

## C H A P. XX.

*He visits Bedlam.---The distresses of a daughter.*

OF those things called Sights in London, which every stranger is supposed desirous to see, Bedlam is one. To that place, therefore, an acquaintance of Harley's after having accompanied him to several other shows, proposed a visit. Harley objected to it, "because, said he, I think it an inhuman practice to expose the greatest misery with which our nature is afflicted, to every idle visitant who can afford a trifling perquisite to the keeper; especially as it is a distress which the humane must see with the painful reflection that it is not in their power to alleviate it." He was overpowered, however, by the solicitations of his friend and the other persons of the party (amongst whom

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were several ladies ;) and they went in a body to Moorfields.

Their conductor led them first to the dismal mansions of those who are in the most horrid state of incurable madness. The clanking of chains, the wildness of their cries, and the imprecations which some of them uttered, formed a scene inexpressibly shocking. Harley and his companions, especially the female part of them, begged their guide to return: he seemed surprised at their uneasiness, and was with difficulty prevailed on to leave that part of the house without showing them some others; who, as he expressed it in the phrase of those that keep wild beasts for show, were much better worth seeing than any they had passed, being ten times more fierce and unmanageable.

He led them next to that quarter where those reside, who, as they are not dangerous to themselves or others, enjoy a certain

tain degree of freedom, according to the state of their distemper.

Harley had fallen behind his companions, looking at a man, who was making pendulums with bits of thread, and little balls of clay. He had delineated a segment of a circle on the wall with chalk, and marked their different vibrations, by intersecting it with cross lines. A decent looking man came up, and smiling at the maniac, turned to Harley, and told him, that gentleman had once been a very celebrated mathematician. "He fell a sacrifice, said he, to the theory of comets; for having with infinite labour, formed a table on the conjectures of Sir Isaac Newton, he was disappointed in the return of one of those luminaries, and was very soon after obliged to be placed here by his friends. If you please to follow me, Sir, continued the stranger, I believe I shall be able to give you a more satisfactory account of the unfortunate people you see

here, than the man who attends your companions." Harley bowed, and accepted his offer.

The next person they came up to had scrawled a variety of figures on a piece of slate. Harley had the curiosity to take a nearer view of them. They consisted of different columns, on the top of which were marked South-Sea annuities, India-stock, and Three per cent. annuities consol. "This, said Harley's instructor, was a gentleman well known in Change-alley. He was once worth fifty thousand pounds, and had actually agreed for the purchase of an estate in the West, in order to realize his money; but he quarrelled with the proprietor about the repairs of the garden-wall, and so returned to town to follow his old trade of stock-jobbing a little longer; when an unlucky fluctuation of stock, in which he was engaged to an immense extent, reduced him at once to poverty and to madness, Poor wretch!

wretch ! he told me t'other day, that against the next payment of differences, he should be some hundreds above a plum."

"It is a spondee, and I will maintain it," interrupted a voice on his left hand. This assertion was followed by a very rapid recital of some verses from Homer.

"That figure said the gentleman, whose clothes are so bedaubed with snuff, was a schoolmaster of some reputation : he came hither to be resolved of some doubts he entertained concerning the genuine pronunciation of the Greek vowels. In his highest fits, he makes frequent mention of one Mr Bently.

"But delusive ideas, Sir, are the motives of the greatest part of mankind, and a heated imagination the power by which their actions are incited : the world, in the eye of a philosopher, may be said to be a large madhouse." "It is true, answered Harley, the passions of men are temporary

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rary madnesses; and sometimes very fatal in their effects.

From Maccdonia's madman to the Swede."

"It was indeed said the stranger, a very mad thing in Charles, to think of adding so vast a country as Russia to his dominions; that would have been fatal indeed the balance of the North would then have been lost; but the Sultan and I would never have allowed it."-----"Sir!" said Harley, with no small surprise on his countenance. "Why, yes, answered the other, the Sultan and I; do you know me? I am the Chan of Tartary.

Harley was a good deal struck by this discovery; he had prudence enough, however, to conceal his amazement, and bowing as low to the monarch, as his dignity required, left him immediately, and joined his companions.

He found them in a quarter of the house

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set apart for the insane of the other sex, several of whom had gathered about the female visitors, and were examining, with rather more accuracy than might have been expected, the particulars of their dress.

Separate from the rest stood one, whose appearance had something of superior dignity. Her face, though pale and wasted, was less squalid than those of the others, and showed a dejection of that decent kind, which moves our pity unmixed with horror: upon her, therefore, the eyes of all were immediately turned. The keeper, who accompanied them, observed it: "This, said he, is a young lady, who was born to ride in her coach and six. She was beloved, if the story I have heard is true, by a young gentleman, her equal in birth, though by no means her match in fortune: but love, they say, is blind, and so she fancied him as much as he did her. Her father, it  
seems,

seems, would not hear of their marriage, and threatened to turn her out of doors, if ever she saw him again. Upon this the young gentleman took a voyage to the West Indies, in hopes of bettering his fortune, and obtaining his mistress; but he was scarce landed when he was seized with one of the fevers which are common in those islands, and died in a few days, lamented by every one that knew him. This news soon reached his mistress, who was at the same time pressed by her father to marry a rich miserly fellow, who was old enough to be her grandfather. The death of her lover had no effect on her inhuman parent: he was only the more earnest for her marriage with the man he had provided for her; and what between her despair at the death of the one, and her aversion to the other, the poor young lady was reduced to the condition you see her in. But God would not prosper such cruelty; her father's



her's affairs soon after went to wreck, and he died almost a beggar."

Though this story was told in very plain language, it had particularly attracted Harley's notice; he had given it the tribute of some tears. The unfortunate young lady had till now seemed entranced in thought, with her eyes fixed on a little garnet ring she wore on her finger; she turned them now upon Harley. "My Billy is no more! said she, do you weep for my Billy? Blessings on your tears! I would weep too, but my brain is dry; and it burns, it burns, it burns!"---She drew nearer to Harley.--"Be comforted, young lady, said he'your Billy is in heaven."---"Is he, indeed? and shall we meet again? and shall that frightful man (pointing to the keeper) not be there?--Alas! I am grown naughty of late; I have almost forgotten to think of heaven; yet I pray sometimes; when I can, I pray, and sometimes I sing; when

when I am saddest, I sing :--- You shall hear me, hush !

“ Light be the earth on Billy’s breast,  
“ And green the sod that wraps his grave ! ”

There was a plaintive wildness in the air not to be withstood ; and, except the keeper’s, there was not an unmoistened eye around her.

“ Do you weep again ? said she ; I would not have you weep : you are like my Billy : you are, believe me ; just so he looked when he gave me this ring ; poor Billy ! ’twas the last time ever we met !

“ ’Twas when the seas were roaring, I love you for resembling my Billy ; but I shall never love any man like him. ”---She stretched out her hand to Harley ; he pressed it between both of his, and bathed it with his tears.---“ Nay, that is Billy’s ring, said she, you cannot have it, indeed ; but here is another, look here, which I plated

plated to day of some gold-thread from this bit of stuff; will you keep it for my sake? I am a strange girl;---but my heart is harmless: my poor heart; it will burst some day; feel how it beats!"---She press'd his hand to her bosom, then holding her head in the attitude of listening---"Hark! one, two, three! be quiet, thou little trembler; my Billy's is cold! ---but I had forgotten the ring."---She put it on his finger.---"Farewell! I must leave you now."---She would have withdrawn her hand; Harley held it to his lips.---"I dare not stay longer; my head throbs sadly: farewell!"-----She walked with a hurried step to a little apartment at some distance. Harley stood fixed in astonishment and pity; his friend gave money to the keeper.---Harley looked on his ring.---He put a couple of guineas into the man's hand: "Be kind to that unfortunate"---He burst into tears, and left them.