

than did mine the transport of grunting by which Mr. Frampton welcomed his niece, the daughter of his childhood's friend, his fondly remembered sister.

"Umph! eh! so you've let that rascal Cumberland slip through your fingers, Master Frank? Umph! stupid boy, stupid. I wanted to have him hanged."

"I am afraid, sir, the law would scarcely have sanctioned such a proceeding."

"Umph! why not, why not? He richly deserved it, the scoundrel—daring to run off with my niece. Dear oh! she's as like her poor—um—um—um! the Elliots were always reckoned a handsome race. What are you laughing at, you conceited puppy? It's my belief that when I was your age I was a great deal better looking a fellow than you are. Some people admire a snub nose; there was the Begum of Cuddles, splendid woman—Well, what do you want, sir, eh?"

The last words were addressed to Captain Spicer, to whom (as since our late truce he had become all amiability) I had entrusted the commission of ascertaining Wilford's state, and who now appeared at the door, and beckoned me out of the room.

"I shall be with you again immediately," said I, rising; and, replying to Clara's anxious glance by a smile and a pressure of the hand, I hastened to obey the summons.

"Wilford is in a sad state, Mr. Fairleigh," he began, as I closed the door behind me; "dreadful, 'pon my life, sir; but here's the surgeon—you'd better speak to him yourself."

In a little ante-room adjoining the chamber to which Wilford had been conveyed, I found the surgeon, who seemed an intelligent and gentlemanly person. He informed me that his patient had not many hours to live; the wound in the head was not mortal, but the spine had received severe injuries, and his lower extremities were already paralyzed; he inquired whether I was acquainted with any of his relations, adding that they ought to be sent for without a minute's delay.

"Really I am not," replied I; "I never was at all intimate with him; but I have heard that, even with those whom he admitted to his friendship, he was strangely reserved on such subjects."

"Better question the servant," suggested the surgeon; "the patient himself is quite incapable of giving us any information; the concussion has affected the brain, and he is now delirious."

The only information to be gained by this means was, that the servant believed his master had no relations in England; he had heard that he had been brought up in Italy, and therefore imagined that his family resided there: he was able, however, to tell the name of his man of business in London, and a messenger was immediately despatched to summon him. Having done this, at the surgeon's request I accompanied him to the chamber of the sufferer.

As we entered, Wilford was lying in bed, supported by pillows, with his eyes half shut, apparently in a state of stupor; but the sound of