

of grief, but awaited his recital. At length he continued :

"Emilia removed her mask, and we seated ourselves to listen to the music, and the plaintive barcarole, as it came from the fishermen in the distant lagoons. Suddenly there glanced before us an elegant domino, who, in the soft voice of a female, said, 'Does Lorenzo prefer the charms of a moonlight revelry to the delights of the dance?'

"At these words the masquer vanished, and Lorenzo followed her swiftly, promising to return. For the first time in my life, I was alone with Emilia; at the same moment the moon broke forth in all its glory. The scene was magnificent. Sea, tower, dome and spire, were embathed in the radiance, and Emilia, casting her eyes toward Heaven, as if ravished with the splendour of the scene, looked like a seraph in breathless adoration.

"I see,' said I, 'that Emilia prefers to gaze upon the beauties of nature, to indulge in the luxury of solitude, to the turbulent pleasures of the *fete*.'

"Ah, Gaetano!' she replied, with a deep sigh, 'all hearts have their moments of sadness.'

"Sadness!" I exclaimed. 'Surely thou knowest nought but happiness!'

"Alas!" murmured she, with a sweet smile, 'what is happiness?'

"It is to love!" I passionately exclaimed.

"The vehemence with which I pronounced these words, made her start, and borne on by the violence of my feelings, I continued—

"Are you unhappy, Emilia?—unhappy that you love? Am I the unfortunate cause? If so do not blame me. I cannot see thee but to adore.'

"Emilia became pale and trembling, and looking upon me, said, 'I will be plain with you, Gaetano. I love you, and my heart can never love another; but you know the insurmountable barrier that is placed between us; the pride of family will never permit our union, and therefore it is better that we crush the flower of our loves in the bud,' and in saying this, she covered her face with her hands, while I beheld a tear glistening through her fingers. A tear—a tear of Emilia's, and for me. Oh, moment—oh, only and happy luxury that was ever on me conferred.

"Emilia,' said I to her with fervor, 'dear Emilia—arbiter of my destiny—if you desire it, I will struggle to subdue my passion. Fear nothing from my love. I shall adore in silence, and respect your peace a hundred times more than my life.'

"The return of Lorenzo interrupted this brief and indecisive conversation. The confusion of his sister appeared to strike him; he regarded me with astonishment, and without speaking, conducted Emilia back to the saloon.

"The next day I was on the grand canal in my gondola, when I encountered Lorenzo.

"I have been looking for you. I desire to speak with you,' said he, coldly.

"Well!' replied I, 'you have found me; what do you require?' and passing into his gondola, he drew the curtains, and spoke as follows :

"Gaetano,' said he, in a low and collected tone, 'Gaetano, you love my sister. It is vain for you to deny it—I know, and am certain of it.'

"I will not dissimulate with you,' I replied; 'it is true. I do love your sister—love her to distraction.'

"How, sir?' cried he, 'do you not know the immense barrier which exists between you?'

"Yes, Lorenzo, I know the distance which separates us, but I also know your friendship for me, and I have dared to believe that it will now not be withheld.'

"Count not on that,' cried he, with vehemence, count not on that; my friendship for an ingrate, will never lead me so far as to sacrifice the honour of my house.'

"The honour of your house, Lorenzo! I do not understand you. Where are those republican sentiments that you so lately professed? those high and generous feelings which actuated your every movement. The honour of your house! Think you that the love of an honest man for the daughter of a Venetian noble is a stain upon the 'scutcheon of your family? I am, it is true, the son of a merchant, but his conduct is without reproach, and the integrity of his sentiments entitle him to the respect of the republic. We are simple citizens, I allow, but we are rich and powerful, and, after all, there are few families that lay claim to nobility, but what have derived their rank from the exercise of the merchant's profession. I mean no disrespect to the heir of Morosoni, who is my friend. I wish still to hold him as such, but I will not sacrifice the independence of principle and honesty, to pride and aristocratic tyranny.' Lorenzo, who had listened to me with impatience, said :

"Enough, sir. It is not for you to tax me with a change in my principles; but why should I be surprized? I have descended too far in making you the friend of my heart.—This is a fit reward for my folly.'