

## ALTHAM.

BY JOHN S. CUMMINS, ESQ.

## CHAPTER I.

But let my due feet never fail  
To walk the studious cloisters pale.—*Milton.*

A NIGHT of storm had terminated a dreary winter's evening ; the rain fell in torrents, and the wind howled dismally through the deserted streets, as Bushe left the lodging of a brother student, in ——— street, to return to his chambers in College. The clock, on the neighboring Church of St. Patrick's, had told ten, and the last stroke had scarce died on the ear, when it was succeeded by the solemn sound of the great bell of the Cathedral<sup>1</sup>, which, repeated at half minute intervals, raised the curiosity of the young gownsmen so much, that, despite the inclemency of the weather, he determined on gratifying it.— He found the old building lighted up, and, as he reached the entrance, a funeral procession, evidently of a person of high rank, entered the close. The black plumes on the hearse and horses waved wildly in the blast, and it, together with the long train of mourning coaches which followed, viewed by the red fitful glare of torches, borne by the undertaker's mutes, clad in long black cloaks and weepers, formed altogether a very striking scene, as they slowly approached. Bushe determined to witness the ceremonial, and entered the church. One hundred oil lamps, and twelve large wax tapers, (the latter on the high altar) shed a flood of mellow light on the groined roof, and the richly emblazoned banners of the Knights of the illustrious order of St. Patrick. Bushe had often attended the Cathedral afternoon service, when it was lighted as at present, but whether it was the contrast with the cheerless darkness of the scene without, or the effect of association, he had never been so struck with the solemn beauty of that ancient pile.— The procession now passed beneath the richly carved screen which divides the nave and choir ;—the Dean, in full robes, reading the beautiful psalms with which the burial service so appropriately commences. After him the coffin was borne.— The Pall of black velvet, on which was elaborately emblazoned the heraldick bearing of Altham and Mountmorris, surmounted by an Earl's coronet, was supported by eight Peers of the deceased, who had been raised to the above titles, though only a younger son. The chief mourners were the Earl of Anglesey, and his younger brother Richard, heir to his titles and estates. A long train of nobles and gentry followed, to many of whom their stalls, as Knights of the Order, were opened by the Verger,—these again were followed by humble friends and