

The heat of pursuit having subsided, he at length expressed a wish to enter once more upon the busy scenes of life; but how to do this with safety was the question that often rose to his lips, but was as often met by the cavernous gloom of the future. By and bye he became more fitful and abstracted, and to the attentions of his kind hostess he seemed perfectly indifferent, and at last he sought to evade her altogether.

"Can it be," she thought, turning over in her mind every incident that had happened since his arrival, to find a clue to his conduct. "Can it be that he feels too deeply the weight of obligations to a stranger? If I thought—but that cannot be! have the avenues to his heart been choked up by disappointment, cruelty and relentless persecution; and that the chain that links him with society is about to snap asunder;—that from fearing some and hating others, he is about to make the fearful leap into the vortex of crime—to wage war with all the affections of our nature?—perhaps' his reason totters, and he is doomed to suffer—a hapless maniac!"

Which of these surmises was correct, she was not to be long in ignorance; but her conception had not reached half the reality of what, in the extent of her worse conjecture, she had shadowed out and rejected as a slanderous suspicion.

One morning the inmates of the family were surprised to find the door opening from the yard into the unoccupied wing of the house, standing open, and on entering a small room through a narrow passage, they were amazed at the indications of a recent tenancy. The circumstance was made known to Mrs. Gaunt, when the poor lady became pale, and appeared greatly agitated, for until now, she had been ignorant of any intention on the part of her guest to leave her protecting roof, much less of so unceremonious a desertion as this. The only clue that could be discovered to his intentions, was an open paper lying on the table, containing the offer of a reward and indemnity to all such, as should inform against criminals, and which from its position, appeared to have been before him up to the time of his departure. The consternation depicted on their mistress' features, was attributed by the servants to any thing but the true cause, and Roderick seemed to share their sentiments.

Every sound, and every footstep through the whole of that day, made the widow start; and it was only when every thing settled down to the quietness of night, and no appearance of

a change was visible, that she began to think her fears were idle, and that the dread of discovery and betrayal had worked upon the mind of her guest, and had induced him to elope.

A week more passed, and all went on smoothly within the old mansion, and only two days of the nine were wanting to entomb the wonder. The lady herself had begun to smile at her vagaries, and even to remember an event that had relieved her of a dilemma, with gratitude for the deliverance. Roderick too, felt his heart grow lighter, and questioned why it had ever been heavy—the crickets had taken up their old abodes in the chinks, and the spiders wove their webs in the places whence they had been so rudely driven—and again was the old wing given up to darkness and solitude; once more had the widow returned to the dependants on her bounty, with the same hopeful smile that had been wont to cheer them in their poverty, and to remind them of 'the cruse of oil and the barrel of meal that never failed;' and if the prayers of some could have availed, she might have lived on to the end of time, an angel indeed, ministering to the wants of afflicted humanity. But virtue meets not its reward in this world, nor do the machinations of the wicked terminate with adequate retribution.

If the leading incidents of this tale, which are matters of history, are fixed upon the reader's memory, with the same tenacity with which they have worked upon ours, perhaps much of the interest of our narrative will be lost—if not, before judgment be passed on our veracity, or this be declared an overworked picture of human frailty, let him turn to the transactions of the year 1685, in Hume's History of England.

A man in an undress uniform lay reclining on a couch in the principal room of a noble mansion on the banks of the Ouse; every thing around him showed that the hand of violence had been recently there, and proclaimed in language too loud to be mistaken, that he who then occupied it was not the rightful owner. Instruments of female industry and amusement lay scattered on the chairs, tables, and floors, in a way that too plainly announced the removal of their owner. A small boy stood trembling with downcast eyes before him, whose coarse and vulgar appearance was so much in keeping with the disorder and confusion he had caused. The man had been asleep on the shady side of the room when the boy's entrance had disturbed him, and he had raised his head, and was support-