

never spent it—it is here. Take it, Harry. I shall die soon, and I shall die happy in the consolation that it will assist you. Take it, Harry, and God bless you with it.” As the deeply injured girl spoke, she produced from her bosom a bank-note, and presenting it to her lover, continued—“There, Harry, it is warm from a heart that has ever loved you, but will soon cease to beat. I have always worn it there; knowing your gay life, I thought the day might come when it would be of service.” Then, throwing her arms around his neck, she wept.

“No, no!” gasped Sir Henry, “no, Matilda, you must not die; there are brighter days in store for us yet; dearest, we will be happy again, though I have deceived you.” As he spoke the tear of true repentance stole down his cheek, with a gush of old and warm affection, and he added, “No, Matilda, no; I have nothing—nothing now but you.”

Looking in his face, with a gaze that told how true she spoke, she replied, “Do not attempt to deceive me; it is useless. I am certain that I shall not survive many days, perhaps hours; but I would ask one last request, renounce your present life. There are but two paths lead to happiness, virtue and the grave; if our feet have strayed from one, perchance our souls may gain the other.” Matilda sank down exhausted.

“What a villain I have been!” exclaimed Sir Henry, as he gazed upon the form of his dying mistress, and recalled her image as he had first beheld it in placid innocence. His feelings were those of mingled agony and remorse. He had loved Matilda as well as he could love anything on earth; and her solemn and pathetic appeal had awakened thoughts his heart had always before been a stranger to. He felt that he had seduced and afterwards neglected her; but her gentle tenderness and amiability of character, her patient and unrequiting endurance, and her last proof of unceasing love in providing against distress for one who had so basely deceived her, and afterwards by his excesses brought poverty to her dying bed, was something more than human, it was a warmth that even friendship, strongest of man’s ties, was too cold to reach; it was worthy of its name—it was WOMAN’S LOVE!

“You shall not die, Matilda!” exclaimed Sir Henry, “Much injured woman, the church shall first unite us. Live to call me husband, as in thy heart I feel I have ever been.”

With a power almost supernatural, Matilda raised herself from the bed, and grasping his

hand, exclaimed with a faint smile, “My husband!” There was a pause of a moment; it was a fearful struggle, the tongue refused its office; the eye-ball sank; and she breathed rather than spoke—“*REPENT.*” The next instant Sir Henry Cathcart’s arms supported dust.

“It was my wife’s first, her last request!” he exclaimed. *Reader, he faithfully obeyed it.*



### THE PEASANT PRIEST.

IN the pretty little village of Bertrand, on the banks of the Loire, where that river is but a streamlet issuing from the mountains of Ardeche, lived two brothers, of the names of Rupert and Gervais, proprietors of the same farm, which had belonged to their ancestors for ages. Rupert, who was the eldest, by some years, was, in person, tall and athletic, with a countenance on which ever rested a melancholy, nay, a sullen expression, and by those unacquainted with him, might be regarded as almost repulsive. Yet among the inhabitants he was respected for his strict probity and industrious habits. His fields were cultivated with the greatest care, his dwelling was the model of neatness, and his garden was ever the first to put forth its buds and blossoms, on the approach of Spring. His brother, Gervais, was, in appearance and looks, entirely opposite; symmetrical in figure, and handsome in features, with a buoyancy of spirits that made him the life and spirit of whatever society he entered. Rupert was esteemed by the elders of the village as a staid and worthy youth, who promised to tread in the steps of his father, and like him, die a respected and wealthy farmer; but Gervais was the favourite among the junior members, and especially with the maidens of the village, and not a day occurred without his achieving a conquest over some rustic heart.—But although endowed with all that captivates and pleases in the exterior man, his heart was naturally cold and selfish: not a thought, act or feeling, but what was tinged with deceit and avarice. By his brother, Rupert, he was loved with an affection which savored more of a paternal than fraternal character—he laboured for him by day, and watched over him by night, deeming no task or sacrifice too great to contribute to his happiness.

In the same village, resided a beautiful girl, by name, Ninette, the only child of a small farmer. By the youths of the hamlet, she was admired and sought after above the rest of her companions; but though respectful and affa-