

closed to pity ; the innocent's smiles would oft soothe and soften it to better feelings. Sometimes a gleam of penitence would cross my mind ; and I have thought to seek the place from whence I took it, and throw myself on the mercy of its parent ; but a fear of premature discovery has deterred me. The little mone. I had gained was soon expended : I determined to beg my way to Ireland, where detection would be less likely to follow me ; but yesterday as I approached this village, fatigue and famine overcame me : night came on ; my strength was failing fast ; a light from this cottage encouraged me to try its charity.—You know the rest," said the poor object faintly. "Oh, do not turn me out of door ! let me die in a bed. I was born of good parents ; let me not perish on the high road. Speak, good people : is there any hope in heaven for me ?"

Walter and Rebecca looked at each other : a deed so atrocious had never entered their imaginations. Rebecca drew her child to her, as though she feared one so wicked might steal her away. But the misery of the woman recalled her attention and compassion, and Walter with simple eloquence attempted to comfort her : "Let not your heart be cast down," said he ; "you do not die with your wickedness imputed of : we have a merciful Judge, in whom we trust : he knows your thoughts and your penitence. You are not so bad as you might have been—there are greater crimes than your : you might have destroyed the child when it became burthensome to you, yet you treated it with kindness, think upon this, and thank God that he did not quite abandon you. We will pray for you, and ourselves : we have nothing to repent of. Endeavour to compose yourself : you shall stay here, till you are better. If it please God to spare your life, you will amend it ; if not, he will accept your sincere intention ; and if you die, you shall have decent burial."

The woman lifted up her hands and eyes to heaven, and her lips

moved in silent prayer. After a moment she turned towards them, and they saw her countenance was greatly changed. "The child!" she faintly said. Rebecca took it from the cradle, and presented it to her. Emotions of various kinds covered her dying face, but affection rested on it. "Canst thou," she said, "forgive thy cruel enemy?" The poor innocent appeared to recollect her face, and smiled. "O, God forgive me too," she almost inarticulately added ; and sinking on the bed, drew the face of the child to her dying cheek, and held it in convulsive grasping. To her last words the cottagers had added a solemn amen : they saw she was dying, and took the helpless babe away.

In laying out the body, the gold clasps she had spoken of were found sewed within the lining of her stays : they were large and handsome ; and in the inside of one was engraven, "For the dear Maria, and on each, the cipher V. An event so strange occupied all their conversation. "We will apply," said Walter, "to the parish, to bury the poor creature ; but what must we do with the child?" "Ay!" said Rebecca, "what indeed, Walter?" and she looked in his face for an explanation of his thoughts. "It is a sweet child," he said, "and born perhaps of good parents ; it would be a pity to send it to the work-house—yet we have nothing but what we work for. What do you think Rebecca?"—"It will not take much to keep this little thing," replied the benevolent woman : "let us try at least, dear Walter ; we can but give it up if we are not able. It is so pretty!—it is just the age, and I think something like my little Walter that is dead ;" and the fond mother wept.

Her husband, who had never seen her unhappy since he married her, without seeking to remove the cause, said, "Do not grieve, we will keep the child at all events ; we shall not be the poorer for it : perhaps it may live to complete our old age.

(To be continued.)