

pressed feelings, he would have wished concealed.

"I thought you had forgotten it, therefore I wished not to remind you of it. Miss Gaveston, no doubt will take pity on you." This was said with bitterness, as she walked away with Lord Stepney, who, enjoyed the passion which he saw raging in the breast of Colonel Brereton, but which, by a powerful effort, he mastered, though it was madness to witness, the freedom of the young and libertine nobleman, as he ran his eyes over the person of the lovely girl, and encircled her waist with his arm, to bear her round the room in the gay gallopade. "Villain, you shall answer for this another time," he muttered, ere he moved away from the scene with rapid steps.

There must have been something in the manners or conversation of Lord Stepney offensive to Beatrice, for she soon pleaded fatigue, and withdrew from the circle; he would have conducted her into the picture gallery, which had been thrown open for the night, and where several young persons who prefer quiet corners, had congregated; but this she opposed, looking eagerly round, her for Colonel Brereton, whom she could no where see, and whose request she now regretted having slighted. Her anxious countenance revealed a mind ill at ease, while the thought crossed her that a ball was not so full of happiness as she had imagined, and, gladly she turned from her obtrusive partner to join some of her youthful friends, who were amusing themselves in a group, by quizzing the various persons passing before them—and, indeed, in many cases little blame could be attached to them for so doing, for is it not a melancholy sight to witness in scenes like this—the wrinkled cheek of age disfigured by rouge, the palsied head shaking under the glittering diamonds, the bared and shrivelled bosom over which the gauze of lace is so lightly thrown, and to reflect that but a step lies between such objects and the grave! Oh, how beautiful in contrast to these, are the grey hairs and appropriate attire of the venerable pilgrim, on whose serene and calm countenance, (deeply lined, though it is), may be traced, those holy thoughts which exclude the world and its gay follies, as unworthy and inconsistent with the higher, nobler aims of an immortal soul, for whose redemption a Saviour died; the thoughtlessness of youth we regret, but not without hope of their repentance and amendment, but the forgetfulness of age to prepare for eternity, how mournful?

Lord Stepney now walked over to his friend, Lord Charles Clapperton, evidently surprised at the rebuke he had received from so young a girl as Beatrice, and at the disgust with which he had inspired her, for he said:

"By heavens, Charles, that is the veriest little shrew I ever met; did you see her indignant toss of the head, and the curl on her lip, as she turned from me just now? She has the face of an angel, but the spirit of a d—l, or I am much mistaken. I say, old

fellow, she would look well in my phaeton though, wouldn't she?"

"Hush, there is Brereton entering, you had better not let him hear you talking treason," replied Lord Charles. "He did not appear over pleased to see you carry off his lady love in such gallant style; he has not forgotten the story of poor Fanny Belson, I imagine."

"Pshaw, what was that to him, unless I was his rival; might not fifty other spectres in white pass in array before me like the ghosts in Macbeth, and cry Stepney, Stepney, thou false and perfidious man?"

"Come, come, you are too bad, and will contaminate me; let us go into the next room, I wish to speak to Miss Gaveston," said Lord Charles, laughing.

"Any where you please; this is a devilish stupid affair, pon honour. I never would have came here, but for Lady Westerham; I think I shall soon steal away."

"Indeed I would advise you," returned Lord Charles, for Brereton looks very much inclined to throw down the gauntlet."

"And what if he does, I am not the one to be tardy in lifting it up, hey, Master Charles."

"I crave your pardon! no! At the same time I have no inclination to leave my warm comfortable bed, to attend you to some crackskull common, I assure you, so come along this way."

At a late hour the supper was announced, when Beatrice hoped that Colonel Brereton would have come to take her down, but instead of this he gave his arm to Miss Gaveston, who was smiling most bewitchingly in his face. Beatrice could have cried with vexation, as she muttered:

"Horrid creature, how I hate her with my whole heart."

The scene of splendour she entered, attended by Lord Charles, possessed no charms for her. The supper room was fitted up in the style of a magnificent tent, with ottomans and couches placed round it—quite a grove of orange trees, carried in for the night, adorned the sides, while innumerable lamps hung from the roof—the table spread with every luxury, presented a beautiful appearance; but Beatrice turned away from it with indifference. She tried to laugh at the gay nothings spoken by Lord Charles, but her mirth was feigned, for again had Colonel Brereton disappeared, while Miss Gaveston was now talking to another; in the same moment she beheld Antonio, the page, go up to Lord Stepney and address him, when he immediately left the room. New fears assailed her, for the angry glances that Colonel Brereton had cast upon his lordship during the latter part of the evening had not escaped her notice, and she dreaded that a quarrel with all its direful consequences might arise between them. Poor Beatrice, how full of bitterness were her reflections, yet what to do she knew