

extent she had been until now ignorant, she burst into tears, and throwing her arms round the neck of Mrs. Walden, confessed to her indulgent companion the real state of her sentiments.

Aware of the insuperable objection which would in all probability exist in the breast of Sir Herbert Milton to their union, Mrs. Walden endeavoured, by every means in her power, to prevail on Emily to discountenance the idea, and to receive in their true character the attentions of Lord Henry Thursby, the real nature of which she now, for the first time, thought it necessary distinctly to communicate, but in vain; no argument, no statement of the probable consequences, could induce Emily to remove Herbert from her view as the object of her lasting attachment; nor did she afterwards hesitate, when conversing with Lady Lymington on the subject, to make known to her Ladyship the real state of her feelings, and firmly, yet gratefully, to decline the honour intended her; in the union proposed between herself and her Ladyship's elegant and accomplished son, Lord Henry Thursby.

CHAPTER VI.

NOTWITHSTANDING the mystery with which Herbert Milton had endeavoured to envelope his attachment for Emily, in despite of his determined secrecy, and the coolness with which he had constantly repulsed every effort on the part of Sidney to dive into his thoughts, the latter was not long before he discovered the real situation of Herbert's mind; and with the usual ardour and good-nature of his disposition, he resolved to lend Herbert every assistance in his power, during the absence of the former in Spain.

Scarcely had Lord Henry Thursby's refusal by Emily been made known, that Sidney communicated the whole circumstance to his friend, accompanying this intelligence with a few remarks upon the probable motives which had induced Miss Manby to reject a marriage so brilliant:

adding to his letter the following postscript:—"I have hitherto, Master Herbert, been making advances on your account; but, let me tell you, it is a very dangerous service; and as I feel a wonderful propensity to fall in love myself, I hereby give you fair and honourable warning, that unless you declare your intentions, and throw off the mask, I shall look upon myself as freely entitled to carry on the siege for my own particular profit and advantage."

Won by the frankness and friendship with which Sidney had repaid his own reserve and distrust, and perhaps feeling that his interest might be materially advanced, by securing the co-operation of such an active and kind-hearted ally as Sidney, as well as the conviction he felt of the inutilty of farther attempting to mislead his friend, Herbert no longer delayed opening his whole heart to him; earnestly entreating him to consider this confession as sacred and inviolable; and urging him, out of delicacy to Miss Manby, and regard for him, not to divulge his secret to any human being.

Pleased with this mark of Herbert's confidence, and furnished, as it were, with full powers, Sidney not only lost no time in exerting himself, but showed much more skill, delicacy, and management in the cause he had undertaken, than could possibly have been expected from one so wild and thoughtless: but, as we before observed, he had an excellent heart, and was sincerely attached to Herbert; in whose behalf, he said, he thought he could even sacrifice a Newmarket meeting.

For the purpose of better ascertaining the nature of Emily's sentiments, Sidney called more frequently in Park-lane, threw himself, whenever the occasion presented itself, in her way, and lost no opportunity of conversing with her in society, when the expiration of her mourning for Major Manby permitted her once more to participate in the amusements of the world; where, however, she appeared much more rarely, and evidently with much less inclination or enjoyment, than formerly.

At first, Sidney contented himself with merely mentioning Herbert's name, as if accidentally; but, at the same time, he failed not to scrutinize every look, every expression of Emily's features. At one time, he spoke of his

absent friend with all the enthusiasm of the warmest attachment, and then he observed that the countenance of Emily beamed with pleasure and satisfaction. At another, he pretended to criticise, or rather quiz in a good-natured manner, some of those little foibles, to which Herbert, in common with others, was more or less subject; and these remarks, he plainly saw, were received with evident displeasure. Then, again, he would endeavour to retrieve his error, by touching a more agreeable chord, and recounting some deed of kindness—some act of charity performed by Herbert, unknown to all but himself, and the objects of his bounty. The tear which glistened in Emily's eye, the animation of her beautiful countenance, glowing with the blush arising from the emotion of her own thoughts, sufficiently proved the interest she took in the recital of these anecdotes.

Sidney would often talk to her of the army in the Peninsula; and, by way of probing her feelings, would dwell upon the dangers, the miseries, and hardships, to which both officers and men were exposed, until he was warned to desist, by the agitation of his fair auditress; then he would change the subject, and describe the pleasures with which they were sometimes repaid for their sufferings; the balls, the fêtes, and gayeties which were offered them by the natives; nor did he omit to mention the fascinations of the Spanish ladies, the raptures in which all the officers spoke of them, and the numbers of English whose hearts had been enthralled, and whose constancy had given way to the charms of the dark-eyed daughters of Iberia. When this last subject was touched upon, the wary *chargé d'affaires* carefully noted down the little marks of uneasiness, and even jealousy, evinced by Emily. In short, Sidney was enabled, in due time, to forward such satisfactory reports to Herbert, as afforded the latter, without vanity, just reasons to hope that he had excited more than a common interest in the heart of Miss Manby.

Herbert now thought that he might venture to put into execution his intention of writing to Mrs. Walden, merely a letter of common civility; a plan which he had long projected, but had been prevented from adopting by his ignorance of Emily's sentiments.

His letter, though addressed to Mrs. Walden, was evidently intended for the perusal of her young friend; and while he most studiously avoided making any declaration of his real sentiments, he yet ventured to say that one of the greatest pleasures he looked forward to, on his return to his native land, was that of seeing Mrs. Walden and *Miss Manby* again. He touched upon every subject which he thought could interest or amuse Emily. With some degree of art, and, perhaps, not without doing violence to his conscience, he expressed his disappointment at the vaunted beauty of the Spanish damsels; an opinion which, he took care to observe, differed, as it did, in fact, from that of almost all his brother-officers. He dwelt, however, with rapture, on the magnificence of the Spanish scenery, the grandeur of the mountains, the fertility of the plains, and the picturesque variety of the costumes. He spoke, with the greatest admiration, of the richness of the literature, the majesty of the language, and the charms of the national music. Then he observed the contrast between the spirit, intelligence, and activity of the Spaniards of olden times, and the apathy and indolence of its present race of inhabitants, to avail themselves of the manifold benefits which nature has conferred, with lavish hand, upon that lovely, unhappy land, where man, alone, seems unworthy and indifferent to the blessings of Providence.

He described with enthusiasm, those glorious days when her numerous and invincible fleets triumphantly swept the surface of the ocean, and carried the terror of her name to the remotest quarters of the globe; when the genius of her statesmen, the talents of her generals, and the unrivalled discipline of her soldiers, laid Europe trembling at her feet; when the burning desert and frozen glacier, or the dangers of unknown and distant seas, presented feeble barriers to the enterprise and ardour of her adventurous subjects, by whom vast and hitherto unheard-of regions were explored and conquered, and new and inexhaustible mines of wealth, power, and prosperity, poured into the bosom of the mother-country. He called to mind that epoch when the banner of Spain floated in almost universal and proud dominion; when the immortal composi-

tions of her artists, the brilliant and varied productions of her literary men, the splendour and politeness of her courtiers, and the purity of her idiom, rendered her as admirable in the school of arts, science, and politeness, as she was formidable in the field and terrible on the ocean. Herbert compared all this with her present abject and fallen state :—arts, science, literature, military and political glory, had fled before the demons of ignorance and superstition ; and from being in a measure mistress and lawgiver of almost the whole civilized world, she was now become the prey of a faithless and cowardly monarch, and the degraded victim of a crafty, avaricious, and fanatic priesthood.

To make amends, however, for all this tiresome tirade, Herbert enclosed in his letter some of the most beautiful specimens of Spanish airs and Portuguese Modinhas ; and he was not a little pleased to hear, in due time, that Emily was taking infinite pains to learn the Spanish language, and that the music he had transmitted was the endless subject of her study and amusement. Herbert, however, was still more delighted to receive an answer from Mrs. Walden ; and his heart bounded when the drum-major of his regiment, with his usual formality and unbending stiffness, addressed him with that kind of freedom which his long services induced some of the senior officers to suffer, and which the youngsters encouraged from the quaintness of the man.

“ A litter for your honour, Captain Milton. One shilling and too pence. A lady’s hand. Hope your honour is not going to be married. Them weddings has robbed the regiment of many a good officer !” And then raising his hand to his gold-laced hat, he turned to the right-about, and marched off with his cane towards another party of officers, and left Herbert to meditate upon the epistle, which, before he attempted to read, he turned over in every direction, to see if by chance Emily’s name, or, perhaps, her handwriting, appeared in any part of it. This answer produced, as might be anticipated, another letter from Herbert ; and in due time a regular correspondence was established.

A battle having at length taken place, Herbert’s name appeared in the Gazette as successor to a company in his

regiment, caused by the death of an officer who had fallen in the affair : and his immediate return to England, in consequence of this event, when announced to Emily, filled her heart with joy ; though Mrs. Walden could not avoid looking upon this return with dread, as she foresaw the crisis must now arrive which must decide for ever the happiness or misery of Emily.

As soon as Herbert received the intelligence of his promotion, accompanied by an order to return forthwith to the head-quarters of his regiment, he made preparations for his departure ; but however delighted he might have been at the idea of again revisiting his native land, and of again being united to those who were dearest to him in existence, yet he could not quit his brave companions in arms, who were still destined to perform so many glorious exploits, (and many of whom he might never see again,) without a deep sensation of regret.

It was not without the utmost emotion that he entered the cabinet of the great chieftain, whose kindness to himself had been particularly marked. In vain he endeavoured to give utterance to the feelings of gratitude which he wished to express ; and as the hero extended his hand to bid adieu to the young soldier, the thrill which it imparted to the whole frame of the latter seemed to animate his soul with a portion of that immortal fire which flowed in the veins of the conqueror himself. Had not the image of Emily swept before his sight, he would have renounced home, friends, and promotion, rather than quit the commander whom he almost worshipped.

Herbert had ever felt the same enthusiastic admiration for the man before whom he stood, which, fortunately for England, animated the breasts of the lowest soldier in her small but valiant host.

The few campaigns Herbert had made, had taught him how to estimate the chief, who himself so well understood how to appreciate the rising merits, and reward the courage and devotion of the young warriors under his command. Disdaining the ordinary trammels which had, generally speaking, enthralled the minds and impeded the actions of former British commanders, the hero at once burst through the shackles of antiquated systems, and mathematical tech-

nicalities, and, above all, had shown himself indifferent to the pretensions of favour, interest, and fortune. Promptitude and decision marked his commands, and victory his progress. With an equal hand and unerring judgment, rewards were bestowed on the youngest subaltern, when his bravery attracted the notice of his superiors; while punishment was meted to the highest in authority, when misconduct or incapacity called for censure or disgrace. Disregarding the absurd pretensions of parade-tacticians, and orderly-room heroes, whose pens had alone given proofs of their military existence, while their virgin swords had slumbered in their scabbards; he founded, as it were, a new practical military school, and formed for his country an army, such as England never had hitherto possessed; an army, which not only gave daily proofs upon the enemy, of their commander's skill and consummate judgment, but which enabled him to throw himself in security upon his couch, with the gratifying feeling, that the confidence between it and himself was mutual and well-deserved; and that he had but to rise and give the signal for the onset, and the victory was his own, however unequal the numbers, arduous the service, or disadvantageous the circumstances.*

* It may not be inappropriate to record an anecdote, communicated by an officer of high rank, which, had the subject of it occurred in the French army, would have probably have furnished a trait as worthy of the pencil of the inimitable Horace Vernet, as it is deserving of the illustrious days of his classic namesake. "Late on the evening of the battle of Albuera," (it is the General who speaks,) "I rode forward to examine the positions occupied by the enemy during this murderous conflict. On passing a hill, where a British brigade had charged and driven from the field a battery of the enemy's guns, I perceived four bodies lying separate from, and considerably in advance of, the remaining slain. Three were French, and the fourth a private of the Third Foot. It was evident that a deadly and mortal struggle had taken place between these men, which had ended in the death of the whole. Observing, however, by the convulsive movements of the English soldier, that life was not yet extinct, I dismounted, and raising the poor fellow, poured a small portion of spirits down his throat, and then, imagining that he might recover, and that he was only exhausted from loss of blood, I directed my attendants to place him on a horse, and convey him to the bivouac. The poor fellow, who had not entirely lost the use of his senses or voice, now raised himself a little, opened his eyes, stared wildly about him for a moment, and then fixed an inquiring look on me, and said, "It's of no use, your honour, it's of no use to move me, I am a dead man!" Then, clenching his teeth, and casting a ghastly and triumphant look on the other bodies, he added, "but there lie three for one." We were still proceeding to lift him on the horse, when he again exclaimed, "Leave me, leave me to die quietly, your ho-

Herbert had now reached Lisbon, on his way to England, where he determined to remain a short time, in order to await the sailing of a ship-of-war, in which it was his intention to embark. When returning one night, with two other officers from a late party at Janelles Verdes, the palace of the British Ambassador, which was at a considerable distance from their hotel, Herbert remarked that they were followed by three individuals, who appeared studiously to track their movements. In proportion as the officers accelerated or relaxed their pace, or whenever they stopped to look around, they perceived that they were imitated by their pursuers, who also carefully kept their persons concealed beneath the shade of the houses, or the projecting porticos of the numerous churches. The first impulse of the friends, who were in uniform, and consequently armed, was at once to turn upon the men, and either to insist upon their proceeding before them, or force them to explain their motives for following in this suspicious manner; but as the fellows contented themselves with keeping at a distance, and as they had shown no decided symptoms of committing any act of hostility, the officers forbore to interrupt them; contenting themselves with preserving the middle of the streets, and closely watching the movements of these suspicious persons. In due time, the gentlemen reached the *Praca de Soudré*, in which was situated their hotel, and as the men who had followed them to this spot, continued their progress towards the Arsenal, without taking any farther notice of them, they mutually rallied each other at the folly of their apprehensions, and were now inclined to admit that it was impossible the fellows could have entertained any sinister intentions against them. The party felt the more ashamed of their suspicions, when they considered that such an event as an open attack upon British officers in the streets, was not only unusual, but unheard of; and in this instance there was still less probability of such an outrage being

nour! but first tell me who won the battle?" "We, to be sure," was my reply. Then, starting upon his legs, with a violent and almost supernatural effort, he huzzaed, or rather shrieked aloud, "Thank God! England! England! the Old Buffs for ever!" and then bounding three or four yards, as if he had received a shot through his heart, he rolled over, and fell dead beneath the horse's feet."

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meditated, as they were unconscious of having given offence, and had not been long enough in Lisbon to have excited any personal animosity against them. The idea of a common robbery was out of the question.

The night was calm and sultry, and of that peculiar clearness and brilliancy which is only to be met with in southern climates, where, in fact, the transition from the meridian glory of the sun to the tranquil loveliness of the night, appears to have been produced by the suspension of a magic curtain of the purest ultramarine before the rays of the mighty luminary, rather than by its total disappearance beneath the horizon. Herbert, who felt little inclination to retire to rest, directed his servant to place his writing materials on the table, and after dismissing him, drew his chair near the open window, and occupied himself in making some additions to his journal.

While he was thus engaged, he had heard the splashing of oars, the grating of a boat as it touched the shore, then the sound of footsteps, and voices as if conversing in a whisper beneath his window; but of this he took no notice, though his attention was much excited by the uneasiness and singular irritation of his favourite dog. This noble animal was of that scarce and beautiful breed of mastiffs, or blood-hounds, which is sometimes, though rarely, to be met with in the Sierra Morena, and other southern parts of Spain. They are said to be descendants of that ferocious race, which were trained and employed by the old Spaniards for the purpose of hunting down and exterminating the original inhabitants of their newly acquired American possessions, and were at a later period made use of by the planters in Cuba and other islands of the Spanish Main, to track the Maroons, or runaway slaves, who had escaped from the dreadful tyranny of their masters, and secreted themselves in the fastnesses of the woods or mountains. The beautiful and sagacious beast (who was Herbert's constant companion, and of whose vigilance and courage he had already had ample proofs) no sooner heard the noises beneath the window, than he uttered a long and low growl, then raised himself on his fore-legs, and bristled up the hair of his back, while, from the shade by which he was enveloped, his eyes seemed gleaming with fire. With violent symptoms of anger and

irritation the huge animal rushed into the balcony, where for a while he snuffed the air, moaned, growled and scraped the floor; then he came to Herbert's side, placed his paws on his knees, licked his hands, and looked with almost human expression in his master's face; he then ran to the different doors of the room, again snuffed, scented, and scratched, and with increasing uneasiness again returned, wagging his tail, to Herbert's side. To humour his favourite, Herbert took up his candle, opened the doors, and examined every corner of his own room, as well as the adjoining apartment. Nothing, however, appearing to warrant the extraordinary proceeding of his four-footed friend, Herbert fastened the doors, and endeavoured to coax his dumb favourite to rest, by spreading his cloak on the floor, and by addressing to him the usual caresses of "Come, old man! *Majo! Chucho querido!* down!" but in vain; the animal only wagged his tail, rubbed his nose against his master's hand, and then obstinately placed himself in the balcony, where he continued growling, whining, and bristling his back, until Herbert, tired with his interruption, called him into the adjoining room, bolted the door, and angrily ordered him to be quiet, which command the noble beast appeared to have obeyed, after pawing the lock of the door several times, and expressing his anger by a succession of growls, whines, and sharp barkings. More than an hour had elapsed, and as the greatest stillness reigned in the hotel, and the reflection of the lights on the river had gradually died away as they were successively extinguished in the house, he prepared to retire to rest; still, however, attracted by the beauty of the night, Herbert remained for some time leaning on the balcony, in silent admiration of the lovely scene which lay before him.

At his feet, and within a stone's throw, the golden Tagus, on whose surface the starry map of heaven was reflected by myriads of dancing and glittering spangles, flashed its rippling eddies in monotonous succession against the walls of the quay. On the right as far as the eye could span, hundreds of vessels shot upwards towards the heavens, the dark outlines of their masts, like some bleak forest of larch disrobed of its foliage; while the Tower of Belem rearing its black battlements above the tide, either

frowned in solemn and clouded majesty, or glistened for a moment as the rays of the moon glanced on its bristling cannon, or lighted the angles of its turrets.

In the centre of the stream, the indistinct and sombre masses of the ships of war, as they rode quietly and sluggishly at anchor on the bosom of the current, appeared like some huge monsters of the deep reposing on the flood.

On the opposite side, the shores of Almada, with their craggy steps and vine-clad banks, its summit crowned with villages and quintas, its groves of orange, myrtle, and pomegranate,—cast its dark shades across the river in a thousand fantastic and varying forms, and filled the air with the fragrance of its flowers.

On the left, the gray and formal bastions of the Castle rose in majestic grandeur above the slumbering city; whose thousand steeples, minarets, and spires, glittered like pyramids of pure silver through the veil of night. Before him extended the broad and splendid bay, across whose dark blue waters, unbroken by a single wave, the moon cast her light in one long, undivided, and brilliant stream, from the very strand of Aldea Gallega to the wall of the city. The tranquillity and stillness of the night was unbroken, save by the casual apparition of some Blankanese boat as it rapidly descended the river on its course to the fishing-ground, or by the monotonous though not unpleasing chant of the fishermen, as they rose and sunk to their oars.

Herbert was on the point of retiring from the window, when his attention was attracted by the shadow of two figures which were emerging from beneath the shade of a wall, at a short distance to the left of the hotel. He immediately perceived that one was a strong and gigantic-looking man, who appeared to be dragging after him a female, and, from what he could discover, not a woman of an inferior class.

A moment sufficed for Herbert to distinguish, by the faint cries and entreaties of the woman, and the ferocious threats of the man, that robbery or murder was the object of the latter; and he plainly perceived that it was the ruffian's intention to force his victim down to the margin of

the stream, and, having accomplished his purpose, to cast her body into the tide. The situation was admirably adapted for a deed of this dreadful nature, being one of those secluded issues, or rather passages, sloping down to the Tagus, constructed in by-streets, for the convenience of the muleteers and carmen to water their mules and oxen; being enclosed on one side by the lofty and blank walls of a convent, and by the masonry of the quay on the other, while scarcely a single house or window, save that of Herbert's chamber, overlooked the spot.

To see a woman in danger, or ill-treated, and to fly to her rescue formed but one act in the mind of Herbert. It was evident no time should be lost: springing, therefore, from the window, he seized his sabre, rushed down the stairs, tore open the door of the house, ringing the house-bell at the same moment, and then flying round the corner, in another instant he was at the head of the slope. When he appeared, the ruffian, who had already dragged his victim to the very brink of the river, relaxed his hold, and, drawing his sword, awaited Herbert's approach; while the female, to whose rescue Herbert had hastened, no sooner perceived herself at liberty, than she fled past him with the speed of a deer, and, without even thanking her preserver, disappeared in an instant.

Not satisfied, however, with having providentially snatched this woman from the very jaws of death, Herbert determined to seize the ruffian himself, and then to deliver him to the police: for this purpose he continued advancing; and desiring the fellow to throw down his sword, commanded him instantly to surrender. To this the villain made no reply but by uttering one of those hissing noises so familiar to every one who has visited Lisbon, and in an instant Herbert saw two other men rapidly emerge from the shade of a buttress.

Our gallant countryman immediately perceived that his rashness and imprudence had drawn him into one of those *guet-apans*, into which he heard (but did not believe) that other British officers had fallen. The precipitate flight of the woman, the sudden and preconcerted appearance of the two men, left no doubt upon his mind of the fact; and although he condemned his own folly, there was now no time

for repentance, and he determined at once to make a desperate push to secure his retreat, or at all events to sell his life as dearly as possible, if the ruffians should attempt to interrupt his progress, or have the audacity to attack him.

Before he had time to secure the cord of his sabre firmly round his wrist, all doubts of the intentions of the villains were put an end to by their hastily advancing towards him, headed by the tallest and most ferocious of the three, who, with a pistol in one hand and a long rapier in the other, was already within a few feet of his person. With the decision and promptitude of lightning, and with the strength and activity of a tiger, Herbert sprung forward upon the foremost ruffian, and before he had time to discharge his weapon, it had already flown into the Tagus, dashed from his grasp by a stroke of Herbert's sabre; while, at the same time, a tremendous blow from the left hand of the latter, laid the wretch prostrate and senseless on the pavement.

Herbert's coolness and undaunted courage were only to be rivalled by his perfect skill in the use of all offensive and defensive weapons; and most fortunate was it for him at this tremendous moment that he possessed these advantages in the highest degree, for never had a man more urgent necessity for the employment of his valour. Undaunted by the fall of their comrade, the two remaining bravoes, who were armed with a long knife in the left, and a sword in the right hand, advanced with still greater impetuosity, and commenced a most furious and simultaneous assault upon Herbert, who had placed his back against the wall of the quay, and continued to parry their blows with consummate coolness and dexterity. It was evident that the two villains were perfect masters of their weapons; and therefore Milton saw that his only chance of victory was by continuing to act upon the defensive, and to preserve his strength until a favourable moment should present itself of wounding or disarming one of his assailants, and then of making his escape from the other.

This unequal contest had already continued for some minutes, when Herbert, who had received three slight wounds from the swords of his adversaries, felt that it was

time to make a violent effort, or the loss of blood, which flowed from his arm and thigh, might render him too weak to offer farther resistance. Being himself in the shade, and his opponents being exposed to the full rays of the moon, he was the better enabled to watch their countenances, and to evade and parry their blows. Seizing the instant when the eye of one of the ruffians appeared to be diverted to some object upon the wall, Herbert sprung in, and with well-directed aim almost severed the villain's sword-arm from his shoulder, while the weapon it wielded fell harmless to the ground; then, observing that both his antagonists had retreated two or three steps, Herbert collected his remaining strength, and was about to make an effort to rush by them towards the hotel, when he found himself suddenly pinioned, as it were, and pulled back towards the wall, by what he quickly discovered to be a rope cast over him from the parapet of the quay. His situation was now, indeed, truly critical, and it appeared as if nothing but the immediate intervention of Providence could rescue him. By a violent exertion he contrived, however, to liberate his right arm, and still in some measure he was enabled to defend himself with his sword, but every effort to disengage the rest of his person was fruitless. These vain exertions, however, could not last long; his violent struggles, caused the blood to flow more rapidly from his wounds; while at the same time he felt the treacherous noose tightening every instant round his person, and his strength and courage proportionately decreasing.

With mixed sensations of rage, despair, and horror, he saw the moment was fast approaching when he must yield himself an unresisting prey to the mercy, or rather blood-thirsty intentions, of his ruffianly assassins. His mother—Emily—his friends—life, with all its gay and happy prospects—death, a degrading, horrible death swam before his eyes;—above all, a pang of repentance at the rashness which had drawn him into the power of these ruffians, caused his heart to beat with extreme agony and bitterness. Every moment he was becoming weaker; the blood from the wound on his forehead trickled into his eyes, and dimmed his sight; the point of his sword, which he had hitherto held so as to guard his person, now gradually sunk

towards the ground ; already one of the ruffians had rushed in upon him with his knife, and he felt the cold steel penetrate his flesh ; all appeared lost, his head became dizzy, his eyes were swimming in the faintness of death ; the gleam of the moon shone upon the knife of the assassin, lifted to renew the stroke—when suddenly the noose which bound him was relaxed, and he reeled forward and fell upon his knee at the foot of the villain, whose blow not only missed its aim, but, by the violence with which it was driven, the knife itself was shivered to fragments against the wall. He then heard a rushing noise, accompanied by a sharp, deep, growl ; then followed a curse, a struggle, a groan, and the noise of a body falling ; and wiping the blood from his eyes and disengaging his hand, he saw his faithful dog immovably fixed on the throat of his assassin, whom the noble animal had hurled prostrate to the ground, and held down, with his mouth and claws, as securely as if he were impanelled in a vice. In the meantime, a female voice was heard exclaiming in Spanish, “ Fly, fly, Perez ! to the boat for your life ! Here come English ! ” distant cries of “ Milton, Milton, speak ! Where are you ? ” struck his ear ; and he saw the third ruffian, accompanied by a woman, rush by him towards the river, spring into a skiff, and then disappear.

In a few seconds, several officers arrived to the assistance of their brave countryman, whom they found extended on the pavement, senseless and faint from loss of blood. While some of the party occupied themselves in removing Herbert to his apartment, others proceeded to secure the two ruffians, one of whom still remained apparently motionless from the blow he had received, while the other was vainly endeavouring to extricate himself from the grasp of the blood-hound : indeed, it required the united efforts of the whole party to disengage the villain, whose throat and breast were dreadfully lacerated by the teeth and claws of the faithful animal.

Though the brave young officer had lost much blood, and was at first extremely faint, he quickly recovered sufficient strength to be enabled to recount the circumstances which had so nearly proved fatal to him ; and, as may be well imagined, his gallantry and heroism became the theme

of general praise and admiration. At the same time, he was informed that he owed his eventual safety to his dog, who had now taken his station near his master's bed, and could not be induced to quit his side for a moment.

It appeared that Herbert had no sooner rushed down-stairs, leaving the animal fastened in the adjoining room, ere the courageous beast commenced howling and barking most furiously ; and, in his eagerness to accompany his master, had overthrown tables and chairs, and, in short, created such a disturbance that the whole house was speedily aroused, and many of the officers hastened to the spot. Upon finding Herbert's door open, the scabbard of his sword in the passage, and upon observing that the dog was no sooner liberated than he rushed down-stairs and flew after his master, the officers concluded something extraordinary must have occurred, and immediately sallied forth in pursuit of the animal, when they arrived just in time to rescue their friend.

Upon a careful examination of Herbert's wounds, they were declared to be trifling ; even that which he had received from the knife of one of the ruffians, had fortunately only cut through the outward flesh of his left arm, and glanced across his ribs. In short, in a few days he was enabled to attend the first examination of the captured braves,—the affair having been taken up with infinitely more promptitude and decision than was at all usual with the Portuguese authorities.

During the hurried and fearful moments of Herbert's struggle with his cowardly assailants, he had been much struck by the singular resemblance between the features of one of the wretches, and those of a Spanish servant whom he had dismissed from his service a few months previous. But he had heard of the man's being in England, and indeed, the fearful necessity of watching their movements and parrying their blows, had left him no time to make comparisons, or observe more nearly the villain's countenance. His suspicions were, however, not only revived but confirmed by the deposition of the prisoners, who, upon being promised that their lives should be spared, at once made every necessary confession, and, farther, gave every assistance which could aid in the detection of their confederate.

By their confessions, the mystery was cleared up ; and it was evident to Herbert, that revenge for having been driven from his service (the reasons for which will be explained hereafter) had excited the monster to seek his late master's life. The prisoners, in answer to the questions put to them, stated that they were natives of Xeres, in Andalusia ; that they were by profession bull-fighters, and had quitted, or rather fled from Seville, in consequence of a disagreement with the police ; they had only been a few days in Lisbon, whither they had come to obtain employment, or exhibit themselves in the Arena.

They added, that they were totally unacquainted with the Colonel, and bore him no malice ; but that they were met one evening at a wine-house, by an individual named Antonio Perez, commonly called El Zorro, whom they had formerly known as a *Majo* at Seville, and who, they understood, had been some years in the service of the English. After treating them to several quartillos of wine, and showing them a pocket-full of money, Perez proposed to them to lend him their assistance in despatching an Englishman, for which service they were to receive a thousand reals each. They had accepted the offer, and received their instructions how to act.

During several days they had followed the Colonel on his return home, but were unable to attack him, either from his being in the company of other officers, or from the number of persons still in the streets. Five or six times they had endeavoured to entice him from his apartments by the same scheme which had so fully succeeded on the night of the ambassador's party, and in which the mistress of Perez, who was a *Gitana*, performed so dangerous a part. They had traced him from the house of the ambassador, and having mounted the parapet of the quay, observed he was employed in writing : and as Perez, who planned the scheme, well knew his former master's gallantry would cause him to descend to the assistance of any woman in danger, he adopted the measures already described.

The villains added, that the mistress of Perez, who had been in South America, proposed throwing a noose, or *laço*, over the head of the victim, should his bravery and well-known skill prove too much for the united efforts of

the party; and that it was their intention to carry out the body of their murdered victim in a boat, and to have sunk it in the Tagus.

Notwithstanding a most active and minute search by the police, assisted by the disclosures of the prisoners, every attempt to arrest Perez and his paramour proved abortive; and it was soon discovered that they had both escaped on board a vessel which had sailed from Setubal for Val Paraiso. The usual forms having been gone through, the two prisoners were condemned to perpetual labour in the galleys, and to be branded on the forehead.

Delighted as Herbert must have naturally felt, and thankful as he was to Providence for having rescued his life from such imminent peril, still the circumstance left a deep and lasting impression on his heart, and caused him a degree of uneasiness which he could not control or account for. The base ingratitude and treachery of the villain Perez, while it excited the utmost disgust and indignation, gave rise to the most painful and contradictory surmises in Herbert's mind. He could scarcely believe that the man whom he had saved from the pains of an ignominious punishment, to whom, during four years, he had shown the utmost liberality, and treated with unbounded confidence, could thus basely repay his generosity, or carry his spirit of unholy vengeance so far as to return to Lisbon purposely to seek the life of his benefactor.

If this man Perez was the agent of another, who could be his employer? Herbert was unconscious of having wilfully offended any human being: he had caused no quarrels, had formed no female *liaisons* in the country, consequently could have no rivals, and was not aware that he had a single enemy in the world.

The whole affair appeared to be involved in an impenetrable mystery, and he endeavoured to calm the anxiety of his thoughts, by attributing the whole matter to the infernal design of Perez.

For many years prior to Herbert's departure from England, Perez had been employed as *valet de chambre* to his cousin, Alfred Milton; and when the former was about to leave London with his regiment, Alfred hinted to him

this man might be of great use in the Peninsula, not only from his knowledge of the language, but from his activity, talents, and moreover from his being an excellent cook; no trifling recommendation (let it be said) to a campaigning servant. In short, Alfred kindly offered to transfer the fellow's services to his cousin, and Herbert gladly accepted the proposal.

During nearly four years Perez continued to give the greatest satisfaction to his master; and although he had observed that the man appeared occasionally to possess more money, and to live more expensively than his station justified, yet as he never missed any sums himself, he had not only no grounds to doubt his honesty, but permitted him to enjoy his utmost confidence.

Herbert's suspicions of the man's fidelity and honesty were however at length awakened, by hearing from England that letters which he remembered had been intrusted to Perez's charge to convey to the post, had either not reached their destination, or had arrived with evident marks of having been opened.

He had also remarked that the letters and papers in his own letter-box were often disarranged and some were wanting. He had latterly, also, missed several pieces of gold, which were enclosed in the same case. Unwilling to tax Perez at once, and being aware that these robberies could only take place when he was asleep, he determined to be upon his guard, and watch in the hope of detecting him in the fact.

He had particular occasion to observe that the disarrangement of his papers, and his losses of money, were more frequent when his regiment was in bivouac, where it was more easy to enter his tent than a room without disturbing him. Calling an English servant, of whose honesty he could have no doubt, he communicated his loss, mentioning his suspicions of Perez.

The soldier bluntly replied, "Why, Sir, it's that d--d Spaniard; and I could have told you so long ago, only you seem'd so fond of the fellow; but if you'll just let me loosen the Corporal when you're gone to bed, he'll catch him I'll be bound."

The Corporal was no other than the noble dog before

mentioned, and whose attachment to Herbert was as strong as his apparent hatred to Perez; indeed, the animal had shown such determined antipathy to the Spaniard, and had so often attempted to fly upon him, that Herbert was obliged to order him to be fastened up with the horses and mules, to prevent accidents.

Following the soldier's advice, Herbert took no farther notice of his loss or his suspicions, but dismissing Perez as usual, retired to his bed, and in a few moments his favourite crept through the opening of the tent; and, delighted at his unusual liberty, jumped on his master's couch, and almost stifled him with his awkward but affectionate caresses.

Herbert had watched for a couple of hours, and was at last falling asleep, when he was aroused by the dog springing under the tent; and jumping up, he discovered Perez on the ground, where the Corporal had fastened on him. In a moment, two or three soldiers came to Herbert's assistance, and they discovered the keys and box on the ground outside the tent; from which it was evident he had been in the habit of purloining, and afterwards replacing them.

Suffice it to say, that the fellow was immediately dismissed from Herbert's service.

He heard afterwards however, from Sidney, that he had seen the rascal in London, and added with some degree of indignation and surprise, "I met him entering Alfred Milton's house."

CHAPTER VII.

AMONG the different young men who had been most particular in their attentions to Emily, no one was more remarkable in his assiduities than Alfred Milton, the cousin of Herbert. Indeed, the busy and insatiable tongues of London gossips had already destined him as the successor of Lord Henry, and the consequent and very probable