



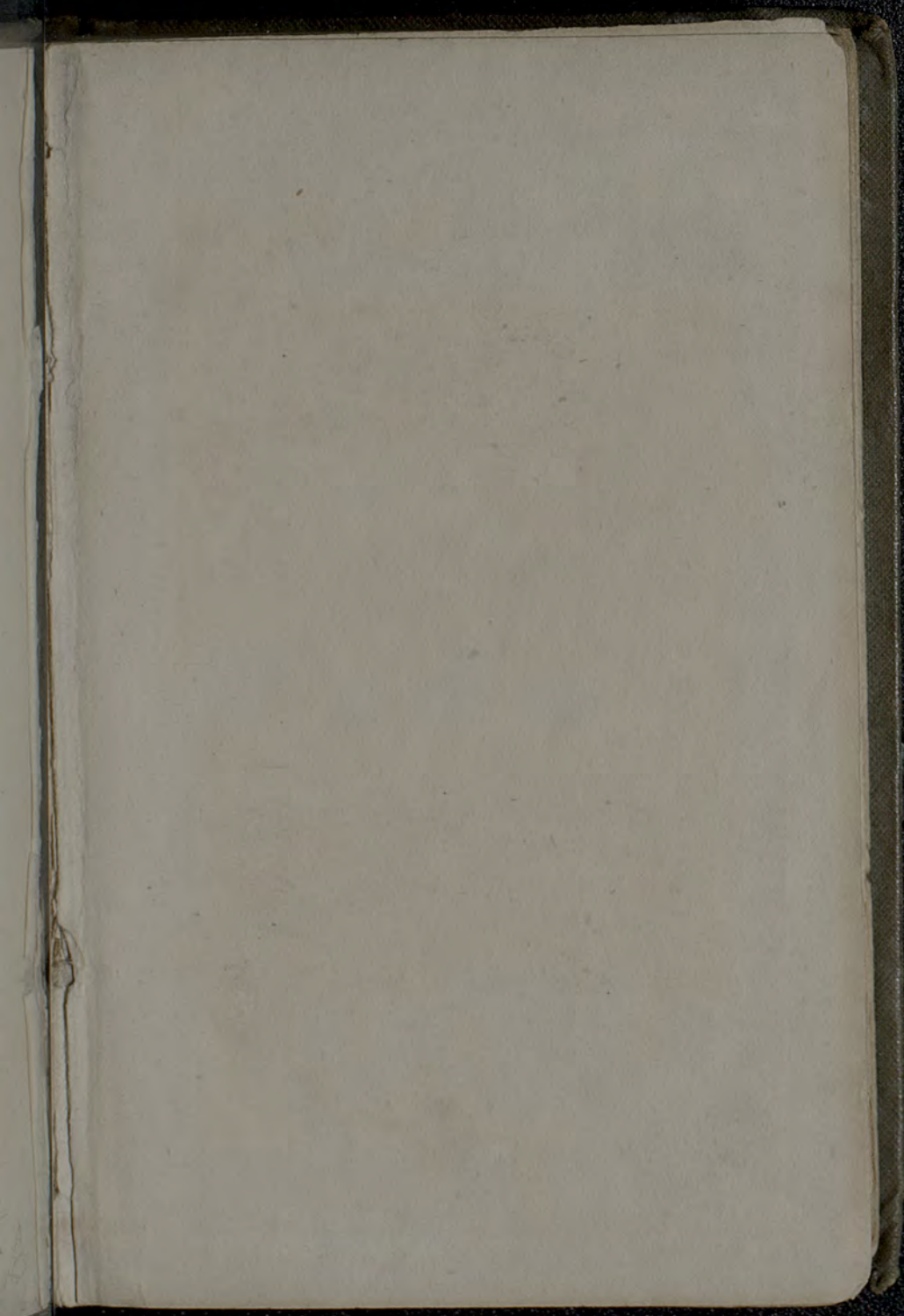
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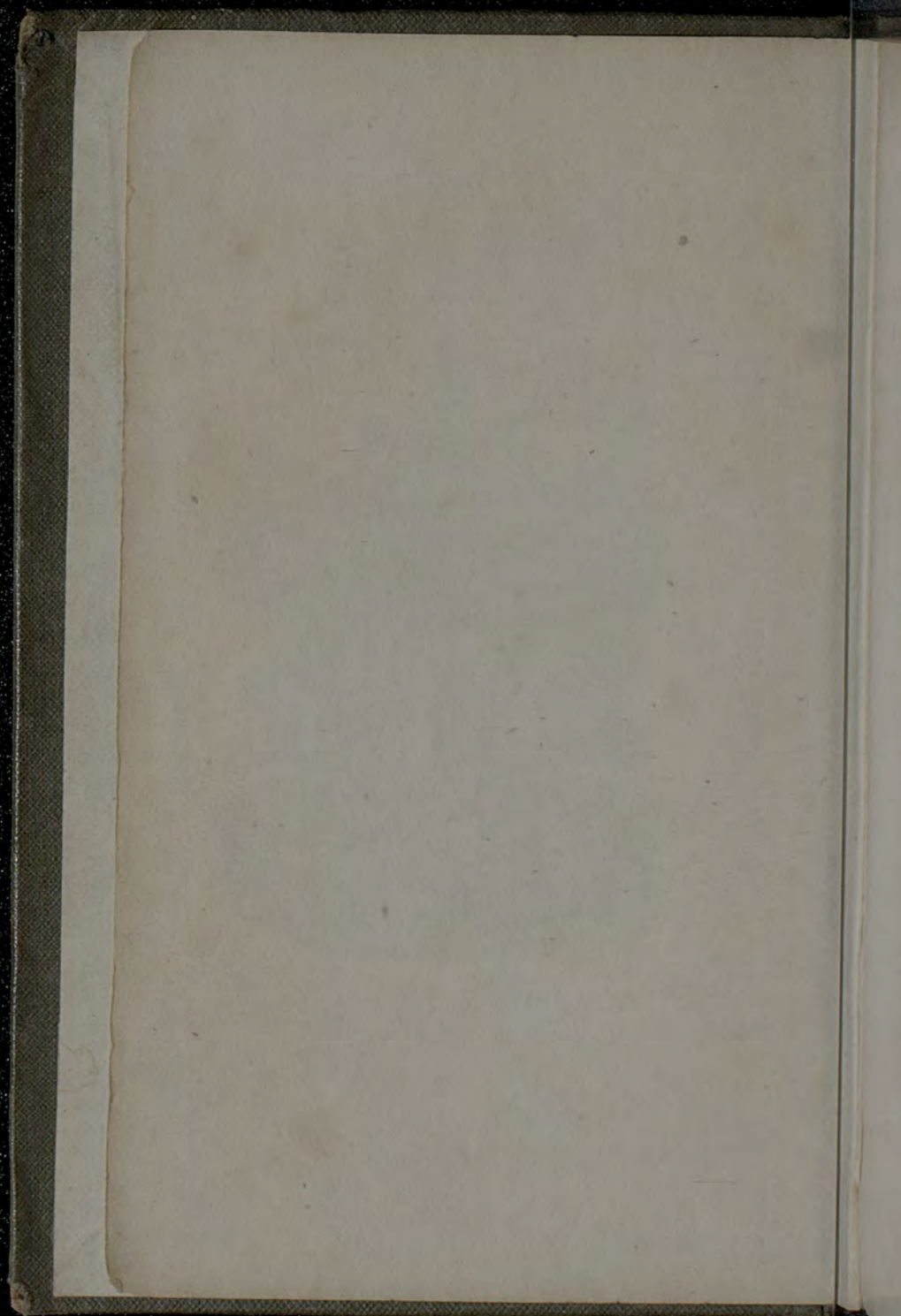
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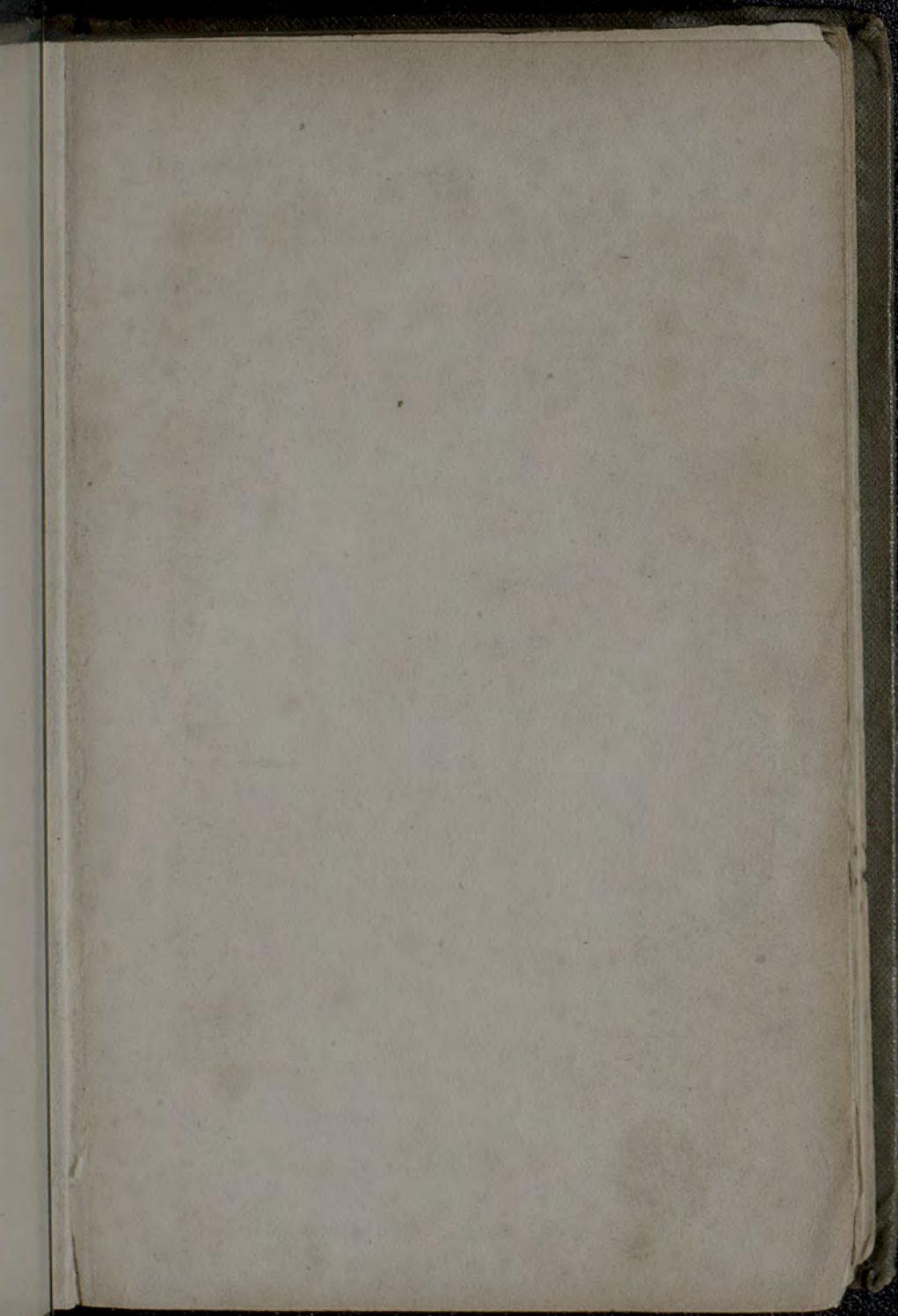
















See page 60.

## *The Little Prisoner.*

*London, Published by Harvey & Darton, 55, Gracechurch St. July 29, 1822.*



THE  
**LITTLE PRISONER;**

OR,

**A VISIT**

TO THE

**ISLAND OF MALTA.**

*FOUNDED ON FACT.*

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SECOND EDITION.

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LONDON:

PRINTED FOR HARVEY AND DARTON,  
55, GRACECHURCH-STREET.

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1825.

THE PRISONER;

OR

THE

ISLAND OF MARY.

FOUNDED BY KING

AND

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR HARRIS AND SONS,  
BY CLARENCE-STREET.

1835.

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THE  
LITTLE PRISONER, &c.

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CHAPTER I.

"I AM glad you have finished writing, mamma," said little Caroline Melville to her mother, as she sat at work; "for I have something very particular to say."

"And what have you to tell me? some wonderful history?"

"It is something very shocking, mamma, that I heard to-day. Salvo was telling Rosa, that as he passed fort St. Elmo, where the French prisoners are confined, he looked through the iron bars of the window; and only think, mamma, he saw a little girl among them, about my size, shut up as a prisoner. Salvo says the

poor little creature looked quite miserable; her clothes were dirty, and her poor toes came through her shoes. He asked the man who held her in his arms, if he was her father; but he answered no, he had found her in the woods, after the battle. I forget the name; but it was at the time so many French were taken prisoners."

"The battle of Maida, I suppose you mean, my dear," replied Mrs. Melville; "but surely there must be some mistake in this account of Salvo's: a little child, such as you have described, would scarcely be shut up as a prisoner. We will make further enquiry. I must first, however, seal and direct my letters: the packet will sail for England to-morrow."

Before we proceed in the history of the little prisoner of fort St. Elmo, it is necessary that our readers should be informed, that Mrs. Melville was at this time residing at Malta, where the regiment of her husband, Colonel Melville,



had been stationed, after the English had gained possession of the island, in the year 1800. They had two children: Caroline, the eldest, was eight years old, and her brother Frederic a year younger.

The heat of the climate, and the situation of Malta, so near the scene of war, were both causes of apprehension to Mrs. Melville; but unwilling either to lose the society of her husband, or to transfer to others the care of educating her children, she determined to accompany him, and take Caroline and Frederic with her. The chief city, Valetta, is built on a promontory, on the point of which stands the castle of St. Elmo, commanding the entrance of the two largest harbours. The whole coast on this side is strongly fortified with batteries and watch-towers. The strength of the island, and its excellent port, render it a place of great importance. Many different nations have alternately possessed Malta, and many have been the contests concerning it.



Cotton is the chief commodity. The fig and orange-tree abound; the fruit of the latter is celebrated for a fine flavour: the vine flourishes, and sugar-canes are cultivated. The spring water is excellent, and is remarkable for keeping an unusual time at sea, without losing its spirit and freshness.

Notwithstanding the industry of the Maltese, which is often rewarded with double crops, they cannot raise sufficient corn to supply them longer than three months. The chief supplies of wheat, oil, and wine, are brought from Sicily. Another article of no small importance, in this sultry climate, is snow, which is procured from Mount Etna.

Upon referring to the Acts of the Apostles, the young reader will find, that Paul was shipwrecked on the coast of Melita, (the ancient name of Malta,) on his journey to Rome. The church in the old town, Citta Vecchia, a grotto, and a harbour, still bear the name of St. Paul.



Near to Malta are the small islands Gozzo and Comino. The former is fertile, and supplies the Maltese with many fruits and vegetables.

"Now, my dear," said Mrs. Melville, "ring the bell, and I will speak to Salvo." The man related the same circumstances, and added, that the child appeared very ill.

"I will go myself to the castle," said Mrs. Melville, "and procure further information: it is very probable that the colonel will prevail upon the governor to set her free. Poor little creature! she can injure no one, though she may be the child of a Frenchman. Caroline, you shall go with me: she may be pleased to see a little girl of her own age."

"Oh, thank you, mamma," exclaimed Caroline: "the very thing I wished for;" and away she ran for her bonnet.

Caroline quickly returned with a small basket carefully covered.

"What have you there?" asked her mother.

"I thought, mamma," replied the child, "that the poor prisoner would, perhaps, like something to amuse her, while she is shut up in that dismal place; at least, I know that if I were there, I should be very thankful to any one who thought of me; so I have taken one of my dolls in this basket. It is not the doll my aunt sent me, for I do not like to give away any presents from England; and as this is very pretty, you know it cannot signify to her."

"But here is a parcel," said Mrs. Melville: "is it the doll's wardrobe likewise?"

"No, mamma; but I have heard that prisoners have only bread and water to live upon, so this piece of cake will be very good for her. I shall tell her it is English cake; English cake made at Malta, I mean."

"You are not quite correct yet, my little Irish girl," said her mother, smiling:



"you mean cake made in the English manner. But come, your wish to be kind would make me overlook a worse mistake than this."

On reaching the fort, Salvo led the way to the prison-window. A tall, elderly man stood by it, supporting the little girl before described, apparently to keep her within reach of the fresh air. She was trying to plat some straw, while the man appeared to teach her the method. Her pale, sickly countenance plainly showed that she was suffering from the confined air of the prison.

Just as Caroline drew near, the child said in French, "Indeed, Francois, I shall never be able to do it, my fingers are quite tired."

"Well, then," he replied, "you shall leave off, and rest your head on my shoulder: perhaps you may get a little sleep. I will go on with the straw-work, and watch you."

"I do not care about the straw-work,"

said the child, fretfully: "I want to get out of this nasty dark place. I could squeeze myself through these bars, if you would let me; and the wind would blow upon my face, and make me cool, as it used to do when we were in the camp."

"Perhaps, Emilie, you might get through yourself," answered Francois; "but what would become of you, my poor little girl? I could not follow you, and you would be quite alone, without any body to love you or take care of you. And you should like this straw-work; for we shall make some pretty thing that will sell for money, and then I will try to get some oranges, to keep you from being so thirsty."

"Oh, no, no," cried the child, throwing her arms round his neck, "I won't go without you, Francois. It is very naughty to tease you: pray forgive me, I will try to be good." She then laid her head on his arm, and would soon have slept, had



not Mrs. Melville's voice caught her attention.

In answer to that lady's enquiries, Francois informed her, that he had fought in the French army at the battle of Maida, in Calabria; and finding that the English forces were completely victorious, he endeavoured, like the rest of his comrades, to escape into the woods. After remaining there many hours, he ventured towards the more inhabited part of the country, in hopes of procuring food. He had not advanced far, when he heard a child crying bitterly. Supposing it belonged to some of the soldiers who had fled from the camp, he crept softly to the spot whence the sound seemed to come. "I peeped through the bushes," continued Francois, "for it was almost dark, lest I should be surprised and taken prisoner; and at the foot of a tree, I saw this child alone, crying piteously for her mamma. I went up and endeavoured to pacify her; and after asking many questions concern-

ing her friend, she suddenly exclaimed :  
' You are Francois, papa's man Francois,  
I am sure you are, though I cannot see  
your face plainly.' Miss Emilie then an-  
swered me willingly, and I found that she  
had been deserted by the soldier's wife  
who had charge of her, and finding the  
tent suddenly filled with smoke, she ran  
out to a little distance. As she stood, a  
pretty butterfly flew by, and she ran for  
some time, trying to catch it. At length  
she grew tired, and wanted to go back;  
but she had lost the way, and had been  
crying a long time when I found her.  
Thinking it safer to remain there for the  
night, I wrapped the child in my cloak,  
and we both fell asleep. A violent storm of  
rain soon awoke me; and to add to my dis-  
tress, the howling of wolves at a distance,  
made me fear either to remain or seek a  
better shelter. As I heard the noise  
more distinctly every minute, I snatched  
up the child, and ran forwards, while she  
screamed with hunger and fright. I



think I never passed such a dreadful night. At day-break I heard a drum beat. I was ignorant of the country, but resolved to follow the sound, and surrender myself to the enemy, rather than suffer the child to perish in the woods. As we drew near, Emilie's cries betrayed us before I could discover the party, who soon surrounded us. The detachment had been dispatched from the English army, to search the woods for stragglers. We were kindly treated, but the poor child has undergone many hardships, during the time we were travelling here; and the confinement she suffers, together with the food she has had lately, make me afraid she will soon be very ill. I have taken all the care I possibly could; but I was a prisoner myself, Madam."

Tears ran down his cheeks as he spoke, which little Emilie observing, she sprang up and kissed him, saying, "Pray don't cry, Francois, I will never again say

that I want to leave you: I do love you dearly."

"You should, indeed, love Francois," said Mrs. Melville, much affected; and turning to Caroline, who was weeping by her side, she lifted her up, that she might stand on the outside of the window. "Emilie," said the lady, "I have brought my little girl to see you. Will you speak to her? She is very sorry to see you and Francois in prison."

The child shook her head sorrowfully, and said, "I cannot play now, little girl; poor Emilie is not happy; she has only this ugly, dark place to stay in."

"But mamma will, perhaps, be able to get you out of this dark place," said Caroline; "and then I hope you will be better, and play with me and my brother. Mamma will soon make you well. Won't you like to be mamma's little girl?"

"Yes, I should," answered Emilie, "if Francois gets out also. I could not come



without him: he would have to stay by himself."

Caroline now presented her little offerings. Emilie took the cake eagerly. "Poor thing," said Francois, "she scarcely eats any thing now. You like that young lady's cake, don't you, my dear?"

"Yes; but you must eat with me: I cannot take it alone."

Caroline then showed the doll, and told her it would help to amuse her till she left the prison.

"I thank you," said Emilie; "but I shall spoil that nice doll with these dirty hands: I cannot keep them clean now, nor my frock either."

Caroline assured her that the doll was on purpose for her to do what she pleased with; and having shaken hands with her through the bars, Mrs. Melville took leave of Francois and his charge, desirous of reaching home, that she might take immediate steps for procuring their liberty.

"Whither have you been?" said Colonel Melville, as Caroline ran to meet him on her return home.

"Oh, papa, I hope you will be so very kind as to stay a little while, before you go to the palace: it is not near dinner-time yet, and mamma has such a sad story to tell you, and such a great favour we have to ask the governor; that is, you must ask it, if you please, and I know he will do it for you."

"I hope the favour is one that I *can* ask," replied her father. "Sir Charles Balfour will grant no favour that is improper, either to me or any other of his friends."

"I think," said Mrs. Melville, "that you will not be less desirous of using your efforts than we are, when you have heard our tale; so sit down and hear me patiently."

"Now, papa," said Caroline, when her mother ceased to speak; "*now* will you ask the governor to let poor little Emilie



out of the prison, and Francois for her sake? I know you will, by your looks."

The colonel promised to do every thing in his power, and assured her that he did not doubt of success with respect to the child; "neither," added he, "do I greatly fear that Sir Charles will be inexorable to my entreaties for her kind friend the soldier." The colonel then departed, and Caroline went to tell her brother, and her faithful nurse Fraser, that she hoped the little prisoner would be released before the next morning.

"Well, Caroline," said the colonel, as she came in to breakfast, "the governor has promised to make every necessary enquiry about Francois and Emilie. Why do you look so grave, my dear?"

"Because I thought by this time they would have been set free; and the governor is only going to enquire about them, after all."

"And what more would you wish? Is it not proper that Sir Charles should

be satisfied that there is no deception in this affair?—that he should see and question the man, the officers of the prison, and the soldiers who brought in the prisoners to Malta? I do not doubt the truth of the account he gave your mother; but I wish, for the sake of Francois himself, that his veracity should be proved. Be assured, my dear child, that no good person's character is ever injured by enquiries. "I have agreed," continued he to Mrs. Melville, "that they shall both come hither, for a time at least, as you authorised me to make the proposal."

"How long will it be before we hear about them?" asked Caroline.

"Some hours, I apprehend," replied her mother.

"Oh, I wish then that I could make the hours fly away, that I might know whether the governor will let them come here."

"Young Marcet sails to-day, in the frigate that lies in the great harbour," said



Colonel Melville, "and a sorrowful parting it will be for his mother and sister. They wish that every minute were an hour, I dare say; while that silly little girl would deprive them, and thousands beside, of time so valuable, by making time hasten away, merely because she cannot wait patiently."

"But, papa, is it not very disagreeable to be uncertain about a thing one wishes so much?"

"However unpleasant such a state of mind may be, Caroline, we must endure it frequently, in the course of our lives; therefore I advise you to begin exercising your patience to-day, and remember that such selfish wishes should never be indulged."

"I know a certain method of relieving these unpleasant sensations," observed Mrs. Melville.

"Pray tell it to me, mamma," said Caroline.

"Bring me a slate, and the parcel you

will find upon the table in the library." She then wrote the following arithmetical question. 'A boy can point sixteen thousand pins in an hour, how many will he do in six days, supposing he works eleven clear hours each day?' "Now," continued Mrs. Melville, "when you have worked this sum correctly, you shall be gratified by reading in one of these volumes."

"I think it is a multiplication sum," said Caroline; "and if I do but find out the rule, I shall conquer the rest. But the books, mamma——"

"Are just arrived from England: your aunt informs me they are in great estimation there, and I think justly so."

"The 'Parent's Assistant,' exclaimed Caroline: "the books are full of stories. How kind my aunt is to send you books, as you desired her."

"Well then, my dear, be industrious," said the colonel: "your mother has put



you in possession of her method to pass away time innocently and profitably."

"I declare I forgot Emilie all this time, and I do not feel quite so impatient now."

"Attend to your employment, I am going to mine."

"I dare say," said Caroline, "papa will not think of Francois and Emilie again, till he sees Sir Charles Balfour: he is always so busy."

"I am not of your opinion, my dear: they will often occur to his mind; but your father will not neglect to appear on parade, in order to walk down to the fort."

"Ah, papa is a man, and I am only a little girl."

"But the children of the present times will become the men and women of the next thirty years; and will they be worthy to take the places of their elders, if they are not accustomed to self-controul and virtuous habits during childhood? If your brother were to grow up an idle,

vicious youth, how ill would he supply his father's place, when he is grown old."

"I think I understand," said Caroline, "and I will try to control myself, that I may be a good woman when I grow up, like you, mamma."

"It is certainly more wise to begin in childhood, though you may endure a few more privations than those children who are suffered to omit their regular occupations, in order to enjoy pleasure which they would be equally happy without, and who are never suffered to feel the consequences of their disobedience and carelessness."

Mrs. Melville now left the room, and Frederic, who had been out with Fraser, came to beg Caroline would walk on the terrace with him; but she steadily refused till her mother had seen her sum; and the pleasure of listening to the story entitled, "Waste not, Want not," compensated Frederic for the loss of his walk. Mrs. Melville then gave them their usual les-



sons, and they had scarcely finished when Salva announced the governor. "I do believe, Miss," said he, "that the little girl is in the calisse: my master would not allow me to open the door of it."

"Oh! where, where?" they both exclaimed, rushing out somewhat too boisterously.

"Caroline," said Mrs. Melville, "remember, self-control is necessary." They returned quietly, and Sir Charles Balfour entered with Colonel Melville, who carried Emilie, and Francois followed.

"Emilie, my dear Emilie," cried Caroline, springing forwards, "now are you not happy? Look, here are mamma and Frederic; and Fraser up stairs, and all the servants, will be glad to see you are come from that dark prison."

But Emilie did not appear disposed to rejoice: she kept stretching out her arms over colonel Melville's shoulder towards Francois, who stood respectfully at the

door, endeavouring, by signs, to pacify the child.

"I have brought you this poor little girl, my dear Madam," said the governor, addressing Mrs. Melville, "and I give her to your care with great pleasure. I have examined the case, as my duty required, and I find her faithful friend deserving both of freedom and protection. At present the colonel desires that he may remain here, on the child's account, and that he may recover from the effects of imprisonment; afterwards, I purpose taking him into my house as a footman, in which capacity he has served Captain Gramont and his family. I fear it may be many months before we can obtain intelligence of Emilie's parents, from the state of public affairs, if indeed the captain has escaped with life; for Francois informs me that his master's regiment was nearly cut to pieces at Maida. Our communications with France and Italy are so extremely limited, that I fear we shall be unable to



give her relations any account of her safety. I find that she is an only child, and that her parents could not be persuaded to leave her in France. I shall, however, use every means that my office affords, of procuring information: in the mean time, she is in a most happy situation, and you have engaged in a very benevolent undertaking."

"And now, Caroline," said Sir Charles, smiling, "I hope you are satisfied with the governor, though he neither sent an immediate order for releasing the prisoners, nor arrived quite so soon as you expected?"

Caroline coloured, and looked at her father. "I am not unreasonable now, Sir Charles," said she, "and indeed I think you came sooner than I thought for, thanks to mamma for teaching me how to pass the time agreeably."

Emilie, who had been seated on the colonel's knee, jumped down, when Sir Charles had finished speaking, and ran back

to Francois. Caroline followed, and endeavoured to draw her towards Frederic. "Won't you love me?" said she, "and play with me?"

"Yes I will, if Francois is with me; but I cannot leave him, indeed."

"My dear," said Mrs. Melville, "take Emilie and Francois up stairs to Fraser's room, where your playthings are: she is provided with some clothing for your little friend, who will be very glad to have clean hands, I dare say."

When Emilie had been up stairs a little while, she grew cheerful. Francois had his share of toys to examine, nor could he be excused from taking a share of the biscuits that Fraser offered them. At length a bell rang, and Caroline said: "Is not Francois to go down to dine with the servants? I am sure he must be very hungry."

"Will you let Francois go down, my dear?" said Fraser.

"Pray do, Emilie," observed poor



Francois, "for I am very hungry. You know I never used to dine in your room at Paris."

"And here is your dinner coming up," said Fraser; "so Francois will return again by the time you have finished."

"But promise to come to me," said Emilie.

"I will, indeed, my dear: only trust to me."

On Francois' leaving the room, Fraser placed the seats for dinner, but Emilie exclaimed: "Oh! I must not sit down to dinner with these dirty hands." The good nurse gave her water, and she applied it to her face very cleverly. "A little bit of soap," said she, making a curtesy: "oh! how delightful it is to be clean; but I wonder if Francois has some soap."

"Oh yes, do not fear that," said Fraser; "there is Salvo, who saw him first, will take good care of him, and so will Jean Marie."



Frederic, who had been unusually silent during the last hour, now began to be a little used to his new companion. As a step to farther acquaintance, he offered her what he thought best at dinner, and promised to be her horse when she liked to play on the terrace. "Thank you," said Emilie, "but I am so tired, and my head aches with the light."

"That is because you have been so long shut up in the dark prison," said Fraser: "but come, Miss Caroline, let me put on your clean frock, and Master Frederic must go into the next room and put on clean stockings."

When Caroline was ready, Fraser asked Emilie if she would change her frock also. "Yes," replied she, "I should like it very much, but I have no clean muslin frocks now; Francois says he thinks they were all burned in papa's tent."

"See," said Fraser, "here is one that the lady below has made on purpose for you; and in that drawer are petticoats and other things, if you want them."



Emilie stood quite still till Fraser had finished, and then curtseying, said: "Thank you, Ma'am, for making me so comfortable."

"You must thank the lady in the parlour, my dear," said Fraser; "she provided these clothes for you."

"But you put them on," replied Emilie, "so I may thank you for that."

"You are very welcome, my little dear," said the nurse, much pleased with the behaviour of her new charge: "you must go down now, the bell rings, Miss Caroline."

"Come," said Frederic, "mamma will be glad to see you look so nice and clean. What a good thing it was that Salvo happened to go through fort St. Elmo!"

When the door was opened, Emilie drew back, seeing the company seated round the table. "Come in, my dear," said colonel Melville, "come and take some fruit with Frederic and Caroline."

Emilie held Caroline's hand very tight, and ventured in, notwithstanding her bash-



fulness, for she had always been accustomed to comply with her parents' wishes, and to do as she was told; but instead of following Caroline to the lower end of the table, she looked for Mrs. Melville. "Take no notice," said the colonel to his friends, (who were all disposed to show kindness to the little stranger,) and resumed the conversation. When Emilie thought herself unobserved, she came softly to Mrs. Melville, and touching her hand, whispered: "I want to kiss you, and thank you, Ma'am, for my clean frock: the lady up stairs told me that you gave it to me. But pray tell me where Francois is gone."

Mrs. M. took her on her knee, and assured her that she was very glad to see her so comfortable, "And Francois," continued she, "is happy also." She then whispered a servant who came into the room, and continued to talk to Emily and the lady who sat next her, till Francois appeared, bringing in wine and cakes.



"Oh! Francois, my dear Francois, all dressed and waiting, just as he used to do at home," cried the little girl, forgetting the company: "do not go away, Francois, and I shall be very happy."

"You see, my dear," said Francois, in a low voice, as he put the wine on the table, "that I am doing the same as if I were at Paris. I am in the hall; whenever you want to see me I will come." He then left the room, and the company all joined in assuring Emilie that Francois looked too kind and good to deceive her.

Notwithstanding Emilie's happiness, her cheeks looked very pale, she could not eat, and complained of fatigue. Mrs. Melville judged it most prudent to have her kept quiet, and carried her to Fraser, that she might be put to rest, charging the children not to disturb her.

Some time passed before Emilie regained her healthy appearance, and Mrs. Melville was obliged to use the utmost care to

prevent her from over-heating herself by running about, which she always attempted, whenever her head-ache abated. The children sometimes rode out in a calisse, attended by Francois, who was a general favourite. The calisse is the most common kind of carriage used in the island. It has two wheels, and is drawn by a mule. The muleteer, who acts as driver, runs on foot, and is capable of enduring the fatigue of a day's journey.

After some weeks, Sir Charles Balfour proposed that Francois should enter upon his new office; and Emilie, who had now learned to trust those around her, readily acquiesced, upon his promise of coming regularly to see her. Notwithstanding the happy situation in which Emilie was now placed, she did not forget her parents. Frequently her conversation with Francois consisted of wishes to know how her papa was, and when her mamma would learn how kind the colonel and Mrs. Melville were to her. \* She was much



pleased that these kind friends allowed her to call them papa and mamma, while they enjoined her never to forget that she had other parents, who were perhaps lamenting her loss, or making vain efforts to obtain information concerning her.

Mrs. Melville now turned her attention to Emilie's instruction: she had recovered her health, and began to show considerable quickness of understanding. Caroline had made some progress in writing, arithmetic, and geography; she read well, and Emilie, who loved her little friend, eagerly attended to Mrs. Melville's instructions, that she might be as forward, and learn the same lessons. A volume of the "Parent's Assistant" was the reward of peculiar attention, and Emilie and Frederic sat with great pleasure to listen, while Caroline read to them during the hottest hours of the day.

Francois paid a weekly visit to the children's room, and Emilie always tried to show how she loved and esteemed him.

Francois, like most of his countrymen, was very ingenious, and many were the boxes, kites, balls, hoops, and bows and arrows, which he brought to please his little friends; and even Mrs. Melville's tea-chest and liquor-case were of Francois' manufacture. His great amusement was to make the children guess what his pocket or parcel contained, before he would produce his gifts. Indeed, Francois was a favourite both with the family of the colonel and the governor, and he had now no care. But the remembrance of his master and mistress lamenting for their child, sometimes made him wish to leave the island, and make some effort to restore Emilie to them.

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## CHAPTER II.

"THE air is considerably cooler," said Mrs. Melville one day, when the children came down to breakfast; "we will take a



ride to the gardens of St. Antonia; the orange-groves are delightful, and I will hear you all three read your lessons in one of the myrtle-bowers." A few books were soon collected, and they proceeded in a calisse to the gardens.

St. Antonia had been the country-seat of the Grand Master of the Order of Malta, and was now inhabited by the English governor, who had requested Mrs. Melville to go thither whenever it was agreeable to her. The myrtle hedges that fenced the broad gravel walks were in full bloom, flowers of various kinds decorated the borders; and the orange-groves presented fruit in all its various stages, while the blossoms shed a delightful fragrance around. After rambling for some time, the party seated themselves, and read their lessons with considerable accuracy.

"I am well satisfied with you," said Mrs. Melville, "for you have used some efforts to fix your attention, which, sur-



rounded as we are by so many beautiful objects, is some merit. Go, therefore, and gather some of the ripe oranges, and be careful not to injure any thing."

The children soon disappeared, and having gathered the fruit, sat down in a bower not far distant. As they sat, Caroline desired Emilie to look under a branch of myrtle near to her. "Oh! it is one of those beautiful green lizards," said Frederic, "only look at its little shining black eyes."

"And how delicately it is shaped," said Caroline: "it turns up its head as if it listened to our praises. Ah! now your moving has frightened it away. Mamma is very fond of looking at them, as they frisk about in the sun."

"Will they hurt any one?" asked Emilie.

"Oh no! they are quite harmless, and they are to be seen in the country very often."

"I wish I could catch it," said Emilie,



and keep it in a cage. Francois would make me a cage, I know, and I might tame it, perhaps. I will watch till it comes out again."

"I do not think you ought to catch it," said Frederic: "it will not be very happy."

"Oh! there it is: softly, Frederic; gently, pray gently, Caroline, and I shall have it," said Emilie, stooping down, and extending her hand towards the lizard.

"*Forbear, prisoner!*" exclaimed a voice which startled the children, and Emilie hastily rose.

"Let us look round and see who it was," said Caroline.

"Oh! no, no," cried Emilie: "if it should be the man who keeps the prison, he may seize me for taking any thing out of this place. Oh! let us run back to mamma."

They soon regained the arbour, where Mrs. Melville waited for them, and related their adventure. "It is very proba-



ble," observed that lady, "that one of the men employed in the grounds might pity the poor lizard, and endeavour to save him from captivity by startling you. But, my dear little girl, did you like to be shut up in the prison of fort St. Elmo?"

"Not at all, mamma: I thought you knew how unhappy I was when you and dear Caroline came to see me. Oh! I remember that day, when I first saw you; and when you left the prison-window I thought I was never to see you again. I cried very much, and teased poor Francois, I am afraid, with my complaints. Foolish child that I was! I thought you very cruel not to take us both out of the prison at once, and would not believe that you ever intended to return. But, mamma, what has this to do with the lizard?"

"A great deal, my dear; because I am afraid that the little creature would not like your cage better than you did the prison at fort St. Elmo. Here it sports all day long among flowers and herbs,



choosing its own food, according to its taste, and basking in the sun with companions of its own species."

"Indeed, mamma," said Emilie, "I never once thought that it would make the poor lizard unhappy; I only thought of my own delight in feeding and playing with it."

"I believe you, my dear," said Mrs. Melville; "and I am glad that you did not succeed in catching the lizard, as I should have been obliged to forbid your detaining it. Indeed, I do not approve of any animals being kept in a state of bondage merely for pleasure: accident may bring a poor pensioner to you, and then it would be kind and humane to take charge of it."

They now left the gardens and returned home, but the children could not easily forget their own adventure, and occupied themselves with guessing various persons, who might have been at St. Antonia that

day, and were acquainted with Emilie's history.

In the evening George Balfour called, to deliver a message from his father to Colonel Melville. He was a sprightly boy of eleven years old, and a favourite with all the children. They did not fail to mention their excursion to the gardens; and George seemed to enjoy the alarm they described, on hearing the strange voice, as they termed it.

"You would not have laughed, I assure you," said Emilie, somewhat displeased at his mirth, "if you had been in my place."

"Why did you not look round and try to find out the person, instead of running off? I should have done so, I am sure. However, you will not be in a hurry to catch lizards again at St. Antonia: a good thing for them. So, good-bye," and away he ran.

"George! George! stay a little while," said Frederic; but George either did not



or would not hear, and the children went to their mother till the hour of rest.

"I wonder what they mean by the carnival," said Frederic, one day, to his father.

"Of whom do you speak, my dear?"

"Why, papa, Rosa was telling Fraser, that the carnival will soon come, and then the streets will be full of people that are dressed so fine, and who dance and make such fun. I did not understand all she said, for Rosa cannot speak English, and I only know a little Maltese."

"The very question I wanted to ask," said Emilie: "Caroline does not remember any thing about it."

"We have hitherto been at our country-house, St. Julien's, during the carnival," said Colonel Melville, "but this season we small remain at Valetta till it is over; you will, therefore, have a sight of it. The carnival is an annual festival in catholic countries, which begins on Twelfth-day, and lasts till Lent; but the three last days



only are kept. All kinds of amusement and extravagance are then permitted. The people walk about in masks, and assume various characters, that they may not be known. Suppose now that I should put the dress of an English chimney-sweeper upon you, with a mask black with soot, and in your hand a brush and wooden scraper, then you would be dressed in the character of a sweep, and must try to support it, that is, to behave like one, by calling sweep! sweep! as you pass on."

"But I do not want to be like a sweep, papa," said Frederic, colouring and looking very grave.

"Neither do I intend you should, my dear; therefore do not look quite so solemn about the matter, but tell me if you understand."

"Oh, yes, papa; and I shall like very much to see the carnival."

"I should like to have a mask," said Caroline, "and I would be a primrose-girl,



with a thick woollen cloak, and a beautiful basket of primroses to sell."

"And where, among the heated rocks of Malta, unsheltered by hedges and grass, unwatered by little streams, would my primrose-girl fill her basket?" said Mrs. Melville.

"Ah, I forgot," replied Caroline: "I wish I was in England."

"To gather primroses?"

"Yes, mamma."

"But then you would lose the carnival," said Emilie.

"Well, we cannot have every thing," replied Caroline, "so I will not wish to be in England till the carnival is over."

In a few days the much-desired festival took place. The children were stationed in the balcony, and were joined by the daughters of Captain Hamilton, who was a friend and fellow-soldier of the colonel's.

"There," said Frederic to his visitors,

"I declare mamma and your aunt Hamil-



ton are going into the balcony, and papa too, though he laughed at us so this morning at breakfast, for liking to see sights. I am sure, if Miss Hamilton looks at the carnival we may, for she is so clever, mamma says; and I think so too, for what a number of wonderful things she does know. Ah! papa," continued Frederic, calling aloud, "I see you."

"But I should be well pleased if you were not so easily heard," said the colonel; "we shall have the masks looking up to observe us, so keep quiet. I am going to the palace, and shall probably send Francois and your friend George Balfour to you."

"But do let me tell you something very delightful before you go. I am to dine in the parlour to-day, for the dinner is to be earlier. Are you not very glad, papa, that I shall dine with you?"

"The pleasure must depend on your good behaviour," said the colonel: "I shall not be glad to see a little boy at my



table, who shouts, and makes such a noise as you have done for the last ten minutes."

Mrs. Melville and her guest now joined the children, and their father took leave. Frederic, always attentive to his favourite, Miss Hamilton, grew very quiet; and as a few persons only appeared at present in the street, she amused the children with her conversation till noon, when the crowd began to collect.

The view from the balcony now greatly surprised them. A train of carriages filled with masks, dressed in the gayest manner, passed along the street. The Maltese ladies wore a profusion of flowers, feathers, and jewels; the gentlemen were all full dressed, and wore large nosegays. As the carriages moved slowly along, the ladies scattered quantities of sugar-plums amongst the crowd in the street, and from time to time shook hands with those who could approach near enough to obtain that honour. As soon as the genteel part of the company disappeared, a great



variety of characters succeeded; some were dressed as mountebanks, others as tinkers. Many wore a dress called a domino, which is merely a large sort of cloak, that completely conceals the figure. Those who wear them seldom take any active part in the scene, but remain spectators. At the same time, their dress and mask secure them from insult, to which they would be liable at this time, if they appeared without any disguise.

The noise and crowd continued to increase. At length a very large car drew up before the colonel's house; a platform was erected upon this car, where some strange-looking performers appeared, whose antics amused the party at the windows. An awkward country clown began scolding his daughter for speaking to a little plough-boy, who appeared to have been begging. In the midst of his passion, the plough-boy came suddenly behind, and struck him with a wand, when he instantly sunk into a great box,



which fastened over him of its own accord. At the same moment the plough-boy was changed into a harlequin, who, with another stroke of his wand, changed the daughter into a beautiful columbine. A band of music struck up, and harlequin and columbine danced about the stage, till the father, having forced his way through the chest, seized harlequin's wand, which he had laid down whilst dancing. He struck the platform, and, in a moment, harlequin was shut up in the box; columbine lost her fine dress, and was obliged to sit down to her work, and listen to her father's lecture. Mrs. Melville now threw some money down to the performers, and the car proceeded to another street, amidst the huzzas of the multitude.

A group of quadrille dancers succeeded, who were followed by another car with an exhibition of wild beasts, which so extremely delighted Frederic, that his mother was obliged to call Fraser down to stand behind and hold him; for he jumped



about, and leaned so far over the balcony, that she thought he would certainly fall over. When the monkey began grinning and making faces, he laughed so loud and violently, that his mother declared he was as laughable a sight himself.

Soon after, Caroline exclaimed: "Oh! mamma, mamma, what will become of papa? only look, a great number of people have seized him: what are they going to do?"

"Your papa is indeed fairly caught, my dear," said Mrs. Melville, "but they will not hurt him much; they are only teasing him, as they do every one who appears in the street unmasked. The governor has given orders that no British officer or soldier shall appear masked during the carnival, and therefore I suppose the inhabitants like to tease them, now they have an opportunity. Your father hoped to have escaped by coming down a back street."



Caroline continued watching. The group of dancers placed the colonel in the midst of the circle they formed, and began dancing round him: every turn, one of them broke from the circle, and danced up to him, slapping his cheeks smartly with both hands, and then danced back to her place, which was repeated until every one had had this gratification. The colonel took it all with good-humour, which pleased them so much, that when the ceremony was ended, they protected him against all other parties, who would otherwise have attacked him, and thus he was guarded to his own door.

The children all ran to meet him, desirous to know if he were hurt. "No, my dears," said he, "I am not much hurt, though I confess my face burns a little. These ladies' hands are not very soft; they are all, I believe, men dressed up like ladies, for no women's hands could ever be so hard and rough."

"Why did you not fight them, papa,



with your sword?" said Frederic: "if I had been you, I would soon have knocked them all away."

"Oh! what a brave fellow you are," answered his father; "but let me tell you, my boy, you would have been very foolish, and even wicked, to have drawn your sword on such an occasion. These poor people only wanted to have a little fun, and to punish me for not complying with the customs of their country; and though they annoyed me a little, they had not the slightest intention of doing me any serious injury. A soldier, Frederic, does not deserve to wear a sword, who cannot command his temper on much more trying occasions than this: besides, it is the act of a coward to draw a sword on those who are unarmed, and, consequently, not on equal terms with you."

"Oh! dear papa, I never thought of that; but I shall be sure to remember what you have told me; for I would rather be beaten till I was quite sore, than that I



should ever be thought a coward, for I know that is very mean."

Just as the party had dined, the parlour-door opened, and a company of masks entered the room; a liberty which is often taken by the natives amongst each other, and even with English families, upon very slight acquaintance. They are always well received, and uniformly conduct themselves with the greatest propriety. On this occasion the colonel welcomed and invited them to sit down, and offered them wine. One of the masks, habited like a Turk, seemed to hesitate; the rest seated themselves, and drank the health of the company. The Turk wore a high turban, and was dressed very superbly: he did not speak, but made signs to thank the colonel, refusing to partake of the wine that was offered him. On Mrs. Melville's pressing him, he took a seat next to Emilie, when he thought no one observed him.

But a new alarm awaited poor Emilie.



Just as she bent forward to reach a biscuit, a voice exclaimed: "Forbear!" and turning, she saw the Turk close to her. "Oh! the man from the gardens," she exclaimed: "who are you, and why do you come here?"

"Why do you catch my lizards?" muttered the Turk: "my lizards love freedom as well as yourself." She tried to catch hold of his mask, while he struggled to prevent her.

"Emilie, my dear!" said Mrs. Melville, greatly alarmed, lest the mask should be a Maltese, and resent what he might consider an insult, you forget the rules of politeness and good manners: I am quite ashamed of you."

"Oh! mamma, it is the man that frightened us so in the gardens of St. Antonia, and I thought he should not get away now. George Balfour shall not laugh at me for a coward now: I did not mean to be rude."

"There is no offence, Ma'amselle," said



one of the female masks, who was in the character of a sultana; "Selim has no objection to a little mirth occasionally, but I think we must take our leave: we have intruded here long enough." She rose on saying these words, and the party had nearly all reached the parlour-door, when little Frederic, who had not spoken, nor ventured to move from his father's side, all the time this formidable party had been in the room, mounted, unperceived, upon Emilie's chair, and with one of the fruit-knives, cut the string of the Turk's mask. It instantly fell to the ground, and discovered, under the fine turban, the features of George Balfour. On the mask dropping off, the children set up a shout of delight, and George, catching hold of Frederic, exclaimed: "You little rogue, what a trick you have played me: I should have escaped detection, I am sure, if you had not come so sily behind me and cut the string."

"That you would," cried Caroline; "I



never thought of your being under that frightful mask: what have you done to make yourself look so tall? Your turban reaches above papa's head."

"See if you can find out," returned George: "I don't mean to let you into any more of my secrets, if I can help it; but I must run away now, to pay some other visits, where I hope I shall not meet with any more such mischievous monkeys as you have been, Frederic, to spoil my sport."

"No, no," said Emilie, "you shall not get away yet, Master George, till you tell me how you came to know of my wishing to catch the lizard."

"Shake hands now," said he, "and allow me to run after my company, or I shall lose a great deal of mirth."

"I will let you go now," said Emilie, "if you promise to come back and answer my question truly."

"Well, well, I will return in the evening: good-bye," and away he walked.

"How stately he looks," said Caroline;



"I wonder he does not move faster, to overtake his companions."

"That would not be supporting his character," said the colonel. "It would be very indecorous to see a Turk running; and besides this reason, I rather think Selim has another for preserving his solemn pace at present. But I must not betray his secret: that would not be quite fair."

As the evening approached, Emilie began to grow anxious for George's arrival. "I hope he will come, for I so much wish to hear about the man."

"I wish more to know how he could make himself so tall," said Frederic. "He had on a pair of his papa's boots, I believe; for I saw his feet from under his long gown, and they were quite as large as a man's. If I had known it was George Balfour, I would have crept under the table, and looked under his gown, when he did not observe me."



"But as it was, my boy," said Mrs. Melville, "I fancy his fierce mask rather frightened you; for I perceived you kept close to your papa's elbow, all the time he was here, and did not venture to speak a word. How came you to get courage to go near him at last?"

"Indeed, mamma, I was a little frightened, for he looked very frightful; but when he turned his head round, I saw the string, and I thought, if I could only get that ugly face off, I should not mind either his turban or his boots; so I slipped round, behind papa's chair, and had cut the knot before he observed or felt me."

"And do you know, Frederic, you had more reason to be frightened just then, than at any other time; for if the Turk had proved to be a stranger and a Maltese, he would, in all probability, have been extremely offended, and, perhaps, have beaten you for taking such a liberty;



and neither your papa nor I could have said a word in your defence."

George returned in the evening, and Emilie renewed her enquiries. "After all," said she, "you only imitated the man; for you remembered what we told you. You do not know whether he is a Turk."

"I know he is not," said George; "and I know who it was likewise who spoke to you."

"Will you give me leave to guess?" said Mrs. Melville. "I think George is a good performer; for I apprehend that the man in the garden, and Selim the Turk, are the same person."

"But how could I come there?" said George: "my father does not live at St. Antonia now."

"Here is a gentleman who will assist us, perhaps," said Mrs. Melville. "Mr. Bell is coming in with the colonel, I perceive."

"You need not ask Mr. Bell, Ma'am," said George, colouring, "for he does not



know. But I will allow you are right. It was I who spoke to you, Emilie, in a rough voice. I was sauntering through the grove when I heard your voices; and as I do not like to see animals confined in cages, and deprived of their liberty, I resolved to save the lizard, and frighten you; for you ought to have remembered that you had been a prisoner yourself."

"But Emilie is quite convinced of that," said Caroline; "and she would not confine any living thing now."

"Well then, shake hands," said George, "and I will tell you another secret. My father wanted some particularly fine fruit from the garden, and sent a servant for it. Now it was Mr. Bell's day, and I wanted to go with the man; so I persuaded him to take me with him, and slipped out, unknown to any one. Mr. Bell would not wait, and I escaped my Latin; and since then the carnival has put all lessons aside. He will forget all about my want of punctuality, if he is not reminded of it;



and it was on this day that you chanced to be at St. Antonia."

"My young friend," said Mrs. Melville, "do you think that *you* were acting right, in avoiding your tutor for the purpose of secret pleasure. Your father, I am sure, would not have objected to your going: you have only to express your wishes, and he is as ready to enter into your views, as if he were of your own standing. You have no shadow of a pretext for acting thus."

"But I know," said George, a little abashed, "that he would have said: 'Are you free from any other claim upon your time?' and I never told him a story in my life. I must have said, Mr. Bell was to come. Now I liked best to go down to the garden, but I believe I was wrong. I might as well have asked my father to let the servant wait till I had done, (for he would not have suffered me to go otherwise,) and have given it up, if there was not time. To be sure it was not



right. I will tell my father the whole story; for he let me wear a mask, on my saying what fun I could have in the company of some Maltese friends, who would take care I did no harm, and that I had a scheme for surprising you all. No, no, it is not right, I see," said George, warmly: "I will go to my father directly; he is not engaged to-night." Away ran George again, and Mrs. Melville expressed her pleasure at his resolution.

The children heard with pleasure, the next morning, that the family were to leave Valetta in two days, for St. Julien's. They collected their various toys and books to pack up, and Francois came to visit them before their departure. Emilie was not willing to have him left behind, for the distance would not permit him to make such frequent visits, and she could not bid him farewell without much lamentation. He assured her that he was so very happy in the governor's service, and so much trust and confidence were



placed in him, that it would be ungrateful to wish for any other place nearer to her; that he would come as often as he possibly could, if he slept an hour or two less for it; and reminded her how happily she herself lived with her new papa and mamma.

Colonel Melville was so much pleased with the conduct of George Balfour, that he proposed to take him into the country, if Mrs. Melville was disposed to have his company. "He will be under better order there than at the palace," said he; "for though his father is as watchful over his studies as his various duties will permit, I know he is very often idle, and there is too much dissipation for his good." Mrs. Melville assented, and George heard with pleasure, that he should be a guest at St. Julien's. He promised that he would not lead his companions into any mischief, and Mr. Bell agreed to superintend his Latin lessons.

The party at length assembled, and left



the close air of the city, to enjoy the sea breeze from St. Julien's bay, close to which the house was situated. The beauty of the setting sun caught the attention of the children as they rode. The whole eastern part of the heavens exhibited the finest purple colours, while the west glowed with the richest yellow hues; a spectacle frequent at Malta, during the earlier part of the spring months.

Emilie was delighted to find a good garden, in excellent order, and a broad terrace shaded by a colonnade, under which she could walk, sheltered from the sun. Around the pillars creeping plants grew in profusion, vines covered the roof, while myrtles and geraniums of various species were placed in pots between the pillars. A covered walk extended from the terrace to the lower end of the garden, terminated by a summer-house, which commanded a view of the sea. "Here," said Mrs. Melville, "we will per-



form our daily lessons, and in this vine-covered walk you may study at ease."

"I shall like that," said they all: "Oh, we shall learn very fast in this cool place, and then we may look through the telescope at the ships. It is far better to be at St. Julien's than Valetta."

The family was soon settled, and Francois surprised them one morning very early, bringing a small cabinet with drawers, as a gift to Emilie. "You will find a great many sorts of shells and coral on the sands," said he, "and you may keep them all nicely sorted in these drawers."

"And we will all help to pick them up," said Frederic. "But Francois, where is my whip? I am learning to ride already." Francois promised all diligence, and the girls put in their claim.

"Why don't you beg for one?" said Frederic to George.

"Because I promised not to ask him

for any thing for a long time, if he would help me to dress for the carnival."

"So Francois made you look like a Turk."

"Yes, I could not have been so completely fitted out, if Francois had not taught me. I used to practise with him; for I found it difficult to walk, at first, with my feet mounted so high." Francois told George he was a good young gentleman for keeping his word, and bade them farewell.

Their evening walk was generally by the sea, in order to collect shells for their cabinet. The colonel having taken charge of the children one evening, they extended their walk to St. Paul's harbour, where they were told some fine shells might be obtained. As they walked, Caroline dropped her glove. On discovering her loss, she was greatly distressed, and said she must go back and look for it; for she had lost so many gloves lately, that her mamma would be displeased if she did



not find it. George offered to run back and look for it; but as he turned round with this intention, he saw the colonel's little dog running very fast after them, holding something in his mouth.

"Oh! it is my glove," exclaimed Caroline, "that Carlo has got in his mouth. What a good creature you are: I shall love you much better than I ever did before, it was so good-natured of you to bring it to me."

The children all caressed Carlo, and Frederic enquired whether his father did not think Carlo was a very clever dog.

"Yes, my dear, I think he is; but I remember having heard of one far more sagacious than Carlo."

"Oh, pray tell the story," said Frederic, and the colonel began.

"Two Italians, named Antonia and Pietro, were travelling from Rome to Naples. The former was attended by a Florentine spaniel, a race of dogs esteemed even more for their sagacity than



for their extreme beauty. In the course of conversation, Antonia related some remarkable stories of his dog Fidele's performances. In proof of his assertions, he proposed to mark a piece of money, throw it on the ground, and leave it; and engaged that Fidele would return, when they were many miles distant, and bring it safely to him again. Pietro treated the proposal with scorn, and was so foolish as to offer a considerable wager, that the dog would not bring back the money. Antonia accepted it, and having marked a crown-piece, threw it upon the ground, Pietro having likewise marked the money. They proceeded on their journey, still followed by Fidele.

"When they had reached the distance agreed upon, Antonia made a sign to his dog, to return for the crown they had left; and while Fidele trotted back, the travellers proceeded towards the inn, where they intended to sleep that night.

"Fidele retracing his master's steps,



arrived at the spot where the crown had fallen. It was gone. A Neapolitan passing that way, had seen and picked it up. Guided by instinct, Fidele tracked this man, and overtook him as he was travelling on, rejoicing in the treasure he had found. The man, perceiving that he was followed by this beautiful animal, began to notice and caress him; and believing that he had lost his master, resolved to take care of him. When night drew on, he stopped at an inn. Fidele shared his supper, and when he retired to rest, followed him into the bed-room, and lay down upon the traveller's waistcoat, which contained the lost piece of silver in one of its pockets. In the morning, the door was opened by a barber, who came to shave the Neapolitan. Fidele now stole out unperceived, carrying off the waistcoat.

“By a singular chance, Antonia and his companion had chosen the very same inn as the Neapolitan. Pietro thought his



wager won, on finding that the dog did not return to them at night; but Antonia coolly observed, 'they laugh best who laugh last.'

"In the morning, to the astonishment of Pietro, Fidele entered the room as the door stood open. He held a waistcoat between his teeth. Antonia took it from the dog, and shaking it well, several pieces of money fell to the ground. Fidele immediately seized upon one of them, and presented it to his master. Pietro having examined it, allowed that it was the crown which they had dropped by the road, and acknowledged that his wager was fairly lost; but neither Pietro nor Antonia could conjecture how the dog came by the waistcoat.

"In the mean time, the Neapolitan, wanting to pay the barber, had missed the waistcoat which contained his money, and began charging him with having stolen it, since no one else had entered the room. The man in vain protested that



he was innocent. The Neapolitan began to use violent means to make him restore the lost property; and the barber, in terror, called loudly for assistance. A crowd of persons soon collected upon the stairs. The Neapolitan used most violent language, the barber cried, and the landlady screamed. The landlord and his men-servants had armed themselves with broomsticks and spits, and the greatest uproar was made, when Antonia and Pietro, alarmed at the noise, came to enquire the cause.

“Hitherto no explanation had been given; but when Antonia heard that a waistcoat was supposed to have been stolen, he bade them be quiet, and told the Neapolitan that the real thief should be brought forth. He went in search of Fidele and the waistcoat; and replacing all the money, except his own crown, desired him to observe that his property was untouched.

“‘I miss a crown,’ said the man.



" 'There is the thief,' replied Antonia, pointing to Fidele.

"The Neapolitan immediately claimed the dog as his own; but Antonia coolly asked him whether he could affirm that the dog, and the crown he missed, were really his own. He then frankly confessed how both came into his possession; and Antonia, in return for his openness, related the history of the wager. All who heard the story were charmed with the sagacity of Fidele, and having admired and caressed him, retired in high good-humour to their different occupations."

As the colonel ceased speaking, they saw a calisse at a distance, which soon stopped, and a lady descended, accompanied by two little girls. They seemed to have come thither for the purpose of walking by the sea-shore, and were so occupied, that they did not perceive the colonel and his young companions. At length Emilie exclaimed: "It is Miss Hamilton, with Mary and Jane;" and run-



ning forward, she soon caught their attention.

"This is an unexpected pleasure," said Colonel Melville, as he drew near: "we thought you still at Valetta."

"I was so weary of the bustle and heat of the city," replied Miss Hamilton, "that my two little girls and I have sought a small dwelling at the head of this bay, that we may enjoy the cool sea breeze. My brother and sister are obliged to remain in the town. The heat in this island is greater than I ever experienced either in Calabria or Sicily."

"Oh, Ma'am," said Emilie, "have you been in Calabria?"

"Yes, my dear, I was there when the battle was fought on the plain of Maida: my father and brother were in the battle."

"I wonder if they know what became of papa. He was a Frenchman, and perhaps they took him prisoner; for the English got the battle."

"I am sure they do not, my little girl," replied Miss Hamilton; "for I have already written to make the enquiry of them, and of my acquaintance in Sicily, where the British troops are stationed."

"And would they tell papa, if they met with him, though he is a prisoner?"

"Certainly: it would give them great pleasure."

"How strange that is," said Emilie: "the English are very kind to one or two people, when they meet with them in distress; but they fight and kill, when they meet with a great number, as they did at Maida."

"I wish there were no wars," said Caroline, "they make so much uneasiness. There is Emilie has lost her papa and mamma, and she cries about them, though she loves her new mamma. Then mamma herself is often afraid that papa will be ordered away from Malta to fight Buonaparte. The people here are often talking about the pirates and the Turks,



whom the knights used to fight against. Only papa, and Sir Charles Balfour, and Captain Hamilton seem not to be afraid."

The colonel smiled, and Miss Hamilton enquired what the children had in their basket. "Shells," said George: "we are going to make a large collection."

"Here is a very pretty cowrie," said Mary Hamilton: "I have just picked it up; and this is very much like the shape of the *pinna*, aunt."

"Oh, dear," said George, "do you know the names of the shells? I was wishing this morning that we could find a better way of placing these shells in the drawers: we can hardly understand each other, for want of names to distinguish the various kinds."

"Much wiser persons than you and I, George, have felt the same difficulty. And it has been obviated; so that by a little industry, any one may acquire the terms of *conchology*, or the study of

shells, and consequently he will then make himself understood."

"I wish I could learn," said the children, all together.

"Now, Mary," said Caroline, "what is this shell?"

"A limpet. And this is a turbo, or screw-shell; that is a little scallop; that a heart-shell; and there is Venus's ear: you may always know it by the pearly inside, and the edge pierced through with several holes. And that one is a murex."

"The scallop," said the colonel, "show me one. I like the sight of them."

"Why, papa?"

"Because they are mentioned by poets. Pilgrims also wore scallops in their hats, to indicate that they had crossed the seas, and visited Jerusalem, a city in Syria, far yonder to the east, across this sea. Do any of you know the name of this sea by which we are walking?"

"The Mediterranean," said several voices at once.



"Very right," said Miss Hamilton; "and now I must bid you farewell. I will shortly visit the summer-house, Colonel Melville, with Mrs. Melville's leave, and show these young folks a method of arranging their shells." She hastened away to the calisse, and the children returned home, much pleased with the kind promise of their mother's friend.

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### CHAPTER III.

SOME time passed before the children saw their friend again; Mrs. Melville also was frequently engaged with company in the evening, and Fraser then walked with them.

During one of their rambles, they passed near a field where some women were at work. "Do let us go into that ground," said George; "we can walk in the little path without hurting any thing."

"Only look," said Emilie, "the women have neither shoes nor stockings."

"The country people never wear them," said Fraser: "I have seen them put on stockings when they go into the town; and when the women are at church, they throw a black veil over their heads; but they all wear that blue striped dress, made like a shift. A country woman told me, the other day, that one pair of shoes will last the lives of two or three people."

They drew near to one of the females, and Emilie asked what seed she was planting; but she spoke in French, and the woman shook her head, and replied, "*nix tendè*."

Emilie then asked the same question in English, which she had at first acquired by being with Francois, who knew the language, and with the English soldiers: she had since greatly improved in the refined society at Colonel Melville's.

"I can make her understand," said



Frederic, and addressed the woman in Maltese. This so delighted her, that she clapped her hands, and called her companions to hear a little Inglese speak their own language. She then told him that they were sowing cotton-seeds, and that in three months time he would see the plants grown to the height of his knee, and bearing pods of cotton.

"And what is that girl watering?" said Caroline.

"She is watering the seed before it is covered over," replied the Maltese woman. "Our soil is so dry, that we make wells and cisterns in our fields, that we may procure water for the plants. We give the seed water when it is sown, and again when the plant appears above ground."

"But what coloured cotton will this be?" asked George.

"That depends upon our leaving it a longer or a shorter time in the sun," said she. "If we want white pods,



we are out in the fields before sun-rise, to gather them; but if we wish for nan-keen cotton, we leave the pods in the sun, which soon turns them yellow."

"How odd it is," said George, "that you should only want to water the plants twice, though the heat is so great in summer."

"I will tell you why, Master," said a labourer, who stood near. "There is a great deal of moisture below the soil, which keeps the roots cool; and you must have observed how heavy the dews are in spring and summer, which serve instead of rain. They that come into our ports, from Egypt, say that it hardly ever rains there; and yet what plenty they have, owing to the dews of night, and the overflowing of their great river. But come," said he, "if you will go with me to our house yonder, I will show you the cotton after it is made into stockings."

The party followed the peasant, and saw his daughters spinning the cotton into



thread: in another house, his son was weaving a beautiful counterpane, a manufacture for which the Maltese are celebrated.

After the children had observed the different operations, the peasant desired them to stay and rest, saying, that he must go on with the building of his house, for he wanted it done in two days. "A house built in two days," said Caroline; "why, it will take a year!"

"Not here, young lady," said the wife of the peasant: "we have a soft kind of stone, which is cut into square blocks; and these being laid one on the other, soon harden, and join together without any mortar. We do not want such houses as they have at Valetta."

Fraser now proposed that they should return home, and thanking the Maltese for their civility, they left the house, much pleased with their evening walk. "I wish," said Emilie, "I knew what



they said: "I could not understand half of it. I shall try to talk with Rosa and Jean Marie."

"Mamma lets us talk to them," said Caroline; "for she says it is so useful to be able to speak the same language as the natives of any country we live in."

"And I am sure you found it so to-night, Miss," said Fraser; "for you seemed to be quite pleased. Miss Emilie would soon learn, if she would ask for what she wants in Maltese words. It would be very dull to me if I could not talk now and then to the people I meet with; but now I can hear a great many curious things about this island, because I understand what the people say."

Colonel and Mrs. Melville now advanced to meet them; and the dew beginning to fall, they went into the house, and sat with their parents till bed-time.

The following morning, when Emilie opened her window, to water a favourite myrtle, she was surprised to find the



branches drooping, and the blossoms scattered, while the air that blew in upon her was like the heated steam from the mouth of an oven. She closed the window hastily, calling to Fraser that there was a great fire very near. Mrs. Melville, who was aware of the change, now entered, and told Emilie that the increased heat of the air was caused by the south-east wind, which, in the countries of Italy, Sicily, &c. is called the *sirocco*. She desired the children to remain in the room that fronted the sea, that they might suffer less from the extreme heat. The servants sprinkled the floors, to keep the apartments cool, and Mrs. Melville advised them to avoid going into the air.

The children threw themselves upon the sofas, and could neither play, nor learn their usual lessons. Emilie began to cry, and the others complained of weariness and fatigue. Mrs. Melville advised Emilie to keep herself quiet, and assured her that she would soon feel



strong and cheerful, when the *tramontane*, or north wind, began to blow.

"I wonder how the people bear it at Valetta," said Emilie, "and those that work in the fields and gardens."

"They are used to the effects of the sirocco, in the first place," said Mrs. Melville; "and even they have some relief, by the use of snow, which they purchase very cheap at all times."

"Can the poor people get snow?" said Emilie.

"Oh, yes," replied George: "it does not cost them a halfpenny a pound."

"But where can they get snow from?" said Caroline: "I am sure there is none on this island."

"Miss Hamilton told me that snow is brought from Mount Etna: it is laid in vaults upon straw, and it will keep for some months in that manner," replied George.

"This oppressive wind," observed Mrs. Melville, "is supposed to proceed from



the heated sands of Zaara in Africa, and crosses Malta, and other countries near, in its way to warm the cold regions of the north; while the air that comes from the icy seas of the pole, imparts coolness and vigour to us who are fainting beneath the burning sun of the south."

"How long will the sirocco blow?" asked Emilie.

"The wind may change in a few hours," replied Mrs. Melville; "but it sometimes lasts much longer. At Naples this wind is very common: at the present season, it prevails for a week sometimes; but at Palermo, in Sicily, it has still more power, but it lasts only a few hours; and the tramontane, which succeeds, soon recovers the inhabitants from its effects. In the evening, Jean Marie came to inform them that the sirocco had ceased to blow; and the children, on running to the terrace, were astonished to find how great a change had taken place.

Jean Marie, the Maltese footman, who



had attended his mistress to the garden, now advanced; and making a low bow, entreated the honour of her company the next day, at the christening of his little boy. "I hope, Madam," continued he, "that the young ladies and gentlemen may be allowed to come; they have not seen our ceremonies at this *festa*, and they will like to see the baby: he is only a day or two old."

Mrs. Melville assured him that she would attend with great pleasure; but proposed leaving the children at home, as they might be troublesome.

"Not at all, Madam," replied Jean: "we shall be quite proud of our company."

It was then determined that the party should visit *Birkicara*, (the village where Jean Marie's family lived,) by ten o'clock, the time appointed for the commencement of the ceremony.

Emilie repaired to the window the next morning, in some fear, lest the sirocco



should have returned; for her father had told her it was not possible for them to visit Jean Marie's family, unless the weather was cooler. But a fresh breeze prevailed, and every one was dressed and ready at the appointed hour.

"Do you know, mamma," said Frederic, "that Jean remembers Malta being taken by the French? He was telling Fraser about it yesterday. He saw the fleet sail into the great harbour to attack Valletta. There were twenty great ships and frigates, and a very large number of vessels, I forget what he called them, to carry provisions, horses, and great cannon guns."

"How frightened he must have been," said Emilie. "I remember, on the day of the battle, when papa's tent took fire, how the cannon roared, and such quantities of smoke came over the camp. The soldiers' wives were some crying, some running out to get news of the battle; and the woman who was left with me, heard that her



husband was brought in wounded, so that made her run out of the tent, I suppose. Oh, it was very terrible!"

"You have seen enough, my little adventurer," said Mrs. Melville, "to make you love peace."

"Yes, indeed: mamma was always hearing some sad story from the people round her, and she could not help everybody."

"I do not think," said Frederic, "that Jean was so much frightened; for he said that Valetta was well guarded by the fortifications, and they had plenty of food."

"Very little resistance, however, was made," observed Mrs. Melville; "and it is strongly suspected that the knights had no inclination to defend the island."

"That is exactly what Jean told us his master thought; and he was so offended with his companions, that he would not stay in Valetta to see the French soldiers in the garrisons; so he



escaped into Germany, and died there. The old knight had given him the house we are going to, but Jean said he would not leave him to travel alone; so he took the chance of getting back his house when he returned to Malta."

"Jean is a good man, I believe," replied Mrs. Melville: "your father has had several proofs of it. We are now arrived at the village. I caution you all to behave properly, and to remember that laughing, and asking questions, in the house in which you are guests, is a mark of disrespect and rudeness."

On reaching the cottage-door, they found Jean Marie waiting impatiently to receive them. He was dressed in a suit of clothes that had formerly belonged to his master. He usually wore the dress of the native servants, but upon this grand occasion he had recourse to his late master's wardrobe. He now wore a fine scarlet coat, with large flat silver buttons: large



bunches of ribbons adorned his knees. His hair was powdered, and his head-dress completed by a silk bag, such as gentlemen wear when they go to court. When this figure presented himself at the door of the carriage, Frederic exclaimed, bursting into a loud laugh, "How fine you are, Jean Marie." Mrs. Melville, who feared that the good man would be hurt, and saw the gay dress of the knight with interest, said aloud to Frederic: "Little boy, that dress belonged to a brave, noble gentleman, who loved his country as much as your father does his native England; and Jean Marie was his faithful servant: look at both with respect." Jean bowed low to his lady with a look of pleasure, shook hands with Frederic, and welcomed the little girls, who were effectually prevented from further indecorum by their mother's words. They followed Jean Marie through a pretty long trellis, covered with vines, on each side of which were benches, occupied by



the neighbours and friends of the master of the feast. Music was heard on entering the house; and they found the outer room, which was large and commodious, filled with well-dressed people: a small space in the centre was occupied by dancers.

They were then introduced into the sleeping apartment, and Mrs. Melville was handed to a chair placed at the head of the bed. The mother returned Mrs. Melville thanks for the honour of the visit, spoke in good French, and expressed herself like a sensible woman. In the course of the morning, her English visitors were not a little surprised to hear her converse in Italian, German, and Maltese, as it suited the convenience of her different visitors. She apologized for not being able to speak English, and said that she intended to learn it shortly. Her dress was peculiar, and almost as fine as her husband's. Her silk jacket was adorned with buttons like his; her



head was covered with a huge gauze cap, stuck full of flowers; she wore a profusion of rich gold chains round her neck and arms, long ear-rings, and a large topaz broach, and used a small embroidered fan.

The ceremony of dressing the infant is always performed before the guests. The grandmother first plunged it three times into a tub of cold water: she next put on some under clothing. An embroidered band, about a quarter of a yard wide, and three yards long, was afterwards produced; and beginning at the shoulders, she wound this so tightly round the child, that he was unable to move a limb. Just below the feet this bandage was confined by a ribbon, tied in a great bow, with a large gold tassel hanging from it. The head was left quite bare, according to the custom of the Maltese.

When the dressing was completed, the child was carried round to each of the company. The notice which Caroline



and Emilie took of him appeared to give Jean Marie great pleasure; but Frederic drew back, nor would he bestow the least caress upon the infant. He said nothing, but his face became very red, and he drew close to his mother.

Soon after, the grandfather entered, to invite the company to attend the procession to church. Those who were catholics, and wished to join it, now rose and followed him. An old Maltese lady, who appeared to have been purposely invited to entertain the company who remained with the mother, now rose, and began relating a story, which greatly entertained those who understood the language she spoke. The grimace and gestures which accompanied her narration amused Mrs. Melville and the girls; while Charles and Frederic drew near, in order better to understand what she said. Observing the earnestness of the little foreigners, she adapted her next tale to their age,



and related the adventures of Nicholas Pessacola.

“In the time of Frederic, king of Sicily, there lived a celebrated diver, whose name was Nicholas; and who, from his amazing skill in swimming, and his perseverance under water, was surnamed *the fish*. This man had, from his infancy, been used to the sea; and earned his scanty subsistence by diving for corals and oysters, which he sold to the villagers on shore. His long acquaintance with the sea at last brought it to be almost his natural element. He frequently was known to spend five days in the midst of the waves, without any other provisions than the fish which he caught there and ate raw. He often swam over from Sicily to Calabria, a tempestuous and dangerous passage, carrying letters from the king. He was frequently known to swim among the gulfs of the Lipari islands, no way apprehensive of danger.

“Some mariners, out at sea one day,



observed something at a distance from them, which they regarded as a sea-monster; but upon its approach it was known to be Nicholas, whom they took into their ship. When they asked him whither he was going in so stormy and rough a sea, and at such a distance from land, he showed them a packet of letters, which he was carrying to one of the towns of Italy, carefully done up in a leather bag, in such a manner as that they could not be wetted by the sea. He kept them thus company for some time on their voyage, conversing and asking questions; and after eating a hearty meal with them, he took his leave, and jumping into the sea, pursued his voyage alone.

“The account of so extraordinary a person did not fail to reach the king himself; who, actuated by the general curiosity, ordered that Nicholas should be brought before him. It was no easy matter to find Nicholas, who generally spent his time in the solitudes of the



deep; but at last, however, after much searching, he was found, and brought before his majesty. The curiosity of this monarch had long been excited by the accounts he had heard of the bottom of the gulf of Charybdis: he therefore conceived that it would be a proper opportunity to have more certain information, and commanded our poor diver to examine the bottom of this dreadful whirlpool. As an incitement to his obedience, he ordered a golden cup to be flung into it. Nicholas was not insensible to the danger to which he was exposed—dangers best known only to himself—and he therefore presumed to remonstrate; but the hopes of the reward, the desire of pleasing the king, and the pleasure of showing his skill, at last prevailed. He instantly jumped into the gulf, and was swallowed as instantly up in its bosom. He continued for three quarters of an hour below; during which time the king and his attendants remained on shore,



anxious for his fate; but he at last appeared, holding the cup in triumph in one hand, and making his way among the waves with the other. It may be supposed he was received with applause upon his arrival on shore. The cup was made the reward of his adventure; the king ordered him to be taken proper care of; and, as he was somewhat fatigued and debilitated by his labour, after a hearty meal he was put to bed, and permitted to refresh himself by sleeping.

“When his spirits were thus restored, he was again brought to satisfy the king’s curiosity with a narrative of the wonders he had seen; and his account was to the following effect: He would never, he said, have obeyed the king’s commands, had he been apprized of half the dangers that were before him. There were four things, he said, that rendered the gulf dreadful, not only to men, but even to the fishes themselves: first, the force of the water bursting up from the bottom, which re-



quires great strength to resist; secondly, the abruptness of the rocks, that on every side threatened destruction; thirdly, the force of the whirlpool, dashing against those rocks; and fourthly, the number and magnitude of the polypous fish, some of which appeared as large as a man, and which every where sticking against the rocks, projected their fibrous arms to entangle him. Being asked how he was able so readily to find the cup that had been thrown in, he replied, that it happened to be flung by the waves into the cavity of a rock, against which he himself was urged in his descent.

“This account, however, did not satisfy the king’s curiosity. Being requested to venture once more into the gulf for further discoveries, he at first refused; but the king, desirous of having the most exact information possible of all things to be found in the gulf, repeated his solicitations; and, to give them still greater weight, produced a larger cup than the



former, and added also a purse of gold. Upon these considerations the unfortunate Pessacola once again plunged into the whirlpool, and was never heard of more."

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When the procession returned from church, the priest who had officiated joined the company. He appeared a respectable, intelligent man, and looked benevolently upon the innocent gaiety of the scene. Refreshment was now offered the guests: coffee, chocolate, confectionary, and ices, in the most beautiful and varied forms, were handed round. The old lady now rallied Frederic, and told him that he must touch none of these nice things, unless he first kissed the baby. Her laughter, and the temptation of an ice in the form of a beautiful peach, at last overcame his repugnance, and the old lady, clapping her hands, cried, "bravo! bravo!" After remaining some hours, Mrs. Melville took leave of the company, and set out for St.



Antonia, the summer residence of the governor.

When they were seated in the carriage, Frederic said, eagerly: "Now, mamma, I may laugh, for indeed I never saw any thing so droll in my life, as that baby looked in the fine bandage."

"The dress it wore is called swaddling-clothes," replied his mother: "the custom of covering infants in this manner is very ancient."

"I am sure," said Emilie, "I thought the grandmother would have squeezed the breath out of its body; though I really believe it would have been pretty in a frock and cap."

"Pretty, do you call it?" said Frederic: "I never saw such an ugly little thing as it looked; and it was only because I did not like that old lady to make game of me, that I did kiss him: I would rather have kissed the cat."

"I fancy," said Emilie, laughing, "that



you did not much like to lose the fine peach."

"I am of your opinion," observed Mrs. Melville; "and I can assure you, Frederic, however ugly you may think that poor baby, he is quite a beauty, compared with what you were at his age."

Lady Balfour prevailed upon Mrs. Melville to pass the rest of the day with her, and asked her son George, when she was to have his company at St. Antonia. George looked rather grave, and Colonel Melville assured her that Latin and arithmetic advanced far more rapidly at St. Julien's, than at the palace; and that the children were so happy in his society, that he must plead for leave to return for some weeks longer. To this lady Balfour consented, with many acknowledgments for the care and kindness her friends had already shown to George. This arrangement added to the children's delight, and George drew them from the apartment, to



visit his own room, whither he soon summoned Francois to see Emilie.

Francois entered, leaning upon a stick: he looked pale, and seemed very feeble. "Oh! my dear Francois," exclaimed Emilie, "what is the matter with you? how ill you look! why did you not let us know?" said she, beginning to cry bitterly.

"My dear," replied Francois, "do not grieve for me: I shall soon be better, I hope, and then I will come over to see you, as I used to do: your whip has been ready a long time, but we have been settling here for the season. But come," said he, "let us go out on the roof; and do you, Master George, get the telescope: the Neapolitan galleys are come; they lie in the harbour, and there are two English frigates arrived to-day."

They were much pleased with the fine view of the vessels, and George pointed out Citta Vecchia and Valetta to them. "We cannot see Sicily," said George, "though some people say that Mount



Etna is to be perceived from Citta Vecchia."

"The people know, at least, that it is rather near to them," said Francois, "for an old Maltese told me, that in great eruptions of the mountain, the whole island is illuminated, and the thundering noise of the mountain is distinctly heard."

"Come down to my room," said George, "and I will show you some views in Sicily; and do you come with us, Francois, for you are not well enough to work, I am sure."

"I will return after dinner," said Francois; "but I can tell the man, who waits instead of me, what to do, if he is at a loss."

"He is a kind-hearted man," said George: "do you know, Emilie, that he went out, intending to go over to St. Julien's with your whip, the day the sirocco blew; and he is not used to this hot climate, so he fell down, overcome with weakness, and has not been well since."



"Poor dear Francois," said Emilie, weeping again, "to think of going out so far about me."

"While we," said Caroline, "could hardly bear ourselves whilst we sat still in a cool room."

"It was the affection that he has for Emilie," observed George, "that made him forget the heat and fatigue of travelling."

"Oh! I wish I may find my papa and mamma again," said Emilie, "that Francois may live comfortably, without working, when he grows old: I know papa would take such care of him."

"As to care, Emilie," said George, "I can tell you my father will not let him work now he is weak and ill, so you may be assured he will be taken care of."

"Dear George," said Emilie, "do not be displeased: I am sure your father is very good, or he would not have taken so much trouble about us; only I *should* like



that papa knew how good Francois has been to me."

They were now informed that their company was desired at tea, and on entering the drawing-room, they found Miss Hamilton and Mr. Bell had joined the party. They heard, with pleasure, that Miss Hamilton had consented to return with Mrs. Melville to St. Julien's for a short time, and Colonel Melville prevailed with Mr. Bell to pass the week with him. George took little pleasure in the society of the latter; for, notwithstanding he possessed a good capacity for learning, he disliked application, and, consequently, his tutor was not to him the most agreeable of his father's friends. Mr. Bell was a man of learning, and in high estimation among the English resident at Malta; but, devoted to his studies, he conscientiously superintended the lessons of his pupils; explained the difficulties they met with; pointed out the beauties of the passages



they read; and, having performed his task, hastened back to his library. When Mr. Bell, therefore, was among his father's guests, George expected nothing to amuse him, and quickly made his escape from the company. Caroline and Emilie, on the contrary, had a great respect for this gentleman. Their mother had taught them to feel pleasure in their studies; and the observations they had heard from him, when conversing with Colonel and Mrs. Melville, were frequently intelligible to them, and they had often wondered why George should not like Mr. Bell. The company were speaking of the galleys that were arrived in the harbour. Mrs. Melville expressed a wish to see them. Sir Charles Balfour observed, that she would find the visit less agreeable than she expected.

"Mrs. Melville," said Mr. Bell, "is fond of comparing her own situation with that of her fellow-creatures; and the remembrance of the Protestant sufferers,



whom Louis the Fourteenth condemned to the galleys in past times, is an additional source of interest."

"It is true," replied Mrs. Melville: "I never hear a galley mentioned, without thinking of those virtuous people, who preferred dungeons and chains to the sacrifice of their religion. They shrunk not from the wretched life of a galley-slave, though this latter fate obliged them to mix with the worst of characters, and to endure with patience the severest hardships, and scenes the most disgusting to a virtuous and refined mind."

After some further conversation, it was agreed that Sir Charles Balfour should visit the commander of the galleys the next evening, and that the colonel and his party should accompany him.

The carriages were then ordered for their return to St. Julien's. George accompanied Mrs. Melville and Mr. Bell. They spoke of the singular scene they had witnessed in the morning, and George,



who was beginning to lose his dread of Mr. Bell, said: "I wish I knew about these knights of Malta, who they were, and what they did: I never can make out any thing from the people in papa's house, though so many are natives."

"Perhaps you do not understand each other when you speak on the subject, Master George," said Mr. Bell; "I know not if you are acquainted with their language."

"They call it Maltese," replied George, "but I never read any of their books."

"The Maltese speak a corrupt Arabic," replied Mr. Bell; "but in the towns Italian is much used."

"But, Sir," continued George, "can you tell me about the knights?"

"I believe I can make the subject a little more intelligible; at least, I will endeavour. Nearly eight hundred years ago, it was a custom among the inhabitants of European countries to travel to Jeru-



salem, in order to visit the sepulchre of Christ."

"Was it really to be seen?" asked George.

"I apprehend that it could not be recognized, at the distance of more than a thousand years, during which period the country had been in the possession both of idolaters and Mahometans. However, at the time I mention, some Italian merchants, who were at Jerusalem, established a hospital for the reception of pilgrims and travellers. The country was then under the dominion of the Saracens. Godfrey of Bouillon, a French captain in the time of the crusades, afterwards conquered Jerusalem; and the ruler of the hospital being of a military character, formed the plan of converting the officers, or brethren of the institution, into knights, or soldiers, to fight against the Turks, under the title of Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. Upon entering the order, or society, the knights took certain vows, one of which was, to



make continual war against the Saracens or Turks. After losing all their possessions, they were finally driven out of Palestine by the Turks, who reconquered the country. The knights took refuge in the island of Cyprus, and afterwards attacked Rhodes, which they captured, and were then called Knights of Rhodes. Here they continued till the Turks again expelled them. At this time, namely, 1523, the celebrated emperor, Charles the Fifth, gave them the island of Malta."

"And then they were called Knights of Malta," exclaimed George: "now I see how it is."

"Their old enemies continued to invade their territory, and the invincible courage of the knights in opposing and repelling their attacks, has been the admiration of all nations."

"Yes, yes," interrupted George, "the fortifications are strong enough here; but how came they to leave it, Sir?"

"Buonaparte captured the island, on



his way to Egypt. It is supposed that the knights did not wish to defend themselves. In the year 1800, Malta surrendered to the English, after a siege of two years. Gozzo and Comino likewise belonged to the order, and now are in our possession. The knights had establishments in most European countries, where they lived separate from the rest of the world. Henry the Eighth forbade their remaining in England, when he turned Protestant. You will recollect, that all these military orders were Roman Catholics."

"Thank you, Sir," said George; "now I know something of their history I shall be able to ask questions of Jean Marie. But here, we are arrived at the house already."

In the course of the evening, George applied to Mr. Bell for the English of several Maltese words; and the good-nature with which he replied, greatly pleased his pupil, who had foolishly fancied that Mr. Bell was not to be spoken to, except upon Greek and Latin.



## CHAPTER IV.

THE family from St. Julien's were punctual to the time fixed by Sir Charles Balfour. A large party filled the governor's pleasure-barge, which was rowed by twelve sailors, belonging to the ships in the harbour. The number of rowers rendered the movement more than usually delightful to the children, who chattered to Mr. Bell about the fine sight they had had of the galleys lying in the harbour, the preceding day, when they looked through the telescope.

"You talk gaily of the fine appearance these vessels made; but, my young friends, do you know what is the state of their interior?"

Frederic gave a confused answer, and Caroline recollected something concerning the cruel treatment of some French Pro-



testants. Emilie begged that Mr. Bell would tell them about the galley-slaves.

"They are generally men convicted of enormous crimes," said he; "their business is to work at the oars, each of which requires the strength of seven or eight men to work it. They all rise at every stroke, in order to exert sufficient strength. They are chained to the oars, as you will see, and sleep on the bare benches, without covering. A superintendant walks about with a whip, to lash those who relax their efforts."

"It is very shocking," said Caroline: "I almost wish we were not going."

"How pitiable then must be the lot of the slaves, who endure for years, those miseries which you fear to witness for a moment."

When the barge arrived along-side the galley, the company were received with much politeness by the commander, and after remaining a short time in his state-



cabin, were conducted over the vessel. Civility to this obliging officer forced the company to refrain from expressing their feelings, at the sight of human beings in such a deplorable and degraded state; and Lady Balfour, after thanking the commander for his attention, retired, with most of the company, to her own barge. Sir Charles and Colonel Melville returned to the cabin, having business to transact with the commander.

Emilie had been unusually silent the whole evening, and, on returning to the barge, appeared quite overcome by the nauseous and painful spectacle they had witnessed.

"A glass of water for Emilie Gramont," exclaimed George, as he sprang up to the galley. The water was handed down by one of the officers, and Emilie, cheered by the kindness of the friends who surrounded her, and refreshed by her return into the air, gradually recovered herself. Miss Hamilton, Mrs. Melville, and Mr. Bell,



soon resumed the conversation, which Emilie's change of appearance had interrupted, lest any undue importance should be attached to this extreme sensibility of the little prisoner, towards the miserable beings whose lot reminded her so forcibly of the captivity which she had once shared with the good Francois.

"Well," said Mr. Bell, after some interval had passed, "did I exaggerate in my description?"

"Oh! no," replied Caroline; "and that man who brandished his whip to make them rise, when the company walked along the deck, shocked me more than any thing besides."

"I heard papa making some enquiry about the quantity of food allowed them," said Frederic; "and I know, by his look, that he was grieved to find it so little."

"Are galleys of this kind in use every where, Sir?" asked Emilie.

"Chiefly in the Mediterranean Sea."

"Oh! Miss Hamilton," exclaimed Fre-



deric, "only see how very fast yonder boat moves."

"That is a sparono: it has six oars, and is constructed entirely for speed. It is so flat and narrow, that the rowers are always obliged to keep very near the coast. This kind of boat is used especially by those who fear to encounter pirates in their passage. The sparono in view, is putting off for Sicily: the passage between that island and Malta is considered one of the most stormy and dangerous in the Mediterranean."

"Has it any particular name?"

"It is called the Canal of Malta. At this season of the year, I believe, the passage is not dangerous."

While Miss Hamilton conversed with the young people, Colonel Melville returned with the general, and they soon reached the shore. Colonel Melville seized the first opportunity of speaking to his wife alone, for he had some important intelligence to communicate.



"You remember," said he, "that George Balfour sprang hastily on board the galley, calling for water for Emilie Gramont?"

"Certainly."

"The commander of one of the other galleys, who chanced to be on board, started forwards at the sound, and enquired, of what Emilie Gramont he spoke. I enquired the reason of his earnestness, and he informed me that he had a relation named Gramont, who some months since lost an only child, whose name was *Emilie*. He then gave me the following particulars. After the battle of Maida he received a letter from Madame Gramont, written in the greatest distress of mind. She informed him that her husband had been dangerously wounded in that engagement, and that, while endeavouring to procure assistance for him, she had left her only child under the care of a soldier's wife, who unfortunately was called away to another part of the camp.



It was supposed that the child, being left alone, had wandered from the camp and lost her way; or, what her mother most feared, had remained within, and been consumed with the tent, which, on her return, she found burnt to ashes. Madame Gramont had further stated, that all the enquiries they could make at the time, had failed to procure any certain information, and that the regiment being ordered into Spain, she was obliged to give her whole attention to her wounded and afflicted husband, who was still very unfit for so long a journey. She earnestly entreated that Captain Sonnini would endeavour to learn whether her child had ever since been seen in Calabria. ‘On the receipt of this letter,’ continued the officer, ‘I went into Calabria, but could hear nothing of Emilie. I afterwards procured a passport, and met my friends in Spain. Captain Gramont had then nearly recovered from his wounds, yet both parents were in the deepest distress concerning



their daughter. It is now some time since I heard from them. When I heard this young gentleman pronounce a name, in which I feel so deep an interest, my hope of restoring her to her parents suddenly revived.'

The colonel continued: "I then gave the captain a circumstantial account of Emilie's arrival at Malta, under the care of Francois. This gentleman would have returned with me to the barge, but, hearing that Emilie had been overcome by the heat and oppressive air of the galley, I urged him to defer speaking with her until his return to Malta, as he had already seen her among the other young people, though without knowing his near connexion with her. As the galley under his command is under positive orders to sail to-morrow, and he found that the surprise might be dangerous to Emilie, he acquiesced. He had at first appeared desirous that she should return to Naples with him, but on hearing that we already con-



sidered her as one of our own children, and that she was much attached to us, declared himself convinced that she had better remain under our protection. He will of course lose no time in communicating to her parents, intelligence so joyful to them. If Madame Gramont is still with her husband in Spain, Sonnini thinks it very probable, that in a few months she will visit Malta, and claim her lost Emilie. I hinted to the captain that we should be unwilling to resign her to the care of any one, except her father, mother, or grandmother."

Mrs. Melville was much surprised at this intelligence; at length she observed: "It would be sinful to regret the circumstance, for if we are moved at the prospect of losing this interesting child, after a short intercourse, how exquisite must be the joy of her parents on recovering their treasure. But let Emilie still remain in ignorance of what has happened: in these disastrous times the fate of her father



must be very uncertain; and after having unsettled her mind with Sonnini's report, we may finally have to communicate the most melancholy tidings concerning both parents. When Madame Gramont arrives, she will find no reason to complain of her daughter's want of memory or affection."

"You are right," said her husband; and the children continued to enjoy the happy, because regular and rational mode of life to which they were accustomed.

"Suppose we take a boat and pass over to Gozzo," said Colonel Melville, a day or two after the excursion to the galleys. The proposal was agreeable to every one, and the children were delighted that they should at length walk upon the island they had so long viewed through their telescope. Leaving then St. Julien's bay, they passed close under Comino. This island is uninhabited, but it is the resort of sportsmen, who find game in greater quantity than at Malta or Gozzo.



"And now," said Mr. Bell, "we are approaching the famed isle of Calypso."

"We shall look with great curiosity for the grotto of the goddess," said Miss Hamilton; "but I confess, the approach does not indicate such a spot as Fenelon has described."

"Do you mean in Telemachus?" asked George. "I read that book, some time ago, and I could not imagine where her beautiful island was situated."

"We shall look in vain, my dear George," replied Mrs. Melville, "for verdant groves of poplars, alders, and the odoriferous cypress, and meadows green with fresh and beautiful herbage. I see Mr. Bell has Homer with him, but we are ignorant of his language."

"I will give you the passage from the Odyssey, which describes Calypso's island, in the best English I can command," said Mr. Bell. "But here is Pope's translation; and his verses will, perhaps, better



please your ear than a literal translation."

"Large was the grot in which the nymph he found;  
(The fair-hair'd nymph, with every beauty  
crown'd;)

She sat and sung; the rocks resound her lays:  
The cave was brighten'd with a rising blaze;  
Cedar and frankincense, an od'rous pile,  
Flam'd on the hearth, and wide perfum'd the isle.  
Without the grot, a various sylvan scene  
Appear'd around, and groves of living green;  
Poplars and alders, ever quiv'ring, play'd,  
And nodding cypress form'd a fragrant shade;  
On whose high branches, waving with the storm,  
The birds of broadest wing their mansion form;  
The chough, the sea-mew, the loquacious crow,  
And scream aloft, and skim the deeps below.  
Depending vines the shelving cavern screen,  
With purple clusters blushing thro' the green.  
Four limpid fountains from the clefts distil,  
And ev'ry fountain pours a sev'ral rill,  
In mazy windings wand'ring down the hill;  
Where bloomy meads with vivid greens were  
crown'd,  
And glowing violets throw odours round."

"After all," said Colonel Melville, "is



it certain that Gozzo is the celebrated place?"

"Much discussion and variety of opinion have prevailed," replied Mr. Bell. "Some place the abode of Calypso at Gozzo, some at Malta, and others elsewhere. For my own part, I think it is very uncertain to what spot the poet alluded. But here we must land; and I think we should proceed to the burying-place of the knights who died during the crusade under St. Louis, king of France."

Another object of curiosity was the rock on which the celebrated styptic grows, called *fungus Melitensis*. This rock, which is called *Hagira*, is separated from the land; and on all sides terminates in a steep cliff, apparently inaccessible. The variety of plants that flourish in so confined a spot is astonishing. The fungus grows from the fissures of the rock, and is gathered annually. When any one designs to pass over to the rock, two cords are stretched across to it from



the land, and fixed at each end. On these cords is suspended a small square case of wood, large enough to contain a single person in a bending posture, which is drawn from the island to the rock, by means of other cords and pulleys. During the time that the knights were in possession of these islands, the rock was under the care of a guardian. The fungus is not at present in so great repute, but is still used with success in the stoppage of excessive bleedings.

At the approach of evening the party returned to their boat, having previously visited the castle, and the Giant's Tower, which is built in a circular form, of huge masses of stone. It is of great antiquity, and is supposed to be the work of the oldest inhabitants, the Phœnicians.

As they drew near the shore, the boatmen began to sing the evening service, and were joined by their companions on shore, striking the oars in exact time.



This practice of singing as they row, is common among the mariners of these seas, and produced a most agreeable effect in the stillness of evening. Arriving late at St. Julien's, the children found that even pleasure will fatigue, and hastened to take repose.

"There is a man-of-war come into the great harbour," said George to Caroline and Emilie, when he met them the next morning in the summer-house. "Go tell your father: perhaps he will bring his large telescope; for he always likes to see what they are doing on board."

Emilie soon returned, jumping and running. "Oh, Francois is come, and he is quite well. He will stay till to-morrow, and he has brought a letter from Sir Charles."

"For me?" asked George.

"No; for papa, and letters for Mr. Bell. They are so busy reading and talking, in the breakfast-room, that I could not speak about the ship."



George was now summoned into the house, and on entering the room where the family was assembled, Colonel Melville said: "George, my boy, can you hear unpleasant news with courage?"

"What news?" said George, looking rather serious.

"My young friend," said Mr. Bell, "I am in some measure the cause of the change that is about to take place, and I would endeavour to reconcile you to what is evidently best. How, think you, did your father and Colonel Melville acquire the knowledge and experience that enable them to fill an honourable place in society? Not, surely, by passing their younger days in pleasure, and frequently in idleness. Your father wishes that you should gain an ample store of learning, and that your mind should be enlarged, and highly cultivated. The measures which he has hitherto adopted are insufficient, and even these measures must now cease; for I am about to depart for Eng-



land. The letters that I have just received by the Eagle, require my speedy return."

"What, Sir!" exclaimed George, "are you going to leave us? And what will your English pupils do? for no one can instruct them like you, my father says. But I know what is coming; for my father has often said, 'while Mr. Bell stays in the island, I shall not think of sending George to England.' I see I must leave you all," continued he, trying to prevent his tears from falling.

"You must, my young friend," said Mr. Bell; "but we shall sail together; and, among your parents' numerous connexions, no one is more friendly to your welfare than myself. At my house you will be a welcome guest; and with me you may talk of Malta and your absent friends. I shall hear with pleasure the intelligence that your letters may bring, and mine will gratify you."



"But where am I to go?" asked George.

"To Eton," replied Mr. Bell: "to the scene where poets, historians, philosophers, and statesmen have spent their early years."

George was silent. "Tell us your thoughts, my dear George," said Mrs. Melville: "we are all your friends."

"I was thinking that the lines I was construing the other day with Mr. Bell, when I was very idle, (and he observed it, I know,) have come true. Part was

*'Quam cuperes votis hunc revocare diem.'*

I did not then think that I should wish to recall that time. But I shall make a bad figure among the Eton boys, while young Vincent would be quite an honour to his tutor."

"Vincent certainly is a clever fellow," said Colonel Melville; "but I believe he



used a great deal of industry to become so."

"I wish I was but to stay another year," cried George; "I would work so hard. Oh! but Mr. Bell will not be here," continued he.

"I have read," said Miss Hamilton, who had been silently observing the workings of George's mind, "that the elder Cato acquired Greek after he was an old man; therefore it seems to me, that the boy George Balfour would do well to use every opportunity of study, while he has Mr. Bell's friendly aid: it is never too late to learn."

"Oh, so I will," said George; "I will work hard at all my studies on board ship, if Mr. Bell will but attend to me."

"Be assured of that," replied the friendly tutor; "and now I must tell you that we shall sail in the Eagle. The vessel does not remain long at Malta: you must expect a speedy departure."

"And so Francois is come to bring us



all this bad news," said Emilie, when she heard of these arrangements.

"And George is gone off with Mr. Bell into the library," said Frederic: "he will not play till twelve o'clock. He used not to be very fond of Mr. Bell, or his lessons either, and I told him so; but he looked as grave as an old man, and bade me take warning by him, and learn while I had it in my power."

"Francois now knocked at the door of the apartment, and Emilie begged him to come in. He then opened a small wooden case, from which he took a model of fort St. Elmo, very ingeniously formed of cork."

"Who is this for?" said Emilie.

"I think, Miss Emilie," replied Francois, "we will offer it to Master George: it will remind him of us all. There is the window against which you and I stood, to talk to Miss Caroline and her mamma; and through this door we followed the



governor, Colonel Melville, and Master George, when we were set at liberty."

"Oh, the very thing," said Emilie; and they waited impatiently till George came.

The poor boy could no longer refrain from tears at this gift, and the children wept with him. Francois tried to comfort him with the prospect of seeing his own country once more, and with the hope that his parents would themselves return to England. By degrees they grew more cheerful, and went to dinner, expecting to see the captain of the *Eagle*, who, Francois had told him, was invited by Colonel Melville.

Captain Beaumont politely assured George, upon his being introduced to him, that no pains should be spared to render his voyage agreeable. "I cannot," said he, "control winds and waves; but my experience will prevent your feeling unnecessary apprehensions. We shall probably meet with a boisterous sea in



the bay of Biscay. Never shall I forget the first time I sailed through it, in a little vessel, when I was not so old as yourself.

“Just as I had lain down to rest, the weather became very squally, and I felt an unusual motion of the ship, which kept me waking through the night. At day-break the captain came reeling into the cabin; for no one could for a moment stand upright without holding. ‘Now,’ said he, ‘if you have a mind to behold what a sea is, come on deck; but mind you hold fast, or you will go overboard.’ I followed him, and saw, with wonder and terror, the billows rising to such a tremendous height, that I felt persuaded our small vessel could not long resist their fury. I fixed myself securely, and watched the waves towering like rocky cliffs over our heads: on the utmost verge they often bore a vessel, which they threatened to precipitate upon us. A moment after, we ourselves were on the top of such a



billow, and menaced some vessel beneath us with destruction. Sometimes a sea appeared advancing towards us, increasing as it rolled; when, just as it seemed ready to overwhelm us, our ship would rise above it, and brave its terrors. Such is the effect of a little wind in the bay of Biscay."

"Oh, dear," exclaimed Emilie, "what will you do, George, if such a storm should happen when you are in the bay?"

"Why," said Caroline, "if there *is* no danger, why should one be afraid? I like to see the waves run high. I should not mind, if I could go back to England with papa and mamma."

"It is probable that we shall stop at Gibraltar, and, in that case, George will see the fortress. You are so courageous, Miss Caroline," continued the captain, "that you would find pleasure in mounting the heights."

"If I could have a fine prospect of



many miles, I should," replied Caroline: "I do love to see the places I read of, and look for in the maps."

"So did I, at your age," said the good-natured captain; "and as I continued my voyage, I was highly delighted to behold the bold coast of Spain, broken into a thousand romantic forms, and opposing its rocky barriers into the wild waves; while the distant Pyrenees, towering above the clouds, increased the grandeur of the view."

"The captain is so very good-natured," whispered Frederic, "that I dare say he would tell us about the castle of Gibraltar."

"What, you want some sailor's stories, I see," said Captain Beaumont, "by your looking at me. Well, speak your wishes."

Mrs. Melville interposed, and expressed her fears that the children would be troublesome. "Not at all, my dear Madam," returned the captain: "it is agreeable to



me. Two years have passed since I have spent a month with my own children."

"Tell us, then, about the rock of Gibraltar," said Caroline, "if you please, Sir."

"The rock of Gibraltar\* appears an immense mass of stone. When the wind blows from the east, a thick cloud always rests on its summit. This cloud the sailors call its cap. On the night that we arrived I saw one formed just like a huge cannon, while the rock appeared to support it.

"Some years after my first voyage, I had an opportunity of visiting the whole fortress, which takes a day. It was necessary to provide ourselves with flambeaux, candles, means for striking a light, provisions, and water. When we had reached the rock, by a tolerably easy ascent, we arrived at the lower range of subterranean

\* For this account of Gibraltar the writer is indebted to a friend.



ous galleries, the whole of which singular structures were formed by blasting the rock."

"These galleries," observed Colonel Melville, "were originally contrived for the protection of the men who mount guard during a siege."

"Yes," continued Captain Beaumont: "previously to their construction, a vast number of men were killed by the enemy, while marching from one post to another. But the sentinels may now be relieved in perfect security. Light is thrown in, by means of holes bored through the rock. The holes are in the form of an arch, about eleven feet in height; and here guns are placed to annoy the enemy, from situations inaccessible but for this contrivance."

"The galleries are very extensive. They pierce the rock in various directions, and at various degrees of elevation. All of them have communication with



each other, by flights of steps cut in the rock, or by wooden stairs, where the passage is required to be very perpendicular. The galleries are about twelve feet wide, and fourteen high. In different parts there are spacious recesses, capable of accommodating a considerable number of men. To these recesses they give names: such as St. Patrick's Chamber, St. George's Hall, &c.

"After ascending for some time, we arrived at a spot where an officer and several men were on duty. We were required to produce our permit. When the officer had seen it, we requested him to allow us a guide to the most remarkable places on the rock. With the utmost civility he answered, that, as far as his command extended, he would accompany us himself.

"To his civility we were indebted for the view of a curious spring, called Smart's Reservoir. The spring is at a considerable depth, in the body of the



rock, and seven hundred feet above the level of the sea. You descend the cavern that contains it by a rope ladder; and proceed through a narrow passage, over crystallized protuberances of the rock, till you come to a hollow, which appears to have been opened by some convulsion of nature. Here, from a bed of spar, rises the wholesome fount, clear and cold as an icicle.

“Before this obliging officer took leave, he had obtained for us the key of St. George’s Hall, and provided us with a conductor.

“After winding through many intricate paths, we entered, by a gloomy passage, that spacious excavation named St. George’s Hall.”

“Excuse a second interruption, captain,” said Colonel Melville; “but is it not almost incredible, that so large an excavation could be formed by gunpowder, without blowing up the whole of that part of the rock? I think the hall is one



hundred feet high, with a width in proportion."

"It has always struck me as wonderful, and the manner in which the mighty instrument performed the work, as still more surprising. The hall is lighted on the same plan as the galleries, by perforations in the rock.

"On a table we found in the hall, our cloth was now spread, and the vaulted roof resounded with our joyous and unrestrained expression of the delight we felt in this unexpected accommodation—a dining-room in the bosom of the rock! Our refreshment enabled us to ascend with vigour the outside of this portion of the rock. Here, seated on a projecting crag, I contemplated the grand objects around me. The isthmus that connects Gibraltar with the main land; the violet-coloured mountains of Spain, fading imperceptibly into the atmosphere; and the Mediterranean sea, terminated by the level line of the horizon, which was now



and then broken by the white sail of some distant vessel, that disappeared almost the moment it was observed. Above me towered the stony ridges of Calpè.

“My brother and I determined to climb two very high ridges, that might be considered as the summit of the mountain. There was no road to the particular spot we wished to reach, and it was upwards of five hundred feet high from the place whence we set out; we were therefore obliged to scramble over many rugged angles and fissures; and before we attained the dizzy height, our hands and feet were severely lacerated and bruised, by the sharp edges of the crags, and the thorny plants that grew in their interstices. From the summit we beheld the shores of Africa, with the mountainous range of Atlas; while, through the clouds that rolled far below our feet, we could just discern the coast of Spain, with the vessels in the bay of Gibraltar.



"Having rejoined our companions, we found, by the time, that the sun was about to set; we therefore hurried away, and fortunately reached the gates a moment before they were shut."

"Well," said Frederic, as the captain ceased speaking, "I hope, when we go back to England, it will be with Captain Beaumont; for then, perhaps, he will take me up to the top of the mountain with him, and I shall be able to say that I have stood on the highest place of the rock."

"And very probably you would likewise have to boast of broken limbs," said the colonel; "for people who like to place themselves in dangerous situations, that they may talk of it afterwards, are often vain and thoughtless, seldom taking proper care to avoid accidents, and consequently meet with disappointment instead of gratification."

Frederic looked ashamed, and Colonel Melville, turning to Captain Beaumont,



asked if he had seen the catacombs during his former stay at Malta, and on learning that he had been prevented, the colonel proposed to visit them before George's departure.

Before Captain Beaumont took leave, it was agreed that the excursion to Citta Vecchia and the catacombs should take place the following week. George returned till that time to his parents, and Mr. Bell, accompanied by the captain, took leave of the colonel's family, and repaired to Valetta.

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## CHAPTER V.

ON the day appointed for visiting the catacombs, Colonel Melville's family was invited to dine at St. Antonia. Sir Charles and Lady Balfour, Captain Beaumont, and



Mr. Bell, formed the rest of the party. Sir Charles proposed to pass through Citta Vecchia, (the ancient capital of the island,) to the church and grotto of St. Paul, which are at a short distance from the town. According to the tradition of the natives, St. Paul passed some months in this cave, after he was shipwrecked on the island. There is now a fine statue of the apostle at the entrance of the cave. The guide presented the visitors with pieces of stone taken from the rock, which he assured them were of great value, as they would preserve them from every kind of disease, and saved the lives of thousands every year. So persuaded are the natives of its efficacy, that every house on the island is provided with it.

Colonel Melville, with the other gentlemen, rode to the spot where the great source of water rises, from which Valetta is supplied. It is conveyed thither by an aqueduct of many thousand arches.



This immense work was finished at the private expense of one of the grand masters. While they were absent, the rest of the company refreshed themselves at Citta Vecchia, and Frederic desired to know what the catacombs were, which they would soon visit.

His mother told him that catacombs are grottos, or subterranean places for the burial of the dead. "Some persons," continued Mrs. Melville, "have supposed them to be the cells where the primitive Christians concealed themselves from the pursuit of their enemies. They are long galleries or passages, having small niches on each side, in which the bodies were deposited. Catacombs are met with at Rome, Naples, Syracuse, and Paris. Those of Malta are not far below the surface of the ground."

Frederic and his sisters were impatient to proceed, which they did when the colonel returned. Upon arriving at the entrance, the guide lighted a torch, and



preceded the company. He informed them, that one of the passages reached to the Boschetta, (a country-seat of the former grand master,) another into the town, and a third to the bay of Marsamucetto. In one of the niches they observed round stones, suited for grinding corn; and which were probably used for the purpose, by those who took refuge in the catacombs, when the island was invaded by the Moors.

Mrs. Melville had placed the two girls in the centre of the party, and George took charge of Frederic. The little boy soon grew tired of traversing the long passages, and frequently ran forward, looking down other galleries, to see where they would lead; for he had boasted to George that he was not in the least afraid of the dark, and should not mind walking there alone. At length he said he would go to his father, and ran first; but instead of seeking Colonel Melville, he took a fancy to play a trick, that he might make



George as much surprised as he had been during the carnival. Having watched his opportunity, he slipped into a side passage, and hid himself in one of the recesses. "Now," said he, "they will have a fine hunt for me, and when they come near, I will make an odd noise and run away." He then sat down to await the issue of his scheme, and having been wearied with running about, he fell asleep upon the steps. When the party had satisfied their curiosity, they returned to the entrance, and had reached the carriages, which were waiting at some distance, before Frederic was missed. Mrs. Melville, believing he was with the gentlemen who went first, had observed only the girls; and Colonel Melville, seeing him with George, was soon engrossed with the conversation of his friends.

George was much distressed; for he felt certain that the child must have wandered into the passages when he left him. He informed Colonel Melville of what had



passed, and assured him that he had used every means to keep Frederic with him. The colonel blamed no one but himself, and returned to the catacombs, accompanied by Mrs. Melville and the gentlemen, leaving Lady Balfour and the little girls in the carriage. They procured more torches and several guides, and retraced their steps, calling loudly for Frederic. It was in vain they searched: no noise or sound was heard but the echo of their own voices; and Mrs. Melville began to apprehend that he had followed the windings of some passage that led to the sea. The guides assured her that could not be, for all the passages that led to any great distance were closed, since some persons had lost their lives in exploring these labyrinths.

They were now so exhausted by fatigue and hunger, that it was proposed to leave the catacombs, and return to Citta Vecchia, in order to concert measures for searching every avenue. One of the



guides was persuaded to remain within the entrance, in case the child should find his way there, or should be heard at a distance. This was determined upon, as the man was well acquainted with the place. Sir Charles returned to Lady Balfour, and took the children to St. Antonia. Mrs. Melville, in extreme anxiety, went back to Citta Vecchia with her husband and friends.

It was now night, and Colonel Melville would have persuaded Captain Beaumont and Mr. Bell to take some repose, while he accompanied the people he had engaged to renew the search for his son. But they resolved to attend him, and Mrs. Melville, aware that she could now only impede their progress, controlled her inclination, and remained in the town.

But Frederic was no longer in the catacombs: he was lamenting his folly at Macluba, a singular spot at some distance from St. Antonia.



When the silly little boy awoke from his sleep, he listened for the sound of voices, expecting to hear himself called. No sound, however, was to be heard, and he began to be frightened. He ran along the passage, calling out to George and his father, but no one answered. He went from one place to another, attempting to find the entrance. Sometimes he fell down, and at others struck himself against the wall. Bitterly did he now regret his inattention to his friend George's entreaties to remain with him. He fancied he heard his mother's voice, then Caroline and Emilie seemed to call him: he even answered, but found he had deceived himself. Having completely exhausted his strength, he threw himself down on the ground, and wept loudly. At length a faint light gleamed at a distance: it drew nearer, and the child ran forward to meet the person who held the torch. "Oh! papa," he exclaimed, and fell at the feet of the stranger. The man lifted



him from the ground, and carried him into the air; but finding that he did not revive, he proceeded to the cottage of a friend at some distance, where he was soon recovered. He easily accounted for his being there alone, and it was supposed that the torch had been left to afford him light, in case he made his way to the entrance. The fact was, that the guide being weary of his office, had withdrawn to refresh himself, and had left his torch burning.

The old man, hearing that the child knew the governor, proposed taking him to his home at Macluba, whence he might easily be sent to St. Antonia.

At the dawn of day Frederic was awakened, and set out with his protector. They met with the driver of an empty calisse, who offered to take them to the town of Quricha, to which the old man agreed, as the distance was too great for the child to walk. From this place they proceeded on foot to Macluba.



"What made you come to the catacombs?" said Frederic: "I wonder how any body can like to go into such a frightful place."

"I was surprised to see a light in the entrance," replied the old man, "and as I know the passages tolerably well, I determined to go in; for I know people have wandered there and lost themselves, and you see I was right. But, my little master," continued he, "consider how you are afflicting your parents and friends all this time: they know the dangers you have exposed yourself to, and very likely will return to seek for you. I almost regret that I did not remain with you at the catacombs; but you were so faint that I feared for your life, and my daughter will even now be uneasy at my absence."

"And I have given you trouble," said Frederic: "oh! what mischief may come from a love of playing tricks: I will never do it again. If I can but once more see



papa and mamma, I will never disobey them again."

"That is a good resolution, master," replied his companion; "but I doubt whether you will keep it, when you lose the terror you are now in from the consequences of your folly. We are nearly arrived at my home, and I think you will be glad to rest yourself till evening, for the day is very hot."

"What kind of place is Macluba?" said Frederic.

"It is like a great cave," replied the old man, "but it is open to the sky, and surrounded by steep rocks. We go up and down by steps cut in the rock. It is said, that a long time ago a city stood on the top, and that the ground fell in, and left the deep hollow now called Macluba. There are many caverns and grottos on this side of the island, some of them very large. Very fine petrifications are produced in them, by the dropping of the



water through the rocks which form the roof. But come, we have reached the steps: yonder, at the bottom, among the trees, stands my cottage."

He assisted Frederic to descend, and at the bottom of the steps he found his daughter, who eagerly asked the cause of his long absence. On hearing his account, she pitied the distress of the poor child, and took him into the house. Frederic saw, with surprise, that he was in a very fine garden, well stored with vegetables and fruit-trees. Indeed, the soil of this singular spot is so well suited for vegetables, that its productions are in great estimation.

The old man, and his daughter Rosa, endeavoured to divert their little guest in various ways. Rosa showed him a pair of gloves, made of the silky threads procured from the *pinna marina*, a large shell-fish not uncommon in the Mediterranean; some beautiful shells and coral from Sicily; and a purse, which she told



him she had often made clean by burning it in the fire. When Frederic had looked at these curiosities, he could not refrain from asking how she could get such things in that place, quite away from every body. "My husband," replied Rosa, "was a sailor: he loved to see strange places, and, like you, often fell into dangers and trouble. He brought me these curiosities from the islands near Italy. Once he had nearly been swallowed up by the great whirlpool near Messina, and when he got on shore, he would go up the great mountain that we get the snow from. I forget the name: it is in Sicily."

"Is he alive now?" asked Frederic.

"No; he went out against the Barbary pirates, in one of the galleys, when the knights had the island, and was killed in a fight. But his galley took a great deal of treasure from them."

She then led Frederic into the garden, where the old man showed him the orange grafted on the pomegranate, (which pro-



duces the deep red fruit, so highly valued for its rich flavour,) the lotus and palm-tree from Africa, and the ash which affords manna.

In the latter part of the day, while they sat at the door of the house, partaking of some choice fruit, Rosa observed some persons descending the rocky steps; and, as they drew nearer, Frederic distinguished his father and mother. Overjoyed at the sight of them, he ran towards the steps, and was soon embraced by his anxious parents, while the child wept from the consciousness of his fault. The colonel and Mrs. Melville readily accepted Rosa's invitation to enter her dwelling, where all the circumstances of Frederic's adventure were easily explained. They had been informed of his asylum, by the person with whom he had passed the night, having made enquiries concerning him, upon finding that he was not in the catacombs. After passing a little time with the good-natured Rosa and her



father, who could not be persuaded to accept of any recompense, they returned to St. Antonia, where Frederic was joyfully received.

Mrs. Melville requested that George might be allowed to return with them, and pass one day more at St. Julien's. His father consented, and the family took leave of Lady Balfour, who smilingly bade Frederic adieu; telling him she should not soon forget his inclination to play tricks, and should take care how she ventured out with boys who were fond of such sport. But poor Frederic was so humbled by his late adventure, that he could not bear to joke upon the subject, and began to cry. Lady Balfour kindly endeavoured to comfort him, assuring him that she spoke jestingly, and promised that she would show her confidence in him, by making him her guide to Macluba at some future time. "I am sure," said he, "I would take you the very same way that the old man showed me, and I would not stir a



step from your side; indeed, Lady Balfour, I would not."

"Well, we shall see," said Colonel Melville; "but it is time for us to depart." They then took leave, and returned to St. Julien's.

Early the next morning Miss Hamilton arrived, accompanied by her nieces. "So then, you are going to leave us," said Jane: "we shall miss you very much, George, for you used to run in and play with us very often, when we were at Valetta."

"More frequently than I ought," replied George; "for many an hour that I should have spent in reading or writing, have I been at play."

"We have brought, at least, an hour's employment for you," said Miss Hamilton. "Mary, open your chest, and show your friends that we have not forgotten their wish to learn something of conchology."

The little girl unlocked a small trunk, and, assisted by Jane, placed a variety of shells and other marine productions on



the table. The children drew their seats, and Mrs. Melville begged permission to make one of the students.

"If aunt Hamilton would but explain a little what we have been doing," said Jane, "it would be far more amusing, I am sure. Besides, if Mrs. Melville sits with us, we cannot be proper teachers."

"Do just as you prefer, my dear," said Mrs. Melville: "I shall be pleased in any way."

"You have heard, no doubt," said Miss Hamilton, "of the celebrated Linnæus. According to his arrangement, shells are divided into three principal tribes, called *univalve*, *bivalve*, and *multivalve*. You comprehend that all shells are the habitations of some animal."

GEORGE. No: I thought that these handsome ones were thrown up by the waves quite empty. I know that snails have shells."

"And oysters and cockles," said Frederic.



Miss H. Jane, take out examples of the univalve-shell.

GEORGE. The word means, having one opening.

Miss H. You are right. This *cypræa* or cowry, is a shell of that kind. The *murex* is another. I have often seen one species of them in London, called whelk. Some of those before us have spines on the top or summit. Take up that long spiral shell, that you see has also one aperture or opening. It is called *turbo*, or screw-shell. Some shells of this family are very highly prized. I have seen one which was brought from Amboyna, called the wentletrap, which was valued at five hundred pounds.

“Here is the *mitra*, or mitre-shell. The fish which inhabits it is said to be of a poisonous nature, and will wound those who touch it, with a kind of pointed trunk. In some islands of the South-sea they are used as hatchets.”



"Is this shell found on our shores?" asked Emilie.

Miss H. No; it chiefly inhabits India. *Trochus* or top-shell, is another kind of univalve. This flat shell, formed like an ear, is also a univalve. You may easily distinguish shells of this family by the ear-formed shape, and the holes which are pierced on one side in a line. This is lined with a pearly substance.

"It seems only half a shell," observed Mrs. Melville.

Miss H. It is, however, the dwelling of an animal called *limax*, a name common to those inhabiting the *turbo*, the *murex*, the *voluta*, *cypræa*, and others. The *patella* or limpet is another open shell: it is hollow within, and conical. You have seen the nautilus-shells in our library: what tribe do they belong to?"

"Oh! to the univalves," said Caroline.

Miss H. And where, think you, should we place the shell of the garden snail?



"Among the univalves, also," observed George: "but they live on the land."

"Several species do," replied Miss Hamilton; "but they are common in rivers and pools. I have frequently seen them floating on the surface of a little pool, when the sun has shone on the water."

A shell of the second order was then produced. "This," said she, "is a bivalve-shell: it has two shells united by a hinge. Of this the oyster, cockle, and muscle are common examples."

"That shell, which Rosa at Macluba showed me, is a bivalve," said Frederic: "it was of two pieces joined behind. I mean the one which has long, silky threads."

"That was the *pinna*," said Mary Hamilton, eagerly: "the *pinna marina* that affords silk, of which gloves are made sometimes."

Miss H. By those threads the animal fastens itself to the rocks. It is called the



silk-worm of the sea. The scallop, which you have probably seen among the kitchen utensils in England, is a bivalve of the oyster genus: the projections on each side the hinge are called the ears. This is a pretty bivalve, called *cardissa*; it sails along on its edge, and shows the elegant heart-shaped form to great advantage. The *chamagigas* is the largest example of the bivalve tribe: it is a native of New Holland, and sometimes weighs above three hundred pounds. The fish is eatable.

"Of the multivalves I have no specimen. The term signifies several shells, which, in the *chiton*, lie on each other, over the back of the animal. There are two other families, called *lepas* and *pholas*.

"There are some shells found only in a fossil state; that is, dug out of the earth. Such is this *cornu ammonis*, which you see is a spiral shell."

"It looks like a little worm rolled up," said Emilie.



"Oh, you have forgotten the *dentalium*," exclaimed Jane.

"Is this a shell?" asked Emilie. "I had some once, and they were called blackamoor's teeth."

"That is the vulgar name," replied Miss Hamilton: "those who study shells know them by the name of *dentalium*. *Serpula* is another *genus*: the shell is single, and several of them are found together, twisted like serpents, and fastened to other bodies."

"My little girls and I have collected a few specimens of the shells, and other productions of the Maltese shores, in that little box which we have not opened, George. You may as well reserve that amusement till you are on your voyage, as we have packed the articles closely, that you might have a variety in a small compass. The name, family, and tribe, are written upon each, together with a short explanation of the terms, which time will not allow me to repeat to you



at present. I do not like parting, especially with one who is going to England. Think of me when you see the

‘————— antique towers  
That crown the wat’ry glade.’

“The spot is well known to me.”

Mary and Jane would have wished health and safety to their favourite play-fellow; but they could only shake hands heartily, and sob out, “farewell.” They hastened to the calisse that waited for them, and waved their hands till they were out of sight.

The time appointed for the departure of Captain Beaumont’s vessel now approached. On the day previous to his sailing, he invited his friends at St. Julien’s and Antonia, with others from Valetta, to partake of an entertainment on board the Eagle. The children anticipated much pleasure in seeing the cabin which George and Mr. Bell would



occupy, and in being quite near to objects which they had so often seen at a distance. Frederic only was silent.

"Why, Frederic, my lad," said Captain Beaumont, "you surely are not afraid to go on board a man-of-war?"

"I am not afraid of *that*," said Frederic; "but I am afraid that papa will not let me go."

"It is true," said Mrs. Melville: "there are so many new objects that may attract Frederic, that I think it is probable he will either do mischief, or meet with some misfortune."

"And that would be very disagreeable," said George, "on the very last day before we sail."

"Indeed, indeed, George," replied Frederic, "if you will but believe me this once, you will see how careful I shall be."

"Do not go away with such a bad opinion of him," said Caroline: "we will all look after him, if he will promise to



mind us when we speak. Pray, papa, allow Frederic to go."

Leave having been obtained, the party proceeded the next day in the governor's barge to Captain Beaumont's ship, which lay near the shore. The accommodation-chair being lowered for the ladies, they were severally drawn up, and placed on the deck, and received with three cheers by the sailors. Caroline stood amazed, and told Emilie she could not think of going up in such a frightful manner, swinging in the air; nor when it was her turn, could her mother induce her to sit in the chair. She begged to return in the boat alone.

"Come," said Mrs. Melville, "do you set the example, Emilie."

"Oh, yes, I should like to be drawn up," said she, taking her seat.

"But mind, my little dear," said the midshipman who attended in the boat, "or you may fall out." Again Caroline was called, but she shrunk back, and



Frederic was put in. He held very fast, nor spoke a word, lest he should do wrong, and was safely carried up.

"My young countrywoman," said the seamen to Caroline, "you pay us a very ill compliment, in being so unwilling to go on board our vessel; we, who protect your country, and guard these harbours from the enemy's ships. The Eagle yonder, at our stern, was never so affronted before by any young lady."

"But as the eagle itself does not soar aloft, to gaze at the sun, without a shelter for its eye," said Mrs. Melville, "unwilling to make a serious affair of her daughter's fear, "so neither will we desire Caroline to rise in the air, without a handkerchief to shield her eyes, lest she should be giddy. Come, therefore, my dear, throw this over your head." Still Caroline resisted, till George proposed to go with her, and hold her fast.

"You will spoil all my pleasure," said he; "and the captain will think you so



cowardly: you, who told him that to mount the heights of Calpè would be delightful." At this proof of inconsistency Caroline felt ashamed, and took her seat with George, who threw a covering over her head, and they were received on the deck. Mrs. Melville followed.

The captain then led Lady Balfour to the state cabin, where a handsome entertainment was prepared. The choicest fruits that Malta afforded, ices of every kind, with cakes and other delicacies, were lavished upon the younger part of the company, by the officers who took charge of them. After the repast, the ladies were invited to inspect the ship. When the sailors saw the governor and Colonel Melville advance, they voluntarily gave three cheers. The gentlemen were surprised, but saluted the men by bowing. The truth was, that Francois, who had begged leave to attend his lady to the vessel, that he might see Emilie, had just told his story to the sailors, in terms of



gratitude and feeling that excited the applause of his hearers, and they instantly offered the customary tribute of respect.

"Oh, how different this ship is to those disagreeable galleys," said Emilie. "All here is clean and comfortable. I am glad you are not obliged to go in one of them."

"I fancy he would find some difference," said the lieutenant who accompanied the children.

"But pray, Sir," said Emilie, "where is George to sleep? Is he to have one of those curious little beds that are hung up in that long room? How he will swing about in the night!"

"Master George will have a bed in the cabin, I believe," replied Mr. Ellis; "but we have made a clearance for this morning."

The hour of parting at length arrived; and the governor, having drank to the health and safety of the officers and crew, turned to his son. "My dear boy," said



he, "your father and mother offer their wishes and their prayers for your safe arrival in your native country. Do not, by your conduct, either at sea or on shore, make them ashamed to own you for their child." They then withdrew a few minutes with George, who returned, and took leave of his friends with considerable self-command. But it was more difficult to part with his three little companions; and while Sir Charles Balfour was expressing his gratitude to Mr. Bell, they withdrew into a corner and wept together.

The barge came alongside the vessel, and the company descended. George shut himself in the cabin; for he had exerted his fortitude to the utmost, and now gave way to his tears.

The following morning the Eagle sailed out of the harbour, and was visible only through the telescope at St. Julien's.



## CHAPTER VI.

AFTER the departure of George Balfour, the family of Colonel Melville returned to their regular occupations, which were interrupted only by the visit of each of the children separately to Lady Balfour, who felt the absence of her lively and good-natured son, and persuaded Mrs. Melville to depart from her usual plan of seeing the children every night beneath her own roof. Many were the anecdotes they had to relate concerning George, with which his mother was amused; while they were equally glad to have an opportunity of speaking about him.

At the latter end of the year, the two families returned to Valetta. One morning, as Emilie sat at work, Francois sent to request he might speak to her. He was immediately desired to come up, and



entered with a large packet, which he said Sir Charles had desired him to deliver either to herself, or Miss Caroline. "My lady," continued he, "has received news of Master George's safe landing, and she is busy reading his letters; so I suppose yours is from the same person."

Caroline and Frederic were called to hear this agreeable intelligence, and the packet was opened. "A letter for Caroline and Emilie! one for Francois, I declare; and one for Frederic! Has he not written to papa?"

"Oh, yes: '*To Colonel and Mrs. Melville.*' I thought he could not have forgotten them."

"*Ah, le cher enfant!*" exclaimed Francois; "he does not forget old Francois. Give me my letter: I must go back;" and he hurried out of the room.

Various were the contents of these welcome dispatches; and as the letter addressed to the little girls contained the



most interesting information, we shall insert it.

"DEAR CAROLINE AND EMILIE,

"From what a distance do I now address you, and how different the scene before my window, from that in which you will read this letter. Caroline, I know, remembers and loves the green meadows of England; and I often wish that all my dear friends and play-fellows were here, that I might fully enjoy the change from Malta to the summer-weather of our own country. Yet, now I know what it is to part with you all, I cannot help thinking that, if I might but return, I could bear even the heat of the sirocco without complaining. But I know my parents think that it is best for me to be here, and I am resolved to be contented.

"How much I am obliged to Mrs. Melville for making me comprehend Gray's poem on our college, and for all



the information concerning the history of the school, which she gave me. I felt acquainted with the place, though most of my companions were strangers.

“I found many practices allowed here, which I could not in the least approve. My father gave me some excellent hints before I left home; and I hope to deserve a character for courage and resolution, without disgracing myself, by giving those proofs that school-boys think needful. To you I may own, that my spirits were at first ready to sink under the vexatious teasing I endured, because I would not do that which I knew to be wrong. At last I had a glorious opportunity of proving that I *feared* none of them, when two boys, much younger than the rest, were placed here. As we boarded in the same house, I saw a great deal of what was going on, and I was resolved to protect them from all oppression. I procured peace for them at last; and we three, with a few others, who seemed to be really



generous and manly, study our lessons together, and enjoy ourselves in the play-fields after our own manner. As the masters are satisfied by the proofs we give of industry and attention, we are now held in tolerable estimation by all. Even the most vulgar and bullying do not trouble us much. I should have been quite astonished to see such conduct in young gentlemen of their class, had not my father prepared me to expect what I afterwards encountered.

“My mother will give you the history of my voyage, arrival in England, and long stay with our kind friend Mr. Bell. While we remained in London, he took me to many places which my father wished me to visit. We spent two days in examining the collection in the British Museum. Mr. Bell, having presented some curious minerals, we were allowed to see every room. Among a great variety of objects I saw the Portland vase,



you more ill-humoured, and I could not be certain."

"Well," observed Caroline, "it does not signify now: and if you like I will read the little poem that George enclosed in our letter. Mamma has explained some part of it to me. You must remember that the children are German, not English."

#### THE GREAT VICTORY.

It was a summer evening,  
 Old Kaspar's work was done,  
 And he before his cottage door  
 Was sitting in the sun;  
 And by him sported on the green  
 His little grandchild, Wilhelmine.

She saw her brother Peterkin  
 Roll something large and round,  
 That he beside the rivulet,  
 Whilst playing there, had found;  
 He came to ask what he had found,  
 That was so large, and smooth, and round.



Old Kaspar took it from the boy,  
 Who stood expectant by;  
 And first the old man shook his head,  
 Then heav'd a deep-drawn sigh:  
 "'Tis some poor fellow's scull," said he,  
 "Who fell in the great victory."

"Now tell us what 'twas all about?"  
 Young Peterkin, he cries,  
 And little Wilhelmine looks up  
 With wonder-waiting eyes:  
 "Now tell us all about the war,  
 And what they kill'd each other for?"

"It was the English," Kaspar cried,  
 "That put the French to rout;  
 And what they kill'd each other for  
 I ne'er could well make out:  
 But every body said," quoth he,  
 "That 'twas a famous victory."

"My father liv'd at Blenheim then,  
 Yon little stream hard by;  
 They burnt his dwelling to the ground,  
 And he was forc'd to fly;  
 So with his wife and child he fled,  
 Nor had he where to rest his head."



“ With fire and sword the country round  
 Was wasted far and wide,  
 And many a weeping mother then  
 And new-born infant died ;  
 But things like these, you know, must be  
 At ev’ry famous victory.

“ And ev’ry body prais’d the duke  
 Who such a fight did win.”

“ But what good came of it at last ?”  
 Quoth little Peterkin.

“ Why, that I cannot tell,” said he,  
 “ But ’twas a famous victory.”

SOUTHEY.

“ Ah !” exclaimed Emilie, “ Maida was such a victory, I suppose. They might write a poem upon Francois, and his kindness to me. We were driven away by fire and sword, I am sure. And what good came of it ? The French and English are still at war, and we can have no tidings of papa. But where is Blenheim, Caroline ?”

“ In Germany. The Duke of Marlborough was general of the English army.



The battle was fought in the reign of queen Ann. Mamma says that the English government presented the duke with an estate in Oxfordshire, and caused a large mansion to be built for him, which he named Blenheim, in honour of the victory."

"But who lost the battle?" asked Emilie.

"The French."

"Again the poor French," repeated the little girl; "and what a number of fathers and mothers were made sorrowful in France! Oh, it is a sad, sad thing that the people of one nation cannot be at peace with others. A famous victory, indeed! I don't like famous things that are the cause of so much sorrow and distress."

Poor Emilie wept for some time; but was at length comforted by Caroline, who tried to make her hope that the war would cease, and that they should all be able to visit France, and make enqui-



ries about Monsieur Gramont. This anticipation always raised Emilie's spirits; it was her favourite plan that the colonel's family should become her father's guests at Paris, and that she might exercise her ingenuity in contriving amusement for Caroline and Frederic. She described to them her dear grandmamma, who would comply with all her requests;—the joy her father would experience, to find he had such a good English colonel to visit him; and how pleased her mamma would be to walk with Mrs. Melville in the gardens of their country-house. “Will you not, dear mamma?” said she to Mrs. Melville, who then entered the room, “will you not go to France when the peace is made?”

“I have little doubt but we shall, my dear child,” replied she; “but what has produced that question just now, and why have you been crying?”

“We were talking about the poem,” replied Caroline; “and it made us sorry



to think that people are still at war, as they were formerly."

"War will cease, I trust," said Mrs. Melville, "and then Emilie will see her friends again. But in the interval, I would wish to see her excel in every thing calculated to make her mother satisfied with her, and with me."

"With you, mamma! Ah, I remember enough of my parents to know how they will love and thank *you*. And the worst will be, that I must part from you, and my brother and sister. I forgot that. What shall I do then?"

"My dear Emilie, let us think of the present time, and remember the past, that we may profit by experience. Come now, and walk with me."

Some time after this conversation, Colonel Melville took the children into the magnificent church of St. John, at Valetta. The sepulchral monuments were of the finest marble, with porphyry, lapis lazuli, and a variety of valuable stones,



joined together in a most durable manner, representing the arms of the persons whose names the tombs were designed to commemorate.

They then entered that part of the church in which service was performing, and stood silently whilst the mass was chanted. An old lady who was behind them gave a slight push to the children, and, looking very sternly, made signs to kneel. Caroline looked at her father, but seeing him attentively listening to the service, she did not know what to do; for the pavement was cold, and there was neither mat nor cushion. At last she perceived a cushion under the bench before her, and gently drew it for herself and Emilie. On rising, she did not restore it quick enough to its place, and the owner half-turned, while Caroline curtsied. The next time it was necessary to kneel, the lady pushed the cushion to the little girl, and smiled at her, and con-



tinued the attention throughout the service.

When it was ended, Caroline turned to look at the person who had pushed her. The lady gave her a severe and frowning glance, and moved away; while the other, turning round, returned the little girl's curtsy with a most benevolent smile. "You did very right, my dear," said she, "to draw the cushion, and were very welcome."

Colonel Melville, gratified by her manner to the little strangers, said a few words, and then admired the interior of the edifice. The Maltese lady pointed out to them several splendid monuments. The colonel having thanked her for the civility, she left the church, and Caroline told her father what had occurred.

"And yet those two ladies were of the same religion," said the colonel. "They observe the same forms, repeat the same prayers, and think that the catholic religion is the only true rule of faith. But



the one is a bigot, the other a Christian. One considered that to *kneel* was of the first importance; and she was angry that you did not comply with the form, forgetting that you were children and strangers. She disliked you, because probably she thought we were not catholics. The other lady seemed gratified in showing you civility, and her conduct evidently proved that she remembered only that we were strangers."

Passing through one of the streets, in which they were not accustomed to walk, they observed several crosses painted upon the wall. Frederic was desirous of knowing the cause of it; and Colonel Melville referred him to his friend, a Maltese gentleman, who joined them at that minute.

"The Maltese were obliged," said he, "to decide their quarrels in this particular street: if they presumed to fight a duel in any other spot, they were liable to the utmost rigour of the law. A cross



was always painted on the wall, opposite to the place where a knight was killed, and these crosses are memorials of their duels.

"To-morrow," continued he, "you may see some horse-races, performed without either saddle, bridle, whip, or spur, yet the horses run at full speed. The ground is not like your smooth turf in England, Colonel Melville, yet we seldom have any accidents." The children begged that they might go; for they thought it must be very pleasant to see the horses run without being spurred and whipped; and the Maltese offered to take them with his family, who were well known to Colonel and Mrs. Melville.

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## CHAPTER VII.

THREE years passed on, and no tidings had been obtained of Emilie's parents.



Colonel and Mrs. Melville determined to bring her up as their own child, and to provide for her in future. George continued to write to his young friends, and they sent him long accounts of their pursuits. Frederic's excellent mother had privately studied the Latin language, and now instructed her son in the rudiments of it, that he might not prove wholly ignorant, when they should return to their native land.

About this time Francois met with a Sicilian, whose brother had fought against the French in Spain, and remembered the name of Gramont among those who were taken prisoners by his party during a skirmish, and that they were sent to England.

Francois proposed to embark in the first vessel that should sail, and endeavour to find out his master. Colonel Melville thought that an exchange of prisoners might have already taken place, and resolved to write. Upon which, Sir



Charles Balfour and Captain Hamilton also determined to write, that a list of those prisoners might be obtained, who reached England after the time mentioned by the Sicilian. Emilie was not informed of this circumstance, and remained easy and happy.

For some time past Emilie had begged of Francois to visit the prison of St. Elmo, and bestow his little gifts upon the persons confined there, that they might sell them to obtain any trifle they might otherwise be unable to procure. To this she regularly added a small sum of money, saved out of her allowance, and which was given without the knowledge of her friends; for she knew that they would not disapprove of her conduct. To her faithful friend, Emilie would have freely given an ample share of her purse; but he constantly refused, assuring her that Sir Charles Balfour gave him more than he desired, and that he had a little to spare for foreigners in distress.



Intelligence from England satisfied Colonel Melville that Monsieur Gramont had been exchanged and sent over to Calais, some time before.

In the latter part of the following year, a letter from Miss Hamilton summoned Colonel and Mrs. Melville from St. Julien's to Valetta. They repaired to their friend's house, who received them with a joyful countenance. "I have found my friend Julie de la Tour," exclaimed she, "and I could not forbear requiring your presence to congratulate me. I was upon the terrace yesterday, watching the sea during the heavy gale, when a sparono came in view. I was alarmed on seeing they intended to enter the harbour in such a gale; and for more than an hour I watched the little vessel, till it was concealed by the fort. Francois having come from Lady Balfour with a message, I found he was going down to the fort, and told him the circumstance; for I had perceived a female on board,



and was anxious for her fate. Francois was long before he returned. At last he rushed into the room: '*Ah, Madame, c'est elle.*' Who? said I. '*Ah! Madame, go down, I entreat you: she is quite exhausted with fatigue and terror.*' I hastened to the Marino, and, on entering the office, whither she had been carried, I discovered my friend Julie. Francois, all eagerness, made a passage for me through the crowd, and no sooner did she perceive us, than she exclaimed: '*Francois! where is my child? Maria, have you been her friend?*' A few words comforted her as to the welfare of her child, and she now waits impatiently to see her benefactress."

"Madame Gramont is then the lady of whom you have so frequently spoken," said Mrs. Melville, "and of whom you have not heard since your abode in Sicily. But introduce us, dear Miss Hamilton, that we may repeat to the anxious mother



our assurance of the welfare and happiness of Emilie."

The circumstances in which they met Madame Gramont, would have rendered her interesting to Colonel and Mrs. Melville, but she received them with so much feeling, that all parties were mutually pleased. The colonel proposed to return and bring Emilie to Valetta, but her mother expressed a wish that they might meet as strangers; for she desired to discover whether her daughter retained any personal recollection of her.

It was therefore determined that Madame Gramont should endeavour to obtain a few hours' rest, and then accompany Miss Hamilton to St. Julien's. Mrs. Melville returned, to prepare Emilie for this unexpected guest.

"Oh! mamma," exclaimed Emilie, as she ran to meet Mrs. Melville, "here is Rosa from Macluba; she has brought Frederic such a fine basket of shells, that



some friend of hers has given her. Fraser has taken great care that she should have refreshment, and we have been listening to such charming stories, about the Algerines and the Turks. I can tell them to *you*, mamma, when you like that I should chatter to you."

"And I have a charming tale to relate," said Mrs. Melville: "Miss Hamilton is coming hither this evening, with a French lady who knows your mother."

"How I shall enjoy to see her," exclaimed Emilie: "but where is papa now?"

"I am unacquainted with particulars, my dear; we shall hear them on the lady's arrival."

Mrs. Melville retired to give directions to the servants, and the young people watched impatiently for the arrival of the calisse. As it drew up, they hastened to meet Miss Hamilton, who was about to present Emilie to her friend, when the child, springing forward, exclaimed: "It



is mamma, my own mamma!" while Madame Gramont could only exclaim: "My dear child! my dear Emilie! I have at length found you." Tears came to the relief of the parent and the child, while the spectators wept in sympathy.

Francois, who had attended by Colonel Melville's request, now entered with refreshments. "Ah! Miss Emilie," said he, in French, "you little expected to see Madame here, when I brought up wine, for the first time, at the colonel's house, that you might be satisfied I was not gone away from you."

Emilie shook hands with her friend, saying: "I know how glad you are, for my sake."

"And I had the honour," said Francois, "to receive Miss Hamilton's commands to go down to the Marino, and enquire about the little vessel that Madame came in, quite ignorant who was there; and I assisted her to land."

"My good Francois," replied Madame



Gramont, "you were ever ready to assist : I know not how we shall ever repay your goodness."

"Quite repaid already, Madame: I only desire to see my master in his own house at Paris." He bowed and left the room.

Emilie now presented Caroline and Frederic, and many were the caresses that her mother bestowed upon the three children. Mrs. Melville exerted herself to retain her self-command, which had nearly left her at the sight of the mother's joy.

In the course of the evening, Emilie made her mother acquainted with Fraser and Salvo, and recounted the share they had taken in her delivery from imprisonment and its consequences. Madame Gramont charmed every body: she had a smile, and a look, and a suitable expression of gratitude and esteem, for all her daughter's friends. But she could no longer exert herself; and, quite overcome by the events of the last two days, she was



supported to her room, where Miss Hamilton and Fraser watched by her alternately during the night.

Madame Gramont remained in her chamber the next morning, and Emilie having seen her, joined the family at breakfast. "Now," said she, "we may all go to Paris, as soon as mamma gets quite strong. Will you not like it, Caroline?" said she, seeing her ready to weep: "and mamma and papa look grave."

"My dear," said the colonel, "we hear of 'famous victories,' but no tidings of peace have reached us. I cannot leave my post; neither should we be safe in France just now."

"I see how it will be," said Caroline; "and Frederic and I shall be left by ourselves."

"My dear Emilie," said Mrs. Melville, "it will be but for a time, and we shall always consider you as our adopted daughter. We shall visit you at Paris,



and put all your little schemes in execution, I doubt not; and you must persuade your parents to visit England again."

"I shall write to George by the next ship," said Frederic, "that he may know of this change."

"And so will I; for if we go back to Paris, it may be long before he receives any letters from me."

"Jane and Mary Hamilton will be so glad for you," said Caroline.

"It is singular," observed the colonel, "that we should not have discovered, that Madame Gramont and Miss Hamilton's friend, Julie de la Tour, were the same person."

"I have sometimes heard her remark," replied Mrs. Melville, "that Emilie reminded her of Julie. But after Miss Hamilton left France, there were no means of intercourse; and Julie having changed her name, by her marriage with M. Gramont during the interval, com-



pletely prevented any idea that Emilie was connected with her youthful friend."

In a few days Madame Gramont recovered her strength, and joined the family-party. Sir Charles and Lady Balfour were the first to visit and congratulate them. Both the English and Maltese friends of the colonel paid every kind attention to the stranger, whose child had formerly excited so strong an interest in their minds.

On the evening of the day that the governor passed at St. Julien's, Madame Gramont related, in the following words, the various hardships and troubles that she had suffered since the battle of Maida.

"Our friend Sonnini informed you how I was occupied, when Emilie was left alone in the tent."

"Sonnini!" repeated Emilie, greatly surprised. Colonel Melville then gave her the history of Sonnini's accidental discovery of her residence with him, and Mrs.



Melville repeated the reasons which had induced the colonel to be silent respecting the interview.

Madame Gramont and Emilie acquiesced in the prudence of their determination.

"But no one could describe my feelings," continued Madame Gramont, "when on my return I found our tent reduced to ashes, and every one unable to give me any tidings of Emilie. The night was passed in fruitless searches, and I then, in my agony of mind, should have been thankful for some decisive intelligence, even had it been that of her death.

"A summons to return to my husband, who was become delirious in consequence of the fever which made his wounds so dangerous, obliged me to return. I was pierced to the heart to hear him, in the then disordered state of his mind, continually calling me to bring Emilie to him, and enquiring why he did not hear her voice. When his reason returned, he



heard the truth with great fortitude, but his spirits have never yet recovered from the shock. A long period of languor succeeded his delirium; and while he was still feeble, we were ordered into Spain. From this country we departed, as prisoners, to England. Our station was the neighbourhood of Reading, where we received much kindness and attention from many families. An exchange of prisoners, between France and England, was the next important change that occurred, and we returned to our native country, weak and dejected.

“My husband’s mother, though she grieved for the loss of Emilie, endeavoured to support our spirits by every means her affection could suggest. But this consolation we were not long permitted to enjoy: Gramont was ordered to repair to his regiment, which we once more joined in Spain. At Badajos I thought death would have ended our afflictions. The captain was again wounded, more danger-



ously than before, and I was unable to procure him needful assistance and accommodation. Here my own health failed. Yet, from this severe distress, it was the merciful design of Providence to raise us a friend; the benevolent Sonnini unexpectedly arrived in the miserable hut which then served us for a dwelling. Finding no answers returned to his letters communicating intelligence of Emilie, he determined to set out in search of us, as soon as he had learned the station of Gramont's regiment. The tidings he brought—his assurance that he had seen Emilie well, and under the protection of virtuous friends, were almost too joyful for us in our weak and depressed state. By Captain Sonnini's exertions, medical advice was at last procured, we were removed into a decent lodging; and the care of this excellent relation, but above all the intelligence he brought, ultimately restored us.

“However, Gramont received an injury,



in this latter engagement, which will henceforth prevent him from following the life of a soldier; and, on his partial recovery, he was declared free to return home. I would not consent to leave him, until his mother could take my place. She met us, on our return, at Montauban; and while my husband journeyed towards Paris, with his venerable parent, I set out to meet my child and her benefactors. By the assistance of a Sicilian friend, I obtained permission to cross over from Sicily to Malta.

“My friends, you know the remainder of my history. You see my happiness, and that of Emilie’s father and grandmother is little less than mine; their sanguine hopes of a safe return, leading them to overlook those dangers which I have already encountered in my passage. But the feelings of veneration and gratitude which your benevolence has inspired, you cannot know, for I can find no adequate form of expression.”



When Madame Gramont had ceased to speak, her friends entreated her to remain at Malta for the present; since, in the course of a few months, some favourable opportunity might offer for her return to France, in a manner less hazardous than that by which she reached the island.

"Pray grant our request," said Caroline, entreatingly: "only think, Madame, how sad we shall be when Emilie is gone, and do not take her away yet."

Lady Balfour thought it would be best for the governor to detain her on *parole*; and Frederic, who loved a jest, offered to be the lady's guard, if she would not promise to stay with them. After some discussion, it was determined that she should remain with Colonel Melville's family for some months.

The various scenes through which Madame Gramont had passed, rendered her a delightful companion to the children, with whom she frequently walked, or sat at work in the summer-house. She could



tell of battles lost and won, of sieges and skirmishes, and foraging parties; of Spaniards, Italians, and Portuguese. And many an anecdote was recorded for the amusement of George, who complained that he found their letters much too short, considering how long a voyage they had to make.

Madame Gramont desired that Francois might remain with Sir Charles Balfour till their departure, though Colonel Melville would have retained him, to attend upon his mistress; and the good man continued to perform his daily work, with his accustomed diligence and humility.

Unexpected intelligence of her father, who had long been a prisoner in France, reached Miss Hamilton some time after this. She found that he had been exchanged for a French officer, and was arrived in his native country. She therefore determined to sail in the first ship that should leave the island, and take her nieces with her; their mother remaining



with her husband, Captain Hamilton, until the regiment should be ordered home. With this lady, Madame Gramont resolved, though not without some pain, to return to England, whence she might obtain leave to proceed to France, by the efforts of those friends who knew her situation. Notwithstanding he lamented the necessity of parting with his friends and benefactors, Francois was delighted.

Poor Caroline endeavoured to be glad: she acquiesced in every argument that her mother used, to reconcile her to the separation; but she found no comfort, except in sitting beside Emilie, and weeping in silence. Emilie, who could not bear to see her so unhappy, endeavoured to persuade her mother to delay her departure, and even proposed to stay till Colonel Melville should return to England. "I wish to be with you, dear mamma, I am sure, and I should be so glad to see papa again; but then, to be the cause of so much unhappiness to Caroline, who has been so



good and kind, ever since the day she brought me her doll and her cake to the prison-window. Ah! mamma, I see her now; a pretty little girl of eight years old, with the tears in her eyes, looking down upon me through the iron bars; and I, a dirty little creature, peevish from my uncomfortable state, and feverish for want of air and wholesome food: yet she and Frederic never for a moment treated me otherwise than as a sister. The Hamilton's are going also, and she will scarcely have a companion that my other mamma chooses us to be much with."

"My dear child," replied Madame Gramont, much affected, "think of your anxious father. What shall I say, to prevent him from feeling the disappointment most severely? You have heard me relate how fond he was of you, and how much the certainty of your safety and happiness contributed to forward his recovery. I am most painfully circumstanced. I see Mrs. Melville is grieved for her daughter,



and does not part from her adopted child without sorrow. Yet, Emilie, I would not have you be ungrateful, whatever I might myself suffer. But here is Caroline. Come to me, my dear," said Madame Gramont, "I wish to tell you of what Emilie and I have been speaking."

When Madame Gramont mentioned Emilie's wish to remain, Caroline interrupted her, exclaiming: "What, for me! would you do that for me! No, Emilie, no. I have been wrong in giving way to grief to this degree: I would not, if I had the power, keep you from returning to your father. I will restrain myself, and endeavour to see you depart with more composure."

Madame Gramont embraced her, and sought to turn her thoughts to the period when they should again meet, either in Paris or London, and promised to use every means to convey letters to England.

Notwithstanding the various occurrences which had lately taken place, Mrs. Mel-



ville always found an hour or two, during the day, to devote to the instruction of the children; and she regularly required them to spend an hour, in the early part of the morning, in preparing their lessons. This plan she invariably pursued: whether an excursion was designed, or a visit to be made, or company expected, she exacted the usual portion of mental labour from her pupils. "You have sufficient time," she would say, "to anticipate or recollect your pleasures; and by forcing your thoughts into a different channel, you acquire power over your own minds. They frequently found advantage from this scheme: something which they had seen, and did not understand, was fully explained; they had long conversations, upon subjects that they heard discussed at the dinner-table; and thus they acquired a number of ideas, upon many important topics, without having read one half of the books that generally fall into



the hands of young people. In company they were silent, unless addressed by their father's guests, which frequently happened; but they were so constantly used to observe good manners, that, whether the day was passed with company, or only with their parents, no difference was apparent. Mrs. Melville loved her children, but she would not suffer her friends to be inconvenienced by them, nor would she be interrupted by them herself. No voice was ever raised above another, to be first heard; each spoke in turn, and each was attended to. If they wanted to play, they had a spot appointed for their own; but they were forbidden to make a noise in the parlour, and ready obedience they had been accustomed to from infancy.

Madame Gramont observed, with admiration, the manners of her own daughter and the two Melvilles: she questioned her friend concerning her method, (for Mrs. Melville never detailed her own family plans,) and took her advice re-



specting the future management of Emilie.

"One would suppose," said Madame Gramont, "that the fable of our favourite La Fontaine had made a strong impression on your mind, for you have performed more than most mothers; yet, during the time I have spent with you, I have heard only a few words of simple approbation bestowed on any one."

"I have laboured for the present and future happiness of the children," replied Mrs. Melville: "I seek not to engross my friends' attention with their little concerns, and, especially, I never speak of them when they are present. Nothing excites the vanity of children more, than thus to make them the frequent subject of conversation."

A ship of war, together with a number of merchant-vessels under its convoy, at length put into Malta; and it became necessary to make speedy preparation for



the voyage. The last week was occupied in farewell visits at St. Antonia and Valletta, which the young people felt painful, but always restrained themselves sufficiently to avoid being troublesome to their friends.

Francois entreated permission to give a *fête* to his fellow-servants and his acquaintance; and while they wished him a safe return to his own country, he wept and exulted alternately.

The day previous to the party going on board, Emilie desired to visit fort St. Elmo. "Heaven bless you, young lady," was uttered in French by numerous voices: "many a gift we have had from you and Francois; and Madame's bounty we received this morning." Poor Emilie could only wave her hand, and Francois lifted her into the calisse. He returned, however, to receive his various commissions. For some he wrote letters; to others he promised to visit their relations, and give



an account of their situation. Poor Francois had learned, from his own,

“To melt at others’ woe,”

and undertook the office with the utmost satisfaction.

At length the signal for sailing was hoisted, and it was necessary to repair to the vessel. We shall not describe the parting of the young friends: it may be easily imagined, from the affection that subsisted between them. The colonel and Mrs. Melville gave up their youthful charge to her mother, assuring her that she would always retain her place in their affection; while Madame Gramont alternately endeavoured to console Caroline, and lamented the necessity of their departure. The barge now came up, they began to weigh the anchor, the sails were spread, and the LITTLE PRISONER bade farewell to Malta.



## CHAPTER VIII.

"What a good plan Emilie and I have agreed upon, Mamma," said Caroline, some time after the departure of the former: "we shall each keep a journal, and when any means of conveying a packet offers, we are to send them, rather than letters; for we shall obtain a great deal more information than a very long letter can contain. Oh! how glad I shall be to hear they are safely landed in England. I was very sorry to part with George Balfour, but the loss of Emilie is the greatest sorrow I ever had. We were merry on board the Eagle, but I could only shed tears when we reached the deck of the Ceres."

"How terrified you were on being drawn up in the chair," said Frederic:



"you know you were blinded with a handkerchief."

"Do you remember, mamma," asked Caroline, "that you told me the eagle's eye is shielded, that it may look up at the sun? I thought the bird had an eye strong enough to bear its beams."

"The eagle," replied her mother, "is furnished with a second eyelid, that is semi-transparent: it is concealed in the corner of the eye, and the animal has the power of drawing it forward at pleasure. Other birds, I believe, possess a similar eye-lid."

After an interval of several months, the family at St. Julien's received intelligence of their friends. Miss Hamilton informed them that she had the pleasure to find her father in health; that they had obtained passports for Madame Gramont; and that George Balfour retained his good-nature and frankness of disposition, combined with much learning and general information.



Caroline had a rich cargo, as she termed it, consisting of a journal of Emilie's voyage, and of her stay in London. The observations in the latter were a source of much amusement to the whole family. A letter, dated Paris, was yet more valuable; for it assured her of the safe arrival of her mother and herself—of her father's joy at once more finding himself beneath his own roof with those most dear to him—and the strong emotion with which he welcomed the faithful Francois. "No one," continued she, "can describe the joy of the friend of my childhood, and he is now become my father's steward; for out of our house he will not live, and he cannot endure to be unemployed. My father would have settled an annuity upon him, with a comfortable dwelling in the neighbourhood, but he says that will make him miserable: he will have his wages, and be our domestic still; but he is amply provided for in secret."

She then informed them that Captain



Gramont was resigned to his ill state of health, which prevented him from bearing arms to subjugate the nations of Europe; and that they all looked forward to peace between England and France with double pleasure, since it would enable her to rejoin her adopted parents and sister.

No tidings of Emilie reached Malta for nearly twelve months after this letter; and at this period the regiment of Colonel Melville was recalled from its station, and ordered to return to England. This mandate was received with unmixed joy; many of their English friends had already departed, and the governor intended shortly to return. With the greatest alacrity, Caroline and Frederic assisted their parents in preparing for their departure. Frederic forgot his dislike of copying writing, in the recollection that it saved his father's time; and Caroline made out accounts, and packed up trunks with Fraser, long before it was



needful, that she might employ herself in some manner that was connected with her voyage. She visited Macluba, and gathered specimens of Rosa's curious plants to dry, as memorials of the spot. From the cave of St. Paul she brought relics of its rocky sides. The solitary rock near Gozzo, afforded its valuable fungus; while the shells that her brother and herself had collected during their abode in the island, filled a large box.

Their Maltese servants were grieved to lose their stations, in a family where they had been so kindly treated; and Jean Marie's wife entreated the honour of a visit, which was readily granted, and was the last that Caroline made in the island.

The day of embarkation arrived, the governor's barge was once more dispatched to St. Julien's, and in three days Colonel Melville's family were on their passage home.

Most fortunate was this departure: in



a few weeks afterwards the plague visited the island, and many were the victims to this dreadful disease.

Delighted with the novelty of his situation, Frederic was continually on deck with his father: he was always ready to do the captain or his officers any service, and received a variety of information upon the duties of a seaman. His great desire was to climb the rope-ladders with agility equal to the sailors, and to stand at the mast-head, that he might the sooner discover the smoke of *Mount Etna*, and the heights of *Calpè*; but his father disapproved of this display of his abilities, and desired that he would take care to keep a firm footing on the deck.

Caroline wished, yet feared, to behold the stormy bay of Biscay, and saw with pleasure the vast cape of Finisterre. The west coast of France was scarcely within her view, yet she continually looked through her telescope during that part



of the voyage, that she might descry the country which Emilie now inhabited.

They entered the Channel: the English coast was distinctly visible. They were charmed to see the numerous coasting vessels and merchantmen that continually passed them, and their impatience to land daily increased.

"Dover cliff! Caroline," said her mother: "a few hours, and we are at home."

The few hours passed, and the parents embraced their children on English ground. Mrs. Melville called upon them to raise their hearts and hands in thankfulness to the Power which had guarded them during their long absence, and now had given them to see their native land. She charged Frederic to repress the exuberance of his spirits, and bade him beware of talking too much of his abode in Malta.

They had scarcely taken possession of their apartments at an hotel, when Mrs.



Melville's sister, with George Balfour and Mr. Bell, were shown into the room. This was too much to be enjoyed temperately; and Frederic jumped, capered, and shook hands with his old play-fellow, as he was often used to do at Valetta.

"You noisy fellow," said George, "let me speak to your mother and Caroline. I have prevailed with Mr. Bell to bring me with him; I had so great a wish to see my friends, and to hear of my father and mother."

Mrs. Melville delivered the letters she had brought for him, and communicated a variety of intelligence respecting his parents.

He then proposed a walk to Caroline and Frederic, who were eager to tread upon the grass, and enjoy the mild sunbeams of April. Caroline gathered daisies and other wild flowers with the eagerness of childhood; she took off her hat, that she might feel the breeze upon her fore-



head; and paused to hear the sky-lark, that hung in the air above her. George entered into her pleasure with much interest, and suffered her to examine every trifling object that caught her attention, without impatience. At length they resumed their conversation, and George gave them an account of Emilie's stay in London.

When the party had recovered from the effects of their voyage, they travelled to town, and gradually became accustomed to their new residence. Jane and Mary Hamilton were pleased to rejoin their young friends, and, accompanied by their aunt, Caroline visited several places of amusement with them.

Colonel Melville was so well satisfied with the progress and manners of George Balfour, that he determined to send Frederic to Eton, and Mr. Bell offered to give him some previous instruction. A house was procured in the neighbourhood



of Windsor, and thither the colonel's family removed.

The following year was memorable for the conclusion of the long war between France and the other European powers. The king of France returned to his native land, and the intercourse between the two nations soon became considerable. The joyful Emilie sent over her packet, addressed to Miss Hamilton, to be forwarded to Malta; but in a short time, that lady having obtained letters from Emilie's friends, dispatched them by a gentleman who was hastening to Paris, and rejoiced her by the information that they were now separated but by the Channel.

"Caroline, my dear," said Colonel Melville one morning, "have you any inclination to talk with the country people of France, as you used with those of Malta?"

"Or to take a view of the Botanic Garden, or of the Bois de Boulogne?" continued Mrs. Melville, smiling.

"Ah, papa!" exclaimed Caroline, her



countenance brightening with the idea of Paris, "can we go? She will be so happy. We need not wait till Madame Gramont is informed of your intention. What happiness to see Emilie again! and perhaps she will return to England with us, and we may be together the whole winter."

"My dear child, how rapidly you form schemes," said Mrs. Melville: "let us quietly, at least let us steadily, consider how we must arrange our plans for the present excursion. The holidays will not take place for a month: I do not wish to leave Frederic at his own disposal during the vacation."

"And he would be *almost* as glad to see our friends as myself. And George Balfour; you did mention your desire that he should pass the holidays with us, mamma."

"Can you wait a month, Caroline," asked Colonel Melville.

"Yes, I can," replied she. "I remem-



ber the impatience I felt, when you resolved to speak to Sir Charles Balfour concerning Emilie and Francois, and the lesson my mother gave me on self-control. I shall, however, prepare myself: you know it is always *right* to be in readiness. But I shall be quite ready to write, or make out accounts for you, papa, whenever you want me; only give me time, for I am afraid I shall not be so attentive as usual. The anticipation of any thing we wish for is agreeable, I think; and besides, George and Frederic deserve pleasure, for they work hard at Eton."

"I do not recollect that I proposed to take George Balfour," said Colonel Melville; "yet he would be a welcome guest, I apprehend; therefore I shall mention my design to his uncle, and inform George and Frederic of it, when I see them tomorrow."

The holidays arrived. Colonel Melville speedily made the needful preparations for their voyage. He determined to



land at Dieppe, and to proceed by Rouen to the French capital.

From Miss Hamilton the two boys had obtained a variety of information, respecting the buildings and public places most interesting to foreigners. Frederic expressed his intention of visiting the catacombs. "Yes," said George, "you understand their construction so well, that we shall profit by your experience."

"Do not regard his jest," said Miss Hamilton, who was then his mother's guest. "The catacombs of Paris," continued she, "undermine the greater part of the city, extending, as I have heard, for two miles and a half. The descent is by nearly eighty steps. There are above two millions of skulls, ranged in due order, with suitable inscriptions. Do not forget to look at the Conciergerie; for in its dungeons many virtuous men were imprisoned, during the Revolution. Marie Antoinette, the unfortunate queen of France, was also a prisoner there."



Caroline felt certain that Emilie would be able to give her all the information she desired, or would direct her attention to books that contained it. She recollected that it was her friend's long-projected plan, a plan that every letter anticipated with increasing hope, that she should be Caroline's guide through Paris. "I go to meet my dear sister," said she; "and every other object is a matter of small import just now."

They landed at Dieppe, a sea-port of Normandy, and one of the most lively towns in France. They walked on the fine pier, and looked with some surprise on the immense cross, with the image of Jesus Christ, which is erected there.

The road to Rouen is exceedingly varied; and Mrs. Melville saw with delight the beautiful prospect of hills and valleys, wide-spreading woods, with a fine river gliding among them; village spires peeping through the trees, and chateaux half-embosomed in their shade.



"We are now travelling over a territory once nearly connected with our own country," said Colonel Melville. "Many a baron bold followed the duke to the conquest of England. In later times, when France was under the sway of Henry the Fifth of England, Bedford, the regent, caused Joan of Arc to be burned for witchcraft. We are approaching the city where this act of cruelty was perpetrated. Yonder is Rouen."

Frederic begged to visit the bridge of boats across the Seine, and was informed that it can be taken to pieces in two hours.

Caroline's impatience increased as she approached Paris. Desirous of surprising Emilie, she had not answered her last letter, having learned from it that she would remain for some time longer in their town-house.

"You might as well have taken my advice," said George, seeing Caroline look very grave: "I know you are afraid that



they will be from home. You might have seen her by this time; for Madame Gramont, and Emilie, and Francois too, would have met us on the road."

"Well, do not tease her now," said Frederic; "but look out at the window at that building, just at the end of this fine road."

"Are we so near the barrier, then?" said the colonel.

"Yes; we shall soon enter the metropolis of France."

"What is the barrier?" asked Caroline.

"It is a name given to the buildings that form the entrance to Paris: they serve also as stations for the military. These edifices are somewhat more striking than the turnpike-gates of the roads leading into London. We are passing the gate of St. Denis."

The carriage drove down a long and wide street, thence beneath a sumptuous



arch, and entered a fine broad road, thronged with people, having beautiful rows of trees on each side. "What is this?" exclaimed Frederic: "a garden? Perhaps it is a fair. Look, there is a merry Andrew. Here is a juggler. What a number of people seem to be sitting under those fine trees."

"These are the Boulevards," replied Colonel Melville. "Those buildings are splendid coffee-rooms. There is a theatre. How well I recollect these Boulevards, yet it is more than twenty years since I saw Paris."

They drove to the Hôtel Boston; and having a little recruited themselves after a rapid journey, Caroline sprang up, and exclaimed, "Now, papa, I am ready. The Place Vendome we must enquire for. Mamma stays here till we return, and George and Frederic must remain with her." Colonel Melville ordered a *fiacre*, (hackney-coach,) and they were conveyed



to the circle of buildings, called Place Vendome.

"We would see Mademoiselle Gramont," said the colonel; "but before the servant could reply, Francois was at the door. "*Ah, mes bienfaiteurs!* ah, Mademoiselle Caroline! what joy for us," he exclaimed, hastily letting down the step of the coach. "Stay, Pierre; where are you running? I am going to announce Mademoiselle myself." He conducted them to a spacious apartment, and hastened away. Emilie entered almost immediately; and overcome by surprise and pleasure, stood holding Caroline's and the colonel's hand, without uttering a word. Madame Gramont hurried in; while Emilie, overpowered by her recollections, and unable to control herself, drew Caroline with her out of the room.

Madame Gramont welcomed the colonel in the most friendly manner, sent to seek her husband, and introduced him with



every expression of gratitude and esteem. "I have no words to express my feelings," said the captain. Emilie and Caroline now returned: the former welcomed her adopted father in very affectionate terms; and learning that Mrs. Melville and the boys remained at the hotel, she requested to return immediately with the colonel, and bring them to her father's house. Captain Gramont insisted upon their becoming his guests, and ordered the carriage, that Madame Gramont and himself might join their daughter in entreating Mrs. Melville to take up her residence with them.

Persuaded that she should give pleasure by accepting their invitation, Mrs. Melville did not refuse it; and, in the course of the evening, Emilie and her parents had the happiness of seeing the protectors of her childhood assembled under their own roof.

"Have you settled the plan of your



operations, my dear?" said Captain Gramont to Emilie, the following morning.

"So," said the colonel, "my little girl of St. Julien's has not then forgotten the schemes of her childhood."

"Forgotten them! Oh, papa, how can you think I ever should? But you must give us your company sometimes." Caroline begged that they might remain at home till the evening; and Emilie, who preferred to talk with her, did not urge her plan for the morning.

George and Frederic accompanied the colonel to the Boulevards, where they found amusement for several hours. Frederic admired the copious stream of water, called the Fountain of St. Martin, in the Boulevard of that name, and several others which he passed in his walk; for he had not lost the remembrance of the dry rocks of Malta.

In the evening the family rode to the Champs Elysées, (Elysian Fields,) which



are planted with lofty trees, in rows a mile in length.

Emilie pointed out every object that could afford amusement to her three young friends, or waited till they should make their own enquiries. The colonel praised the accuracy with which she spoke, and the extent of her information.

"Ever since her return to Paris," said her father, "it has been her constant aim to acquire a knowledge of our public buildings and exhibitions."

"If that be the case," said Mrs. Melville, "I still more admire the ease and quiet with which she performs her office."

But Captain Gramont was eager to present his daughter's benefactors to his relations and friends; and after a few days had passed, he told Emilie that she must write invitations to them. Emilie playfully contended for the honour of introducing the colonel and his family, but the captain declared no one should pre-



sent the colonel but a soldier, and her mother bade her be satisfied with Caroline.

Mrs. Melville would gladly have been spared this party; but the captain had fixed his mind upon it, and she was unwilling to cause him vexation.

"Let us walk this evening in the gardens of the Tuileries," said Madame Gramont.

"Who erected this palace?" asked George.

"Catherine de Medici," replied Emilie; "and hither Louis the Sixteenth was brought from Versailles, at the beginning of the Revolution. The Louvre, you see, is near; and from the windows of that palace, Charles the Ninth fired upon the Protestants, at the massacre of St. Bartholomew."

The visit to the Museum of Monuments was productive of much pleasure. They entered, by a low gateway, into a court surrounded with ancient buildings,



and proceeded under archways to a garden in the English taste. This small spot of ground is laid out so admirably, that it appears twice its actual size.

"The Parisians are indebted to an individual named Le Noir, for the preservation of these tombs," said Emilie. "During the revolution, irreligion and bad taste had destroyed, or greatly injured, many of the churches in Paris and its vicinity; and Le Noir formed the resolution of preserving those monuments which had been erected to the memory of celebrated characters. He succeeded in secreting them during the most turbulent times, and government afterwards granted him this ancient convent for the venerable relics.

"Under that thick foliage is a Gothic ruin. Let us sit down within this shady retreat. Yonder, on the lawn, we shall find many a pillar that records the history of our heroes. There lies Des Cartes; beyond, Moliere and Boileau;



and many more, whose names we shall read as we walk through the garden."

In the great hall of the convent they saw the rude altars of the Gauls; the tomb of Clovis, first king of France; and that of Charlemagne.

The chapel, containing the monuments of Corneille, La Fontaine, and Louis the Fourteenth, greatly attracted the notice of George, who had a considerable taste for literature.

Captain Gramont had introduced them to several of his friends, who were members of the Royal Academy; and they had been gratified by witnessing a distribution of the prizes, and had attended several of the sittings.

"What have you on your list for to-day, Emilie?" asked the colonel, when she came to breakfast the next morning.

"Jardin des Plantes."

"Oh! then we may as well go to the Hôtel des Invalides, captain, for they will not leave the garden very speedily."



"Just tell me about the place where my father is gone," said Frederic: "I suppose it is some military school."

"It is an asylum for disabled soldiers, and was erected by Louis the Fourteenth. But here is the bridge of Austerlitz, which leads to the gates of the garden. We call it the garden of plants, but you will find many other natural objects. There are more than seven thousand plants here, all arranged for the use of the students. I have often come hither by six o'clock in the morning, to attend the lectures."

As they proceeded, beds of innumerable flowers attracted their admiration; beautiful trees and shrubs, from every clime, formed long and shady walks, while the ample conservatories called forth exclamations of wonder and delight. Emilie pointed out the plants that she remembered her friends used to express a desire to see, when they were children; and this mark of affectionate attention was not lost upon any of them. Among these was the



cedar of Lebanon, which, she told them, had been planted eighty years since, by the celebrated Jussieu. During the reign of anarchy, the mob struck off the top of this fine tree, and decapitated the figure of Linnæus.

Here are likewise specimens of every fruit and vegetable that can be made to grow; and for aquatic plants there is a basin of water, supplied from the Seine.

In this extensive garden is an aviary and menagerie. The visitors saw, with much pleasure, that those animals which might be safely trusted within wooden fences, enjoyed some degree of liberty. A portion of ground is allotted to each little community, and each has a sort of rugged hut, suited to his size. The trees and shrubs to which they have been accustomed, (such at least as the climate will allow,) are tastefully arranged for them to climb or sport with.

Nearer to the river are the ferocious animals, surrounded with iron bars.



Frederic was highly amused with the sight of some fine lions and tigers, an elephant that has a house to himself, and two camels.

Several hours passed rapidly away in this delightful garden, and Emilie proposed returning on the morrow, to visit the grand museum.

"What shall we see there?" asked George.

"A capital collection of shells, which will require a whole morning to examine: indeed, we may spend a week there, at different times. There is a vast variety of birds in good preservation, besides animals. There we shall find a very large collection of fungi, sea-weeds, coral, nests, eggs, and chrysalises.

"Well, my dear Caroline," said Madame Gramont, "I need not ask if you are pleased. And you, Emilie, are glad at heart; for many a time have you wished for Caroline to enjoy the pleasure the



Jardin des Plantes has afforded you, since we left Malta."

"I hope we shall frequently go there," said Caroline, "while we stay in Paris."

"Certainly we will," replied Emilie: "and as I hope you will stay a long time, we can attend the lectures regularly."

Captain Gramont proposed to visit Versailles, and to remain there a week, that his friends might have sufficient time to view the extensive palace and its domain. Caroline was charmed with the two smaller palaces, called the Trianons: the larger, which has only a ground floor, resembles one superb and continued temple, with rich and tasteful apartments: the other is a small but elegant retreat.

Soon after their return to Paris, Colonel Melville reminded George and Frederic that their holidays were expired, and that they should prepare to join their fellow-students at Eton. He accompanied them to England himself. George was delight-



ed, on his arrival, to receive letters announcing the speedy return of his parents.

In the autumn the colonel returned to France, and found the captain, with his family and his guests, at his country-house near Montmorenci.

Mrs. Melville now requested her husband to second her entreaties, that their obliging friends would accompany them to England, whither she proposed to return at the beginning of winter. To this request Monsieur and Madame Gramont acceded; but family affairs detained them at Paris till the end of the year, at which period they quitted France.

With Emilie beside her, Caroline could scarcely regret the delightful Jardin des Plantes, in which they had passed so many pleasant hours, and where they had obtained so large an increase of botanical knowledge.

"I fear that we shall not be able to amuse you in London, half so well as you have gratified us, Emilie, ever since we



became your visitors. But amusements are not necessary to make you happy, I know. I believe you have had far more gratification in seeing me so pleased, than if you had yourself been the stranger. You know I shall always gratefully remember your attention."

"Dear Caroline," replied Emilie, "speak not of gratitude to me: I never can repay your kindness, and I am satisfied to be your debtor, for I know your generosity and your affection."

"That is right," said Caroline; "forget every thing but my regard for you. I am the obliged person, for if you do not return with me, I shall be very unhappy; and there seems no reason why you should not."

On arriving in London, Emilie found herself among the most valued of her Maltese friends; nor was her mother less pleased to meet Miss Hamilton and her family. Sir Charles and Lady Balfour had landed a short time before, and the



captain beheld, with some emotion, the governor whom he had so frequently heard mentioned in terms of respect, and who had opened the prison doors of St. Elmo to his daughter and his faithful Francois.

The political events of the ensuing spring cast a gloom over the two families, and Captain Gramont, with his wife and daughter, retired to the colonel's country-house, during the contest which followed the escape of Buonaparte from Elba.

On the restoration of peace, after the battle of Waterloo, the captain returned to France.

At length he yielded to the entreaties of Emilie, and the persuasions of his friends, to whom he was warmly attached, and consented to reside, during the greater part of the year, in England, upon condition that Caroline should pass the remainder with Emilie in France.

To this arrangement Colonel and Mrs. Melville consented; and in witnessing the



happiness that this consent conferred upon Caroline and Emilie, they found their own augmented.

"Ah! mamma," said Emilie, clasping Mrs. Melville's hand, when that lady informed her that the plan was determined upon, "I cannot thank you and papa in words, but you know that

"Gratitude is the memory of the heart."

THE END.







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