

rushes to the scene of strife, impetuous as the torrent that sweeps away its bounds, and eager as the war-horse that breaks through the hostile ranks. But the combat was ended ere he could arrive. On earth fell a gallant youth, bleeding with his wound; and the ruffians fled at the shout of approaching aid.

Fitzcary flew to the assistance of the wounded hero. Graceful was his form as the bending poplar beside the stream, and stately as the swan that sails on the transparent lake. The down of youth had not forsaken his cheek; but manly strength was conspicuous in his polished limbs.—The Recluse reared him gently, from the earth, and rending his garments, bound up the smarting wound, and led him to his mouldering cell,

But inconsolable was the wounded youth. The maid he protected was ravished from his arms. A ruffian had torn her, loud shrieking, from his side, while his companions, with their swords, baffled the succouring efforts of his valour. 'Ah! whither, injured mourner! art thou borne from my sight? Beloved of this heart! to what sorrows art thou reserved? What indignities may'st thou not suffer from brutal hands?'

'Ah! droop not in despair,' said the Hermit, with a sigh, 'for that is the meed of Guilt! Well hast thou sought in defence of Virtue, and Heaven with compassion will regard thy woes. Slight is thy wound. The morn may restore thee to vigour and health, and the valour of our arms may emancipate the distressed: for not the recesses of this forest shall conceal her from our sight; nor the swords of banditti defend the prison of thy love. Suffering Virtue may confidently hope for redress; but, ah! what shall restore the tranquility of the mind haunted by the consciousness of Cruelty and Guilt.'

'Listen, O youth! to the legend of my woes, the chronicle of perjured crimes; and learn how to shun the afflictions of remorse, by pursuing with honour the desires of thy heart.'

'Fitzcary is my name: once the glory of knights who fought, with the Norman William, for empire and renown. Dreadful was I esteemed in the ranks of war, and in the tournament unequalled for gallant exploits. But the joy of my heart was in the chambers of Love—to bask in the sunshine of Beauty's smile.'

'Egwin the fair, the pride of all hearts, the lily of beauty in the bowers of bliss, the rose of sweetness in the regions of delight, the bright star of admiration in the sphere of Virtue—Egwin awakened the soft sigh of desire, and my bosom panted

for the possession of her blooming charms.'

'Artless was the maid as the transparent rill that waters the uncultured vale; tender was her soul as the turtle of the glade, whose lonely note resounds through the grove, and lures back her wandering mate: oft would the frequent the green-wood's side (the glowing noon painted on her blushing cheek) to meet me unobserved and alone—oft steal along the western Avon (her flowing ringlets glittering in the moon light beam) to listen to my ardent vows.'

'Her artless soul reposed with confidence in my love—but her confidence, alas! was too basely betrayed. In the hour of unbounded tenderness I triumphed over her virtue, and sullied the pure beauties of her modest cheek with the tears of repentant shame.'

'I triumphed—and I left the sweet victim to despair; to weep in the bowers that had been the scenes of our love, and lament to the wind, that had scattered my perjured vows.'

'Oh! Egwin, my love, how unworthy was thy fate! And has that bosom, which ever sympathized with the woes of others, been pierced with Affliction's dart? Bright as the stars were the virtues of thy heart, and clustering as the fruitful vine; mild as the youngling of the flock were the artless graces of thy soul, and cheering as the vernal dawn thy shining manners.—One only fault was e'er attributed to Egwin: she loved a youth unworthy of her charms. But surely the punishment should have come from some other hand.'

'Oh! that the repentance and sorrows of my life might recall thee, dear hovering shade! to the sublunary sphere—might soothe all thy sorrows, and atone for thy wrongs! Blest were a life of anguish and remorse, might its latest moment be consoled by the smile of forgiveness, and my soul, ere it depart, hear thee pronounce its pardon!'

'And could Egwin,' said the youth, 'be restored to thy prayers, couldst thou meet her again with the open arms of affection? Wouldst thou lead to the nuptial hall of thy ancestors, a nymph with a sullied name?'

'Oh! joyful as the bird, that wanders for food, returns to its callow young, would Fitzcary, transported by repentant love, fly to the arms of Egwin!—Prouder than the chiefs of his house of their quartered arms, or the records of ancestral fame, would be the heart of Fitzcary; to lead his Egwin to grace his nuptial hall—'

'But vain is the wish—Egwin is no more. A wretched outcast from her father's court, the scorn of the world, and