

THE
ACADIAN MAGAZINE.

VOL. II.

JANUARY, 1827. 8

No: XIX.

ROSALIE BERTON.

WHILE passing some time in the south of France, I spent a few days at S——, a town on the banks of the Loire, situated in that province, which, from its fertility and beauty, is usually designated the garden of France.

S——, I had been informed, was a place famed alike for its vineyards and its pretty girls, a coincidence certainly natural, since it fairly may be supposed, that the sun which ripens the richest fruit in nature, should alike mature its sweetest flowers, and perfect the beauties and the charms of that sex, which is literally "like the fair flower in its lustre." As the friend, by whom I was accompanied, was well known in the place, we were soon introduced to a circle of respectable families; and among others, to that of Berton, consisting of the father, mother, and daughter.

Rosalie Berton was the *belle* of S——, or to borrow the far prettier French phrase, she was "*la perle de ville*." And a sweet and lovely girl she was, as ever the eye of affection hailed with delight. Her charms had something of a peculiar style and character; for, with the bright black eyes, and fine dark hair of the south, were united the fair complexion and delicately tinted cheek of a northern beauty. Her face was of a somewhat more pensive turn than usual, and her meek, mild features, and soft dark eyes, bore traces of tender feeling and of gentle thought; while so expressive was her countenance, that it responded, at will, to her feelings, and the eye and the cheek which

were one moment impressed with melancholy, beamed forth the next with all the warmth of intelligence, affection, or delight. Her accomplishments were really of a superior kind; she walked with more than the usual elegance of her country-women, and danced with equal animation and grace. But her most attractive charm consisted in her voice, which, though not particularly powerful, had a sweetness and a melody which were perfectly delightful; so that never methinks have I heard a softer strain, than when that fair girl was wont to sing to her guitar the simple ballads and sweet romances of her native land. And her musical talents were enhanced by her gentle, complying disposition, and by the readiness with which she obeyed every call on her exertions. From her music-master, who was a native of Italy, she also learnt Italian, which she spoke with more fluency and correctness than is usual among the French; she drew, moreover, with considerable taste. So affectionate and so amiable was she, that she deserved all the encomiums of her friends and even their hyperbolic compliments were scarcely extravagant when applied to her. She was literally "*douce comme un ange, jolie comme les amours*;" and, as the *ne plus ultra* of merit in France, she was "*tout a fait gentille*." She possessed also, considerable dramatic skill and tact, and would, I think, have proved a delightful acquisition to the stage, from the skill she displayed in those little playful scenes, with which