

TALES FOR THE YOUNG.

THE BEST REVENGE.

At the period when the Republic of Genoa was divided between the factions of the nobles and the people, Uberto, a man of low origin, but of an elevated mind and superior talents, and enriched by commerce, having raised himself to be the head of a popular party, maintained, for a considerable time, a democratical form of government.

The nobles, at length uniting all their efforts, succeeded in subverting this state of things, and regained their former supremacy. They used their victory with considerable rigour; and, in particular, having imprisoned Uberto, proceeded against him as a traitor, and thought they displayed sufficient lenity in passing a sentence upon him of perpetual banishment, and the confiscation of all his property. Adorno—who was then possessed of the first magistracy, a man haughty in temper, and proud of ancient nobility, though otherwise not void of generous sentiment—in pronouncing this sentence on Uberto, aggravated its severity by the insolent terms in which he conveyed it. “You,” said he, “you, the son of a base mechanic, who have dared to trample upon the nobles of Genoa,—you, by their clemency, are only doomed to shrink again into the nothing whence you sprung.”

Uberto received his condemnation with Christian submission, merely saying to Adorno, “that perhaps he might hereafter find cause to repent the language he had used.” He then made his obeisance, and retired; and, after taking leave of his friends, embarked in a vessel bound for Naples, and quitted his native country without a tear.

He collected some debts due to him in the Neapolitan dominions, and, with the wreck of his fortune, went to settle on one of the islands in the Archipelago belonging to the state of Venice. Here his industry and capacity in mercantile pursuits raised him, in a course of years, to greater wealth than he had possessed in his most prosperous days at Genoa: and his reputation for honor and generosity equalled his fortune.

Among other places which he frequently

visited as a merchant, was the city of Tunis, at that time in friendship with the Venetians, though hostile to most of the other Italian states, and especially to Genoa. As Uberto was on a visit to one of the first men of that place at his country-house, he saw a young christian slave at work in irons, whose appearance excited his attention. The youth seemed oppressed with labour to which his delicate frame had not been accustomed; and, while he leaned at intervals upon the instrument with which he was working, a sigh burst from his full heart, and a tear stole down his cheek. Uberto eyed him with tender compassion, and addressed him in Italian. The youth eagerly caught the sounds of his native tongue; and, replying to his inquiries, informed him he was a Genoese. “And what is your name, young man?” said Uberto. “You need not be afraid of confessing to me your birth and condition.”—“Alas,” he answered, “I fear my captors already suspect enough to demand a large ransom. My father is indeed one of the first men in Genoa. His name is Adorno, and I am his only son.”—“Adorno!” Uberto checked himself from uttering more aloud; but to himself he cried, “Thank heaven! then I shall be nobly revenged.”

He took leave of the youth, and immediately went to inquire after the corsair captain who claimed a right in young Adorno; and, having found him, demanded the price of his ransom. He learned that he was considered as a capture of some value, and that less than two thousand crowns would not be accepted. Uberto paid the sum; and, causing his servant to follow him with a horse and with a complete suit of handsome apparel, he returned to the youth, who was working as before, and told him he was free. With his own hands he took off his fetters and helped him to change his dress, and mount on horseback. The youth was tempted to think it all a dream, and the flutter of emotion almost deprived him of the power of returning thanks to his generous benefactor. He was soon, however, convinced of the reality of his good for-