

ven me her will enclosed in an old frame which I sold to her, after taking from it a fine portrait of the Emperor ; and I have also placed it in the public room, as she requested I would.

There was now a general call for the will which the hostess produced in a glazed frame of black wood ; but the glass was so dirty that we could not read a word. At our request it was washed and the frame put into the hands of M. Maurice.

On looking at the writing, he uttered an exclamation of surprise, and changed colour.

" Well ?" said I with curiosity.

" Good God, how singular !" he exclaimed.

" You seem to know the hand-writing !" I said—

" I!—how should I know it ? A will ! our good hostess calls complaints and lamentations a will."

" Let me read them."

M. Maurice's hand trembled, and he continued to exclaim as if unconsciously : ' This is very singular ; quite extraordinary !'

I took the frame out of Maurice's hands, for he still held it though he had done reading the paper, and I copied the following lines written with a somewhat unsteady hand :—

" Be silent. if you recognize my hand-writing ; on my knees I implore you not to tell my name, for I shall be afraid of my father even after death ; I am dishonoured ; and I must die. It is a dreadful thing ; but I cannot act otherwise, I have no more money, no strength to work, and he whom I love, bade me farewell with laughter. Would I had lost my senses ! but I could not become mad. I fear death, but still I must die. I am not yet fifteen. Let poor girls of my age beware of gentlemen who come to them disguised. Their hands are whiter than the hands of workmen ; they utter strange words, and their voice is soft. But they love not girls beneath them in rank. They deceive and abandon, and then laugh at them. I was superior to my station in life ; but I was only fifteen ; had I been older I should have deserved my misfortune. I have erred bitterly, but I dearly loved him who has destroyed my peace. All must now end.