a sudden summons, and no man of spirit likes to die in public unless in a fine Holland shirt."

" Stand out of my way," cried the soldier, " or you'll have something in the

way of my trade, I take it." And so saying he led the march, followed by Jaques and Isidore, who turned in sad silence from a spot where so unexpected, and perhaps fatal, an interruption to his happiness and fortune had occurred.

In this manner they proceeded along a rich level country, covered with the soft green of the luxuriant olive, till the ancient city of Nismes, and the Tour Magne rising in solemn grandeur over the vast extent of magnificent ruins and modern buildings stretched below, presented itself to their view. After winding along the narrow streets that compose what might be termed the suburbs of the town, they reached the gate of France, where, however, a ready sentinel suffered* them to pass, and continuing their way, came at last to the open esplanade, the favourite resort of loungers, who were reposing under the rows of trees, or sauntering to the melody of music along the smooth gravel walks. Here the gloomy walls of the city prison first presented themselves to Isidore's view, and excited feelings which none but a captive can enter into. Beside the house of woe rises that vast majestic amphitheatre which for so many ages has awakened the astonishment of all beholders. Wrapt in silent admiration, he stood for a few moments in utter forgetfulness of his own situation to gaze upon its ruined greatness, the

Mountainous pile o'er whose capacious womb
Pours the broad firmament its varied light.
While from the central floor the seats ascend
Round above round, slow widening to the verge,
A circuit vast and high,

which the merciless hand of the barbarian had not been able entirely to deface, and which time, while robbing it of its more finished splendour, had only rendered more solemn and commanding. As his guards were making the necessary inquiries previous to his reception in the prison, Isidore traversed the space before the arena, unable to turn his eyes from an object which so completely riveted his attention. The night was dark, but vivid

flashes of summer lightning seemed to wrap the vast edifice in one sheet of flame.

For a moment, the bold sweep of the walls, the triple row of lofty arches, the ornamented columns, were given to the view as clearly as life; the noon-day sun, had poured his refulgence upon them, and they then disappeared in impenetrable gloom. Again the lightning flashed over them. It seemed as if some kind enchanter shook his torch in the skies to dazzle his sight with so much grandeur during these last instants of freedom. It was such a scene as those who have once beheld it cannot easily forget, and never will the majestic pile impress such feelings of awe upon the mind, as when thus displayed by the sublimest light in nature. The low thunder was growling at a distance, not a breath of air could be felt, and the white flag hung motionless from the top of the amphitheatre. At length the keeper of the prison announced that all was ready for his admission; he passed the gate, and the wind that rushed along the high-vaulted passages felt chilly and cold when contrasted with the oppressive heat of the outward atmosphere. All was darkness and misery, and when Isidore heard the iron door close upon him, and the kind farewell of his conductors, he threw himself upon his straw mattress in the corner of his cell, and gave way to feelings of hopeless despondency.

CHAPTER IX.

dozen shopkeepers of inferior merit and celebrity, who, impelled by the love of gain, had, for a few days, forsaken their accustomed counters, to display their commodities at this celebrated fair; voitures without number, calashes and charbands of the most antiquated forms rolled away; crowds of country people, eager for the annual sport, came jocund along, mounted on bouriques, or jolting in the rattling cart; while the weary mules, destined to draw them to this scene of amusement, seemed scarcely able to move, under the united weight of packages and passengers. Young and gallant horsemen dashed triumphantly by, scarcely checking their career, to lavish a few jests on the pretty country lasses as they passed; while the more humble pedestrians, panting and toiling through the clouds of dust, almost

wished they had been content to remain at home, and could have assumed sufficient courage to say, unmoved, they had never been at the fair of Beaucaire.

At regular intervals, small parties of cavalry watched over the public convenience and safety, assisted by the gardes champetres from the country round, who found this a more entertaining service, than seizing on the young plunderers of the vineyards and fruit-trees ; and as their sabres glittered in the sun, and their spirited horses pranced and champed against the bit, their appearance gave a lively air to the motley scene.

obtain upon a pack of woollen goods, amidst the din of voices and the mingled scents of tobacco and soup, he prepared to fulfil his commission. The day was by this time far spent, and he found it no easy task to proceed through the main street, lined as it was on both sides with tents and booths, occupied by venders of both sexes, eager to set off to the greatest advantage their various articles, which exhibited all the splendour furnished by the East and West, and all the refinements and delicacies that can tempt the eye or palate. From every booth loud solicitations arrested the attention of the numerous saunterers ; and the cunning chapman, suiting his lavish commendations to the apparent fancy of the purchasers, made his profit of their vanity or credulity. He was the more eager to despatch his work with speed, and dispose of his merchandise, as the close of day warned him that the attractive charms of the prairie would soon draw away every customer, and was himself equally desirous of sharing in a scene presenting to the imagination all the brilliancy and variety of romance.

Each nation might be said to have its representatives in that mingled crowd ; the solemn Turk, chewing opium with the same sang froid as if seated in his divan in the light kiosk ; the sober German, puffing from his short pipe the perfume he so much loves ; the fantastic Italian ; the wary Dutchman ; the fur-clad Russ, sighing for his congenial snows ; even the steady Briton, the proud-daring Spaniard, and the fair-

haired Swede, in the dresses of their respective countries, united in the vast brotherhood of traffic and barter ; nor were the far-distant Chinese, or the tawny Lascar, wanting to complete the assemblage. Gay parties of revellers, clad in all the luxury of taste and splendour, mixed with these strangers, and groups of peasants, presenting to view the fantastic costume of the country, harmonized well amongst them. Every sport that mirth or idleness could require was at hand for the amusement of the company. Bands of music, dispersed about, filled the air with their inspiring sounds. The tinkling guitar, and lively castanet roused the light-footed dancers, while others joined in the chorus of romance and song. In various parts the tables were crowded with those who whiled away their time with cards or dice ; near at hand the active tumbler gained a few pence by his skill, the fortune-teller enriched himself by the credulity of the old and young, and the juggler bewitched them with his wonderful tricks of slight of hand. Parties of young Savoyards, leading about monkeys and marmosets, danced the steps and sung the simple airs of their much-loved mountains, and shows and equestrian exploits drew the attention of numbers. Tents of every form and size were spread about ; some clouded with the smoke of the all-bewitching pipe – others served by smiling damsels, presenting the refreshments best suited to the purse and taste of every class, from the vender of iced water to the gay limonadiere, who had been wafted down the Rhone from Lyons to delight the assembled crowds with the grace with which she condescended to offer her sherbets and cafe. Thousands of lights gave a brilliancy to the fanciful scene, which the glaring eye of day would in part have dissipated; and as their splendour was reflected in the broad waters of the Rhone, the glittering wave seemed to roll in liquid fire.

With a searching eye, he gazed on the motley groups, indifferent alike to the jest, the laugh, or the merry song ; till after much fruitless trouble he stopped at length before a booth less gaily decorated than the rest, and surmounted by a black flag, where two or three countrymen were eagerly engaged at a game of cards round a small oak table. The owner of the tent was

dealing out annisette to a band of thirsty musicians, who were quarrelling at the door, and his little girl perceiving that Pierre regarded him with great earnestness, pulled his coat to awaken his attention to Uie stranger. The man turned round, and

crossed their way. At length they turned to the bridge of boats connecting the towns of Beaucaire and Tarascon, which lies on the opposite bank of the Rhone, and which has acquired notoriety, and the pleasure of an annual commemorative festival, from the destruction of the furious marine monster, called a Tarasc, v^hich, though capable of overpowering all resistance, yielded instantly to the force of St. Martha's apron-string. After answering the summons of the guard, the draw-bridge was let down, and its massy chains rattled under their tread.

How different was the scene they now contemplated, from that which they had so lately quitted. A few lamps suspended on ropes across the bridge, by their dim light, served to make darkness more visible, and the distant sounds of mirth and music that reached the ear, contrasted strangely with the hoarse dash of the rushing flood which rolled under their feet. Behind them lay the picturesque town of Beaucaire, with its half ruined castle, as if suspended from the summit of a steep rock ; before them, Tarascan, with its long lines of fortifications and castellated walls, recalling to mind the power of the Sicilian King, by whom they were erected. On reaching the latter place, they proceeded still in silence along

those streets which were least traversed by strangers, till they at length reached a large gateway, the entrance to some abode, formerly of great magnificence, but which time and neglect had greatly injured. A slight knock was immediately answered by the wicket's opening, as if by enchantment, and they stepped into a large grass-grown court ; but the windows of the house were broken – the shutters falling off their hinges, and the whole appearance sufficiently testified it to be uninhabited.

Our enemies are on the alert ; assisted by the powers of darkness, who are always stirring up the wicked, they roam

abroad, their reign is short, and their fury is therefore great – what wonder that at every turn, I should find it hard to baffle them. For a little time we must arm ourselves with patience – it is the first virtue of a soldier ; when we next meet, we will throw patience to the winds, and buckle on the helmet and the sword, as becomes men and martyrs." A low murmur of discontent ran through the assembly at these words, and some even dared openly to express their dissatisfaction at such frequent delays.

Pierre threw himself in one corner beside them, but unaccustomed to the closeness of the pent-up air, so different from the free and stirring breath of the mountains, his respiration was oppressed, and a feverish restlessness prevented him from closing his eyes: he thus was constrained to become a spectator of the Pilgrim's night-watches. So far from needing that long repose which other men imagine they require, the hours usually dedicated to sleep were often, for him, those in which his mind laboured with most intensity. As he sat buried in deep reflection by the lamp which threw its unsteady light full on his pallid cheek and silver hair ; so striking and energetic was his countenance, that it seemed as if some mighty Spirit possessed his aged frame, and raised his soul to conceptions far beyond its worn-out powers. His eye sparkled – his nostril was distended – determination was in his look, and so strong was the excitement to which he yielded^ that the big drops fell unheeded from his brow.

Deeply reflecting on what he had just witnessed, Pierre also at length composed himself to sleep, but the first light of dawn scarcely passed with uncertain glimmer through the iron-grated window, and the genius of traffic had not yet roused his votaries to their arduous devotion, when Father Bernardine starting up, awoke Pierre, and desired he would follow him. There was little need of leave-taking, since they left their companions of the night either sunk in profound slumber, or half aroused by their voices, turning on their heavy sides, and in a state of indistinct consciousness muttering curses against the obtruding day, which brought neither peace nor happiness to them.

Leaving the house with extreme caution, they proceeded along the same way which Pierre had before traversed through the towns of Tarascon and Beaucaire. A few sons of industry, anticipating the dawn of day, were the only persons they met in the silent streets, and taking the road to Nismes they passed quickly along, scarcely noticing the courteous salutations which the Pilgrim received from the travellers, who had preferred the cooler hours of night for their journey to the fair.

Amongst our band we had men who, inflamed by overwrought zeal, assumed not only the task of teachers but of prophets. One of the most remarkable of these was Clary. Impressed with the authority of their mission, all bent before them, and I amongst the rest ; but the piercing eye might perchance discern the smile of scorn on my lip, as I listened to the dictates of these oracles commanding us forth on expeditions on which the worldly prudence of our leaders had already determined.

and there enjoy the long-neglected exercise of our religion. Our troops flew thither from every part; religious assemblies were unceasingly held, and the multitudes, who, deprived of their Pastors, had so long pined in the want of spiritual instruction, flocked to join the solemn services. Forty or fifty thousand persons were continually uttering hymns of praise ; the night brought no intermission, and the ears of our enemies were forced to listen to the sounds which, of all others, they most abhorred. Yet not a hand dared rise against us, and the Protestant faith, springing from its ruins, seemed to triumph once more over every obstacle. For a moment the Vaunage, that beauteous country of the vine, the olive, and the pomegranate, promised peace as well as riches to its inhabitants. But I dwell too long on these hours - alas! those which follow will have little interesting to detain me. The answer to our demands at length arrived from court. Liberty of conscience was nominally granted, but no temples were to be built, nor were our innocent brethren to be released from the galleys. Cavalier himself was permitted to raise a regiment, of which he was to be colonel. Careless whether his friends, with whom

he had till then made common cause, agreed, he signed the treaty. The independent Roland refused to submit to such terms, and even in his own troop Cavalier soon found he had lost the confidence he so much valued.

'The Syren I spoke of came to me for some bauble, which I could not purchase ; a richer rival might, I thought, bribe her with it, and, stung by the suspicion, I determined to obtain the hundred louis offered for Roland's apprehension. I was willingly employed by the commander of the king's forces. My perfect knowledge of the country ensured success, and a party of dragoons secretly followed me to the retreat of the veteran. Thirty years have elapsed since then, and more than as many crimes have succeeded that one, but never has the remorse for it ceased to sting. It was at the castle of Castelnaud, near Troyes, that Roland was concealed with a few followers. The sentinel on watch, unmindful of danger, did not perceive our approach, till we had surrounded the place, and seized the gates. The brave Rojand, with five of his companions, rushed from a back-way, determined to perish nobly as they lived. With his back against a tree, he stood firm, and dared the boldest to approach. I think I now see that proud, commanding countenance which kept his enemies long at bay - but in vain, a distant shot stretched him lifeless on the ground, and his friends losing all recollection in their grief for his loss, yielded like lambs. I saw them dragged to the place of torture ; I marked their heroic constancy and triumph over pain ; I saw five prelates exulting in their agonies, and even then I envied them the rack and the wheel that tore their limbs to pieces.

Every one hastened to welcome the good old man ; the best seat was offered him, and as the evening was fine, they spread some refreshments, of which the chief delicacies were chestnuts and white wine, upon a table under the plane-trees.

*' And you shall have again," said Andore kindly, " my Jeannette cannot object to two fathers, and if she has not love enough for both, I vould sooner spare you some of my share." Jean-

nette blushed deeply, and retired into the house ; none but her father noticed the rising colour, and he only shook his head and sighed. When supper was ended, the good woman and her children withdrew, and the two friends had too much to communicate to continue long silent. Each retraced the steps by which Providence had led him from a state of comparative happiness, to that in which he was now placed, but neither was inclined to question either the wisdom or the mercy of the dispensation.

This was immediately granted ; they grouped themselves under the shade of the plane-trees, and the aged Pastor, with his eyes raised to the starry heavens that canopied them, implored a blessing on the pious exercise in which they were about to engage. He read a portion of scripture, explaining it afterwards, in a manner level to the meanest capacity there, and after a prayer warm from the heart, they joined in singing the twenty-third psalm from the old French version, which is remarkable for its beauty and simplicity. When all was ended, "Go in peace," said the man of God, extending his hands in the act of blessing, "Go in peace, Christian people, and may the God of peace be with you." A calm yet joyful serenity seemed to fill every heart as they withdrew, but it was not before each one present, even the youngest child, had taken the Pastor by the hand, and offered a wish and a prayer for his happiness. The family then retired to rest, and at an early hour the following morning, the travellers were ready to commence their journey. Andore, who seldom left home, had many directions and exhortations to give, and promising to overtake them on the road, sent forward his companions with their guide.

Isidore was so well acquainted with the country through which his route lay, that he had not stopped during the darkest hours of the night ; as morning dawned, he began to feel that the body also requires support, and was not sorry to perceive the stir of humble life. Here and there a half-awakened cottager was proceeding unwillingly to his toil, chased by the vociferous tongue of his more alert helpmate ; the children, delighted at the return to life and enjoyment, were jump-

ing half-naked before their doors, and the shrill chaunt of the cock, which had aroused them from their slumbers, echoed amongst the hills. But there were no soft dews, no wreaths of white vapour encircling the heights, or stealing silently along the valleys: the sun rose bright in the cloudless blue sky, through which he was, till evening, to pursue his burning course. Aware of the hospitality of his countrymen, our young traveller had no hesitation in asking for such refreshments as he knew they could without difficulty afford, and again proceeding on his way, he soon entered upon that part of the range of the lower Cevennes to which his course was directed.

Isidore walked quickly forward, and on turning the rock, what a spectacle presented itself to his view ! The lofty precipices, the thick woods, and deep ravine, shaggy with immense blocks of granite, and even in the glare of noon-day half hid in gloom, the sparkling foam of the torrent and its Alpine bridge he had beheld before, but they were then desert and silent; now they teemed with life and animation. No sooner had he appeared, than as if by some magical impulse, small parties of men sprang down the sides of the cliffs, or rushed from the shade of the spreading chestnuts. Regardless of danger, superior to fear, they burst out in a loud shrill cry of rejoicing, brandished their arms, and ran with impetuous ardour to the level ground which lay before the cave. Expectation seemed at its height ; in vain some, who assumed the authority of leaders, endeavoured to control them - all were anxious to press forward with a din that increased by opposition. Isidore, doubtful whether to advance or retire, stood for some moments irresolute.

. The peasants, in their usual dresses, were adorned with all that chance could furnish of military accoutrements. The old Flemish belt and huge powder-flask were thrown across a tattered gray doublet; the unwieldy boots, which might have disfigured the appearance of one of Louis the Fourteenth's dragoons, had replaced the more suitable sabot ; some, notwithstanding the heat of the weather, had wrapped themselves in the red horse-cloaks of the

last century, and shattered helmets, half-worn foraging caps, and hats shaded with dangling plumes, formed a strange contrast with the matted locks they covered* Nor were the arms which they unskilfully wielded less diversified in their forms.

While these remarks were rapidly passing amongst the crowd, and every face displayed the varied feelings that agitated them, a small troop of cavalry, whose approach had been thus announced, turned the projecting rock; at their head was Vidal, and even the commanding officer appeared to yield to his authority. Irritated beyond all power of control by the death of their comrade, the sturdy peasants, late so peaceably inclined, ran to repossess themselves of the arms they had just thrown by. In vain Isidore remonstrated, they were deaf to his voice as the raging of the mountain stream : no leader was required to urge them on ; but during this short bustle, the troop had time to pass the defile, where they might have been met with advantage. The soldiers instantly dismounted -- the word of command was given, and with loud cries of "Vive le Roi et la Croix," they flew to the combat. A well-aimed discharge began the work of blood, but it served also to rouse the fury of the attacked. Still more indignant at a proceeding, which, without any inquiry, without even an attempt at pacification, thus wantonly sported with their lives, they rushed forward with the rage of the wounded bear.

In so narrow a field of contention, much of the skill of military tactics was useless, personal valour was at first successful, man closed with man, the nervous mountaineer often succeeded in wresting from his adversary the arms he had not space to wield. It was no vain trial of strength, no boyish exhibition of muscular prowess, life and death hung upon the contest : the sabres' flash was seen like gleams of light--
ning emerging from the smoke of the fire-arms, which once discharged, were thrown away as useless; the quick succeeding shots, together with the shouts of the victors, and the groans of the wounded, in dreadful confusion were repeated by

the echoes of the hills, and augmented the horror of the scene.

It seemed probable that some of the fugitives might yet be found lurking in the cottages and farms which were nearest the woods ; to seize on these, and to chastise such as had afforded them shelter, were important objects ; and perhaps in the opinion of Vidal, all unused to the fatigues and hazards of campaigning, the prospect of exerting his authority in procuring refreshments, was to say the least, equally so. To these two ends he sacrificed the impatience he felt, to display the success of his zeal to the Prior, and contented himself, for the present, with despatching a messenger to convey the pleasing intelligence. Night had already cast her mantle over the scene before the party was re-assembled, but the brightness of the moon was sufficient to guide them, as they proceeded slowly on, forced, though unwillingly, to curb the speed of their impatient steeds, in order to suit the tardy and painful steps of those who pale and wounded followed on foot. From time to time the shrill blast of the trumpet startled the wild animals that were reposing around them ; as the dry leaves crackled under their feet, the timid hare sprang from its form -- the frightened stock-doves flew from their nests, and the squirrel, careless of danger, leapt from bough to bough. In this peaceful solitude the tread of armed men had been for some time unknown, and so completely was the whole troop despoiled of its soldier-like appearance, covered with dust and blood, that it seemed rather some ferocious banditti, fresh from a scene of midnight rapine, than a party of the legal defenders of the land. It was not without difficulty that they proceeded, where the branches, left to grow as nature's wildness dictated, often swept their waving plumes, and the tough and knotted roots, concealed in the black shadows of the overhanging foliage, covered the path. Oaths and curses of impatience were the only words uttered, except a few low and scarcely breathed lamentations, which were sure to be followed by a blow or an injunction to silence, not very gently expressed. By degrees, however, the wood became thinner, and at a distance could be seen, through the

trees, the twinkling lights that showed where cottage comfort was to be found. The trumpet sounded a longer and a louder peal; presently might be discerned, the lights moving like fairy meteors along the dark horizon ; the stir of men was heard, the barking of village curs, and the bustle naturally excited by sounds so new and alarming.

As the soldiers drew near these rapidly increased, and soon they could distinguish the shrill cries of children thus unusually awoke from their slumbers, and the supplicating voices of the women, entreating not to be forsaken. Many of the most discreet of the inhabitants leaving their houses half naked and but half awake, had repaired to the abode of the Consul, unable to form an opinion respecting the cause of so astonishing an occurrence until authorized by him.

Every voice was to be heard at once ; it was the reign of terror, supported by confusion, nor was " the sight less strange than the sound." Men half clad, with brawny limbs and uncombed locks, females for once forgetful of finery and coquetry, were seen by the light of numberless candles, lamps, and torches, whose red glare flung back from the dark walls of the surrounding houses, gave a wild appearance to the whole. The Consul, every where but where he should have been, bustled from one group to another, commanding a silence he was unable to enforce, and prophesying safety while his heart sunk within him. At length, a troop of children, whom curiosity had rendered bold, were seen swiftly running down the principal street, exclaiming in accents of affright, " The soldiers ! the soldiers ! the king's soldiers are coming." It sometimes happens, that to weak consciences a military visit is an unwelcome honour, and so it proved on the present occasion. Many a boasting spirit quailed from an apprehension of inquiry being made into contributions not exactly paid, revenue dues eluded, or game illegally shot ; even the chief magistrate himself it was conjectured would not unwillingly dispense with too minute a scrutiny. However there was no time for deliberation ; Vidal and his party were fast approaching, and as

the horsemen drew up, at the thundering command * to Halt' in the public place, the crowd ran back on each other as far as the scanty space would permit. Had they in other respects felt perfectly at their ease, the sight of many of their friends and acquaintance, pale, dejected, and bound with cords, would have been a painful elucidation of the mystery. After placing these poor creatures apart under a guard, and causing such of the troops to dismount as appeared most alert of hand, Vidal drew near to the terror-struck Consul with a bow, which he meant should express how much he considered himself as his superior. '* Your servant. Sir," he he briefly began ; *' I am on his majesty's service, and assisted by this gentleman," pointing to the captain, ** I have exterminated as fierce a horde of rebels as it was ever the fate of a loyal gentleman to meet with. I mean the greater part, for some certainly have escaped us, and unless they can fly like eagles or dig like moles, they must be concealed in this place. The necessity of the case is my warrant ; with your leave I shall commit to your care the task of restraining your people, whom I see assembled here, and with a few of my friends make such search as I may judge proper. No ceremony, my dear Sir, I beg ; we are brothers in office - pray don't stir."

The affrighted Consul, indeed, dared not oppose his intention : the bare suggestion of their having harboured rebels was sufficient to silence him, and he could only go from one to the other, hoping they were innocent, and protesting, if they were not, the blame must rest on their own heads, since he could not reasonably be supposed to be sleeping quietly in his bed, and know at the same time what was going on in his neighbours' houses. Meanwhile Vidal, followed by the men he had selected, and their captain, who desired no better employment, began his domiciliary visits. With a rare sagacity, they selected the houses belonging to the best provided inhabitants, and from the length of their stay in each, it might have been deemed their search was very strict, if occasionally the screams of alarm or remonstrances, half in laughter and half in anger, from those left within, had not indicated that they found other amusements there. The increasing merriment

indeed was soon a convincing proof that they had at least discovered a way to the good stores and the choice wines of the suspected householders ; so attractive was the sport, that one by one the troopers, forgetful of their charge, betook themselves to it, and the whole village quickly proved the scene of a Bacchanalian orgie. The poor inhabitants, indignant at such treatment, would have driven their invaders away by force, but happily for them, a few of the most respected succeeded in soothing them to endurance: it was a Protestant commune, and therefore accustomed to suffer submissively ; one night's rapine might be repaired, but a single act of opposition would bring down upon them such sure and certain vengeance as no submissions could avert. Meanwhile the wretched prisoners, disregarded amidst the scene of spoliation, in piteous tones, begged for something to quench their thirst. Amongst those whose charity induced them to bring them refreshment, such as they could secure from the marauders, a barefooted girl about sixteen approached Pierre with a cup of water : he instantly recognised her as an inhabitant of St. Florent, to whom Madame Durand had shown great kindness, and eagerly inquired what news she had brought from thence. The girl could give him no late information, but informed him, that had this disaster not taken place, she was to have gone with her mother and several inhabitants of that village to be present at an assembly which was expected to be held not many miles distant. " Heaven grant," added the poor girl fervently, " these wild men do not come up with the poor creatures ; the congregation will be mostly old men, women, and children, and there is little hope but in that case they would show their malice." Pierre inquired who the minister was, who was to preach on this occasion, and learnt with the greatest dismay that the assembly had been summoned, upon the expectation of Monsieur Brunei accompanying Madame Durand on that day towards the low lands, and that it was probable that with the rest of her party she would be present. It was absolutely necessary, after hearing this, to warn the unsuspecting worshippers that at such a moment their meeting was unadvisable, if not dangerous, since the place

at which it was fixed lay on the very route which Vidal and his troop were to pursue. To send the young girl on such an embassy was extremely hazardous,, nor was he sufficiently sure of the disposition of the men of the village, who he thought suffered themselves too tamely to be oppressed, to trust to one of them. To be himself the messenger was above all things desirable, but was that to be risked ? The danger he might incur was nothing ; what he chiefly feared was the heavier vengeance that would fall on his companions whenever his flight should be discovered. He hesitated for some time, however ; the occasion was urgent, and the opportunity too inviting to be neglected. The shouts of laughter and tumultuous cries increased ; it was probable that some time would elapse ere the men would return to their duty, and then in no state to make a close inspection, and he resolved afterwards to give himself up, should his escape be prejudicial to his fellow-captives. With the girl's assistance, he easily undid the knots that confined him, and stealing cautiously along under the shadow of the houses by the most unfrequented ways, gained the open country ; then with the speed with which he had often outstript the deer in the chase, dashed on towards the spot where the girl had informed him the assembly was to be held, and by degrees the lights and noise from the village died away in the distance. To a late hour the scene of revelling and drunkenness continued ; wearied at length with their excesses, the dragoons straggled back to their ranks, taking with them two or three poor vagrants, whom they had found in the haunts of poverty, as some pretext for their behaviour; and Vidal having, with all the superadded impudence of intoxication, harangued the Consul on his duties, with insulting shouts and loyal choruses, they left a place where their presence had brought only alarm and mischief. The Consul, when the horses' tread was heard no longer, assumed a courage that was now become useless, and heroically promised his people, as a return for what they had suffered, such a visit to Vallerargues as should afford them ample compensation. The troop gaily pursued their way, their spirits raised, and their self-consequence so much in-

creased by their late successes in winning a battle and storming a town, that, despising military order, each took to the pace that his inclination prompted, and many a charge was made on the unoffending shrubs and bushes they met with in their way. In such a disordered march, the space they traversed was short in comparison with the time spent upon it, yet by the first streaks of morning light they had descended as far as Le Ranee, another village situated near the foot of the mountains. The wide expanse of low lands lay before them, smiling with the unsullied beauty of returning day, rich with the ripening produce of autumnal stores, and cooled by the freshness of the southern breeze : the song of the nightingale rose from every bush, and the lark flew upward, while chaunting her native song. A small river, whose waters, green and clear as an emerald, could scarcely be distinguished from the flowery meadows by which it was bordered, flowed beneath a shady wood, which, stretching along the foot of a soft sloping hill, was the only object that obstructed the view to an almost boundless horizon. Thin wreaths of smoke ascending from the scattered hamlets, hung over them like fleecy canopies in the still air, and the lowing of cattle, the bleating of flocks, and shrill cries of the herdsmen, animated the scene—Is it possible that men could be found so insensible to nature's charms, as, at such an hour, not to lose all thoughts of vengeance and deeds of violence? Such, however, was the troop that accompanied Vidai : still reeking from the last night's debauch, they appeared more like fiends let loose to mar the beauty of this fair earth, than as its masters, permitted to enjoy its charms, and to regard it only as it afforded them the means of indulging in their riot and excess. The road they pursued lay direct to the wood, and on skirting the hill, they suddenly heard, amid the surrounding silence, the chorus of a hundred voices, in strains at once full and solemn, uttering the hymn of praise ; they paused, and again the chorus rose more strong, and the plaintive sound of woman's voice could be distinguished.

power to enforce my wishes, and I promise you, if it is as I apprehend, they run a chance of being choked with their

own words, or of swallowing them in silence, at the point of the sword. Let Us push on, my merry men, and he who is last in the chase, shall listen to a sermon an hour long, for his pains to-morrow." The captain, although still half stupified with the effect of the wine he had drunk in profusion, could not refrain from interfering, and remonstrating with Vidal against a species of attack, which, though warranted by the strict letter of the law, had now been so long unattempted, that it might perhaps subject them to the •censure of many who thought it better not to awaken terrors that had slept during so many years. Vidal, who knew the temper of the troop, and was generally courageous when well seconded, turning fiercely round, begged to be informed if he was come there to learn law, or to execute justice. " Leave the event to me, Sir," he said, " you are now under my direction, thus it is ordained by our superiors ; they rely upon my judgment and your force, and as it is but right that the head should direct the arm, I order you to disperse that assembly which is illegally held, consisting of persons styling themselves of the pretended reformed religion, warning them to retire on pain of fine and imprisonment, and to seize the trumpeter forth of heresy and rebellion, bringing him bound along with you. Gentlemen, if the captain hesitates, you have my permission to ride on." The captain did hesitate, and preferred remaining with those who kept the prisoners ; the rest waited not for a second bidding, drawing their swords, and cocking their carabines, they galloped off* followed by Vidal, whose zeal had suddenly transformed him into a stout horseman. Could he have turned over one leaf of the book of Fate, he would not perhaps have hurried on so precipitately.

CHAPTER III.

On a smooth level, stretched between the river's brink and the tufted wood that skreened it from the rising sun, was that morning held, one of those religious meetings, which were silently tolerated among the Protestants in France, from the cessation of the Camisard wars, until the

mighty influence of a superior mind restored them their temples, at the moment when he also opened the churches of their persecutors. It seldom happened that such meetings were disturbed, although some instances are on record, of an armed force chasing the devout though timid worshippers to their homes. The zeal which opposition only serves to inflame was so fervent, that crowds always drew together to the places of assembly, obeying only a private summons, and unostentatiously choosing either the closing hour of evening, or preventing the morning watches, in order to be less observed. Sometimes stealing out of the towns before the gates were closed, they were prevented returning to their homes, till they were again opened, and were thus rendered liable to punishment, on the domiciliary visits of the officers in authority, who would rigorously fine them for their absence. So little do outward pomp and ceremony conduce to true religion, that it is probable more devotion was felt, and more charity imbibed on the barren hills, or amidst neglected rocks and quarries, where, exposed to the heat of the sun, or the chilling blasts of winter, they listened to the revealed will of their Heavenly Father, than when reclining at ease, under the regular teaching of a certain and stated ministry. Of the numbers assembled on the morning of which we are speaking, many hearts were kindled with that love to God and man, which is the "fulfilling of the law;" many, who had learnt in adversity how poor is all this world can offer, rejoiced to dwell upon the hopes of another and a better, and felt, not only that "L'infortune semblable a un feu penetrant fait exhaler de Tames parfums les plus exquis," but that there is even a joy in those sorrows which bring the soul nearer to her God.

Vidal, who was provoked at a degree of patience he had not calculated upon, incited the soldiers to still greater violence.

Leaping from his horse, he ran furiously to the venerable old man, and seizing him roughly by the arm, gave him in charge to one of the dragoons, and turned immediately to the spot where Madame Durand and the rest of her party stood overwhelmed with anxiety and dismay.

The appearance of Rose, about to be thrown thus completely into his power, was a sufficient incitement. *' These too," he continued, "' are a lawful prey ; these smooth-spoken corrupters of our peasantry must learn another lesson before they are set free, and bright eyes were not made to be dimmed by the tears drawn by a canting fanatic : to your duty, soldiers." The men obeyed his signal, and seizing Madame Durand and Rose, were preparing in like manner to lay hold of the terrified Louise, but a sudden stop was put to their proceedings ; a shriek so heart-piercing, so appalling, was heard, that the ruffians, aghast at the sound, for a moment paused. Even the Consul drew back, shuddering and aghast. His victim lay before him ; oh how unlike the lovely creature he had betrayed ! Yes ! there she lay extended on the turf ; her dark hair had fallen from under her cap, and streamed over her whole person ; with eyes, tearless and fixed, she regarded him, seeming to shrink from the sight, and yet powerless to turn away her gaze, as the poor animal who is fascinated by the glare of the basilisk. Nor was the seducer more calm, or his look less dismayed, at this unexpected phantom. If ever remorse touched his heart, it was at that moment ; if he could have been turned from a course of violence and outrage, it must have been then : even the spectators perceived that he trembled, but the hour of repentance was past ; the voice of conscience, so often silenced, had ceased to utter its low and solemn warnings ; the triumphant villain had lived to conquer shame, and the goal of iniquity was already reached — his race was well nigh run. *' Does a poor mad creature frighten you," he exclaimed, his colour returning as he spoke, and his courage reviving as he gazed on his awe-struck associates ; " if you are such fools as to be afraid of this woman, I will show you the way to deal with her." So saying, he grasped her by the arm with brutal violence, compelling her to rise ; her screams became louder and more piteous, but it seemed as if the sound only added to his fury ; her unhappy father on his knees entreated for her release, but Vidal, with fiend-like joy, smiled to see to what a degradation it was in his power to reduce him. So shocked were the as-

sembled peasants at his barbarity, that, again assuming an attitude of defiance. serious consequences might have been the result, had not an unlooked-for avenger at this moment appeared. Forced by his fear of detection to take a circuitous route, Pierre only reached Le Ranee a few minutes after those against whose arrival he had wished to warn the inhabitants ; the cries and screams he heard, the confused accounts of what was passing, given by the frightened fugitives whom he saw flying in every direction, excited his apprehensions, and panting and breathless with haste, he reached the field just in time to behold what it passed even his stoic firmness to bear, an insult offered to

the being whose affection and misfortunes had equally endeared her to him. Drawing, therefore, the knife which he always carried about with him, from his sash, he flew to her rescue ; already had he succeeded in disengaging her from the Consul's grasp, by flinging himself with him on the ground ; a short, but violent struggle ensued, but the Consul was no match for the stout mountaineer, who, forcing himself from his attacks, and pressing his knee on his antagonist's breast, held him fast and at his mercy. The enraged Consul, however, found means to draw a pistol from his belt ; in a moment it was pointed at his opponent's heart ; horror-struck at the sight, the wretched Louise wildly exclaimed, ** Oh stay his hand for mercy's sake! Let him not murder his own son ! The pistol went off; entangled in his shepherd's cloak, it had grazed his side but slightly, but on the smoke clearing away, it was perceived, that more just in his aim, Pierre, blinded by the desire of self-preservation, had plunged his knife in his father's bosom - if that man deserved the name of father, to whom his unhappy child was only indebted for life and infamy ! Yet no such extenuation presented itself to the mind of his assassin.

It was evening when they reached the village, and the news of the Consul's death was known before their arrival. Groups of people, with important looks, were assembled at the corners of every street ; their nods and shrugs betokened the more than ordinary in-

terest which they took in the subject of their conversation, and it so completely engrossed them, that hardly a casual salutation welcomed the travellers home. It was a gloomy evening or this season of warmth and sunshine; the air was oppressive, and seemed to threaten a storm, and the spirits flagged in the heavy, moist atmosphere. Already the death-bell tolled forth its dismal warning, and the women, as they hurried to vespers, crossed themselves in shuddering as the dull sound struck on the ear.

CHAPTER IV.

Happily for Rose, the blow which Isidore received was not fatal ; stunned by its force, he remained for some hours insensible, and when life again returned, the past appeared like a dream, and the present as a mere deception of fancy: his head, still filled with uncertain ideas of war and tumult, he found himself stretched on the ground in a large cavern, to which the light was only admitted through an aperture high in the rock ; but his recollection gradually returned, and the pain and stiffness which he felt on attempting to rise, convinced him at length, that he was not deceived by the visions of sleep, but was in deed and truth sheltered after the action of the preceding day, in some recess of the Hermit's abode. With considerable difficulty he managed to stand ; the throbbing of his head was violent, and a quantity of clotted blood on his clothes, showed the injury he had received to be of more consequence than he at first apprehended. It was therefore necessary for him to seek some way of exit, and after groping about a considerable time, an opening presented itself so well concealed, as to be with difficulty discerned by those unacquainted with the secret, as it lay under the shade of overhanging rocks, and led, not to the common room, but to a winding passage, where nature had evidently been assisted by the hand of art in forming its intricacies. Wearied and impatient, he was often inclined to give up the attempt as hopeless ; but the fear of remaining there neglected by those

to whom he had owed his safety, gave spirit to his search, and after a considerable time, he found himself in the open air.

It was now near midnight, the moon was high, and her tranquil light lay upon the rocks and woods, and shone on many a brave mountaineer, in the morning full of life and hope, now a cold corpse, stretched out and horrid to the view. The combat therefore was over, but how it had terminated, those who had fallen its victims were unable to tell : memorials of their own fate, they were insensible to that of their comrades, and not even a sigh was heard amongst them, giving hope that life was not entirely extinguished ; to the last breath they had bravely fought! Yet the waving of the branches in the breeze, and the heavy flap of the eagle's wing as he hovered over his prey, were their only requiem. Isidore, sick at heart, at this contemplation of man slain by his brother, would have quickly departed, but his increasing faintness compelled him to rest, and as he turned to seek the Hermit's couch, and perhaps some cordial to recruit his force, the sound of a human voice made him start, and hastily retire from a spot where he could be so easily distinguished, to the shelter of the overhanging rock. Scarcely had he reached this retreat, when the figure of a man was seen to advance, and the stranger began to examine the bodies as they lay, without, however, attempting to despoil or remove them.

As the moonbeams fell full on his face^ Isidore recognised the well-remembered features of the Pedlar, whose sympathy he had excited on the occasion of his arrest at the baraque, near the Pont du Gard, and who now by his dress and accoutrements, appeared to have adopted the trade of a travelling Tinker. It was indeed the same Gaspard who had once served as a guide to the unfortunate Vidal, a lively and ingenious lad, ready, according to the saying, to "turn an honest penny" in any calling, and not unwilling to shift his profession as well as his quarters, as circumstances might require.

It appeared evident to Isidore, that this young man, whatever might be the reason, was interested in his fate, and probably

now employed to remove him from his retreat: he therefore soon ventured on leaving his hiding-place, and touching the Tinker on the shoulder, said, *' A joyous traveller you are, my friend ; if I may judge by your merriment in such company." The Tinker started, " Faith, Sir," he replied, "' I am not worse off for gaiety than my neighbours, though I must own I am just now little in heart for it ; but before we converse more freely, I must beg you to drop your shade," for Isidore had carefully enveloped himself from inspection in his cloak ; he instantly complied. *' I am right then," continued the Tinker, " though where you were hid that my eyes could not find you, or how you got out without my help, it passes my poor wits to understand. I thought if you were within hearing, you might know/ my voice again, which was the reason of my singing aloud," After explaining these points, Isidore in his turn begged to know by what means his life had been saved, and how the fortune of the day had turned. The Tinker briefly informed him, that in the confusion which had succeeded to his fall, Pierre had, with his assistance, drawn him into the cave, and by a way he could not have discovered, found means to place him in safety, intending to return and deliver him when all danger should be over. " And truly he'd ha\'e done it,"* continued Gaspard ; " but you know, though man proposes, he cannot dispose, and it was disposed otherwise for him. We fought like lions I will say, but what chance had we against the soldiers? Why it's their trade ; they're brought up to it from childhood, and we only take to it by way of amusement, and know no more about the matter than if you were to begin soldering an old saucepan. In short, we were obliged to run, and Pierre, who wouldn't turn his back, was taken with several others. Poor fellow ! I loved him as a brother, but finding I could do nothing for him, I came to try what could be done for you, since my last attempt to get you out of a scrape proved so successful." Isidore thanked him for his kind intentions, inquiring at the same time if he would add to the obligation by procuring him some place of repose for the night, and such assistance as his wound

required. Gaspard replied, that he had provided a shelter before coming in search of him, assuring him also, that he had watched the enemy far on their way, and that he might consider himself safe where he would take him for some hours, as the house, though now deserted, belonged to one who was reputed a zealous and loyal Catholic, and therefore not so liable to suspicion, but that the following morning it would be expedient to make some further arrangements. Accordingly, bidding Isidore keep close to him, and each casting a look of compassion on those they left, and who Gaspard declared would be removed by their friends on the ensuing day, he crept under the brushwood in the rear of the Hermitage, and with great difficulty, by keeping at times the same crouching position, and at others scrambling by the points of the rocks, they gained a roughly-worn sheep-walk, and following its direction, at length emerged into a chase more thinly scattered with underwood, and perceived at the end of an avenue of walnut-trees a large, old fashioned, straggling, white-washed dwelling, to which they bent their steps. It had evidently been a place of some consequence, though now surrounded only by the accompaniments of husbandry, and possibly still contained apartments which were reserved for the casual reception of its lord.

At present it offered the appearance of a farm-house, with its yards, stables, dovecots, and workshops, where every trade might be carried on necessary in such an establishment ; but there was no sound of bleating flocks, cackling poultry, or noisy labourers ; no house-dog to guard the premises from mendicants or thieves ; no scolding, bustling maidens, with their tongues moving faster than their hands. Small windows, strongly fenced with iron bars, were distributed in irregular profusion over the building ; the high pointed roofs shone in the moonlight, as if, like the enchanted castles of old, they had been covered with plates of silver ; and at one corner of the edifice a large round tower, with its appropriate loop-holes and battlements, seemed well fitted for defending the dwelling against the predatory bands which had at one time infested the country. Comfort might have reigned there, but she was evidently banished, and poverty and neglect had usurped her place. After

opening with difficulty the gate, which hung on its oaken hinges, and was flanked by two pillars, each supporting the remains of a rampant fox, Isidore and his companion crossed the straw-littered court, and approached the tower, at the door of which stood an old woman, v/ho

. She now threw open the door, which she had held so as only to admit of her own person being seen, and they entered a room where several men were seated round a blazing fire, which, owing to the thick outside shutters, had not been visible before. This room seemed the only one which the dame occupied, as it presented in a small space all those conveniences that are in general dispersed in different apartments : in one corner stood an old fashioned four-posted bed, with thick faded silk curtains drawn back to display the benitier for holy water, and next to it a high dresser covered with red and yellow crockery, placed there as much for show as use. The floor was strewn with brass pans, earthen-ware, kitchen utensils, tubs in which the first process of washing was going on, and a hen-coop well stored with poultry. On a rack, suspended from the roof, were the week's store of flat round loaves of black bread, large as the shields of the ancients, and almost as hard ; huge gourds and pumpkins to form the savoury soup, and strings of sausages and black puddings, with a stock of lard tied up in bladders, sufficient to turn the stomach of a Jew. Add to this a kneading trough,, and a few broken chairs drawn round the ample chimney by the guests, who were employed in the various parts of cookery, one holding an immense frying-pan, while another poured in large floods of oil, and a third prepared the eggs for an omelette. The table was already spread, the wine sparkling, and all with one voice congratulated Gaspard and his companion on their meeting at so lucky a moment. In such a party, ceremony would have been an intrusive guest, and whatever cause they might have for fear, it seemed at least for a season banished from their minds. Isidore gathered from their discourse that he had met with some of the refugees from the skirmish ; men, as ready to fly as to engage, and who urging on a cause while they think it will prosper,

and let us equip.'* The youngest of the party, who was already nodding in his chair, on hearing the well-known voice, which, sleeping or waking, he obeyed, sprang over the seat near him with the alertness of an uncaught monkey, and going to one corner of the room, threw out of some old sacks, a variety of dresses of various kinds, together with a three-stringed guitar, tambourine, and triangle. wigs, patches, and other means of disguise.

The whole party, with the exception of Isidore, Gaspard, and the old woman, who shook her sides with laughter at the sudden transformations taking place, had, in a few minutes, so completely altered their appearance, that it would have defied the minutest scrutiny to detect them from being any other than a troop of itinerant musicians and jugglers. Lebrun himself, in a three-cornered cocked hat, a pigtail of enormous length, his hair hung in long shaggy locks over his face, a brown jacket with voluminous skirts, ostentatiously displaying its scarlet linings, a waistcoat of the same colour falling in deep flaps over his well-worn leather breeches, and a huge pair of gaiters of the same material, might have passed for an Auvergnois newly descended from his mountains;

Caesar, whose beardless chin and roguish smile could best admit of the change, with a red handkerchief smartly put on his head, a velvet bodice and blue petticoat, seemed a pert coquette of sixteen; and a third, in the dress of a roving Catalan, strummed on his guitar a lively Spanish bolero, to which he sang the following strain: -

fashioned
settee, the fatigue he had undergone, and the want of sleep of the preceding night, procured him some feverish rest, notwithstanding the uproar that was still kept up around him. Yet, when in the intervals of sleep, he reflected on his present situation, he could not forbear a sigh. The contrast, too, of the boisterous mirth within, and the calm majesty of the scene without, was striking. It appeared strange, that echoes, accustomed only to the song of the turtle-dove, should now repeat the oaths and acclamations of such a com-

pany; the gentle motion of the branches when swayed by the breeze - the solitary evening star just risen above the faintly-tinged horizon, and almost lost in the splendour of the moonlight - the balmy air that wafted a thousand sweet odours through the broken casement, all spoke the loveliness of nature, and heightened the feeling of disgust at the presence of polluted man.

Thus at every place through which they passed, the troop, faithful to their disguise, attracted a crowd by their merry notes. The children holding each other by their little hands, jumped eagerly about, their screams of joy almost overpowering the melody; women ran with their infants in their arms to dance them to the measure, while the old laughed as they sat still, and many a young labourer leaving his task, and coming slyly behind a gazing damsel, little loth to be forced into the sport, would put his arm round her waist, and whisk her about in the rapid waltz. In this manner, and refreshed whenever they felt inclined to stop, with brown bread and clusters of fresh-gathered grapes and figs, they proceeded along, obtaining a ready shelter at night, and reached Vallerargues late in the evening of the second day of their journey.

" Christian people, as your spiritual father, I exhort you, as your temporal lord, I command you, to give ear; you know the mournful cause that has brought us together, a foul murder has been committed, a member of the church, a zealous servant of the king cut off, while employed in checking the course of rebellion and heresy, which you, whose gray hairs bear witness to the length of your experience, can remember once before desolated this fair province. And must he die unrevenged? Shall the instigators of such a deed be suffered to triumph in the success of their guilt? The voice of power has decreed that they shall not; its decree, resistless as the lightning of heaven, is gone forth; it is for you to assist in its execution: but lest some contumacious wretches should be slack in their zeal, or even criminally shrink from the requirements of duty, let the terrors of justice overawe them. Punishment is denounced against all who shall harbour, abet, or any way assist the traitors. Our

most just and upright Governor has promised to hasten hither with his counsel and authority to our relief. Let it be our part to meet him in his arduous duties, and by ourselves binding and bringing in the delinquents, leave him only the task of inflicting the deserved penalty. Long live the King!"

When he concluded, by his direction, several of the Brothers distributed amongst the crowd copies of a Proclamation, of one of which Lebrun contrived to obtain possession.

As he ascended the massy stone steps, his admiration and wonder every moment increased. How beautiful was the scene that now lay before him! In front the lofty snow-capt Pyrenees, scarcely distinguishable from the firmament against which they appeared to rest, bounded the view ; on the one side were the deep-blue waves of the Mediterranean, on which a small white sail was sometimes seen scudding swiftly along, and which, insignificant as it appeared in the distance, was perhaps the object of hope or fear to many an anxious breast : still nearer lay the salt-ponds, divided from the sea by narrow strips of yellow sand, and the rich champaign country, from whence the vineyards of Frontignan supply their far-famed wines ; on the other side, the varied and picturesque range of his loved Cevennes stretched along the horizon, while on the hill behind, the city of Montpellier reared aloft its noble towers and stately edifices, the steep ranges of sloping roofs mingling into one mass of firm and not ignoble architecture. Extending round in every direction, lay the " garden of the South/' a plain diversified by every charm of nature interspersed with smiling cottages, villas, and gardens, while here and there tufts of the tall cypress reared their dark and spiral forms, recalling to the mind all the luxuriant images of eastern scenery. Across this plain, a lofty aqueduct spread its long majestic line of arches, and the water which it bore to the city formed a transparent basin on the Peyrou, protected from the weather by an elegant temple. But how tame would even such

The country was in general wild and rocky, the ground covered with tufts of

lavender and thyme, on which flocks of small sheep were feeding, but the jessamine, almond, and pomegranate-trees with which the hedges along the road were formed, had lost their spring-tide beauty, and as they drew near the salt-ponds, an appearance of desolation was everywhere visible; immense pyramids of salt, like heaps of snow unmelted by the heat of an autumnal sun, were the only objects that relieved the uniformity, except that where the lazy waters of the ponds reached their barren and level banks, a few crazy boats, lying dry on the shore, had been left by their hardy owners against the next day's toil. After passing the causeway by which they are crossed, they approached the town of Cette, and admired, by the light of thousand twinkling stars, a sea-view that has even inspired the pencil of Vernet. The first sight of the far-rolling billows of the deep

It was the moment when the fishermen, whose venturous course had, during a two days' absence, carried them nearly to the coasts of Spain, returned with their varied booty. As they furled their dark sails, and neared their little fleet to their respective buoys, the joyous songs of the fishermen and the loud greetings from many a rough voice on their passing through the ships at anchor, drew a motley assemblage to the harbour. Their wives and children flew with fond impatience to welcome their return; the female retailers of the finny spoil, clamouring with proverbial vehemence at the delay they had experienced, each rushing forward to claim a share, and deposit it on the back of the patient long-eared drudge that was doomed that night not only to bear its accustomed burden, but the reiterated blows with which his owner vented her anger at having to undertake The master of the house was a cooper; this was a lucrative employment in a place where, from the extent of the wine trade, his art was in constant requisition, and there was an appearance of plenty about his dwelling that showed he was not considered as without skill in his profession. He was a man of about fifty, wore a short curled brown wig, and, though remarkable for habitual taciturnity, frequently gave a significant smile or nod that led people to

suppose he could have spoken much to the purpose, if he had not thought it most prudent to be silent. His wife was good-humoured and young, reverencing rather than loving her helpmate, and trained to such a degree of conjugal submission as would have satisfied the most strenuous asserters of a husband's rightful superiority. The supper was excellent; they were of that sensible class which, especially in France, has not lessened its power of enjoying all the comforts of life by aiming at its elegancies ; and though the table-linen was not the fairest, a display of silver forks and spoons sufficiently testified the wealth of the owners. After supper, a large bible, strongly braced with brazen clasps, was produced, and the cooper fixing his broad-brimmed hat more immoveably on his head, and adjusting his iron-rimmed spectacles (which, from the want of the usual accompaniment of handles, might otherwise have deserted their post) proceeded to read in a monotonous and elevated voice a portion of the sacred volume, and next, in tones that bade defiance to every rule of melody, sang a psalm, which, with a short prayer, concluded the service. It may perhaps appear invidious to remark, that little devotion graced the exercise ; it was sufficient to mark the host for a protestant against the superstitious errors of the Church of Rome

beneath, in long steep terraces, lay the luxurious vines, nearly ready for the hand of the vintager ; beyond these, the neat town, its crowded port light-house and busy quays ; the sea sometimes dark and frowning, at others dazzling like a liquid mirror, or streaked with the white foam of the waves, and dashing in impotent fury against the deep red rocks ; ships with crowded canvass were hurrying into the shelter of the port, or pursuing their destined way with far different degrees of speed, as the gale either filled or deserted their sails. At some distance towards the right, on an island in a deep-receding bay, lay the mouldering ruins of the cathedral of Magnelone, the melancholy remains of former grandeur, where is pointed out the tomb of Pierre de Provence, his child, and lovely bride. It was a time of war, and the forts and citadel were gay with military

movement and splendour, while the inspiring sounds of martial music mingled with the loud rushing of the wind.

The apartment in which they found themselves was lofty and spacious, lighted by several large casement windows strongly defended by iron bars, and hung with tapestry which might have been considered splendid in the infancy of the art, but whose gigantic figures thus dimly seen, bore some resemblance to a train of silent and motionless spectres. A few heavy old-fashioned chairs, and two wooden beds which would not have been considered as too luxurious for a guard-room, was the only furniture, except that in one corner behind a large skreen, was a broken trou-madame table, at which it was probable some servitors in attendance had often beguiled their leisure. At one extremity of the room were hung some paintings from the legends of the church, and an immense crucifix and a benetoir for holy water, over which an industrious spider had spun her flimsy web, completed the decorations. This