

place to other thoughts. Visions of hospitable old gentlemen, fat, comfortable looking mammas, and (I must confess it,) pretty, rose-lipped daughters, began to arrange themselves in my busy brain. At all events, I determined to reconnoitre the enemy's camp. On reaching the gate, I perceived a tall, well-formed man walking on the lawn, accompanied by a large, noble looking dog, who immediately rushed towards me with a most suspicious growl. His master followed, and having called off the dog with a chiding voice, apologized for the rude behaviour of his four-footed companion. A desultory conversation followed, during which, I informed my new acquaintance of my name and profession, and hinted at my frequent visits to his present domicile. Although reserved and almost stern in his manners, there was something about this man that attracted my curiosity, and in spite of myself, excited my interest, and I accepted with pleasure his somewhat cold invitation to repeat my visits. I shall not detain you with the details of our increasing intimacy. I found him always the same. His features, although cast in the finest mould of manly beauty, were pallid and usually overcast with the deepest gloom. He was perfectly well-informed, and his conversation was eminently pleasing, but at times bitter and breathing a profound scorn of the world and its denizens. Sometimes he would sit for hours plunged in deep and apparently painful thought. I never, however, ventured to question him on his past life, nor did he betray the slightest wish to confide his sorrows to any one. But, of all his singularities, there was one which excited, more than the rest, my surprise and curiosity. Every day, and precisely at the same hour, his servant produced a pistol case, and Sturmwald (for such was the name, whether real or assumed, of my new friend,) fired three shots, neither more or less. I have always been an amateur in pistol shooting, indeed in the army it becomes almost a necessary accomplishment, but never have I known so unerring, so perfect a marksman as Sturmwald. His bullets reached their mark with an obedience to his will that almost seemed the result of magic. 'You would prove a formidable antagonist in an affair of honour,' said I one day, after witnessing a display of his almost miraculous skill. Never can I forget the sudden and singular effect produced on his countenance by these words. His brow became black as midnight, his lips ashy pale, and quivering with passion, and returning his pistol to the case with a muttered and unin-

telligible reply, he rushed into the house.—When we met at dinner, an hour afterwards, all traces of emotion had vanished, nor did he in any way during the evening allude to the circumstance, although he drank much more wine than usual, and was (for him,) extremely sociable. Thus time passed on, and my intimacy with Sturmwald almost ripened into friendship. I had frequently, but always in vain, requested him to visit me at our quarters, and accept the hospitalities of our mess. On these occasions, he never failed to vent his spleen against mankind. 'I detest your false, cold world,' he would say, 'what is it but a ridiculous *melange* of knaves and fools? The betrayers and the betrayed. If I am sad, some insane coxcomb approaches me with an empty jest, if inclined to cheerfulness, I probably meet the doleful countenance of some victim of fraud or treachery. No! to that I prefer the society of my dog. When I am merry, he is but too happy to romp with me, and when serious and thoughtful he sits and watches me with a patient affection, that dogs only are capable of.' One day, however, he yielded to my repeated importunities, and half earnest assurance that I could no longer gratify my inclination to visit him, without some approach on his part to a reciprocity of social intercourse, and promised to dine with me on the following day. At the appointed hour, Sturmwald made his appearance, and was so agreeable, that every one was much pleased and interested in their new acquaintance. But it was decreed that matters were not to terminate thus smoothly. A young cornet, named L. . . ., who had lately joined, a somewhat ignorant and headstrong youth, and who, during the evening, had drank much more wine than he could discreetly carry, took it upon himself to contradict some remark of Sturmwald, and set on foot a furious argument. The cold and somewhat contemptuous bearing of Sturmwald irritated the young cornet so highly, that he made use of language that, (in our service, at least,) usually renders a hostile meeting inevitable. An uneasy silence ensued, when summoning up his former calmness, by a strong effort, our guest took his leave. Innumerable were the reproaches heaped on the luckless origin of this most disagreeable interruption of the harmony of the evening, and numerous were the predictions that on the morrow he would have the extreme felicity of being *winged*, at least, even should he be fortunate enough to escape thus easily. Our young gentleman, however, was stillⁿ