

so unjust towards herself as to admit the existence of such monstrous guilt in the heart of another of her sex."

"Impossible," said Gerald. "Whatever might have been my impression when I first saw the figure in the merchantman—that is to say, if I had then a doubt in regard to the sex, it was entirely removed, when later I beheld the unfaltering energy with which it entered upon its murderous purpose. The hand of woman never could have been armed with such fierce and unflicking determination as was that hand."

"The emergency of the occasion, it would seem, did not much interfere with your study of character," again observed Miss Montgomerie, with a faint smile—"but you say you fired—was it with intent to kill the killer?"

"I scarcely know with what intent myself; but if I can rightly understand my own impulse, it was more with a view to divert him from his deadly object, than to slay—and this impression acquires strength from the fact of my having missed him—I am almost sorry now that I did."

"Perhaps," said Miss Montgomerie, "you might have slain one worthier than him you sought to save. As one of your oldest poets sings—'whatever it is right.——'"

"What!" exclaimed the younger Grantham with emphasis "Can Miss Montgomerie then form any idea of the persons who figured in that scene?"

Most of the party looked at the questioner with surprise. Gerald frowned, and, for the first time in his life, entertained a feeling of anger against his brother. In no way moved or piqued by the demand, Miss Montgomerie calmly replied.

"I can see no just reason for such inference, Mr. Grantham; "I merely stated a case of possibility, without any thing which can refer to the merit of either of the parties."

Henry Grantham felt that he was rebuked—but although he could not avoid something like an apologetical explanation of his remark, he was not the more favorably disposed towards her who had forced it from him. In this feeling he