

## BOOK IV.

### THE DWELLER OF THE THRESHOLD.

Bey hinter ihm was will! Ich heb ihn auf.--“Das Verschleierte Bild zu Sais”  
(Be behind what there may, - I raise the veil.)

#### CHAPTER 4.I.

Come vittima io vengo all' ara.--“Metast.,” At. ii. Sc. 7.  
(As a victim I go to the altar.)

It was about a month after the date of Zanoni's departure and Glyndon's introduction to Mejnour, when two Englishmen were walking, arm-in-arm, through the Toledo.

“I tell you,” said one (who spoke warmly), “that if you have a particle of common-sense left in you, you will accompany me to England. This Mejnour is an imposter more dangerous, because more in earnest, than Zanoni. After all, what do his promises amount to? You allow that nothing can be more equivocal. You say that he has left Naples,--that he has selected a retreat more congenial than the crowded thoroughfares of men to the studies in which he is to initiate you; and this retreat is among the haunts of the fiercest bandits of Italy,--haunts which justice itself dares not penetrate. Fitting hermitage for a sage! I tremble for you. What if this stranger--of whom nothing is known--be leagued with the robbers; and these lures for your credulity bait but the traps for your property,--perhaps your life? You might come off cheaply by a ransom of half your fortune. You smile indignantly! Well, put common-sense out of the question; take your own view of the matter. You are to undergo an ordeal which Mejnour himself does not profess to describe as a very tempting one. It may, or it may not, succeed: if it does not, you are menaced with the darkest evils; and if it does, you cannot be better off than the dull and joyless mystic whom you have taken for a master. Away with this folly; enjoy youth while it is left to you; return with me to England; forget these dreams; enter your proper career; form affections more respectable than those which lured you awhile to an Italian adventuress. Attend to your fortune, make money, and become a happy and distinguished man. This is the advice of sober friendship; yet the promises I hold out to you are fairer than those of Mejnour.”

“Mervale,” said Glyndon, doggedly, “I cannot, if I would, yield to your wishes. A power that is above me urges me on; I cannot resist its influence. I will proceed to the last in the strange career I have commenced. Think of me no more. Follow yourself the advice you give to me, and be happy.”

“This is madness,” said Mervale; “your health is already failing; you are so changed I should scarcely know you. Come; I have already had your name entered in my passport; in another hour I shall be gone, and you, boy that you are, will be left, without a friend, to the deceits of your own fancy and the machinations of this relentless mountebank.”

“Enough,” said Glyndon, coldly; “you cease to be an effective counsellor when you suffer your prejudices to be thus evident. I have already had ample proof,” added the Englishman, and his pale cheek grew more pale, “of the power of this man,--if man he be, which I sometimes doubt,--and, come life, come death, I will not shrink from the paths that allure me. Farewell, Mervale; if we never meet again,--if you hear, amidst our old and cheerful haunts, that Clarence Glyndon sleeps the last sleep by the shores of Naples, or amidst yon distant hills, say to the friends of our youth, ‘He died worthily, as thousands of martyr-students have died before him, in the pursuit of knowledge.’”

He wrung Mervale’s hand as he spoke, darted from his side, and disappeared amidst the crowd. By the corner of the Toledo he was arrested by Nicot.

“Ah, Glyndon! I have not seen you this month. Where have you hid yourself? Have you been absorbed in your studies?”

“Yes.”

“I am about to leave Naples for Paris. Will you accompany me? Talent of all order is eagerly sought for there, and will be sure to rise.”

“I thank you; I have other schemes for the present.”

“So laconic!--what ails you? Do you grieve for the loss of the Pisani? Take example by me. I have already consoled myself with Bianca Sacchini,--a handsome woman, enlightened, no prejudices. A valuable creature I shall find her, no doubt. But as for this Zanoni!”

“What of him?”

“If ever I paint an allegorical subject, I will take his likeness as Satan. Ha, ha! a true painter’s revenge,--eh? And the way of the world, too! When we can do nothing else against a man whom we hate, we can at least paint his effigies as the Devil’s. Seriously, though: I abhor that man.”

“Wherefore?”

“Wherefore! Has he not carried off the wife and the dowry I had marked for myself! Yet, after all,” added Nicot, musingly, “had he served instead of injured me, I should have hated him all the same. His very form, and his very face, made me at once envy and detest him. I felt that there is something antipathetic in our natures. I feel, too, that we shall meet again, when Jean Nicot’s hate may be less impotent. We, too, cher confrere,--we, too, may meet again! Vive la Republique! I to my new world!”

“And I to mine. Farewell!”

That day Mervale left Naples; the next morning Glyndon also quitted the City of Delight alone, and on horseback. He bent his way into those picturesque but dangerous parts of the country which at that time were infested by banditti, and which few travellers dared to pass, even in broad daylight, without a strong escort. A road more lonely cannot well be conceived than that on which the hoofs of his steed, striking upon the fragments of rock that encumbered the neglected way, woke a dull and melancholy echo. Large tracts of waste land, varied by the rank and profuse foliage of the South, lay before him; occasionally a wild goat peeped down from some rocky crag, or the discordant cry of a bird of prey, startled in its sombre haunt, was heard above the hills. These were the only signs of life; not a human being was met,--not a hut was visible. Wrapped in his own ardent and solemn thoughts, the young man continued his way, till the sun had spent its noonday heat, and a breeze that announced the approach of eve sprung up from the unseen ocean which lay far distant to his right. It was then that a turn in the road brought before him one of those long, desolate, gloomy villages which are found in the interior of the Neapolitan dominions: and now he came upon a small chapel on one side the road, with a

gaudily painted image of the Virgin in the open shrine. Around this spot, which, in the heart of a Christian land, retained the vestige of the old idolatry (for just such were the chapels that in the pagan age were dedicated to the demon-saints of mythology), gathered six or seven miserable and squalid wretches, whom the curse of the leper had cut off from mankind. They set up a shrill cry as they turned their ghastly visages towards the horseman; and, without stirring from the spot, stretched out their gaunt arms, and implored charity in the name of the Merciful Mother! Glyndon hastily threw them some small coins, and, turning away his face, clapped spurs to his horse, and relaxed not his speed till he entered the village. On either side the narrow and miry street, fierce and haggard forms--some leaning against the ruined walls of blackened huts, some seated at the threshold, some lying at full length in the mud--presented groups that at once invoked pity and aroused alarm: pity for their squalor, alarm for the ferocity imprinted on their savage aspects. They gazed at him, grim and sullen, as he rode slowly up the rugged street; sometimes whispering significantly to each other, but without attempting to stop his way. Even the children hushed their babble, and ragged urchins, devouring him with sparkling eyes, muttered to their mothers; "We shall feast well to-morrow!" It was, indeed, one of those hamlets in which Law sets not its sober step, in which Violence and Murder house secure,--hamlets common then in the wilder parts of Italy, in which the peasant was but the gentler name for the robber.

Glyndon's heart somewhat failed him as he looked around, and the question he desired to ask died upon his lips. At length from one of the dismal cabins emerged a form superior to the rest. Instead of the patched and ragged over-all, which made the only garment of the men he had hitherto seen, the dress of this person was characterised by all the trappings of the national bravery. Upon his raven hair, the glossy curls of which made a notable contrast to the matted and elfin locks of the savages around, was placed a cloth cap, with a gold tassel that hung down to his shoulder; his mustaches were trimmed with care, and a silk kerchief of gay hues was twisted round a well-shaped but sinewy throat; a short jacket of rough cloth was decorated with several rows of gilt filagree buttons; his nether garments fitted tight to his limbs, and were curiously braided; while in a broad parti-coloured sash were placed two silver-hilted pistols, and the sheathed knife, usually worn by Italians of the lower order, mounted in ivory elaborately carved. A small carbine of handsome workmanship was slung across his shoulder and completed his costume. The man himself was of middle size, athletic yet slender, with straight and regular features, sunburnt, but not swarthy; and an expression of countenance which, though reckless and bold, had in it frankness rather than ferocity, and, if defying, was not altogether unprepossessing.

Glyndon, after eyeing this figure for some moments with great attention, checked his rein, and asked the way to the "Castle of the Mountain."

The man lifted his cap as he heard the question, and, approaching Glyndon, laid his hand upon the neck of the horse, and said, in a low voice, "Then you are the cavalier whom our patron the signor expected. He bade me wait for you here, and lead you to the castle. And indeed, signor, it might have been unfortunate if I had neglected to obey the command."

The man then, drawing a little aside, called out to the bystanders in a loud voice, "Ho, ho! my friends, pay henceforth and forever all respect to this worshipful cavalier. He is the expected guest of our blessed patron of the Castle of the Mountain. Long life to him! May he, like his host, be safe by day and by night; on the hill and in the waste; against the dagger and the bullet,--in limb and in life! Cursed be he who touches a hair of his head, or a baioccho in his pouch.

Now and forever we will protect and honour him,--for the law or against the law; with the faith and to the death. Amen! Amen!"

"Amen!" responded, in wild chorus, a hundred voices; and the scattered and straggling groups pressed up the street, nearer and nearer to the horseman.

"And that he may be known," continued the Englishman's strange protector, "to the eye and to the ear, I place around him the white sash, and I give him the sacred watchword, 'Peace to the Brave.' Signor, when you wear this sash, the proudest in these parts will bare the head and bend the knee. Signor, when you utter this watchword, the bravest hearts will be bound to your bidding. Desire you safety, or ask you revenge--to gain a beauty, or to lose a foe,--speak but the word, and we are yours: we are yours! Is it not so, comrades?"

And again the hoarse voices shouted, "Amen, Amen!"

"Now, signor," whispered the bravo, "if you have a few coins to spare, scatter them amongst the crowd, and let us be gone."

Glyndon, not displeased at the concluding sentence, emptied his purse in the streets; and while, with mingled oaths, blessings, shrieks, and yells, men, women, and children scrambled for the money, the bravo, taking the rein of the horse, led it a few paces through the village at a brisk trot, and then, turning up a narrow lane to the left, in a few minutes neither houses nor men were visible, and the mountains closed their path on either side. It was then that, releasing the bridle and slackening his pace, the guide turned his dark eyes on Glyndon with an arch expression, and said,--

"Your Excellency was not, perhaps, prepared for the hearty welcome we have given you."

"Why, in truth, I OUGHT to have been prepared for it, since the signor, to whose house I am bound, did not disguise from me the character of the neighbourhood. And your name, my friend, if I may so call you?"

"Oh, no ceremonies with me, Excellency. In the village I am generally called Maestro Paolo. I had a surname once, though a very equivocal one; and I have forgotten THAT since I retired from the world."

"And was it from disgust, from poverty, or from some--some ebullition of passion which entailed punishment, that you betook yourself to the mountains?"

"Why, signor," said the bravo, with a gay laugh, "hermits of my class seldom love the confessional. However, I have no secrets while my step is in these defiles, my whistle in my pouch, and my carbine at my back." With that the robber, as if he loved permission to talk at his will, hemmed thrice, and began with much humour; though, as his tale proceeded, the memories it roused seemed to carry him farther than he at first intended, and reckless and light-hearted ease gave way to that fierce and varied play of countenance and passion of gesture which characterise the emotions of his countrymen.

"I was born at Terracina,--a fair spot, is it not? My father was a learned monk of high birth; my mother--Heaven rest her!--an innkeeper's pretty daughter. Of course there could be no marriage in the case; and when I was born, the monk gravely declared my appearance to be miraculous. I was dedicated from my cradle to the altar; and my head was universally declared to be the orthodox shape for a cowl. As I grew up, the monk took great pains with my education; and I learned Latin and psalmody as soon as less miraculous infants learn crowing. Nor did the holy man's care stint itself to my interior accomplishments. Although vowed to poverty, he always contrived that my mother should have her pockets full; and between her pockets and mine there was soon established a clandestine communication; accordingly, at fourteen, I wore my cap on one side, stuck pistols in my belt, and assumed the swagger of a cavalier and a gallant.

At that age my poor mother died; and about the same period my father, having written a History of the Pontifical Bulls, in forty volumes, and being, as I said, of high birth, obtained a cardinal's hat. From that time he thought fit to disown your humble servant. He bound me over to an honest notary at Naples, and gave me two hundred crowns by way of provision. Well, signor, I saw enough of the law to convince me that I should never be rogue enough to shine in the profession. So, instead of spoiling parchment, I made love to the notary's daughter. My master discovered our innocent amusement, and turned me out of doors; that was disagreeable. But my Ninetta loved me, and took care that I should not lie out in the streets with the Lazzaroni. Little jade! I think I see her now with her bare feet, and her finger to her lips, opening the door in the summer nights, and bidding me creep softly into the kitchen, where, praised be the saints! a flask and a manchet always awaited the hungry amoroso. At last, however, Ninetta grew cold. It is the way of the sex, signor. Her father found her an excellent marriage in the person of a withered old picture-dealer. She took the spouse, and very properly clapped the door in the face of the lover. I was not disheartened, Excellency; no, not I. Women are plentiful while we are young. So, without a ducat in my pocket or a crust for my teeth, I set out to seek my fortune on board of a Spanish merchantman. That was duller work than I expected; but luckily we were attacked by a pirate,--half the crew were butchered, the rest captured. I was one of the last: always in luck, you see, signor,--monks' sons have a knack that way! The captain of the pirates took a fancy to me. 'Serve with us?' said he. 'Too happy,' said I. Behold me, then, a pirate! O jolly life! how I blessed the old notary for turning me out of doors! What feasting, what fighting, what wooing, what quarrelling! Sometimes we ran ashore and enjoyed ourselves like princes; sometimes we lay in a calm for days together on the loveliest sea that man ever traversed. And then, if the breeze rose and a sail came in sight, who so merry as we? I passed three years in that charming profession, and then, signor, I grew ambitious. I caballed against the captain; I wanted his post. One still night we struck the blow. The ship was like a log in the sea, no land to be seen from the mast-head, the waves like glass, and the moon at its full. Up we rose, thirty of us and more. Up we rose with a shout; we poured into the captain's cabin, I at the head. The brave old boy had caught the alarm, and there he stood at the doorway, a pistol in each hand; and his one eye (he had only one) worse to meet than the pistols were.

"'Yield!' cried I; 'your life shall be safe.'

"'Take that,' said he, and whiz went the pistol; but the saints took care of their own, and the ball passed by my cheek, and shot the boatswain behind me. I closed with the captain, and the other pistol went off without mischief in the struggle. Such a fellow he was,--six feet four without his shoes! Over we went, rolling each on the other. Santa Maria! no time to get hold of one's knife. Meanwhile all the crew were up, some for the captain, some for me,--clashing and firing, and swearing and groaning, and now and then a heavy splash in the sea. Fine supper for the sharks that night! At last old Bilboa got uppermost; out flashed his knife; down it came, but not in my heart. No! I gave my left arm as a shield; and the blade went through to the hilt, with the blood spurting up like the rain from a whale's nostril! With the weight of the blow the stout fellow came down so that his face touched mine; with my right hand I caught him by the throat, turned him over like a lamb, signor, and faith it was soon all up with him: the boatswain's brother, a fat Dutchman, ran him through with a pike.

"'Old fellow,' said I, as he turned his terrible eye to me, 'I bear you no malice, but we must try to get on in the world, you know.' The captain grinned and gave up the ghost. I went upon deck,--what a sight! Twenty bold fellows stark and cold, and the moon sparkling on the puddles of blood as calmly as if it were water. Well, signor, the victory was ours, and the ship mine; I

ruled merrily enough for six months. We then attacked a French ship twice our size; what sport it was! And we had not had a good fight so long, we were quite like virgins at it! We got the best of it, and won ship and cargo. They wanted to pistol the captain, but that was against my laws: so we gagged him, for he scolded as loud as if we were married to him; left him and the rest of his crew on board our own vessel, which was terribly battered; clapped our black flag on the Frenchman's, and set off merrily, with a brisk wind in our favour. But luck deserted us on forsaking our own dear old ship. A storm came on, a plank struck; several of us escaped in a boat; we had lots of gold with us, but no water. For two days and two nights we suffered horribly; but at last we ran ashore near a French seaport. Our sorry plight moved compassion, and as we had money, we were not suspected,--people only suspect the poor. Here we soon recovered our fatigues, rigged ourselves out gayly, and your humble servant was considered as noble a captain as ever walked deck. But now, alas! my fate would have it that I should fall in love with a silk-mercier's daughter. Ah, how I loved her!--the pretty Clara! Yes, I loved her so well that I was seized with horror at my past life! I resolved to repent, to marry her, and settle down into an honest man. Accordingly, I summoned my messmates, told them my resolution, resigned my command, and persuaded them to depart. They were good fellows, engaged with a Dutchman, against whom I heard afterwards they made a successful mutiny, but I never saw them more. I had two thousand crowns still left; with this sum I obtained the consent of the silk-mercier, and it was agreed that I should become a partner in the firm. I need not say that no one suspected that I had been so great a man, and I passed for a Neapolitan goldsmith's son instead of a cardinal's. I was very happy then, signor, very,--I could not have harmed a fly! Had I married Clara, I had been as gentle a mercier as ever handled a measure."

The bravo paused a moment, and it was easy to see that he felt more than his words and tone betokened. "Well, well, we must not look back at the past too earnestly,--the sunlight upon it makes one's eyes water. The day was fixed for our wedding,--it approached. On the evening before the appointed day, Clara, her mother, her little sister, and myself, were walking by the port; and as we looked on the sea, I was telling them old gossip-tales of mermaids and sea-serpents, when a red-faced, bottle-nosed Frenchman clapped himself right before me, and, placing his spectacles very deliberately astride his proboscis, echoed out, 'Sacre, mille tonnerres! this is the damned pirate who boarded the "Niobe"!' "

"None of your jests,' said I, mildly. 'Ho, ho!' said he; 'I can't be mistaken; help there!' and he griped me by the collar. I replied, as you may suppose, by laying him in the kennel; but it would not do. The French captain had a French lieutenant at his back, whose memory was as good as his chief's. A crowd assembled; other sailors came up: the odds were against me. I slept that night in prison; and in a few weeks afterwards I was sent to the galleys. They spared my life, because the old Frenchman politely averred that I had made my crew spare his. You may believe that the oar and the chain were not to my taste. I and two others escaped; they took to the road, and have, no doubt, been long since broken on the wheel. I, soft soul, would not commit another crime to gain my bread, for Clara was still at my heart with her sweet eyes; so, limiting my rogueries to the theft of a beggar's rags, which I compensated by leaving him my galley attire instead, I begged my way to the town where I left Clara. It was a clear winter's day when I approached the outskirts of the town. I had no fear of detection, for my beard and hair were as good as a mask. Oh, Mother of Mercy! there came across my way a funeral procession! There, now you know it; I can tell you no more. She had died, perhaps of love, more likely of shame. Can you guess how I spent that night?--I stole a pickaxe from a mason's shed, and all alone and unseen, under the frosty heavens, I dug the fresh mould from the grave; I lifted the coffin, I

wrenched the lid, I saw her again--again! Decay had not touched her. She was always pale in life! I could have sworn she lived! It was a blessed thing to see her once more, and all alone too! But then, at dawn, to give her back to the earth,--to close the lid, to throw down the mould, to hear the pebbles rattle on the coffin: that was dreadful! Signor, I never knew before, and I don't wish to think now, how valuable a thing human life is. At sunrise I was again a wanderer; but now that Clara was gone, my scruples vanished, and again I was at war with my betters. I contrived at last, at O--, to get taken on board a vessel bound to Leghorn, working out my passage. From Leghorn I went to Rome, and stationed myself at the door of the cardinal's palace. Out he came, his gilded coach at the gate.

“‘Ho, father!’ said I; ‘don't you know me?’

“‘Who are you?’

“‘Your son,’ said I, in a whisper.

“The cardinal drew back, looked at me earnestly, and mused a moment. ‘All men are my sons,’ quoth he then, very mildly; ‘there is gold for thee! To him who begs once, alms are due; to him who begs twice, jails are open. Take the hint and molest me no more. Heaven bless thee!’ With that he got into his coach, and drove off to the Vatican. His purse which he had left behind was well supplied. I was grateful and contented, and took my way to Terracina. I had not long passed the marshes when I saw two horsemen approach at a canter.

“‘You look poor, friend,’ said one of them, halting; ‘yet you are strong.’

“‘Poor men and strong are both serviceable and dangerous, Signor Cavalier.’

“‘Well said; follow us.’

“I obeyed, and became a bandit. I rose by degrees; and as I have always been mild in my calling, and have taken purses without cutting throats, I bear an excellent character, and can eat my macaroni at Naples without any danger to life and limb. For the last two years I have settled in these parts, where I hold sway, and where I have purchased land. I am called a farmer, signor; and I myself now only rob for amusement, and to keep my hand in. I trust I have satisfied your curiosity. We are within a hundred yards of the castle.”

“And how,” asked the Englishman, whose interest had been much excited by his companion's narrative,--“and how came you acquainted with my host?--and by what means has he so well conciliated the goodwill of yourself and friends?”

Maestro Paolo turned his black eyes very gravely towards his questioner. “Why, signor,” said he, “you must surely know more of the foreign cavalier with the hard name than I do. All I can say is, that about a fortnight ago I chanced to be standing by a booth in the Toledo at Naples, when a sober-looking gentleman touched me by the arm, and said, ‘Maestro Paolo, I want to make your acquaintance; do me the favour to come into yonder tavern, and drink a flask of lacrima.’ ‘Willingly,’ said I. So we entered the tavern. When we were seated, my new acquaintance thus accosted me: ‘The Count d'O-- has offered to let me hire his old castle near B--. You know the spot?’

“‘Extremely well; no one has inhabited it for a century at least; it is half in ruins, signor. A queer place to hire; I hope the rent is not heavy.’

“‘Maestro Paolo,’ said he, ‘I am a philosopher, and don't care for luxuries. I want a quiet retreat for some scientific experiments. The castle will suit me very well, provided you will accept me as a neighbour, and place me and my friends under your special protection. I am rich; but I shall take nothing to the castle worth robbing. I will pay one rent to the count, and another to you.’

“With that we soon came to terms; and as the strange signor doubled the sum I myself proposed, he is in high favour with all his neighbours. We would guard the whole castle against an army. And now, signor, that I have been thus frank, be frank with me. Who is this singular cavalier?”

“Who?--he himself told you, a philosopher.”

“Hem! searching for the Philosopher’s Stone,--eh, a bit of a magician; afraid of the priests?”

“Precisely; you have hit it.”

“I thought so; and you are his pupil?”

“I am.”

“I wish you well through it,” said the robber, seriously, and crossing himself with much devotion; “I am not much better than other people, but one’s soul is one’s soul. I do not mind a little honest robbery, or knocking a man on the head if need be, --but to make a bargain with the devil! Ah, take care, young gentleman, take care!”

“You need not fear,” said Glyndon, smiling; “my preceptor is too wise and too good for such a compact. But here we are, I suppose. A noble ruin,--a glorious prospect!”

Glyndon paused delightedly, and surveyed the scene before and below with the eye of a painter. Insensibly, while listening to the bandit, he had wound up a considerable ascent, and now he was upon a broad ledge of rock covered with mosses and dwarf shrubs. Between this eminence and another of equal height, upon which the castle was built, there was a deep but narrow fissure, overgrown with the most profuse foliage, so that the eye could not penetrate many yards below the rugged surface of the abyss; but the profoundness might be well conjectured by the hoarse, low, monotonous roar of waters unseen that rolled below, and the subsequent course of which was visible at a distance in a perturbed and rapid stream that intersected the waste and desolate valleys.

To the left, the prospect seemed almost boundless,--the extreme clearness of the purple air serving to render distinct the features of a range of country that a conqueror of old might have deemed in itself a kingdom. Lonely and desolate as the road which Glyndon had passed that day had appeared, the landscape now seemed studded with castles, spires, and villages. Afar off, Naples gleamed whitely in the last rays of the sun, and the rose-tints of the horizon melted into the azure of her glorious bay. Yet more remote, and in another part of the prospect, might be caught, dim and shadowy, and backed by the darkest foliage, the ruined pillars of the ancient Posidonia. There, in the midst of his blackened and sterile realms, rose the dismal Mount of Fire; while on the other hand, winding through variegated plains, to which distance lent all its magic, glittered many and many a stream by which Etruscan and Sybarite, Roman and Saracen and Norman had, at intervals of ages, pitched the invading tent. All the visions of the past--the stormy and dazzling histories of Southern Italy--rushed over the artist’s mind as he gazed below. And then, slowly turning to look behind, he saw the grey and mouldering walls of the castle in which he sought the secrets that were to give to hope in the future a mightier empire than memory owns in the past. It was one of those baronial fortresses with which Italy was studded in the earlier middle ages, having but little of the Gothic grace or grandeur which belongs to the ecclesiastical architecture of the same time, but rude, vast, and menacing, even in decay. A wooden bridge was thrown over the chasm, wide enough to admit two horsemen abreast; and the planks trembled and gave back a hollow sound as Glyndon urged his jaded steed across.

A road which had once been broad and paved with rough flags, but which now was half-obliterated by long grass and rank weeds, conducted to the outer court of the castle hard by; the gates were open, and half the building in this part was dismantled; the ruins partially hid by ivy

that was the growth of centuries. But on entering the inner court, Glyndon was not sorry to notice that there was less appearance of neglect and decay; some wild roses gave a smile to the grey walls, and in the centre there was a fountain in which the waters still trickled coolly, and with a pleasing murmur, from the jaws of a gigantic Triton. Here he was met by Mejnour with a smile.

“Welcome, my friend and pupil,” said he: “he who seeks for Truth can find in these solitudes an immortal Academe.”

#### CHAPTER 4.II.

And Abaris, so far from esteeming Pythagoras, who taught these things, a necromancer or wizard, rather revered and admired him as something divine.--Iamblich., “Vit. Pythag.”

The attendants whom Mejnour had engaged for his strange abode were such as might suit a philosopher of few wants. An old Armenian whom Glyndon recognised as in the mystic’s service at Naples, a tall, hard-featured woman from the village, recommended by Maestro Paolo, and two long-haired, smooth-spoken, but fierce-visaged youths from the same place, and honoured by the same sponsorship, constituted the establishment. The rooms used by the sage were commodious and weather-proof, with some remains of ancient splendour in the faded arras that clothed the walls, and the huge tables of costly marble and elaborate carving. Glyndon’s sleeping apartment communicated with a kind of belvedere, or terrace, that commanded prospects of unrivalled beauty and extent, and was separated on the other side by a long gallery, and a flight of ten or a dozen stairs, from the private chambers of the mystic. There was about the whole place a sombre and yet not displeasing depth of repose. It suited well with the studies to which it was now to be appropriated.

For several days Mejnour refused to confer with Glyndon on the subjects nearest to his heart.

“All without,” said he, “is prepared, but not all within; your own soul must grow accustomed to the spot, and filled with the surrounding nature; for Nature is the source of all inspiration.”

With these words Mejnour turned to lighter topics. He made the Englishman accompany him in long rambles through the wild scenes around, and he smiled approvingly when the young artist gave way to the enthusiasm which their fearful beauty could not have failed to rouse in a duller breast; and then Mejnour poured forth to his wondering pupil the stores of a knowledge that seemed inexhaustible and boundless. He gave accounts the most curious, graphic, and minute of the various races (their characters, habits, creeds, and manners) by which that fair land had been successively overrun. It is true that his descriptions could not be found in books, and were unsupported by learned authorities; but he possessed the true charm of the tale-teller, and spoke of all with the animated confidence of a personal witness. Sometimes, too, he would converse upon the more durable and the loftier mysteries of Nature with an eloquence and a research which invested them with all the colours rather of poetry than science. Insensibly the young artist found himself elevated and soothed by the lore of his companion; the fever of his wild desires was slaked. His mind became more and more lulled into the divine tranquillity of contemplation; he felt himself a nobler being, and in the silence of his senses he imagined that he heard the voice of his soul.

It was to this state that Mejnour evidently sought to bring the neophyte, and in this elementary initiation the mystic was like every more ordinary sage. For he who seeks to DISCOVER must first reduce himself into a kind of abstract idealism, and be rendered up, in solemn and sweet bondage, to the faculties which CONTEMPLATE and IMAGINE.

Glyndon noticed that, in their rambles, Mejnour often paused, where the foliage was rifest, to gather some herb or flower; and this reminded him that he had seen Zanoni similarly occupied. "Can these humble children of Nature," said he one day to Mejnour,--"things that bloom and wither in a day, be serviceable to the science of the higher secrets? Is there a pharmacy for the soul as well as the body, and do the nurslings of the summer minister not only to human health but spiritual immortality?"

"If," answered Mejnour, "a stranger had visited a wandering tribe before one property of herbalism was known to them; if he had told the savages that the herbs which every day they trampled under foot were endowed with the most potent virtues; that one would restore to health a brother on the verge of death; that another would paralyse into idiocy their wisest sage; that a third would strike lifeless to the dust their most stalwart champion; that tears and laughter, vigour and disease, madness and reason, wakefulness and sleep, existence and dissolution, were coiled up in those unregarded leaves,--would they not have held him a sorcerer or a liar? To half the virtues of the vegetable world mankind are yet in the darkness of the savages I have supposed. There are faculties within us with which certain herbs have affinity, and over which they have power. The moly of the ancients is not all a fable."

The apparent character of Mejnour differed in much from that of Zanoni; and while it fascinated Glyndon less, it subdued and impressed him more. The conversation of Zanoni evinced a deep and general interest for mankind,--a feeling approaching to enthusiasm for art and beauty. The stories circulated concerning his habits elevated the mystery of his life by actions of charity and beneficence. And in all this there was something genial and humane that softened the awe he created, and tended, perhaps, to raise suspicions as to the loftier secrets that he arrogated to himself. But Mejnour seemed wholly indifferent to all the actual world. If he committed no evil, he seemed equally apathetic to good. His deeds relieved no want, his words pitied no distress. What we call the heart appeared to have merged into the intellect. He moved, thought, and lived like some regular and calm abstraction, rather than one who yet retained, with the form, the feelings and sympathies of his kind.

Glyndon once, observing the tone of supreme indifference with which he spoke of those changes on the face of earth which he asserted he had witnessed, ventured to remark to him the distinction he had noted.

"It is true," said Mejnour, coldly. "My life is the life that contemplates,--Zanoni's is the life that enjoys: when I gather the herb, I think but of its uses; Zanoni will pause to admire its beauties."

"And you deem your own the superior and the loftier existence?"

"No. His is the existence of youth,--mine of age. We have cultivated different faculties. Each has powers the other cannot aspire to. Those with whom he associates live better,--those who associate with me know more."

"I have heard, in truth," said Glyndon, "that his companions at Naples were observed to lead purer and nobler lives after intercourse with Zanoni; yet were they not strange companions, at the best, for a sage? This terrible power, too, that he exercises at will, as in the death of the Prince di --, and that of the Count Ughelli, scarcely becomes the tranquil seeker after good."

“True,” said Mejnour, with an icy smile; “such must ever be the error of those philosophers who would meddle with the active life of mankind. You cannot serve some without injuring others; you cannot protect the good without warring on the bad; and if you desire to reform the faulty, why, you must lower yourself to live with the faulty to know their faults. Even so saith Paracelsus, a great man, though often wrong. (“It is as necessary to know evil things as good; for who can know what is good without the knowing what is evil?” etc.--Paracelsus, “De Nat. Rer.,” lib. 3.) Not mine this folly; I live but in knowledge,--I have no life in mankind!”

Another time Glyndon questioned the mystic as to the nature of that union or fraternity to which Zanoni had once referred.

“I am right, I suppose,” said he, “in conjecturing that you and himself profess to be the brothers of the Rosy Cross?”

“Do you imagine,” answered Mejnour, “that there were no mystic and solemn unions of men seeking the same end through the same means before the Arabians of Damus, in 1378, taught to a wandering German the secrets which founded the Institution of the Rosicrucians? I allow, however, that the Rosicrucians formed a sect descended from the greater and earlier school. They were wiser than the Alchemists,--their masters are wiser than they.”

“And of this early and primary order how many still exist?”

“Zanoni and myself.”

“What, two only!--and you profess the power to teach to all the secret that baffles Death?”

“Your ancestor attained that secret; he died rather than survive the only thing he loved. We have, my pupil, no arts by which we CAN PUT DEATH OUT OF OUR OPTION, or out of the will of Heaven. These walls may crush me as I stand. All that we profess to do is but this,--to find out the secrets of the human frame; to know why the parts ossify and the blood stagnates, and to apply continual preventives to the effects of time. This is not magic; it is the art of medicine rightly understood. In our order we hold most noble,--first, that knowledge which elevates the intellect; secondly, that which preserves the body. But the mere art (extracted from the juices and simples) which recruits the animal vigour and arrests the progress of decay, or that more noble secret, which I will only hint to thee at present, by which HEAT, or CALORIC, as ye call it, being, as Heraclitus wisely taught, the primordial principle of life, can be made its perpetual renovater,--these I say, would not suffice for safety. It is ours also to disarm and elude the wrath of men, to turn the swords of our foes against each other, to glide (if not incorporeal) invisible to eyes over which we can throw a mist and darkness. And this some seers have professed to be the virtue of a stone of agate. Abaris placed it in his arrow. I will find you an herb in yon valley that will give a surer charm than the agate and the arrow. In one word, know this, that the humblest and meanest products of Nature are those from which the sublimest properties are to be drawn.”

“But,” said Glyndon, “if possessed of these great secrets, why so churlish in withholding their diffusion? Does not the false or charlatanic science differ in this from the true and indisputable,--that the last communicates to the world the process by which it attains its discoveries; the first boasts of marvellous results, and refuses to explain the causes?”

“Well said, O Logician of the Schools; but think again. Suppose we were to impart all our knowledge to all mankind indiscriminately,--alike to the vicious and the virtuous,--should we be benefactors or scourges? Imagine the tyrant, the sensualist, the evil and corrupted being possessed of these tremendous powers; would he not be a demon let loose on earth? Grant that the same privilege be accorded also to the good; and in what state would be society? Engaged in a Titan war,--the good forever on the defensive, the bad forever in assault. In the present

condition of the earth, evil is a more active principle than good, and the evil would prevail. It is for these reasons that we are not only solemnly bound to administer our lore only to those who will not misuse and pervert it, but that we place our ordeal in tests that purify the passions and elevate the desires. And Nature in this controls and assists us: for it places awful guardians and insurmountable barriers between the ambition of vice and the heaven of the loftier science.”

Such made a small part of the numerous conversations Mejnour held with his pupil,--conversations that, while they appeared to address themselves to the reason, inflamed yet more the fancy. It was the very disclaiming of all powers which Nature, properly investigated, did not suffice to create, that gave an air of probability to those which Mejnour asserted Nature might bestow.

Thus days and weeks rolled on; and the mind of Glyndon, gradually fitted to this sequestered and musing life, forgot at last the vanities and chimeras of the world without.

One evening he had lingered alone and late upon the ramparts, watching the stars as, one by one, they broke upon the twilight. Never had he felt so sensibly the mighty power of the heavens and the earth upon man; how much the springs of our intellectual being are moved and acted upon by the solemn influences of Nature. As a patient on whom, slowly and by degrees, the agencies of mesmerism are brought to bear, he acknowledged to his heart the growing force of that vast and universal magnetism which is the life of creation, and binds the atom to the whole. A strange and ineffable consciousness of power, of the SOMETHING GREAT within the perishable clay, appealed to feelings at once dim and glorious,--like the faint recognitions of a holier and former being. An impulse, that he could not resist, led him to seek the mystic. He would demand, that hour, his initiation into the worlds beyond our world,--he was prepared to breathe a diviner air. He entered the castle, and strode the shadowy and starlit gallery which conducted to Mejnour's apartment.

#### CHAPTER 4.III.

Man is the eye of things.--Euryph, “de Vit. Hum.”

...There is, therefore, a certain ecstatical or transporting power, which, if at any time it shall be excited or stirred up by an ardent desire and most strong imagination, is able to conduct the spirit of the more outward even to some absent and far-distant object.--Von Helmont.

The rooms that Mejnour occupied consisted of two chambers communicating with each other, and a third in which he slept. All these rooms were placed in the huge square tower that beetled over the dark and bush-grown precipice. The first chamber which Glyndon entered was empty. With a noiseless step he passed on, and opened the door that admitted into the inner one. He drew back at the threshold, overpowered by a strong fragrance which filled the chamber: a kind of mist thickened the air rather than obscured it, for this vapour was not dark, but resembled a snow- cloud moving slowly, and in heavy undulations, wave upon wave regularly over the space. A mortal cold struck to the Englishman's heart, and his blood froze. He stood rooted to the spot; and as his eyes strained involuntarily through the vapour, he fancied (for he could not be sure that it was not the trick of his imagination) that he saw dim, spectre-like, but gigantic forms floating through the mist; or was it not rather the mist itself that formed its vapours fantastically into those moving, impalpable, and bodiless apparitions? A great painter of antiquity is said, in a

picture of Hades, to have represented the monsters that glide through the ghostly River of the Dead, so artfully, that the eye perceived at once that the river itself was but a spectre, and the bloodless things that tenanted it had no life, their forms blending with the dead waters till, as the eye continued to gaze, it ceased to discern them from the preternatural element they were supposed to inhabit. Such were the moving outlines that coiled and floated through the mist; but before Glyndon had even drawn breath in this atmosphere--for his life itself seemed arrested or changed into a kind of horrid trance--he felt his hand seized, and he was led from that room into the outer one. He heard the door close,--his blood rushed again through his veins, and he saw Mejnour by his side. Strong convulsions then suddenly seized his whole frame,--he fell to the ground insensible. When he recovered, he found himself in the open air in a rude balcony of stone that jutted from the chamber, the stars shining serenely over the dark abyss below, and resting calmly upon the face of the mystic, who stood beside him with folded arms.

“Young man,” said Mejnour, “judge by what you have just felt, how dangerous it is to seek knowledge until prepared to receive it. Another moment in the air of that chamber and you had been a corpse.”

“Then of what nature was the knowledge that you, once mortal like myself, could safely have sought in that icy atmosphere, which it was death for me to breathe? Mejnour,” continued Glyndon, and his wild desire, sharpened by the very danger he had passed, once more animated and nerved him, “I am prepared at least for the first steps. I come to you as of old the pupil to the Hierophant, and demand the initiation.”

Mejnour passed his hand over the young man’s heart,--it beat loud, regularly, and boldly. He looked at him with something almost like admiration in his passionless and frigid features, and muttered, half to himself, “Surely, in so much courage the true disciple is found at last.” Then, speaking aloud, he added, “Be it so; man’s first initiation is in TRANCE. In dreams commences all human knowledge; in dreams hovers over measureless space the first faint bridge between spirit and spirit,--this world and the worlds beyond! Look steadfastly on yonder star!”

Glyndon obeyed, and Mejnour retired into the chamber, from which there then slowly emerged a vapour, somewhat paler and of fainter odour than that which had nearly produced so fatal an effect on his frame. This, on the contrary, as it coiled around him, and then melted in thin spires into the air, breathed a refreshing and healthful fragrance. He still kept his eyes on the star, and the star seemed gradually to fix and command his gaze. A sort of languor next seized his frame, but without, as he thought, communicating itself to the mind; and as this crept over him, he felt his temples sprinkled with some volatile and fiery essence. At the same moment a slight tremor shook his limbs and thrilled through his veins. The languor increased, still he kept his gaze upon the star, and now its luminous circumference seemed to expand and dilate. It became gradually softer and clearer in its light; spreading wider and broader, it diffused all space,--all space seemed swallowed up in it. And at last, in the midst of a silver shining atmosphere, he felt as if something burst within his brain,--as if a strong chain were broken; and at that moment a sense of heavenly liberty, of unutterable delight, of freedom from the body, of birdlike lightness, seemed to float him into the space itself. “Whom, now upon earth, dost thou wish to see?” whispered the voice of Mejnour. “Viola and Zanoni!” answered Glyndon, in his heart; but he felt that his lips moved not.

Suddenly at that thought,--through this space, in which nothing save one mellow translucent light had been discernible,--a swift succession of shadowy landscapes seemed to roll: trees, mountains, cities, seas, glided along like the changes of a phantasmagoria; and at last, settled and stationary, he saw a cave by the gradual marge of an ocean shore,--myrtles and orange-trees

clothing the gentle banks. On a height, at a distance, gleamed the white but shattered relics of some ruined heathen edifice; and the moon, in calm splendour, shining over all, literally bathed with its light two forms without the cave, at whose feet the blue waters crept, and he thought that he even heard them murmur. He recognised both the figures. Zanoni was seated on a fragment of stone; Viola, half-reclining by his side, was looking into his face, which was bent down to her, and in her countenance was the expression of that perfect happiness which belongs to perfect love. "Wouldst thou hear them speak?" whispered Mejnour; and again, without sound, Glyndon inly answered, "Yes!" Their voices then came to his ear, but in tones that seemed to him strange; so subdued were they, and sounding, as it were, so far off, that they were as voices heard in the visions of some holier men from a distant sphere.

"And how is it," said Viola, "that thou canst find pleasure in listening to the ignorant?"

"Because the heart is never ignorant; because the mysteries of the feelings are as full of wonder as those of the intellect. If at times thou canst not comprehend the language of my thoughts, at times also I hear sweet enigmas in that of thy emotions."

"Ah, say not so!" said Viola, winding her arm tenderly round his neck, and under that heavenly light her face seemed lovelier for its blushes. "For the enigmas are but love's common language, and love should solve them. Till I knew thee,--till I lived with thee; till I learned to watch for thy footstep when absent: yet even in absence to see thee everywhere!--I dreamed not how strong and all-pervading is the connection between nature and the human soul!..."

"And yet," she continued, "I am now assured of what I at first believed,--that the feelings which attracted me towards thee at first were not those of love. I know THAT, by comparing the present with the past,--it was a sentiment then wholly of the mind or the spirit! I could not hear thee now say, 'Viola, be happy with another!'"

"And I could not now tell thee so! Ah, Viola, never be weary of assuring me that thou art happy!"

"Happy while thou art so. Yet at times, Zanoni, thou art so sad!"

"Because human life is so short; because we must part at last; because yon moon shines on when the nightingale sings to it no more! A little while, and thine eyes will grow dim, and thy beauty haggard, and these locks that I toy with now will be grey and loveless."

"And thou, cruel one!" said Viola, touchingly, "I shall never see the signs of age in thee! But shall we not grow old together, and our eyes be accustomed to a change which the heart shall not share!"

Zanoni sighed. He turned away, and seemed to commune with himself.

Glyndon's attention grew yet more earnest.

"But were it so," muttered Zanoni; and then looking steadfastly at Viola, he said, with a half-smile, "Hast thou no curiosity to learn more of the lover thou once couldst believe the agent of the Evil One?"

"None; all that one wishes to know of the beloved one, I know-- THAT THOU LOVEST ME!"

"I have told thee that my life is apart from others. Wouldst thou not seek to share it?"

"I share it now!"

"But were it possible to be thus young and fair forever, till the world blazes round us as one funeral pyre!"

"We shall be so, when we leave the world!"

Zanoni was mute for some moments, and at length he said,--

“Canst thou recall those brilliant and aerial dreams which once visited thee, when thou didst fancy that thou wert preordained to some fate aloof and afar from the common children of the earth?”

“Zanoni, the fate is found.”

“And hast thou no terror of the future?”

“The future! I forget it! Time past and present and to come reposes in thy smile. Ah, Zanoni, play not with the foolish credulities of my youth! I have been better and humbler since thy presence has dispelled the mist of the air. The future!-- well, when I have cause to dread it, I will look up to heaven, and remember who guides our fate!”

As she lifted her eyes above, a dark cloud swept suddenly over the scene. It wrapped the orange-trees, the azure ocean, the dense sands; but still the last images that it veiled from the charmed eyes of Glyndon were the forms of Viola and Zanoni. The face of the one rapt, serene, and radiant; the face of the other, dark, thoughtful, and locked in more than its usual rigidity of melancholy beauty and profound repose.

“Rouse thyself,” said Mejnour; “thy ordeal has commenced! There are pretenders to the solemn science who could have shown thee the absent, and prated to thee, in their charlatanic jargon, of the secret electricities and the magnetic fluid of whose true properties they know but the germs and elements. I will lend thee the books of those glorious dupes, and thou wilt find, in the dark ages, how many erring steps have stumbled upon the threshold of the mighty learning, and fancied they had pierced the temple. Hermes and Albert and Paracelsus, I knew ye all; but, noble as ye were, ye were fated to be deceived. Ye had not souls of faith, and daring fitted for the destinies at which ye aimed! Yet Paracelsus--modest Paracelsus--had an arrogance that soared higher than all our knowledge. Ho, ho!--he thought he could make a race of men from chemistry; he arrogated to himself the Divine gift,--the breath of life. (Paracelsus, “De Nat. Rer.,” lib. i.)

He would have made men, and, after all, confessed that they could be but pygmies! My art is to make men above mankind. But you are impatient of my digressions. Forgive me. All these men (they were great dreamers, as you desire to be) were intimate friends of mine. But they are dead and rotten. They talked of spirits,--but they dreaded to be in other company than that of men. Like orators whom I have heard, when I stood by the Pnyx of Athens, blazing with words like comets in the assembly, and extinguishing their ardour like holiday rockets when they were in the field. Ho, ho! Demosthenes, my hero-coward, how nimble were thy heels at Chaeronea! And thou art impatient still! Boy, I could tell thee such truths of the past as would make thee the luminary of schools. But thou lustest only for the shadows of the future. Thou shalt have thy wish. But the mind must be first exercised and trained. Go to thy room, and sleep; fast austere, read no books; meditate, imagine, dream, bewilder thyself if thou wilt. Thought shapes out its own chaos at last. Before midnight, seek me again!”

#### CHAPTER 4.IV.

It is fit that we who endeavour to rise to an elevation so sublime, should study first to leave behind carnal affections, the frailty of the senses, the passions that belong to matter; secondly, to learn by what means we may ascend to the climax of pure intellect, united with the powers

above, without which never can we gain the lore of secret things, nor the magic that effects true wonders.--Tritemius "On Secret Things and Secret Spirits."

It wanted still many minutes of midnight, and Glyndon was once more in the apartment of the mystic. He had rigidly observed the fast ordained to him; and in the rapt and intense reveries into which his excited fancy had plunged him, he was not only insensible to the wants of the flesh,--he felt above them.

Mejnour, seated beside his disciple, thus addressed him:--

"Man is arrogant in proportion to his ignorance. Man's natural tendency is to egotism. Man, in his infancy of knowledge, thinks that all creation was formed for him. For several ages he saw in the countless worlds that sparkle through space like the bubbles of a shoreless ocean only the petty candles, the household torches, that Providence had been pleased to light for no other purpose but to make the night more agreeable to man. Astronomy has corrected this delusion of human vanity; and man now reluctantly confesses that the stars are worlds larger and more glorious than his own,--that the earth on which he crawls is a scarce visible speck on the vast chart of creation. But in the small as in the vast, God is equally profuse of life. The traveller looks upon the tree, and fancies its boughs were formed for his shelter in the summer sun, or his fuel in the winter frosts. But in each leaf of these boughs the Creator has made a world; it swarms with innumerable races. Each drop of the water in yon moat is an orb more populous than a kingdom is of men. Everywhere, then, in this immense design, science brings new life to light. Life is the one pervading principle, and even the thing that seems to die and putrify but engenders new life, and changes to fresh forms of matter. Reasoning, then, by evident analogy: if not a leaf, if not a drop of water, but is, no less than yonder star, a habitable and breathing world,--nay, if even man himself is a world to other lives, and millions and myriads dwell in the rivers of his blood, and inhabit man's frame as man inhabits earth, commonsense (if your schoolmen had it) would suffice to teach that the circumfluent infinite which you call space--the countless Impalpable which divides earth from the moon and stars--is filled also with its correspondent and appropriate life. Is it not a visible absurdity to suppose that being is crowded upon every leaf, and yet absent from the immensities of space? The law of the Great System forbids the waste even of an atom; it knows no spot where something of life does not breathe. In the very charnel-house is the nursery of production and animation. Is that true? Well, then, can you conceive that space, which is the Infinite itself, is alone a waste, is alone lifeless, is less useful to the one design of universal being than the dead carcass of a dog, than the peopled leaf, than the swarming globule? The microscope shows you the creatures on the leaf; no mechanical tube is yet invented to discover the nobler and more gifted things that hover in the illimitable air. Yet between these last and man is a mysterious and terrible affinity. And hence, by tales and legends, not wholly false nor wholly true, have arisen from time to time, beliefs in apparitions and spectres. If more common to the earlier and simpler tribes than to the men of your duller age, it is but that, with the first, the senses are more keen and quick. And as the savage can see or scent miles away the traces of a foe, invisible to the gross sense of the civilised animal, so the barrier itself between him and the creatures of the airy world is less thickened and obscured. Do you listen?"

"With my soul!"

"But first, to penetrate this barrier, the soul with which you listen must be sharpened by intense enthusiasm, purified from all earthlier desires. Not without reason have the so-styled magicians, in all lands and times, insisted on chastity and abstemious reverie as the communicants of

inspiration. When thus prepared, science can be brought to aid it; the sight itself may be rendered more subtle, the nerves more acute, the spirit more alive and outward, and the element itself--the air, the space-- may be made, by certain secrets of the higher chemistry, more palpable and clear. And this, too, is not magic, as the credulous call it; as I have so often said before, magic (or science that violates Nature) exists not: it is but the science by which Nature can be controlled. Now, in space there are millions of beings not literally spiritual, for they have all, like the animalculae unseen by the naked eye, certain forms of matter, though matter so delicate, air-drawn, and subtle, that it is, as it were, but a film, a gossamer that clothes the spirit. Hence the Rosicrucian's lovely phantoms of sylph and gnome. Yet, in truth, these races and tribes differ more widely, each from each, than the Calmuc from the Greek,--differ in attributes and powers. In the drop of water you see how the animalculae vary, how vast and terrible are some of those monster mites as compared with others. Equally so with the inhabitants of the atmosphere: some of surpassing wisdom, some of horrible malignity; some hostile as fiends to men, others gentle as messengers between earth and heaven.

He who would establish intercourse with these varying beings resembles the traveller who would penetrate into unknown lands. He is exposed to strange dangers and un conjectured terrors. THAT INTERCOURSE ONCE GAINED, I CANNOT SECURE THEE FROM THE CHANCES TO WHICH THY JOURNEY IS EXPOSED. I cannot direct thee to paths free from the wanderings of the deadliest foes. Thou must alone, and of thyself, face and hazard all. But if thou art so enamoured of life as to care only to live on, no matter for what ends, recruiting the nerves and veins with the alchemist's vivifying elixir, why seek these dangers from the intermediate tribes? Because the very elixir that pours a more glorious life into the frame, so sharpens the senses that those larvae of the air become to thee audible and apparent; so that, unless trained by degrees to endure the phantoms and subdue their malice, a life thus gifted would be the most awful doom man could bring upon himself. Hence it is, that though the elixir be compounded of the simplest herbs, his frame only is prepared to receive it who has gone through the subtlest trials. Nay, some, scared and daunted into the most intolerable horror by the sights that burst upon their eyes at the first draft, have found the potion less powerful to save than the agony and travail of Nature to destroy. To the unprepared the elixir is thus but the deadliest poison. Amidst the dwellers of the threshold is ONE, too, surpassing in malignity and hatred all her tribe,--one whose eyes have paralyzed the bravest, and whose power increases over the spirit precisely in proportion to its fear. Does thy courage falter?"

"Nay; thy words but kindle it."

"Follow me, then, and submit to the initiatory labours."

With that, Mejnour led him into the interior chamber, and proceeded to explain to him certain chemical operations which, though extremely simple in themselves, Glyndon soon perceived were capable of very extraordinary results.

"In the remoter times," said Mejnour, smiling, "our brotherhood were often compelled to recur to delusions to protect realities; and, as dexterous mechanics or expert chemists, they obtained the name of sorcerers. Observe how easy to construct is the Spectre Lion that attended the renowned Leonardo da Vinci!"

And Glyndon beheld with delighted surprise the simple means by which the wildest cheats of the imagination can be formed. The magical landscapes in which Baptista Porta rejoiced; the apparent change of the seasons with which Albertus Magnus startled the Earl of Holland; nay, even those more dread delusions of the Ghost and Image with which the necromancers of Heraclea woke the conscience of the conqueror of Plataea (Pausanias,--see Plutarch.),--all these,

as the showman enchants some trembling children on a Christmas Eve with his lantern and phantasmagoria, Mejnour exhibited to his pupil.

...

“And now laugh forever at magic! when these, the very tricks, the very sports and frivolities of science, were the very acts which men viewed with abhorrence, and inquisitors and kings rewarded with the rack and the stake.”

“But the alchemist’s transmutation of metals--”

“Nature herself is a laboratory in which metals, and all elements, are forever at change. Easy to make gold,--easier, more commodious, and cheaper still, to make the pearl, the diamond, and the ruby. Oh, yes; wise men found sorcery in this too; but they found no sorcery in the discovery that by the simplest combination of things of every-day use they could raise a devil that would sweep away thousands of their kind by the breath of consuming fire. Discover what will destroy life, and you are a great man!--what will prolong it, and you are an imposter! Discover some invention in machinery that will make the rich more rich and the poor more poor, and they will build you a statue! Discover some mystery in art that will equalise physical disparities, and they will pull down their own houses to stone you! Ha, ha, my pupil! such is the world Zanoni still cares for!--you and I will leave this world to itself. And now that you have seen some few of the effects of science, begin to learn its grammar.”

Mejnour then set before his pupil certain tasks, in which the rest of the night wore itself away.

#### CHAPTER 4.V.

Great travell hath the gentle Calidore  
And toyle endured...  
There on a day,--  
He chaunst to spy a sort of shepheard groomes,  
Playing on pipes and caroling apace.  
...He, there besyde  
Saw a faire damzell.  
Spenser, --“Faerie Queene,” cant. ix.

For a considerable period the pupil of Mejnour was now absorbed in labour dependent on the most vigilant attention, on the most minute and subtle calculation. Results astonishing and various rewarded his toils and stimulated his interest. Nor were these studies limited to chemical discovery,--in which it is permitted me to say that the greatest marvels upon the organisation of physical life seemed wrought by experiments of the vivifying influence of heat. Mejnour professed to find a link between all intellectual beings in the existence of a certain all-pervading and invisible fluid resembling electricity, yet distinct from the known operations of that mysterious agency--a fluid that connected thought to thought with the rapidity and precision of the modern telegraph, and the influence of this fluid, according to Mejnour, extended to the remotest past,--that is to say, whenever and wheresoever man had thought. Thus, if the doctrine were true, all human knowledge became attainable through a medium established between the brain of the individual inquirer and all the farthest and obscurest regions in the universe of ideas. Glyndon was surprised to find Mejnour attached to the abstruse mysteries which the

Pythagoreans ascribed to the occult science of NUMBERS. In this last, new lights glimmered dimly on his eyes; and he began to perceive that even the power to predict, or rather to calculate, results, might by-- (Here there is an erasure in the MS.)

...

But he observed that the last brief process by which, in each of these experiments, the wonder was achieved, Mejnour reserved for himself, and refused to communicate the secret. The answer he obtained to his remonstrances on this head was more stern than satisfactory:

“Dost thou think,” said Mejnour, “that I would give to the mere pupil, whose qualities are not yet tried, powers that might change the face of the social world? The last secrets are intrusted only to him of whose virtue the Master is convinced. Patience! It is labour itself that is the great purifier of the mind; and by degrees the secrets will grow upon thyself as thy mind becomes ripener to receive them.”

At last Mejnour professed himself satisfied with the progress made by his pupil. “The hour now arrives,” he said, “when thou mayst pass the great but airy barrier,--when thou mayst gradually confront the terrible Dweller of the Threshold. Continue thy labours--continue to surpass thine impatience for results until thou canst fathom the causes. I leave thee for one month; if at the end of that period, when I return, the tasks set thee are completed, and thy mind prepared by contemplation and austere thought for the ordeal, I promise thee the ordeal shall commence. One caution alone I give thee: regard it as a peremptory command, enter not this chamber!” (They were then standing in the room where their experiments had been chiefly made, and in which Glyndon, on the night he had sought the solitude of the mystic, had nearly fallen a victim to his intrusion.)

“Enter not this chamber till my return; or, above all, if by any search for materials necessary to thy toils thou shouldst venture hither, forbear to light the naphtha in those vessels, and to open the vases on yonder shelves. I leave the key of the room in thy keeping, in order to try thy abstinence and self-control. Young man, this very temptation is a part of thy trial.”

With that, Mejnour placed the key in his hands; and at sunset he left the castle.

For several days Glyndon continued immersed in employments which strained to the utmost all the faculties of his intellect. Even the most partial success depended so entirely on the abstraction of the mind, and the minuteness of its calculations, that there was scarcely room for any other thought than those absorbed in the occupation. And doubtless this perpetual strain of the faculties was the object of Mejnour in works that did not seem exactly pertinent to the purposes in view. As the study of the elementary mathematics, for example, is not so profitable in the solving of problems, useless in our after-callings, as it is serviceable in training the intellect to the comprehension and analysis of general truths.

But in less than half the time which Mejnour had stated for the duration of his absence, all that the mystic had appointed to his toils was completed by the pupil; and then his mind, thus relieved from the drudgery and mechanism of employment, once more sought occupation in dim conjecture and restless fancies. His inquisitive and rash nature grew excited by the prohibition of Mejnour, and he found himself gazing too often, with perturbed and daring curiosity, upon the key of the forbidden chamber. He began to feel indignant at a trial of constancy which he deemed frivolous and puerile. What nursery tales of Bluebeard and his closet were revived to daunt and terrify him! How could the mere walls of a chamber, in which he had so often securely pursued his labours, start into living danger? If haunted, it could be but by those delusions which Mejnour had taught him to despise,--a shadowy lion,--a chemical phantasm! Tush! he lost half his awe of Mejnour, when he thought that by such tricks the sage could

practise upon the very intellect he had awakened and instructed! Still he resisted the impulses of his curiosity and his pride, and, to escape from their dictation, he took long rambles on the hills, or amidst the valleys that surrounded the castle,--seeking by bodily fatigue to subdue the unreposing mind. One day suddenly emerging from a dark ravine, he came upon one of those Italian scenes of rural festivity and mirth in which the classic age appears to revive. It was a festival, partly agricultural, partly religious, held yearly by the peasants of that district. Assembled at the outskirts of a village, animated crowds, just returned from a procession to a neighbouring chapel, were now forming themselves into groups: the old to taste the vintage, the young to dance,--all to be gay and happy. This sudden picture of easy joy and careless ignorance, contrasting so forcibly with the intense studies and that parching desire for wisdom which had so long made up his own life, and burned at his own heart, sensibly affected Glyndon. As he stood aloof and gazing on them, the young man felt once more that he was young. The memory of all he had been content to sacrifice spoke to him like the sharp voice of remorse. The flitting forms of the women in their picturesque attire, their happy laughter ringing through the cool, still air of the autumn noon, brought back to the heart, or rather perhaps to the senses, the images of his past time, the "golden shepherd hours," when to live was but to enjoy.

He approached nearer and nearer to the scene, and suddenly a noisy group swept round him; and Maestro Paolo, tapping him familiarly on the shoulder, exclaimed in a hearty voice, "Welcome, Excellency!--we are rejoiced to see you amongst us." Glyndon was about to reply to this salutation, when his eyes rested upon the face of a young girl leaning on Paolo's arm, of a beauty so attractive that his colour rose and his heart beat as he encountered her gaze. Her eyes sparkled with a roguish and petulant mirth, her parted lips showed teeth like pearls; as if impatient at the pause of her companion from the revel of the rest, her little foot beat the ground to a measure that she half-hummed, half-chanted. Paolo laughed as he saw the effect the girl had produced upon the young foreigner.

"Will you not dance, Excellency? Come, lay aside your greatness, and be merry, like us poor devils. See how our pretty Fillide is longing for a partner. Take compassion on her."

Fillide pouted at this speech, and, disengaging her arm from Paolo's, turned away, but threw over her shoulder a glance half inviting, half defying. Glyndon, almost involuntarily, advanced to her, and addressed her.

Oh, yes; he addresses her! She looks down, and smiles. Paolo leaves them to themselves, sauntering off with a devil-me-carish air. Fillide speaks now, and looks up at the scholar's face with arch invitation. He shakes his head; Fillide laughs, and her laugh is silvery. She points to a gay mountaineer, who is tripping up to her merrily. Why does Glyndon feel jealous? Why, when she speaks again, does he shake his head no more? He offers his hand; Fillide blushes, and takes it with a demure coquetry. What! is it so, indeed! They whirl into the noisy circle of the revellers. Ha! ha! is not this better than distilling herbs, and breaking thy brains on Pythagorean numbers? How lightly Fillide bounds along! How her lithesome waist supple itself to thy circling arm! Tara-ra-tara, ta-tara, rara-ra! What the devil is in the measure that it makes the blood course like quicksilver through the veins? Was there ever a pair of eyes like Fillide's? Nothing of the cold stars there! Yet how they twinkle and laugh at thee! And that rosy, pursed-up mouth that will answer so sparingly to thy flatteries, as if words were a waste of time, and kisses were their proper language. Oh, pupil of Mejnour! Oh, would-be Rosicrucian, Platonist, Magian, I know not what! I am ashamed of thee! What, in the names of Averroes and Burri and Agrippa and Hermes have become of thy austere contemplations? Was it for this thou didst resign Viola? I don't think thou hast the smallest recollection of the elixir or the Cabala. Take

care! What are you about, sir? Why do you clasp that small hand locked within your own? Why do you--Tara-rara tara-ra tara-rara- ra, rarara, ta-ra, a-ra! Keep your eyes off those slender ankles and that crimson bodice! Tara-rara-ra! There they go again! And now they rest under the broad trees. The revel has whirled away from them. They hear--or do they not hear--the laughter at the distance? They see--or if they have their eyes about them, they SHOULD see--couple after couple gliding by, love-talking and love-looking. But I will lay a wager, as they sit under that tree, and the round sun goes down behind the mountains, that they see or hear very little except themselves.

“Hollo, Signor Excellency! and how does your partner please you? Come and join our feast, loiterers; one dances more merrily after wine.”

Down goes the round sun; up comes the autumn moon. Tara, tara, rarara, rarara, tarara-ra! Dancing again; is it a dance, or some movement gayer, noisier, wilder still? How they glance and gleam through the night shadows, those flitting forms! What confusion!--what order! Ha, that is the Tarantula dance; Maestro Paolo foots it bravely! Diavolo, what fury! the Tarantula has stung them all. Dance or die; it is fury,--the Corybantes, the Maenads, the--Ho, ho! more wine! the Sabbat of the Witches at Benevento is a joke to this! From cloud to cloud wanders the moon,--now shining, now lost. Dimness while the maiden blushes; light when the maiden smiles.

“Fillide, thou art an enchantress!”

“Buona notte, Excellency; you will see me again!”

“Ah, young man,” said an old, decrepit, hollow-eyed octogenarian, leaning on his staff, “make the best of your youth. I, too, once had a Fillide! I was handsomer than you then! Alas! if we could be always young!”

“Always young!” Glyndon started, as he turned his gaze from the fresh, fair, rosy face of the girl, and saw the eyes dropping rheum, the yellow wrinkled skin, the tottering frame of the old man.

“Ha, ha!” said the decrepit creature, hobbling near to him, and with a malicious laugh. “Yet I, too, was young once! Give me a baioccho for a glass of aqua vitae!”

Tara, rara, ra-rara, tara, rara-ra! There dances Youth! Wrap thy rags round thee, and totter off, Old Age!

#### CHAPTER 4.VI.

Whilest Calidore does follow that faire mayd,  
Unmindful of his vow and high beheast  
Which by the Faerie Queene was on him layd.  
Spenser,--“Faerie Queene,” cant. x. s. 1.

It was that grey, indistinct, struggling interval between the night and the dawn, when Clarence stood once more in his chamber. The abstruse calculations lying on his table caught his eye, and filled him with a sentiment of weariness and distaste. But-- “Alas, if we could be always young! Oh, thou horrid spectre of the old, rheum-eyed man! What apparition can the mystic chamber shadow forth more ugly and more hateful than thou? Oh, yes, if we could be always young! But not [thinks the neophyte now]--not to labour forever at these crabbed figures and these cold

compounds of herbs and drugs. No; but to enjoy, to love, to revel! What should be the companion of youth but pleasure? And the gift of eternal youth may be mine this very hour! What means this prohibition of Mejnour's? Is it not of the same complexion as his ungenerous reserve even in the minutest secrets of chemistry, or the numbers of his Cabala?--compelling me to perform all the toils, and yet withholding from me the knowledge of the crowning result? No doubt he will still, on his return, show me that the great mystery CAN be attained; but will still forbid ME to attain it. Is it not as if he desired to keep my youth the slave to his age; to make me dependent solely on himself; to bind me to a journeyman's service by perpetual excitement to curiosity, and the sight of the fruits he places beyond my lips?" These, and many reflections still more repining, disturbed and irritated him. Heated with wine--excited by the wild revels he had left--he was unable to sleep. The image of that revolting Old Age which Time, unless defeated, must bring upon himself, quickened the eagerness of his desire for the dazzling and imperishable Youth he ascribed to Zanoni. The prohibition only served to create a spirit of defiance. The reviving day, laughing jocundly through his lattice, dispelled all the fears and superstitions that belong to night. The mystic chamber presented to his imagination nothing to differ from any other apartment in the castle. What foul or malignant apparition could harm him in the light of that blessed sun! It was the peculiar, and on the whole most unhappy, contradiction in Glyndon's nature, that while his reasonings led him to doubt,-- and doubt rendered him in MORAL conduct irresolute and unsteady; he was PHYSICALLY brave to rashness. Nor is this uncommon: scepticism and presumption are often twins. When a man of this character determines upon any action, personal fear never deters him; and for the moral fear, any sophistry suffices to self-will. Almost without analysing himself the mental process by which his nerves hardened themselves and his limbs moved, he traversed the corridor, gained Mejnour's apartment, and opened the forbidden door. All was as he had been accustomed to see it, save that on a table in the centre of the room lay open a large volume. He approached, and gazed on the characters on the page; they were in a cipher, the study of which had made a part of his labours. With but slight difficulty he imagined that he interpreted the meaning of the first sentences, and that they ran thus:--

"To quaff the inner life, is to see the outer life: to live in defiance of time, is to live in the whole. He who discovers the elixir discovers what lies in space; for the spirit that vivifies the frame strengthens the senses. There is attraction in the elementary principle of light. In the lamps of Rosicrucius the fire is the pure elementary principle. Kindle the lamps while thou openst the vessel that contains the elixir, and the light attracts towards thee those beings whose life is that light. Beware of Fear. Fear is the deadliest enemy to Knowledge." Here the ciphers changed their character, and became incomprehensible. But had he not read enough? Did not the last sentence suffice?-- "Beware of Fear!" It was as if Mejnour had purposely left the page open,--as if the trial was, in truth, the reverse of the one pretended; as if the mystic had designed to make experiment of his COURAGE while affecting but that of his FORBEARANCE. Not Boldness, but Fear, was the deadliest enemy to Knowledge. He moved to the shelves on which the crystal vases were placed; with an untrembling hand he took from one of them the stopper, and a delicious odor suddenly diffused itself through the room. The air sparkled as if with a diamond-dust. A sense of unearthly delight,--of an existence that seemed all spirit, flashed through his whole frame; and a faint, low, but exquisite music crept, thrilling, through the chamber. At this moment he heard a voice in the corridor calling on his name; and presently there was a knock at the door without. "Are you there, signor?" said the clear tones of Maestro Paolo. Glyndon hastily reclosed and replaced the vial, and bidding Paolo await him in his own

apartment, tarried till he heard the intruder's steps depart; he then reluctantly quitted the room. As he locked the door, he still heard the dying strain of that fairy music; and with a light step and a joyous heart he repaired to Paolo, inly resolving to visit again the chamber at an hour when his experiment would be safe from interruption.

As he crossed his threshold, Paolo started back, and exclaimed, "Why, Excellency! I scarcely recognise you! Amusement, I see, is a great beautifier to the young. Yesterday you looked so pale and haggard; but Fillide's merry eyes have done more for you than the Philosopher's Stone (saints forgive me for naming it) ever did for the wizards." And Glyndon, glancing at the old Venetian mirror as Paolo spoke, was scarcely less startled than Paolo himself at the change in his own mien and bearing. His form, before bent with thought, seemed to him taller by half the head, so lithesome and erect rose his slender stature; his eyes glowed, his cheeks bloomed with health and the innate and pervading pleasure. If the mere fragrance of the elixir was thus potent, well might the alchemists have ascribed life and youth to the draught!

"You must forgive me, Excellency, for disturbing you," said Paolo, producing a letter from his pouch; "but our Patron has just written to me to say that he will be here to-morrow, and desired me to lose not a moment in giving to yourself this billet, which he enclosed."

"Who brought the letter?"

"A horseman, who did not wait for any reply."

Glyndon opened the letter, and read as follows:--

"I return a week sooner than I had intended, and you will expect me to-morrow. You will then enter on the ordeal you desire, but remember that, in doing so, you must reduce Being as far as possible into Mind. The senses must be mortified and subdued,-- not the whisper of one passion heard. Thou mayst be master of the Cabala and the Chemistry; but thou must be master also over the Flesh and the Blood,--over Love and Vanity, Ambition and Hate. I will trust to find thee so. Fast and meditate till we meet!"

Glyndon crumpled the letter in his hand with a smile of disdain. What! more drudgery,--more abstinence! Youth without love and pleasure! Ha, ha! baffled Mejnour, thy pupil shall gain thy secrets without thine aid!

"And Fillide! I passed her cottage in my way,--she blushed and sighed when I jested her about you, Excellency!"

"Well, Paolo! I thank thee for so charming an introduction. Thine must be a rare life."

"Ah, Excellency, while we are young, nothing like adventure,-- except love, wine, and laughter!"

"Very true. Farewell, Maestro Paolo; we will talk more with each other in a few days."

All that morning Glyndon was almost overpowered with the new sentiment of happiness that had entered into him. He roamed into the woods, and he felt a pleasure that resembled his earlier life of an artist, but a pleasure yet more subtle and vivid, in the various colours of the autumn foliage. Certainly Nature seemed to be brought closer to him; he comprehended better all that Mejnour had often preached to him of the mystery of sympathies and attractions. He was about to enter into the same law as those mute children of the forests. He was to know THE RENEWAL OF LIFE; the seasons that chilled to winter should yet bring again the bloom and the mirth of spring. Man's common existence is as one year to the vegetable world: he has his spring, his summer, his autumn, and winter,--but only ONCE. But the giant oaks round him go through a revolving series of verdure and youth, and the green of the centenarian is as vivid in the beams of May as that of the sapling by its side. "Mine shall be your spring, but not your winter!" exclaimed the aspirant.

Wrapped in these sanguine and joyous reveries, Glyndon, quitting the woods, found himself amidst cultivated fields and vineyards to which his footstep had not before wandered; and there stood, by the skirts of a green lane that reminded him of verdant England, a modest house,--half cottage, half farm. The door was open, and he saw a girl at work with her distaff. She looked up, uttered a slight cry, and, tripping gayly into the lane to his side, he recognised the dark-eyed Fillide.

"Hist!" she said, archly putting her finger to her lip; "do not speak loud,--my mother is asleep within; and I knew you would come to see me. It is kind!"

Glyndon, with a little embarrassment, accepted the compliment to his kindness, which he did not exactly deserve. "You have thought, then, of me, fair Fillide?"

"Yes," answered the girl, colouring, but with that frank, bold ingenuousness, which characterises the females of Italy, especially of the lower class, and in the southern provinces,--"oh, yes! I have thought of little else. Paolo said he knew you would visit me."

"And what relation is Paolo to you?"

"None; but a good friend to us all. My brother is one of his band."

"One of his band!--a robber?"

"We of the mountains do not call a mountaineer 'a robber,' signor."

"I ask pardon. Do you not tremble sometimes for your brother's life? The law--"

"Law never ventures into these defiles. Tremble for him! No. My father and grandsire were of the same calling. I often wish I were a man!"

"By these lips, I am enchanted that your wish cannot be realised."

"Fie, signor! And do you really love me?"

"With my whole heart!"

"And I thee!" said the girl, with a candour that seemed innocent, as she suffered him to clasp her hand.

"But," she added, "thou wilt soon leave us; and I--" She stopped short, and the tears stood in her eyes.

There was something dangerous in this, it must be confessed. Certainly Fillide had not the seraphic loveliness of Viola; but hers was a beauty that equally at least touched the senses. Perhaps Glyndon had never really loved Viola; perhaps the feelings with which she had inspired him were not of that ardent character which deserves the name of love. However that be, he thought, as he gazed on those dark eyes, that he had never loved before.

"And couldst thou not leave thy mountains?" he whispered, as he drew yet nearer to her.

"Dost thou ask me?" she said, retreating, and looking him steadfastly in the face. "Dost thou know what we daughters of the mountains are? You gay, smooth cavaliers of cities seldom mean what you speak. With you, love is amusement; with us, it is life. Leave these mountains! Well! I should not leave my nature."

"Keep thy nature ever,--it is a sweet one."

"Yes, sweet while thou art true; stern, if thou art faithless. Shall I tell thee what I--what the girls of this country are? Daughters of men whom you call robbers, we aspire to be the companions of our lovers or our husbands. We love ardently; we own it boldly. We stand by your side in danger; we serve you as slaves in safety: we never change, and we resent change. You may reproach, strike us, trample us as a dog,--we bear all without a murmur; betray us, and no tiger is more relentless. Be true, and our hearts reward you; be false, and our hands revenge! Dost thou love me now?"

During this speech the Italian's countenance had most eloquently aided her words,--by turns soft, frank, fierce,--and at the last question she inclined her head humbly, and stood, as in fear of his reply, before him. The stern, brave, wild spirit, in which what seemed unfeminine was yet, if I may so say, still womanly, did not recoil, it rather captivated Glyndon. He answered readily, briefly, and freely, "Fillide,--yes!"

Oh, "yes!" forsooth, Clarence Glyndon! Every light nature answers "yes" lightly to such a question from lips so rosy! Have a care,--have a care! Why the deuce, Mejnour, do you leave your pupil of four-and-twenty to the mercy of these wild cats-a- mountain! Preach fast, and abstinence, and sublime renunciation of the cheats of the senses! Very well in you, sir, Heaven knows how many ages old; but at four-and-twenty, your Hierophant would have kept you out of Fillide's way, or you would have had small taste for the Cabala.

And so they stood, and talked, and vowed, and whispered, till the girl's mother made some noise within the house, and Fillide bounded back to the distaff, her finger once more on her lip.

"There is more magic in Fillide than in Mejnour," said Glyndon to himself, walking gayly home; "yet on second thoughts, I know not if I quite so well like a character so ready for revenge. But he who has the real secret can baffle even the vengeance of a woman, and disarm all danger!"

Sirrah! dost thou even already meditate the possibility of treason? Oh, well said Zanoni, "to pour pure water into the muddy well does but disturb the mud."

## CHAPTER 4.VII.

*Cernis, custodia qualis*

*Vestibulo sedeat? facies quae limina servet?--"Aeneid," lib. vi. 574.*

(See you what porter sits within the vestibule?--what face watches at the threshold?)

And it is profound night. All is at rest within the old castle, --all is breathless under the melancholy stars. Now is the time. Mejnour with his austere wisdom,--Mejnour the enemy to love; Mejnour, whose eye will read thy heart, and refuse thee the promised secrets because the sunny face of Fillide disturbs the lifeless shadow that he calls repose,--Mejnour comes tomorrow! Seize the night! Beware of fear! Never, or this hour! So, brave youth,--brave despite all thy errors,--so, with a steady pulse, thy hand unlocks once more the forbidden door.

He placed his lamp on the table beside the book, which still lay there opened; he turned over the leaves, but could not decipher their meaning till he came to the following passage:--

"When, then, the pupil is thus initiated and prepared, let him open the casement, light the lamps, and bathe his temples with the elixir. He must beware how he presume yet to quaff the volatile and fiery spirit. To taste till repeated inhalations have accustomed the frame gradually to the ecstatic liquid, is to know not life, but death."

He could penetrate no farther into the instructions; the cipher again changed. He now looked steadily and earnestly round the chamber. The moonlight came quietly through the lattice as his hand opened it, and seemed, as it rested on the floor, and filled the walls, like the presence of some ghostly and mournful Power. He ranged the mystic lamps (nine in number) round the centre of the room, and lighted them one by one. A flame of silvery and azure tints sprung up from each, and lighted the apartment with a calm and yet most dazzling splendour; but presently

this light grew more soft and dim, as a thin, grey cloud, like a mist, gradually spread over the room; and an icy thrill shot through the heart of the Englishman, and quickly gathered over him like the coldness of death. Instinctively aware of his danger, he tottered, though with difficulty, for his limbs seemed rigid and stone-like, to the shelf that contained the crystal vials; hastily he inhaled the spirit, and laved his temples with the sparkling liquid. The same sensation of vigour and youth, and joy and airy lightness, that he had felt in the morning, instantaneously replaced the deadly numbness that just before had invaded the citadel of life. He stood, with his arms folded on his bosom erect and dauntless, to watch what should ensue.

The vapour had now assumed almost the thickness and seeming consistency of a snow-cloud; the lamps piercing it like stars. And now he distinctly saw shapes, somewhat resembling in outline those of the human form, gliding slowly and with regular evolutions through the cloud. They appeared bloodless; their bodies were transparent, and contracted or expanded like the folds of a serpent. As they moved in majestic order, he heard a low sound--the ghost, as it were, of voice--which each caught and echoed from the other; a low sound, but musical, which seemed the chant of some unspeakably tranquil joy. None of these apparitions heeded him. His intense longing to accost them, to be of them, to make one of this movement of aerial happiness,-- for such it seemed to him,--made him stretch forth his arms and seek to cry aloud, but only an inarticulate whisper passed his lips; and the movement and the music went on the same as if the mortal were not there. Slowly they glided round and aloft, till, in the same majestic order, one after one, they floated through the casement and were lost in the moonlight; then, as his eyes followed them, the casement became darkened with some object undistinguishable at the first gaze, but which sufficed mysteriously to change into ineffable horror the delight he had before experienced. By degrees this object shaped itself to his sight. It was as that of a human head covered with a dark veil through which glared, with livid and demoniac fire, eyes that froze the marrow of his bones. Nothing else of the face was distinguishable,--nothing but those intolerable eyes; but his terror, that even at the first seemed beyond nature to endure, was increased a thousand-fold, when, after a pause, the phantom glided slowly into the chamber.

The cloud retreated from it as it advanced; the bright lamps grew wan, and flickered restlessly as at the breath of its presence. Its form was veiled as the face, but the outline was that of a female; yet it moved not as move even the ghosts that simulate the living. It seemed rather to crawl as some vast misshapen reptile; and pausing, at length it cowered beside the table which held the mystic volume, and again fixed its eyes through the filmy veil on the rash invoker. All fancies, the most grotesque, of monk or painter in the early North, would have failed to give to the visage of imp or fiend that aspect of deadly malignity which spoke to the shuddering nature in those eyes alone. All else so dark,--shrouded, veiled and larva-like. But that burning glare so intense, so livid, yet so living, had in it something that was almost HUMAN in its passion of hate and mockery,-- something that served to show that the shadowy Horror was not all a spirit, but partook of matter enough, at least, to make it more deadly and fearful an enemy to material forms. As, clinging with the grasp of agony to the wall,--his hair erect, his eyeballs starting, he still gazed back upon that appalling gaze,--the Image spoke to him: his soul rather than his ear comprehended the words it said.

“Thou hast entered the immeasurable region. I am the Dweller of the Threshold. What wouldst thou with me? Silent? Dost thou fear me? Am I not thy beloved? Is it not for me that thou hast rendered up the delights of thy race? Wouldst thou be wise? Mine is the wisdom of the countless ages. Kiss me, my mortal lover.” And the Horror crawled near and nearer to him; it crept to his side, its breath breathed upon his cheek! With a sharp cry he fell to the earth

insensible, and knew no more till, far in the noon of the next day, he opened his eyes and found himself in his bed,--the glorious sun streaming through his lattice, and the bandit Paolo by his side, engaged in polishing his carbine, and whistling a Calabrian love-air.

#### CHAPTER 4.VIII.

Thus man pursues his weary calling,  
And wrings the hard life from the sky,  
While happiness unseen is falling  
Down from God's bosom silently.--Schiller.

In one of those islands whose history the imperishable literature and renown of Athens yet invest with melancholy interest, and on which Nature, in whom "there is nothing melancholy," still bestows a glory of scenery and climate equally radiant for the freeman or the slave,--the Ionian, the Venetian, the Gaul, the Turk, or the restless Briton,--Zanoni had fixed his bridal home. There the air carries with it the perfumes of the plains for miles along the blue, translucent deep. (See Dr. Holland's "Travels to the Ionian Isles," etc., page 18.) Seen from one of its green sloping heights, the island he had selected seemed one delicious garden. The towers and turrets of its capital gleaming amidst groves of oranges and lemons; vineyards and olive-woods filling up the valleys, and clambering along the hill-sides; and villa, farm, and cottage covered with luxuriant trellises of dark-green leaves and purple fruit. For there the prodigal beauty yet seems half to justify those graceful superstitions of a creed that, too enamoured of earth, rather brought the deities to man, than raised the man to their less alluring and less voluptuous Olympus.

And still to the fishermen, weaving yet their antique dances on the sand; to the maiden, adorning yet, with many a silver fibula, her glossy tresses under the tree that overshadows her tranquil cot,--the same Great Mother that watched over the wise of Samos, the democracy of Corcyra, the graceful and deep-taught loveliness of Miletus, smiles as graciously as of yore. For the North, philosophy and freedom are essentials to human happiness; in the lands which Aphrodite rose from the waves to govern, as the Seasons, hand in hand, stood to welcome her on the shores, Nature is all sufficient. (Homeric Hymn.)

The isle which Zanoni had selected was one of the loveliest in that divine sea. His abode, at some distance from the city, but near one of the creeks on the shore, belonged to a Venetian, and, though small, had more of elegance than the natives ordinarily cared for. On the seas, and in sight, rode his vessel. His Indians, as before, ministered in mute gravity to the service of the household. No spot could be more beautiful,--no solitude less invaded. To the mysterious knowledge of Zanoni, to the harmless ignorance of Viola, the babbling and garish world of civilised man was alike unheeded. The loving sky and the lovely earth are companions enough to Wisdom and to Ignorance while they love.

Although, as I have before said, there was nothing in the visible occupations of Zanoni that betrayed a cultivator of the occult sciences, his habits were those of a man who remembers or reflects. He loved to roam alone, chiefly at dawn, or at night, when the moon was clear (especially in each month, at its rise and full), miles and miles away over the rich inlands of the island, and to cull herbs and flowers, which he hoarded with jealous care. Sometimes, at the dead of night, Viola would wake by an instinct that told her he was not by her side, and, stretching out her arms, find that the instinct had not deceived her. But she early saw that he was

reserved on his peculiar habits; and if at times a chill, a foreboding, a suspicious awe crept over her, she forebore to question him.

But his rambles were not always unaccompanied,--he took pleasure in excursions less solitary. Often, when the sea lay before them like a lake, the barren dreariness of the opposite coast of Cephallenia contrasting the smiling shores on which they dwelt, Viola and himself would pass days in cruising slowly around the coast, or in visits to the neighbouring isles. Every spot of the Greek soil, "that fair Fable-Land," seemed to him familiar; and as he conversed of the past and its exquisite traditions, he taught Viola to love the race from which have descended the poetry and the wisdom of the world. There was much in Zanoni, as she knew him better, that deepened the fascination in which Viola was from the first enthralled. His love for herself was so tender, so vigilant, and had that best and most enduring attribute, that it seemed rather grateful for the happiness in its own cares than vain of the happiness it created. His habitual mood with all who approached him was calm and gentle, almost to apathy. An angry word never passed his lips,--an angry gleam never shot from his eyes. Once they had been exposed to the danger not uncommon in those then half-savage lands. Some pirates who infested the neighbouring coasts had heard of the arrival of the strangers, and the seamen Zanoni employed had gossiped of their master's wealth. One night, after Viola had retired to rest, she was awakened by a slight noise below. Zanoni was not by her side; she listened in some alarm. Was that a groan that came upon her ear? She started up, she went to the door; all was still. A footstep now slowly approached, and Zanoni entered calm as usual, and seemed unconscious of her fears.

The next morning three men were found dead at the threshold of the principal entrance, the door of which had been forced. They were recognised in the neighbourhood as the most sanguinary and terrible marauders of the coasts,--men stained with a thousand murders, and who had never hitherto failed in any attempt to which the lust of rapine had impelled them. The footsteps of many others were tracked to the seashore. It seemed that their accomplices must have fled on the death of their leaders. But when the Venetian Proveditore, or authority, of the island, came to examine into the matter, the most unaccountable mystery was the manner in which these ruffians had met their fate. Zanoni had not stirred from the apartment in which he ordinarily pursued his chemical studies. None of the servants had even been disturbed from their slumbers. No marks of human violence were on the bodies of the dead. They died, and made no sign. From that moment Zanoni's house--nay, the whole vicinity--was sacred. The neighbouring villages, rejoiced to be delivered from a scourge, regarded the stranger as one whom the Pagiana (or Virgin) held under her especial protection.

In truth, the lively Greeks around, facile to all external impressions, and struck with the singular and majestic beauty of the man who knew their language as a native, whose voice often cheered them in their humble sorrows, and whose hand was never closed to their wants, long after he had left their shore preserved his memory by grateful traditions, and still point to the lofty platanus beneath which they had often seen him seated, alone and thoughtful, in the heats of noon. But Zanoni had haunts less open to the gaze than the shade of the platanus. In that isle there are the bituminous springs which Herodotus has commemorated. Often at night, the moon, at least, beheld him emerging from the myrtle and cystus that clothe the hillocks around the marsh that imbeds the pools containing the inflammable materia, all the medical uses of which, as applied to the nerves of organic life, modern science has not yet perhaps explored. Yet more often would he pass his hours in a cavern, by the loneliest part of the beach, where the stalactites seem almost arranged by the hand of art, and which the superstition of the peasants associates, in

some ancient legends, with the numerous and almost incessant earthquakes to which the island is so singularly subjected.

Whatever the pursuits that instigated these wanderings and favoured these haunts, either they were linked with, or else subordinate to, one main and master desire, which every fresh day passed in the sweet human company of Viola confirmed and strengthened.

The scene that Glyndon had witnessed in his trance was faithful to truth. And some little time after the date of that night, Viola was dimly aware that an influence, she knew not of what nature, was struggling to establish itself over her happy life. Visions indistinct and beautiful, such as those she had known in her earlier days, but more constant and impressive, began to haunt her night and day when Zanoni was absent, to fade in his presence, and seem less fair than THAT. Zanoni questioned her eagerly and minutely of these visitations, but seemed dissatisfied, and at times perplexed, by her answers.

“Tell me not,” he said, one day, “of those unconnected images, those evolutions of starry shapes in a choral dance, or those delicious melodies that seem to thee of the music and the language of the distant spheres. Has no ONE shape been to thee more distinct and more beautiful than the rest,—no voice uttering, or seeming to utter, thine own tongue, and whispering to thee of strange secrets and solemn knowledge?”

“No; all is confused in these dreams, whether of day or night; and when at the sound of thy footsteps I recover, my memory retains nothing but a vague impression of happiness. How different—how cold—to the rapture of hanging on thy smile, and listening to thy voice, when it says, ‘I love thee!’”

“Yet, how is it that visions less fair than these once seemed to thee so alluring? How is it that they then stirred thy fancies and filled thy heart? Once thou didst desire a fairy-land, and now thou seemest so contented with common life.”

“Have I not explained it to thee before? Is it common life, then, to love, and to live with the one we love? My true fairy-land is won! Speak to me of no other.”

And so night surprised them by the lonely beach; and Zanoni, allured from his sublimer projects, and bending over that tender face, forgot that, in the Harmonious Infinite which spread around, there were other worlds than that one human heart.

#### CHAPTER 4.IX.

There is a principle of the soul, superior to all nature, through which we are capable of surpassing the order and systems of the world. When the soul is elevated to natures better than itself, THEN it is entirely separated from subordinate natures, exchanges this for another life, and, deserting the order of things with which it was connected, links and mingles itself with another.-- Iamblichus.

“Adon-Ai! Adon-Ai!--appear, appear!”

And in the lonely cave, whence once had gone forth the oracles of a heathen god, there emerged from the shadows of fantastic rocks a luminous and gigantic column, glittering and shifting. It resembled the shining but misty spray which, seen afar off, a fountain seems to send

up on a starry night. The radiance lit the stalactites, the crags, the arches of the cave, and shed a pale and tremulous splendour on the features of Zanoni.

“Son of Eternal Light,” said the invoker, “thou to whose knowledge, grade after grade, race after race, I attained at last, on the broad Chaldean plains; thou from whom I have drawn so largely of the unutterable knowledge that yet eternity alone can suffice to drain; thou who, congenial with myself, so far as our various beings will permit, hast been for centuries my familiar and my friend,--answer me and counsel!”

From the column there emerged a shape of unimaginable glory. Its face was that of a man in its first youth, but solemn, as with the consciousness of eternity and the tranquillity of wisdom; light, like starbeams, flowed through its transparent veins; light made its limbs themselves, and undulated, in restless sparkles, through the waves of its dazzling hair. With its arms folded on its breast, it stood distant a few feet from Zanoni, and its low voice murmured gently, “My counsels were sweet to thee once; and once, night after night, thy soul could follow my wings through the untroubled splendours of the Infinite. Now thou hast bound thyself back to the earth by its strongest chains, and the attraction to the clay is more potent than the sympathies that drew to thy charms the Dweller of the Starbeam and the Air. When last thy soul hearkened to me, the senses already troubled thine intellect and obscured thy vision. Once again I come to thee; but thy power even to summon me to thy side is fading from thy spirit, as sunshine fades from the wave when the winds drive the cloud between the ocean and the sky.”

“Alas, Adon-Ai!” answered the seer, mournfully, “I know too well the conditions of the being which thy presence was wont to rejoice. I know that our wisdom comes but from the indifference to the things of the world which the wisdom masters. The mirror of the soul cannot reflect both earth and heaven; and the one vanishes from the surface as the other is glassed upon its deeps. But it is not to restore me to that sublime abstraction in which the intellect, free and disembodied, rises, region after region, to the spheres,--that once again, and with the agony and travail of enfeebled power I have called thee to mine aid. I love; and in love I begin to live in the sweet humanities of another. If wise, yet in all which makes danger powerless against myself, or those on whom I can gaze from the calm height of indifferent science, I am blind as the merest mortal to the destinies of the creature that makes my heart beat with the passions which obscure my gaze.”

“What matter!” answered Adon-Ai. “Thy love must be but a mockery of the name; thou canst not love as they do for whom there are death and the grave. A short time,--like a day in thy incalculable life,--and the form thou dotest on is dust! Others of the nether world go hand in hand, each with each, unto the tomb; hand in hand they ascend from the worm to new cycles of existence. For thee, below are ages; for her, but hours. And for her and thee--O poor, but mighty one!--will there be even a joint hereafter! Through what grades and heavens of spiritualised being will her soul have passed when thou, the solitary loiterer, comest from the vapours of the earth to the gates of light!”

“Son of the Starbeam, thinkest thou that this thought is not with me forever; and seest thou not that I have invoked thee to hearken and minister to my design? Readest thou not my desire and dream to raise the conditions of her being to my own? Thou, Adon-Ai, bathing the celestial joy that makes thy life in the oceans of eternal splendour,--thou, save by the sympathies of knowledge, canst conjecture not what I, the offspring of mortals, feel--debarred yet from the objects of the tremendous and sublime ambition that first winged my desires above the clay--when I see myself compelled to stand in this low world alone. I have sought amongst my tribe for comrades, and in vain. At last I have found a mate. The wild bird and the wild beast have

theirs; and my mastery over the malignant tribes of terror can banish their larvae from the path that shall lead her upward, till the air of eternity fits the frame for the elixir that baffles death.”

“And thou hast begun the initiation, and thou art foiled! I know it. Thou hast conjured to her sleep the fairest visions; thou hast invoked the loveliest children of the air to murmur their music to her trance, and her soul heeds them not, and, returning to the earth, escapes from their control. Blind one, wherefore? canst thou not perceive? Because in her soul all is love. There is no intermediate passion with which the things thou wouldst charm to her have association and affinities. Their attraction is but to the desires and cravings of the INTELLECT. What have they with the PASSION that is of earth, and the HOPE that goes direct to heaven?”

“But can there be no medium--no link--in which our souls, as our hearts, can be united, and so mine may have influence over her own?”

“Ask me not,--thou wilt not comprehend me!”

“I adjure thee!--speak!”

“When two souls are divided, knowest thou not that a third in which both meet and live is the link between them!”

“I do comprehend thee, Adon-Ai,” said Zanoni, with a light of more human joy upon his face than it had ever before been seen to wear; “and if my destiny, which here is dark to mine eyes, vouchsafes to me the happy lot of the humble,--if ever there be a child that I may clasp to my bosom and call my own--”

“And is it to be man at last, that thou hast aspired to be more than man?”

“But a child,--a second Viola!” murmured Zanoni, scarcely heeding the Son of Light; “a young soul fresh from heaven, that I may rear from the first moment it touches earth,--whose wings I may train to follow mine through the glories of creation; and through whom the mother herself may be led upward over the realm of death!”

“Beware,--reflect! Knowest thou not that thy darkest enemy dwells in the Real? Thy wishes bring thee near and nearer to humanity.”

“Ah, humanity is sweet!” answered Zanoni. And as the seer spoke, on the glorious face of Adon-Ai there broke a smile.

## CHAPTER 4.X.

*Aeterna aeternus tribuit, mortalia confert*

*Mortalis; divina Deus, peritura caducus.*--“Aurel. Prud. contra Symmachum,” lib. ii.

(The Eternal gives eternal things, the Mortal gathers mortal things: God, that which is divine, and the perishable that which is perishable.)

### EXTRACTS FROM THE LETTERS OF ZANONI TO MEJNOUR.

Letter 1.

Thou hast not informed me of the progress of thy pupil; and I fear that so differently does circumstance shape the minds of the generations to which we are descended, from the intense and earnest children of the earlier world, that even thy most careful and elaborate guidance would fail, with loftier and purer natures than that of the neophyte thou hast admitted within thy gates. Even that third state of being, which the Indian sage (The Brahmins, speaking of Brahm,

say, "To the Omniscient the three modes of being--sleep, waking, and trance--are not;" distinctly recognising trance as a third and coequal condition of being.) rightly recognises as being between the sleep and the waking, and describes imperfectly by the name of TRANCE, is unknown to the children of the Northern world; and few but would recoil to indulge it, regarding its peopled calm as maya and delusion of the mind. Instead of ripening and culturing that airy soil, from which Nature, duly known, can evoke fruits so rich and flowers so fair, they strive but to exclude it from their gaze; they esteem that struggle of the intellect from men's narrow world to the spirit's infinite home, as a disease which the leech must extirpate with pharmacy and drugs, and know not even that it is from this condition of their being, in its most imperfect and infant form, that poetry, music, art--all that belong to an Idea of Beauty to which neither SLEEPING nor WAKING can furnish archetype and actual semblance--take their immortal birth. When we, O Mejnour in the far time, were ourselves the neophytes and aspirants, we were of a class to which the actual world was shut and barred. Our forefathers had no object in life but knowledge. From the cradle we were predestined and reared to wisdom as to a priesthood. We commenced research where modern Conjecture closes its faithless wings. And with us, those were common elements of science which the sages of to-day disdain as wild chimeras, or despair of as unfathomable mysteries. Even the fundamental principles, the large yet simple theories of electricity and magnetism, rest obscure and dim in the disputes of their blinded schools; yet, even in our youth, how few ever attained to the first circle of the brotherhood, and, after wearily enjoying the sublime privileges they sought, they voluntarily abandoned the light of the sun, and sunk, without effort, to the grave, like pilgrims in a trackless desert, overawed by the stillness of their solitude, and appalled by the absence of a goal. Thou, in whom nothing seems to live BUT THE DESIRE TO KNOW; thou, who, indifferent whether it leads to weal or to woe, lendest thyself to all who would tread the path of mysterious science, a human book, insensate to the precepts it enounces,--thou hast ever sought, and often made additions to our number. But to these have only been vouchsafed partial secrets; vanity and passion unfitted them for the rest; and now, without other interest than that of an experiment in science, without love, and without pity, thou exposest this new soul to the hazards of the tremendous ordeal! Thou thinkest that a zeal so inquisitive, a courage so absolute and dauntless, may suffice to conquer, where austerer intellect and purer virtue have so often failed. Thou thinkest, too, that the germ of art that lies in the painter's mind, as it comprehends in itself the entire embryo of power and beauty, may be expanded into the stately flower of the Golden Science. It is a new experiment to thee. Be gentle with thy neophyte, and if his nature disappoint thee in the first stages of the process, dismiss him back to the Real while it is yet time to enjoy the brief and outward life which dwells in the senses, and closes with the tomb. And as I thus admonish thee, O Mejnour, wilt thou smile at my inconsistent hopes? I, who have so invariably refused to initiate others into our mysteries,--I begin at last to comprehend why the great law, which binds man to his kind, even when seeking most to set himself aloof from their condition, has made thy cold and bloodless science the link between thyself and thy race; why, THOU has sought converts and pupils; why, in seeing life after life voluntarily dropping from our starry order, thou still aspirest to renew the vanished, and repair the lost; why, amidst thy calculations, restless and unceasing as the wheels of Nature herself, thou recoilest from the THOUGHT TO BE ALONE! So with myself; at last I, too, seek a convert, an equal,--I, too, shudder to be alone! What thou hast warned me of has come to pass. Love reduces all things to itself. Either must I be drawn down to the nature of the beloved, or hers must be lifted to my own. As whatever belongs to true Art has always necessarily had attraction for US, whose very being is in the ideal whence Art descends, so in

this fair creature I have learned, at last, the secret that bound me to her at the first glance. The daughter of music,--music, passing into her being, became poetry. It was not the stage that attracted her, with its hollow falsehoods; it was the land in her own fancy which the stage seemed to centre and represent. There the poetry found a voice,--there it struggled into imperfect shape; and then (that land insufficient for it) it fell back upon itself. It coloured her thoughts, it suffused her soul; it asked not words, it created not things; it gave birth but to emotions, and lavished itself on dreams. At last came love; and there, as a river into the sea, it poured its restless waves, to become mute and deep and still,--the everlasting mirror of the heavens.

And is it not through this poetry which lies within her that she may be led into the large poetry of the universe! Often I listen to her careless talk, and find oracles in its unconscious beauty, as we find strange virtues in some lonely flower. I see her mind ripening under my eyes; and in its fair fertility what ever-teeming novelties of thought! O Mejnour! how many of our tribe have unravelled the laws of the universe,--have solved the riddles of the exterior nature, and deduced the light from darkness! And is not the POET, who studies nothing but the human heart, a greater philosopher than all? Knowledge and atheism are incompatible. To know Nature is to know that there must be a God. But does it require this to examine the method and architecture of creation? Methinks, when I look upon a pure mind, however ignorant and childlike, that I see the August and Immaterial One more clearly than in all the orbs of matter which career at His bidding through space.

Rightly is it the fundamental decree of our order, that we must impart our secrets only to the pure. The most terrible part of the ordeal is in the temptations that our power affords to the criminal. If it were possible that a malevolent being could attain to our faculties, what disorder it might introduce into the globe! Happy that it is NOT possible; the malevolence would disarm the power. It is in the purity of Viola that I rely, as thou more vainly hast relied on the courage or the genius of thy pupils. Bear me witness, Mejnour! Never since the distant day in which I pierced the Arcana of our knowledge, have I ever sought to make its mysteries subservient to unworthy objects; though, alas! the extension of our existence robs us of a country and a home; though the law that places all science, as all art, in the abstraction from the noisy passions and turbulent ambition of actual life, forbids us to influence the destinies of nations, for which Heaven selects ruder and blinder agencies; yet, wherever have been my wanderings, I have sought to soften distress, and to convert from sin. My power has been hostile only to the guilty; and yet with all our lore, how in each step we are reduced to be but the permitted instruments of the Power that vouchsafes our own, but only to direct it. How all our wisdom shrinks into nought, compared with that which gives the meanest herb its virtues, and peoples the smallest globule with its appropriate world. And while we are allowed at times to influence the happiness of others, how mysteriously the shadows thicken round our own future doom! We cannot be prophets to ourselves! With what trembling hope I nurse the thought that I may preserve to my solitude the light of a living smile!

...

Extracts from Letter II.

Deeming myself not pure enough to initiate so pure a heart, I invoke to her trance those fairest and most tender inhabitants of space that have furnished to poetry, which is the instinctive guess into creation, the ideas of the Glendoveer and Sylph. And these were less pure than her own thoughts, and less tender than her own love! They could not raise her above her human heart, for THAT has a heaven of its own.

...

I have just looked on her in sleep,--I have heard her breathe my name. Alas! that which is so sweet to others has its bitterness to me; for I think how soon the time may come when that sleep will be without a dream,--when the heart that dictates the name will be cold, and the lips that utter it be dumb. What a twofold shape there is in love! If we examine it coarsely,--if we look but on its fleshy ties, its enjoyments of a moment, its turbulent fever and its dull reaction,--how strange it seems that this passion should be the supreme mover of the world; that it is this which has dictated the greatest sacrifices, and influenced all societies and all times; that to this the loftiest and loveliest genius has ever consecrated its devotion; that, but for love, there were no civilisation, no music, no poetry, no beauty, no life beyond the brute's.

But examine it in its heavenlier shape,--in its utter abnegation of self; in its intimate connection with all that is most delicate and subtle in the spirit,--its power above all that is sordid in existence; its mastery over the idols of the baser worship; its ability to create a palace of the cottage, an oasis in the desert, a summer in the Iceland,--where it breathes, and fertilises, and glows; and the wonder rather becomes how so few regard it in its holiest nature. What the sensual call its enjoyments, are the least of its joys. True love is less a passion than a symbol. Mejnour, shall the time come when I can speak to thee of Viola as a thing that was?

...  
Extract from Letter III.

Knowest thou that of late I have sometimes asked myself, "Is there no guilt in the knowledge that has so divided us from our race?" It is true that the higher we ascend the more hateful seem to us the vices of the short-lived creepers of the earth,-- the more the sense of the goodness of the All-good penetrates and suffuses us, and the more immediately does our happiness seem to emanate from him. But, on the other hand, how many virtues must lie dead in those who live in the world of death, and refuse to die! Is not this sublime egotism, this state of abstraction and reverie,--this self-wrapped and self-dependent majesty of existence, a resignation of that nobility which incorporates our own welfare, our joys, our hopes, our fears with others? To live on in no dread of foes, undegraded by infirmity, secure through the cares, and free from the disease of flesh, is a spectacle that captivates our pride. And yet dost thou not more admire him who dies for another? Since I have loved her, Mejnour, it seems almost cowardice to elude the grave which devours the hearts that wrap us in their folds. I feel it,--the earth grows upon my spirit. Thou wert right; eternal age, serene and passionless, is a happier boon than eternal youth, with its yearnings and desires. Until we can be all spirit, the tranquillity of solitude must be indifference.

...  
Extracts from Letter IV.

I have received thy communication. What! is it so? Has thy pupil disappointed thee? Alas, poor pupil! But--

...  
(Here follow comments on those passages in Glyndon's life already known to the reader, or about to be made so, with earnest adjurations to Mejnour to watch yet over the fate of his scholar.)

...  
But I cherish the same desire, with a warmer heart. My pupil! how the terrors that shall encompass thine ordeal warn me from the task! Once more I will seek the Son of Light.

...

Yes; Adon-Ai, long deaf to my call, at last has descended to my vision, and left behind him the glory of his presence in the shape of Hope. Oh, not impossible, Viola,--not impossible, that we yet may be united, soul with soul!

Extract from Letter V.--(Many months after the last.)

Mejnour, awake from thine apathy,--rejoice! A new soul will be born to the world,--a new soul that shall call me father. Ah, if they for whom exist all the occupations and resources of human life,--if they can thrill with exquisite emotion at the thought of hailing again their own childhood in the faces of their children; if in that birth they are born once more into the holy Innocence which is the first state of existence; if they can feel that on man devolves almost an angel's duty, when he has a life to guide from the cradle, and a soul to nurture for the heaven,--what to me must be the rapture to welcome an inheritor of all the gifts which double themselves in being shared! How sweet the power to watch, and to guard,--to instil the knowledge, to avert the evil, and to guide back the river of life in a richer and broader and deeper stream to the paradise from which it flows! And beside that river our souls shall meet, sweet mother. Our child shall supply the sympathy that fails as yet; and what shape shall haunt thee, what terror shall dismay, when thy initiation is beside the cradle of thy child!

#### CHAPTER 4.XI.

They thus beguile the way  
Untill the blustering storme is overblowne,  
When weening to returne whence they did stray,  
They cannot finde that path which first was showne,  
But wander to and fro in waies unknowne.--Spenser's "Faerie Queene," book i. canto i. st. x.

Yes, Viola, thou art another being than when, by the threshold of thy Italian home, thou didst follow thy dim fancies through the Land of Shadow; or when thou didst vainly seek to give voice to an ideal beauty, on the boards where illusion counterfeits earth and heaven for an hour, till the weary sense, awaking, sees but the tinsel and the scene-shifter. Thy spirit reposes in its own happiness. Its wanderings have found a goal. In a moment there often dwells the sense of eternity; for when profoundly happy, we know that it is impossible to die. Whenever the soul FEELS ITSELF, it feels everlasting life.

The initiation is deferred,--thy days and nights are left to no other visions than those with which a contented heart enchants a guileless fancy. Glendoveers and Sylphs, pardon me if I question whether those visions are not lovelier than yourselves.

They stand by the beach, and see the sun sinking into the sea. How long now have they dwelt on that island? What matters!--it may be months, or years--what matters! Why should I, or they, keep account of that happy time? As in the dream of a moment ages may seem to pass, so shall we measure transport or woe,--by the length of the dream, or the number of emotions that the dream involves?

The sun sinks slowly down; the air is arid and oppressive; on the sea, the stately vessel lies motionless; on the shore, no leaf trembles on the trees.

Viola drew nearer to Zanoni. A presentiment she could not define made her heart beat more quickly; and, looking into his face, she was struck with its expression: it was anxious, abstracted, perturbed. "This stillness awes me," she whispered.

Zanoni did not seem to hear her. He muttered to himself, and his eyes gazed round restlessly. She knew not why, but that gaze, which seemed to pierce into space,--that muttered voice in some foreign language--revived dimly her earlier superstitions. She was more fearful since the hour when she knew that she was to be a mother. Strange crisis in the life of woman, and in her love! Something yet unborn begins already to divide her heart with that which had been before its only monarch.

"Look on me, Zanoni," she said, pressing his hand.

He turned: "Thou art pale, Viola; thy hand trembles!"

"It is true. I feel as if some enemy were creeping near us."

"And the instinct deceives thee not. An enemy is indeed at hand. I see it through the heavy air; I hear it through the silence: the Ghostly One,--the Destroyer, the PESTILENCE! Ah, seest thou how the leaves swarm with insects, only by an effort visible to the eye. They follow the breath of the plague!" As he spoke, a bird fell from the boughs at Viola's feet; it fluttered, it writhed an instant, and was dead.

"Oh, Viola!" cried Zanoni, passionately, "that is death. Dost thou not fear to die?"

"To leave thee? Ah, yes!"

"And if I could teach thee how Death may be defied; if I could arrest for thy youth the course of time; if I could--"

He paused abruptly, for Viola's eyes spoke only terror; her cheek and lips were pale.

"Speak not thus,--look not thus," she said, recoiling from him. "You dismay me. Ah, speak not thus, or I should tremble,--no, not for myself, but for thy child."

"Thy child! But wouldst thou reject for thy child the same glorious boon?"

"Zanoni!"

"Well!"

"The sun has sunk from our eyes, but to rise on those of others. To disappear from this world is to live in the world afar. Oh, lover,--oh, husband!" she continued, with sudden energy, "tell me that thou didst but jest,--that thou didst but trifle with my folly! There is less terror in the pestilence than in thy words."

Zanoni's brow darkened; he looked at her in silence for some moments, and then said, almost severely,--

"What hast thou known of me to distrust?"

"Oh, pardon, pardon!--nothing!" cried Viola, throwing herself on his breast, and bursting into tears. "I will not believe even thine own words, if they seem to wrong thee!" He kissed the tears from her eyes, but made no answer.

"And ah!" she resumed, with an enchanting and child-like smile, "if thou wouldst give me a charm against the pestilence! see, I will take it from thee." And she laid her hand on a small, antique amulet that he wore on his breast.

"Thou knowest how often this has made me jealous of the past; surely some love-gift, Zanoni? But no, thou didst not love the giver as thou dost me. Shall I steal thine amulet?"

"Infant!" said Zanoni, tenderly; "she who placed this round my neck deemed it indeed a charm, for she had superstitions like thyself; but to me it is more than the wizard's spell,--it is the relic of a sweet vanished time when none who loved me could distrust."

He said these words in a tone of such melancholy reproach that it went to the heart of Viola; but the tone changed into a solemnity which chilled back the gush of her feelings as he resumed: "And this, Viola, one day, perhaps, I will transfer from my breast to thine; yes, whenever thou shalt comprehend me better,--WHENEVER THE LAWS OF OUR BEING SHALL BE THE SAME!"

He moved on gently. They returned slowly home; but fear still was in the heart of Viola, though she strove to shake it off. Italian and Catholic she was, with all the superstitions of land and sect. She stole to her chamber and prayed before a little relic of San Gennaro, which the priest of her house had given to her in childhood, and which had accompanied her in all her wanderings. She had never deemed it possible to part with it before. Now, if there was a charm against the pestilence, did she fear the pestilence for herself? The next morning, when he awoke, Zanoni found the relic of the saint suspended with his mystic amulet round his neck.

"Ah! thou wilt have nothing to fear from the pestilence now," said Viola, between tears and smiles; "and when thou wouldst talk to me again as thou didst last night, the saint shall rebuke thee."

Well, Zanoni, can there ever indeed be commune of thought and spirit, except with equals?

Yes, the plague broke out,--the island home must be abandoned. Mighty Seer, THOU HAST NO POWER TO SAVE THOSE WHOM THOU LOVEST! Farewell, thou bridal roof!--sweet resting-place from care, farewell! Climates as soft may greet ye, O lovers,--skies as serene, and waters as blue and calm; but THAT TIME,--can it ever more return? Who shall say that the heart does not change with the scene,--the place where we first dwelt with the beloved one? Every spot THERE has so many memories which the place only can recall. The past that haunts it seems to command such constancy in the future. If a thought less kind, less trustful, enter within us, the sight of a tree under which a vow has been exchanged, a tear has been kissed away, restores us again to the hours of the first divine illusion. But in a home where nothing speaks of the first nuptials, where there is no eloquence of association, no holy burial-places of emotions, whose ghosts are angels!--yes, who that has gone through the sad history of affection will tell us that the heart changes not with the scene! Blow fair, ye favouring winds; cheerily swell, ye sails; away from the land where death has come to snatch the sceptre of Love! The shores glide by; new coasts succeed to the green hills and orange-groves of the Bridal Isle. From afar now gleam in the moonlight the columns, yet extant, of a temple which the Athenian dedicated to wisdom; and, standing on the bark that bounded on in the freshening gale, the votary who had survived the goddess murmured to himself,--

"Has the wisdom of ages brought me no happier hours than those common to the shepherd and the herdsman, with no world beyond their village, no aspiration beyond the kiss and the smile of home?"

And the moon, resting alike over the ruins of the temple of the departed creed, over the hut of the living peasant, over the immemorial mountain-top, and the perishable herbage that clothed its sides, seemed to smile back its answer of calm disdain to the being who, perchance, might have seen the temple built, and who, in his inscrutable existence, might behold the mountain shattered from its base.