

(ORIGINAL.)

THE ROYAL QUIXOTE.

BY MRS. MOODIE.

Continued from our last Number.—(Conclusion.)

CHAPTER IV.

Ah! gentle maid, beware!
 The power who now, so mild a guest,
 Gives dangerous yet delicious zest,
 To the calm pleasures of thy breast,
 Will soon a tyrant o'er thy rest,
 Let none his empire share.

Scott.

The next morning the king visited with Prince George the apartments of the Princess, whom they found in high spirits, and quite removed from the fatigue and agitation she had suffered on the preceding day. After again thanking the king for the service he had rendered her, (she, as her brother had predicted,) led the conversation round to her favourite topic.

"You are a Swede, noble Count, have you the honour to be acquainted with your heroic king?"

"Intimately—we served our first campaign together."

"Is he handsome?" asked the princess, casting down her beautiful eyes.

"He possesses few personal advantages, your highness; he is about my height and complexion, and nature has endowed him with no greater charms to captivate a lady's eye, or to distinguish him from any other man. Nearly allied by the ties of blood, we have always been thought strikingly to resemble each other."

The Princess immediately raised her eyes to the countenance of the king; but meeting the full glance of his, her own were instantly averted, while her face, neck, and arms, were flushed with the deepest crimson; the king regarded her with an expression of tender interest.

"Were you to behold this hot-headed young soldier, fair Eleonora, he would cease to be an object of such exclusive admiration."

"His warlike qualities sound very well in theory," said Prince George, laughing, "and fame gives to them a fictitious lustre, but I query whether this turbulent prince would make a very agreeable husband."

"George, you cannot enter into the noble and chivalrous character of Gustavus of Sweden,"

returned Eleonora, with some warmth, "and I will not hear you detract from qualities which you lack the spirit to imitate. Would it not be happiness enough to be the wife of the heroic descendant of the great Gustavus Vasa,—the partner of his throne, and the sharer of his glory?"

This enthusiastic avowal of her sentiments, only called forth another hearty laugh from her brother; but her words sank deep into the heart of the Swedish monarch.

Love is never more dangerous, than when he flatters our vanity. Nature had endowed Gustavus with a large share of self-esteem, and the enthusiastic Eleonora, possessed a thousand additional charms in his eyes, because he had been the exclusive object of her visionary speculations. He seemed even bound by ties of gratitude to admire one, who, although unseen, had considered him as the model of all that was good and great in human nature.

"But after all," he would say with a sigh, "it is not me, but my glory she is in love with—I will see if Count Dahl will be able to rival this formidable king of Sweden!"

Following this resolution, he omitted no opportunity of making himself agreeable to the Princess; and without betraying that his own heart was irrevocably lost, he soon gained the complete ascendancy over hers, and it was not long before she ceased to expatiate on the virtues of his king, while listening with delight to his lively and agreeable conversation. The king, was not backward in securing the advantage he had gained, and every day she bestowed on him some flattering proof of her esteem and affection, till he could no longer doubt that he had ceased to be an object of indifference to her.

"This noble stranger, Aurora," said the princess one night, as her favourite maid of honour was unrobing her; "has won my heart, and I have ceased to think of the King of Sweden, while conversing with his subject. But then," she continued with increasing animation; "he is like Gustavus—he possesses the same lofty spirit—the same fearlessness of danger—has fought in the same fields—bled in the same cause—and wreathed his young brows with the same laurels—and if he is not perfectly handsome, his manners are so truly fascinating,