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THE MARTYR MAIDENS OF OSTEND. A LEGEND OF THE 18TH CENTURY.

CHAPTER IV.—THE RECLUSE.

Notwithstanding the restless and disturbed night which was the natural consequence of the distressing visit we have just been describing, both Winifride and her faithful Hilliard were quite ready the next morning, when the little attendant assigned them by the Pere de Camba made his appearance at the Golden Fleecce;—and under his experienced guidance they had soon left the gates of the city far behind them, and were walking along the fine sea-promenade called the Levee, which chanced to lead directly towards the hermit's dwelling.

tend, when there is so much to do, and which he has promised should be done, elsewhere." "His language to us was very unlike that of a friend to the king," answered Winifride. "Is it not dangerous, think you, to trust him?" "Trust him I cannot say I do; and yet, I think, were he a traitor, he would hardly have revealed his baseness to you. Perchance he left you wittingly in ignorance of his change." Winifride made no reply. She deemed her cousin's words but an angry threat; and thus, although she entirely distrusted his integrity, she did not wish needlessly, perhaps, to alarm her father. Elliot, finding she continued silent, of his own accord changed the subject to a less anxious theme.

peared, had already begun sorely to repent of his imprudence in making the suspicious-looking Englishman acquainted with his countryman's retreat; and now, nothing doubting that some mischief was intended, he felt greatly puzzled how to act in order to prevent it. The fair foreigner, who had won his heart by the gentle kindness of her voice and manner, would, he felt instinctively, be powerless in the matter; Pere de Camba, to say the truth, he feared to acquaint with his own act of folly; so at length he came to the resolution (the wisest under the circumstances that he could have adopted) of returning at once to the hermit himself, and revealing his anxiety as to the intentions of the intruder. No sooner, accordingly, had he reconducted his charge to the gates of Ostend, than he once more turned his steps towards Elliot's dwelling; and when, some hours afterwards, the Burgomaster sent his officials to the spot, they found, as the result of this interview, not only that the exile had himself thought fit to disappear, but that he had likewise either taken with him, or destroyed, all that the hut contained which could have thrown light on his identity or occupations.

rash; for say you keep it on the one side, then it must perforce be broken on the other. For instance; adherence to your God, by which I believe you would poetically express your mad folly in making a monkish woman of yourself, will inevitably involve you in the much deprecated fact of high treason to your kindred, since I swear to you—and my oath, to say the least of it, may be counted as irrevocable as your own—I swear, that if you relent not, the vessel that sails this night shall bear such intelligence to England as will suffice to send your uncle, with every mother's son who calls him cousin, to the block, ere another month has passed over their heads!"

CHAPTER VII.—THE CATASTROPHE.

Months of uncertainty passed away, during which the young Englishwomen were placed under the surveillance of the chief magistrate of the town, who, although reluctant to undertake the ungracious office, had not ventured to refuse, after George Douglas had represented to him that his cousins were suspected in England of being engaged in aiding and abetting some of the numerous plots for the restoration of the elder line of Stuart which were every where rife at that period. Through the kindness of the Pere de Camba, Winifride had in the course of this time the happiness of hearing of the safe arrival of her father at the Court of St. Germain's, whither he had repaired after flying from Ostend; but concerning the fate of her English relations both she and her cousin were compelled to remain in a most cruel state of uncertainty, George Douglas and his agents so closely watching their proceedings, that every attempt at communication with their own country was effectually prevented.