

THE AMARANTH.

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THE INGRATE.

AN HISTORICAL TALE.

Of all the blemishes characterising human nature, and of which no account is taken by the genius of the English law, none perhaps is marked by a deeper shade of infamy, than ingratitude; and when this ignominious disposition accompanies the conception of any of those offences against the laws of civil society, denominated crimes, they carry with them a tenfold criminality. We behold in imagination the hosts of miscreants that have polluted the fair face of nature: we mark their various crimes, and picture to ourselves the demoniac cruelty of the perpetrators of some, the ambitious criminality of others—and the inhuman thirst for revenge that has actuated the multitude: but for none of these are we filled with that utter abhorrence which attaches to the crimes of the Ingrate.

The accession of James the II. to the throne of England, an event justly dreaded by the great mass of the people, was followed by scenes of the greatest atrocity, enacted by men whose only recommendation was their perfect indifference to the effusion of blood, and to the calamities everywhere perfected by their unrelenting devotion to the will of a gloomy and unprincipled tyrant. Among the most conspicuous characters of the times stands Colonel Kirke, whose conduct must have become familiar to every one, from the tales related of his cold-blooded treachery, and total estrangement from all those redeeming qualities that are to be met with in the characters of the depraved. Not content with the summary and illegal punishment of such as were taken in arms against the Sovereign, and whose offence was therefore evident, he had recourse to a scheme by which to pamper his vicious appe-

tite for blood, while his indolence suffered no inconvenience by even the mockery of a trial. Many were thus ensnared to the confession of deeds which they had never performed, and had to lament with bitter self-reproach a too ready credulity in his assurances of pardon. It is not wonderful therefore that in times such as these, when father rose up against son, and brother pursued his brother with all the fury of bigoted and blindly devoted Sectarianism, there should be found sufficient atrocity to substantiate the following tale.

It is a curious fact, and one well worthy of observation, that in times the most perilous, and when universal degeneracy and a total laxity of morals has degraded the general face of society, there have arisen some of the noblest examples of disinterested patriotism and determined virtue. We have many glorious examples of this during the decline of the Roman Empire; and not forgetting the history of our own ancestors, we may contemplate the same bright picture in the turbulent times shortly preceding those we are now considering; and even then when the genius of evil had spread his baleful wings over the breadth of the land, and seemed to have swallowed up the feeble remnant of good that had survived the luxurious reign of the second Charles, there were found some magnanimous enough to protect the needy and succour the victim of persecution. Among the number of these was a Mrs. Gaunt, who, in her own person, united all the essentials of a strictly christian woman.— Though professing the religious opinions of the Anabaptists, Mrs. Gaunt was noted for her discerning liberality to the needy of every denomination, and none that sought protection at her hands were denied the hospitality of her roof. Thus we see during this reign the extremes of virtue and vice arrayed against each other in formidable contrast.

Mrs. Gaunt was the widow of the last mem-