

ples' suite. Days and weeks passed on, and saw him almost domesticated in the family circle. Whether the lady suspected the real rank and character of her visitor, or had ever learned to look on him as a lover, can only be known when the secrets and the weaknesses of all hearts are disclosed.

Her husband certainly regarded him in no other light than as a good musician, of social, inoffensive manners, who liked much to hear his wife sing, and loved to play with and fondle his little daughter Zillah. This happy state of ignorance was soon dispelled. Coming home one evening M. Heildermaen observed that he was followed for some time by a woman closely muffled; his way led through various bye streets—still she kept on his track; at length, in a retired place, she passed, and turning abruptly round, confronted him. On his replying in the affirmative, to her enquiry if he was M. Heildermaen, husband of the Jewish vocalist, she handed him a letter and passed on. With a curiosity deeply excited and a trepidation that scarcely permitted him to read through the contents of the letter, he learned from it the real character of his Italian guest, and his probable design, in being introduced under an assumed name to his adole. The information came probably from some of the intriguants of the court, as it bore the distinctive marks of such a source in the innuendos thrown out, calculated to wound the feelings of a husband, especially one who relied with unwavering confidence on the fidelity and love of his wife. Bewildered by the strange and sudden intelligence that deprived him of all power of reflection, he proceeded homewards, whilst an ill-defined feeling of jealousy gained upon him with every step he advanced. On reaching his dwelling, he entered stealthily the apartment his wife usually occupied,—he beheld her at the opposite extremity of the chamber, her figure drawn to its full height, her cheeks flushed and her eyes dilated with angry passion,—the count was before her, upon one knee, his hands clasped in an attitude of supplication. The sight of his insulted wife, aroused to fury the madness that before his entrance had been slowly rising on his brain. Springing as a tiger might have done, on the recumbent form before him, he suddenly drew a dagger from a scabbard, suspended to the count's girdle, and plunged it in his side. The outcries of the family drew a crowd to the scene. The unfortunate Heildermaen was seized upon and hurried to prison, and the count was borne upon a litter, weltering in his blood, to his apartments in the palace.

The occurrence produced an extraordinary sensation at court. The Emperor, for whom such incidents had a peculiar charm, investigated in person the sanguinary affair; but few, if any but those concerned, were acquainted with the merits of the case, and even if all were known, the judge would have failed to discover an extenuating plea. In reality

it bore the appearance of a shocking outrage upon an unoffending person, and supposing the parties equal, the assassin seemed to merit the severest punishment; but when it was considered that the aggression was made by a worthless Jew upon one of a privileged order, it was quite evident to the Autocrat, the crime demanded still more signal vengeance. The sentence of death was summarily pronounced upon the wretched culprit, but its infliction was deferred, till the fate of the wounded man should determine the degree of ignominy and suffering, the Jewish spirit of retaliation exacted.

The wound was not as dangerous as had been apprehended; in a very short period the count recovered. In the interim the emperor's ire abated; other trifles occupied his volatile mind, and all causes combining, through the timely interposition of some compassionate person, the doom awarded M. Heildermaen was commuted to perpetual labour in the distant mines of the Arabian mountains.

Whilst death appeared to be suspended over the guilty parties, the innocent and beautiful Mariamne became, in reality, its victim. Her mind unequal to the shock, had given way on the first intimation of her husband's doom. She sat for hours, her hands clasped upon her brow, the image of mute despair, insensible to the cries of her child, or the entreaties of her attendants,—no food had passed her lips, no sign of recognition beamed in her glazed eye. The attending physician was of opinion that when the paroxysm subsided, reason would resume its power; and leaving such sedatives as he deemed requisite, recommended her attendants to be vigilant. Contrary to his anticipation, the hysterical affection terminated in a burst of wild insanity. At midnight she started from the recumbent position in which she had remained for many previous hours, and rushing to the street, fled from the terrified attendants, with a fleetness that defied pursuit, nor stopped till reaching the banks of the Neva, she plunged into the half frozen stream, and was seen no more.

The tragic fate of the gifted vocalist, increased the sensation the affray had excited at court. The little daughter of the lost maniac was brought thither, and, for some days, princesses and arch-duchesses vied with each other in caressing the helpless orphan. But the novelty wore off; in courtly scenes where the panorama of life is ever shifting, and new characters and events are pressing forward in quick succession, a single occurrence, however startling, cannot long retain a prominent place. The count was scarcely restored to health when his story, as well as the tragedy connected with it, were forgotten. The little Zillah, whose desolate infancy awakened for a time a lively sympathy, was now consigned to domesticity and thought of no more. The countess alone, who in her secret thoughts, judged correctly of her husband's turpitude, in the calamity by which she was the sufferer, continued to interest herself in