

and he has well earned so poor a recompense for the dangers he encountered."

"And the scandal his good name has received, in being classed among thieves and vagabonds," said the king, indulging in a hearty laugh.

The prince coloured deeply, but remained silent, for naturally of a gay and joyous disposition, he was angry with himself for having acted so uncourtously. The princess having been accommodated with another horse, the king accepted the same favour from a young nobleman, who resigned for his use a fine hunter, while he mounted a steed belonging to an attendant.

Gustavus left the princess to recount her past perils to her father, while he entered into conversation with Prince George and his brother. The former was anxious to make some apology for his hasty decision.

"We have given you an uncourteous welcome, Count Dahl; but when a brave knight travels abroad in disguise, he must not be surprised at meeting with strange adventures."

"Or of arriving at the honour of becoming a bandit chief," returned the king, who loved humour, and would pursue a joke till he wore it to tatters.

"Was it from my fair complexion and diminutive stature you anticipated such terrible things?" said the prince, glancing as he spoke at the slight but finely proportioned figure of his provoking companion, "that such an odd whim entered my head."

"Let me assure your highness, that my personal advantages are small indeed when compared with the fine form and noble bearing of Wolfenstien."

"You have seen him, then?" exclaimed both princes, leaning eagerly forward.

"I have, and conversed with him. He is a brave and unfortunate man, whom I have met before under very different circumstances."

"How!" exclaimed Prince George, in a tone of surprise. "He is not a stranger to you then, who and what is he? where did you meet with him previous to your encounter tonight?"

"In the field of battle, fighting gloriously for his country. He then bore another name—yes gentlemen," continued the king, with emotion, "this man, who is now the leader of a solitary band of outlaws, gave the word of command to thousands; you have heard of the brave General Zuski—this is he!"

Struck with the solemnity of the king's manner, and well aware of the military talents of the unfortunate Pole, the princes rode on in silence. Each appeared communing with his own thoughts, and both were deeply interested in the fate of the outlaw, till the younger turning to the king first broke silence.

"You are a Swede, Count Dahl, and this circumstance will, in the mind of Eleonora, greatly enhance the service you have rendered her. She is

enamoured with the rising glory of your northern star, and I doubt not that you will be duly catechised to give an exact description of his person, manners and pursuits."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the king, an indistinguishable feeling of delight fluttering at his heart; "what can have given rise to such an extraordinary prepossession in favour of our youthful monarch?"

"My sister is a romantic girl," said Prince George; "her imagination is lively, and her feelings partake of the vivid colouring of her mind. She turns from scenes of dissipation and pleasure, to pore over the pages of antiquity, to weep at the fall of some favourite hero, or to triumph in his success. You will therefore cease to wonder that the enterprising Gustavus should attract her attention—in him she fancies she sees fulfilled all her visionary ideas of greatness, and during his late wars with Denmark and Poland, her eagerness to hear the dispatches, often drew upon her the raillery of the whole court.

"Dear, noble girl!" sighed Gustavus; "here is at last a mind in unison with my own—I must endeavour to win this young ardent heart, so capable of love, and so worthy of being beloved."

The king was so highly flattered by this trait in the princess' character, that he sank into a pleasing train of reflections, from which he vainly essayed to raise himself, till the hollow trampling of the horses' hoofs striking on the stone pavement of the court, reminded him that he was before the electoral palace.

The king followed an obsequious attendant through a long suite of splendid apartments, which were to be appropriated to his use, without regarding a passing object, so completely were his thoughts engrossed by the fair Eleonora and the events of the day. At length, remembering that it was just possible that the princess might appear at the banquet, which the Elector gave that night to the nobles of his court, he dispatched a messenger to the hostelry for his page, who arriving with his portmanteau, assisted in arranging his royal master's dress, to the best possible advantage. The king's adventures in the forest had travelled to the city before him, and master Eric was very loquacious in enumerating the foes he had encountered, and the dangers that had beset him.

The king was at first highly amused by the monstrous exaggerations of the affair. According to Eric's account, he had slain six robbers with his own hand, and taken Wolfenstien prisoner. At length, tired with the repetition of these wonders, he said:

"Prithee, peace good Eric, I am fatigued both in mind and body, and not in a humour tonight to listen to your prattle."

"No wonder," returned the persevering page; "your majesty's labours would have fatigued Her-