

**Louisa: a narrative of facts, supposed to throw light on the mysterious history of 'The lady of the hay-stack' / Translated from a French work ['L'inconnue, histoire véritable'] ... By G.H. Glasse. [Postscript].**

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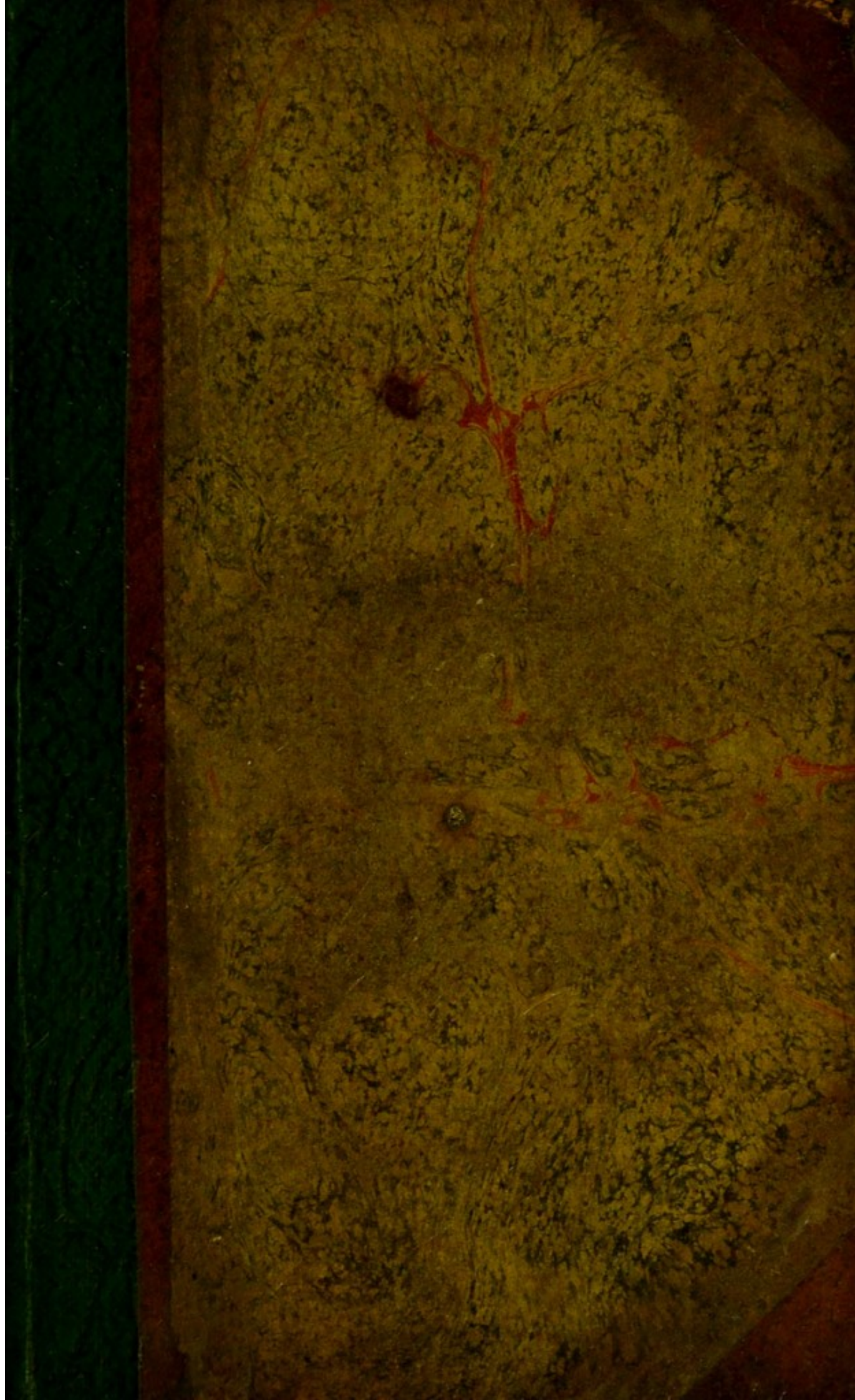
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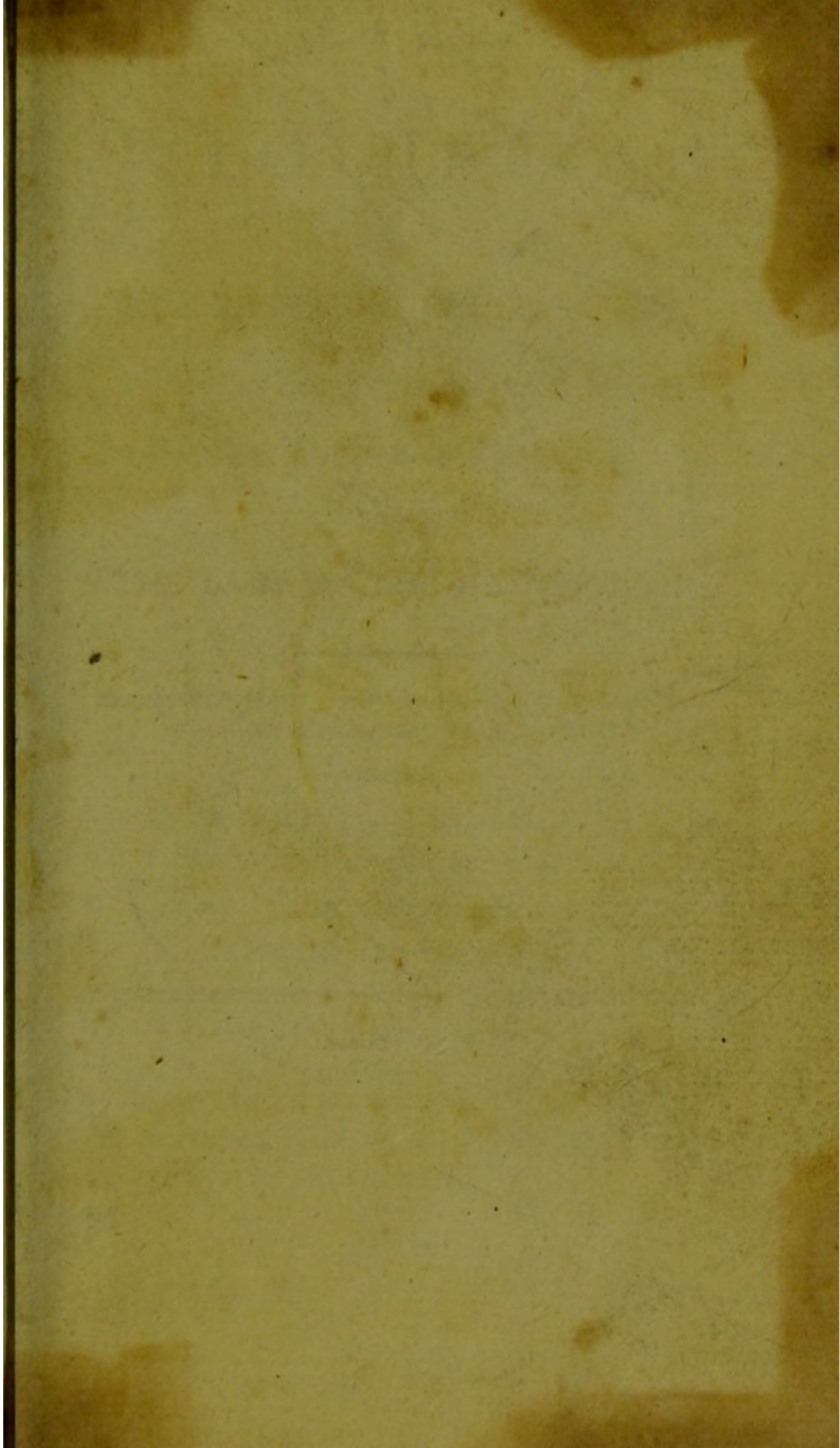
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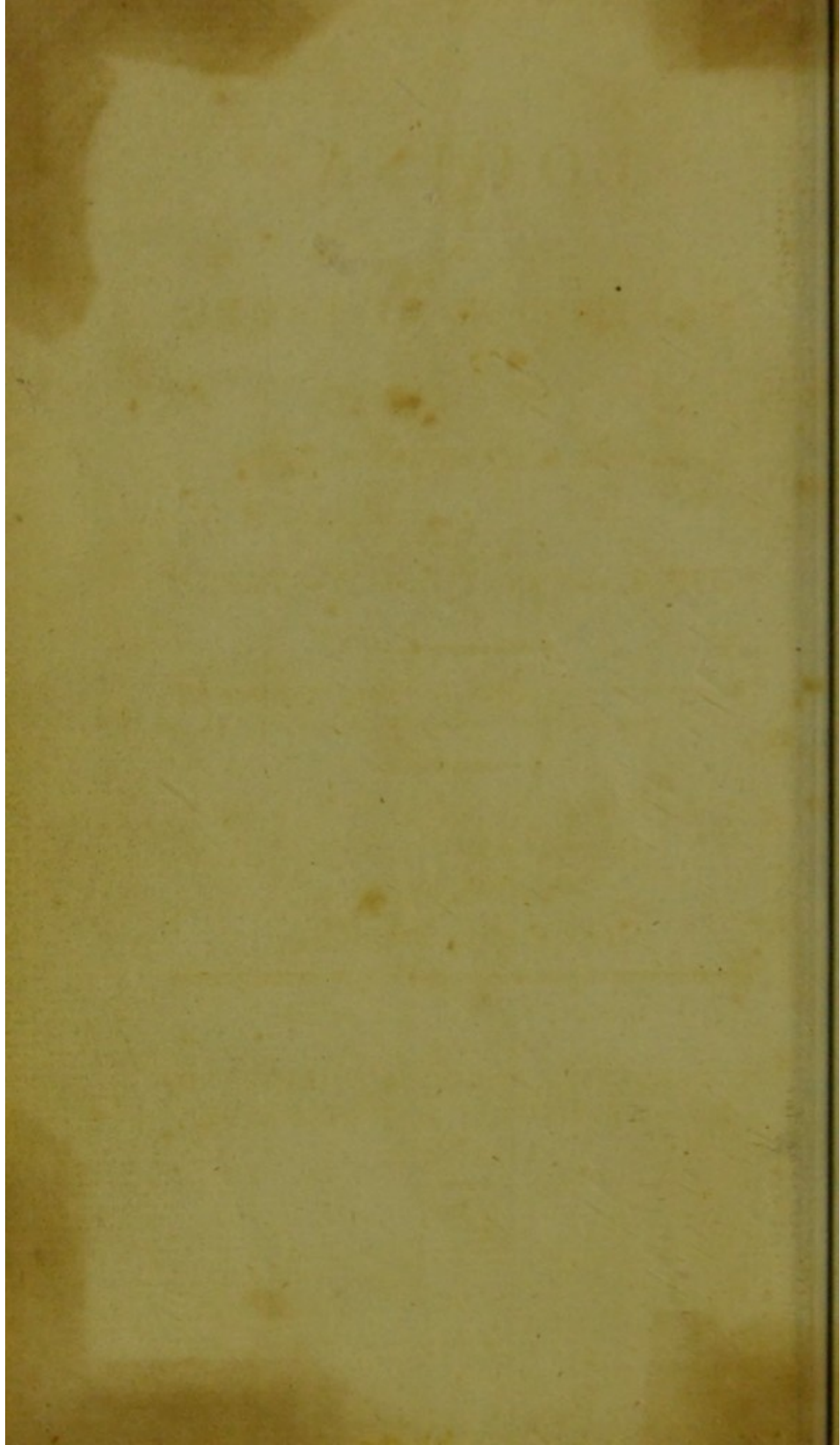


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INCONNUE

(see p x)





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# LOUISA:

A

NARRATIVE OF FACTS,

SUPPOSED TO THROW LIGHT

ON THE MYSTERIOUS HISTORY

OF

“THE LADY OF THE HAY-STACK.”

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TRANSLATED FROM A FRENCH WORK, PUBLISHED IN  
THE IMPERIAL DOMINIONS, A. D. 1785.

---

BY THE REV. G. H. GLASSE, A. M.  
RECTOR OF HANWELL, MIDDLESEX.

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THE SECOND EDITION.

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Printed by P. Norbury, New-Brentford,  
AND SOLD BY  
W. COBBETT, R. FAULDER, J. HATCHARD,  
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LONDON.

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1801.

TO THE

MEMBERS OF THE

ROYAL SOCIETY

OF THE HISTORY

OF THE

ROYAL SOCIETY

OF THE HISTORY

OF THE

ROYAL SOCIETY

OF THE HISTORY



TO  
MISS HANNAH MORE,  
A LADY  
MOST WORTHY OF ADMIRATION,  
FOR  
HER POETICAL ABILITIES,  
HER ELEGANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS,  
AND  
HER GOODNESS OF HEART,  
THIS ATTEMPT TO ELUCIDATE  
THE MYSTERIOUS STORY  
OF ONE OF THE OBJECTS  
OF HER BENEFICENCE,  
IS WITH ALL RESPECT INSCRIBED,  
BY HER MOST FAITHFUL,  
AND MOST DEVOTED SERVANT,  
THE TRANSLATOR.

JUNE 25, 1785.

MRS. F. W. H. A. M. O. R. E.

A L. A. S. A.

MOST WORTHY OF ADMIRATION,

AND

THE MOST ELEGANT

AND ELEGANT

AND

THE MOST ELEGANT

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ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

SECOND EDITION.

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SIXTEEN years have elapsed since the little narrative was first published (without the Translator's name) which will be found in the following pages. The unhappy Louisa was at that time considered as an object of very general interest and curiosity, both here, and on the Continent of Europe. A more convincing proof of this fact cannot be adduced, than the pamphlet in question; which, although from its tendency it was

circulated with extreme caution, found its way into every part of the extensive Dominions of the house of Austria, and was considered of sufficient importance by the then reigning Sovereign to be suppressed by his own immediate command and authority.

To those persons who are acquainted with the facts detailed in a late interesting work, published by Nathaniel William Wraxall, Esq. containing memoirs of the Court of Vienna in the years 1777, 1778, and 1779, the co-incidence between the story of La Frëulen and that of Louisa will appear to be more than possible. The licentious character of the Emperor Francis I. and the pious anxiety of his august widow to draw a veil  
over

over his irregularities, afford the most perfect solution to every circumstance in the present narrative, which might otherwise be deemed obscure and enigmatical.

Soon after the first edition of this work had made its appearance in an English dress, the poor Louisa, from a state of temporary and partial insanity, fell into total idiocy, and deprivation of mental faculties. The names of every person mentioned in the French narrative were repeatedly and anxiously recited to her, under an idea of arresting her attention, and, if possible, of establishing the fact, on the supposition of which the work had been published. But the silence and reserve, from which in her more

lucid intervals she had never been induced to depart, was now changed into the apathy and torpor of morbid insensibility. The secret, whatever it was, is probably dead with her; for there is now very little prospect of its being further elucidated.

The idea therefore held out in this narrative remains precisely in its original state, neither supported nor controverted by any evidence from abroad, subsequent to the first appearance of this work. At a moment when the death of the poor Louisa has in some degree recalled the attention of the public to her mysterious story, it has been judged proper to reprint the narrative, which on a former occasion was so eagerly received,

ceived, and so rapidly and diffusively circulated.

P. S. Some very curious and authentic documents, transmitted from Bristol by Mrs. Hannah More, are now, by the obliging permission of that excellent lady, suffered to be printed at the end of this little work, on a condition which the Translator eagerly accepts; that of affixing his own name to the present edition. He cannot but avail himself with pleasure of a privilege, which allows him to make himself known, as one of the most obliged and most grateful of her friends.

*Hanwell Rectory,*  
*February 27, 1801.*

---

THE  
TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

---

*June 26, 1785.*

THE following narrative was transmitted from the Continent, a few days since, to a lady of distinction, who had resided for some years abroad. Under the sanction of that lady's consent, it is here offered to the public in an English dress.

The original tract makes its appearance without either name or place, or any other date than that of the present year\*. It is entitled,  
“ L'INCONNUE,

\* 1785.

“ L’INCONNUE, HISTOIRE VE-  
 “ RITABLE,” and originates most  
 probably in some part of the Imperial  
 dominions.

By way of introduction to the  
 narrative, the author gives us the  
 affecting recital of the sufferings of a  
 poor female stranger in the neighbour-  
 hood of Bristol, translated into French  
 from the account then recently pub-  
 lished in several English news-papers\*.  
 He leaves it to his readers to deter-  
 mine, whether the sufferer in both  
 instances is or is not one and the same  
 person.

The English editor is equally de-  
 sirous to submit this question to the  
 decision of the public; nor is it pos-  
 sible

\* See the “TALE of REAL WOE,” p. xvii.

fible to attain to any thing beyond mere presumptive evidence in this matter; the poor stranger's intellects being so deranged, as to preclude any further information from that quarter.

Whatever improbability or incoherence may by an attentive reader be discoverable in her story, the *possibility* of its being true must certainly be admitted. And indeed it is on this ground that we present the following pages to the consideration of our countrymen; to whom we should pay but a very dubious compliment, were we to offer to their notice what appeared to ourselves impossible or absurd: such a conduct would rather be an insult offered to their understanding,

standing, than a laudable desire of contributing to their information or amusement.

If any difficulty should arise in the mind of the reader, on account of the poor wanderer's proficiency in the English language, this we think will in a great degree be solved, when it is remembered, that between the time of her dismissal from Quiévraing, and her supposed appearance in the neighbourhood of Bristol, several years had elapsed, of which no account whatever has been given: And there is no improbability in the idea, that this unfortunate stranger might during this period of her life, have been so situated, as to have acquired a considerable

considerable knowlege of the English tongue.

To this, another circumstance may be added; viz. the facility with which our language is attained by those who have been accustomed to speak German. The simlarity of idiom, and the connexion still subsisting between the two languages, may lead us readily to account for this fact. If we were called upon to illustrate our observation by an example, we have not far to go for a very striking one, in the first female personage in this kingdom; that illustrious personage, who has been pleased to extend her royal compassion to the helpless female, who sought so sad a refuge in the British dominions.

We

We are authorized to add, from the most recent accounts, that the poor unfortunate LOUISA (for that is the name by which she is called at present) is still in a state of confinement, under the charitable patronage of a lady, whose character as a writer is so well established, as not to stand in need of any eulogium from us; and whose character as a benevolent christian, surpasses all that we are able to say of it. Humble merit in distress raises its head, supported by her generous exertions; and friendless, inoffensive poverty is sure of a refuge under her protection. The unhappy stranger's disorder now approaches nearer to idiotism, than to lunacy—  
her

her beauty is gone—her body is pale and emaciated—and she is become a melancholy spectacle. She has once or twice been betrayed into an acknowledgement that she understands the German language. She has been greatly affected by hearing it spoken; but has invariably maintained that artful reserve, which leaves her origin and the place of her nativity, and, at any rate, the history of a great portion of her life, involved in uncertainty. This uncertainty we must not hope will be entirely done away, (though some light should be thrown on her story,) in those pages, from which we do not wish any longer to detain our reader.

## INTRODUCTION.



has any charms, will feel it, and to such only it is written. I shall relate it with the utmost simplicity, and the closest adherence to fact.

Near four years ago, a young woman stopped at a small village near Bristol, and begged the refreshment of a little milk.

There was something so attractive in her whole appearance as to engage the attention of all around her. She was extremely young, and strikingly beautiful: her manners graceful and elegant, and her countenance interesting to the last degree. She was alone—a stranger—and in extreme distress; yet she uttered no complaints, and used no arts to excite compassion.

compassion. Her whole deportment and conversation bore visible marks of superior breeding, yet there was a wildness, an incoherence, and want of consistency in all she said and did. All day she wandered about in search of a place to lay her wretched head, and at night she actually took up her lodging under an old hay-stack.

The neighbouring ladies remonstrated with her on the danger of so exposed a situation, but in vain; their bounty supplied her with the necessaries of life, but neither prayers nor menaces could induce her to sleep in a house. As she sometimes discovered evident marks of insanity, she was at length confined.

I pass over this period of her history—it is too touching for my own feelings;—it would too tenderly affect the sensibility of the reader.

At length she was released; with all the speed her small remains of strength allowed, she flew to her beloved hay-stack, though it was six miles from the place of her confinement. Her rapture was inexpressible on finding herself at liberty, and once more safe beneath this miserable shelter.

It is now near four years since this forlorn creature has devoted herself to this desolate life, since she has known the comfort of a bed, or the protection of a roof. Hardship, sickness, intense  
cold,

cold, and extreme misery, have gradually injured her health, and impaired her beauty, but she is still a most interesting figure; there is an uncommon sweetness and delicacy in her air and manner.

She is above all that vanity so common to her sex, and so natural to maniacs; for she will neither wear nor accept of any finery or ornaments, but hangs them on the bushes as below her attention.

She refuses to give the least account of herself; her silence on this head is invincible; her recollection seems impaired, and her whole mind visibly disturbed; yet her answers are per-

continent enough, unless she suspects the question is meant to ensnare her.

Her way of life is the most harmless and inoffensive that can be imagined; every fine morning she walks round the villages, converses with the poor children, makes them little presents of such things as are given her, and receives others in return; she will take nothing except milk, tea, and the most simple diet.

No means have been left unattempted by the neighbouring ladies (one in particular, who has been her constant and unwearied benefactress) to prevail on her to live in a house; but her constant reply is, “*that trouble*  
“*and misery dwell in houses, and that*  
“*there*

“there is no happiness but in liberty and  
“fresh air.”

[ The French Author has here a note, part of which the Translator has ventured to insert into the text.

*One in particular, &c.* “This lady  
“is named \*Atking; she resides at  
“Bristol, and has benevolently un-  
“dertaken the care of our fugitive.  
“By the most constant assiduity, she  
“has persuaded her to reside at the  
“house of a surgeon in that city,  
b 4 “where

\* The word Atking we may suppose is here mistaken for Aikin; the name of another female ornament of our country; which for obvious reasons might easily be substituted for that of the poor Louisa's real benefactress, to whom this tract is dedicated.

“ where she is still living. He has  
 “ contrived to gain her esteem—but  
 “ as soon as he would make any en-  
 “ quiry as to her birth, she lifts her  
 “ finger to her lips.

“ As her aversion to sleeping in a  
 “ bed subsists, a mattrafs is placed  
 “ for her on the ground—and she  
 “ often amuses herself with shaping  
 “ the quilt into the imitation of a  
 “ *royal robe*.

“ One day a coach-and-four passed  
 “ along the street: her attendants  
 “ ran to the windows.—She enquired  
 “ the cause; and then said, ‘ *A won-  
 “ derful sight truly! my father’s  
 “ coach was always drawn by EIGHT  
 “ HORSES.*’ ]

From

From a certain peculiarity of expression, with a slight foreign tincture in her pronounciation, and in the construction of some sentences, some have been led to conjecture *that she is not of this country*. Various attempts have been made at different times to draw from this circumstance some knowlege of her origin.

About a year ago a gentleman spoke to her in the languages of the Continent; she appeared uneasy, restless, and embarrassed: but when he addressed her in GERMAN, her emotion was too great to be suppressed, she turned from him, and burst into tears.

This

This anecdote, which is told in the neighbourhood, was a few days ago related to two gentlemen, whom humanity led to visit this forlorn creature.

One of them, who spoke German fluently, made the experiment; she was evidently confused, blushed, and from accident, or a knowlege in the language, *answered some questions in English*; but, feeling as if she had been hurried into an imprudence, she artfully changed the subject, and denied having understood what had been said to her.

This artless story is written with no other view but the warm hope that it may catch the eye of some  
one

one interested in this tale of woe, and the ardent wish of restoring an amiable and wretched young creature to the arms of (perhaps) a broken-hearted parent.

The writer heartily wishes the whole had been a fiction, and that he had not been himself an eye-witness to the distress he relates—it would have spared him many a pang of unavailing sorrow, and (although a man) some tears of useless compassion.

PHILALETHES.

\* \* \* The

\* \* \* *THE following lines (written under the idea that the Bristol-stranger was a fugitive from a Convent) will, perhaps, not be unacceptable to the public. They are extracted from a poem entitled "Clifton Hill."*

BENEATH

BENEATH this stack Louisa's dwelling rose,  
 Here the fair Maniac bore three winter's snows,  
 Here long she shiver'd, stiffening in the blast;  
 The light'nings round their livid horrors cast.—

\* \* \* \* \*

She starts — then seiz'd the moment of her  
 fate, }  
 Quits the lone cloister, and the horrid grate, }  
 Whilst wilder horrors to receive her wait: }  
 Muffled, on freedom's happy plains they stand,  
 And eager seize her not-reluctant hand.  
 Too late to these mild shores the mourner came,  
 For now the guilt of flight overwhelms her  
 frame.

\* \* \* \* \*

Dishevelled, lo! her beauteous tresses fly,  
 And the wild glance now fills the staring eye:

The

The balls fierce glaring in their orbits move;  
Bright spheres, (where beam'd the sparkling  
fires of love)

Now roam for objects which once fill'd her  
mind,

Ah! long lost objects they must never find.

Ill-starr'd LOUISA! —

*These*

( COPY. )

*Guy's Hospital,*  
February 18, 1801.

*These are to Certify,*

THAT LOUISA, a *Lunatic*,  
died in Guy's Hospital Lunatic-  
House on the 19th of December,  
1800; and was buried in the Ground  
belonging to the said Hospital, in  
the customary manner in which the  
Patients are buried.

Witness my Hand, this 18th of  
February, 1801.

THOMAS CALLAWAY,  
STEWARD of the said Hospital.

ALFRED W<sup>M</sup>. ROBERTS,  
CHAPLAIN.

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LOUISA.

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## LOUISA.

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**I**N the summer of the year 1768, the Count de Cobenzel, Imperial Minister at Bruffels, received a letter from a lady at Bourdeaux; the writer requested him “not to think it strange, “if his advice and friendship were “eagerly sought after;” — adding, “that the universal respect which his “talents and his interest at Court had “acquired, engaged her to address “herself to him — that in a little “time he should know who the per- “son was, that had presumed to so-  
licit

“licit his good offices, and that per-  
“haps he would not repent of having  
“attended to her.” This letter,  
which was written in very indifferent  
French, was signed *La Fräulen*. The  
Count was desired to return an an-  
swer to Mademoiselle La Fräulen, at  
Bourdeaux.

A short time after this, the Count  
received a letter from Prague, signed  
“Le Comte J. de Weiffendorff,” in  
which he was entreated to give the best  
advice in his power to Mademoiselle  
La Fräulen — to interest himself  
warmly in her behalf—to write to  
Bourdeaux in her favour—and even to  
advance her money, to the amount of  
a thousand ducats, if she stood in need  
of it. The letter was concluded in  
these

these words: *When you shall know, Sir, who this stranger is, you will be delighted to think that you have served her, and grateful to those who have given you the opportunity of doing it.*

M. de Cobenzel replied to the Lady, that he was highly sensible of the honour of her good opinion—that he should be proud of assisting her with his advice, and of serving her to the utmost of his power: but that it was absolutely necessary he should in the first instance be informed of her real name.

After this the Count received a letter from Vienna, signed “Le Comte de Dietrichstein.” In this he was again requested to pay every possible attention to Mademoiselle La Fräulen,

and in particular to entreat her to be frugal. He answered this, as well as the former letter from Prague—but no notice was taken of his reply to either.

Meanwhile his epistolary intercourse with the young lady at Bourdeaux continued. Towards the end of the same year, the wife of a tradesman of that city, named Madame L'Englumée, came to Bruffels upon business—that business having introduced her to the Count de Cobenzel, she spoke to him of Mademoiselle La Frëulen in terms of the highest praise. She extolled her beauty, her elegance, and above all, that prudence and propriety of conduct, which did so much honour to a person, left at that tender age to her own disposal. She added,  
that

that the young lady had a house of her own, that she was generous, expensive, and even magnificent—that she had been three years at Bourdeaux — that the distinguished attention with which the Maréchal de Richelieu treated her, the extreme resemblance of her features to those of the late Emperor, Francis the First, and the entire ignorance of all the world, as to her birth, gave rise to strange conjectures—that the young lady had often been questioned on the subject, *but that she always took care to observe the most scrupulous silence as to her family.*

The Count was afterwards desired by Mademoiselle La Fréulen to send her an head-dress of Bruffels lace, va-

lued at fifty louis-d'ors. This commission he executed; but some time afterwards she sent him word that she should return this head-dress, (which she had only once worn) because she was unable to pay for it. The Count requested her not to give herself that trouble.

She likewise informed him, that she was highly displeas'd with the Count de Mercy-Argenteau, the Imperial Ambassador at Paris, on account of that extreme curiosity which he thought proper to express respecting her story.—She added, that all his persecution would be fruitless, because she was determin'd not to admit him to her confidence. She said, however, that she was ready to inform M. de  
Cobenzel

Cobenzel of every particular — but that the secret was too important to be trusted to chance; and therefore she proposed to visit the Austrian Netherlands, and to acquaint him with all her history.—In the mean time she sent him her picture, which she desired him to examine with attention, and which she imagined likely to lead him to some conjectures as to what she had to relate. Accordingly she sent the miniature.—The Count saw in it nothing more than the features of a very lovely woman—but Prince Charles de Lorraine thought the portrait bore a strong resemblance to the late Emperor, his brother.

The correspondence still continued. M. de Cobenzel answered all the letters in a polite, and even an affec-

tionate manner; but was particularly guarded in his expressions. One day she acquainted him that she would send him two more pictures, with one of which she begged him to compare her own. The Count, not receiving them, pressed her to fulfil her promise—she replied, that she had sent them to a jeweller, to take them out of a casket in which they were set with diamonds, and that as soon as the jeweller returned them, she would dispatch them to Bruffels. In fact, about a fortnight afterwards, she sent him the portraits of the Emperor and Empress.—The former was known by Prince Charles to have been painted by Liotard.

In

In December 1768, M. de Cöbenzel received a very singular letter, dated, "VIENNA. *From my bed,—two in the morning.*" In this the Count was highly commended for the good advice he had given the young stranger, and requested to continue his attentions. He was told that M. de Mercy had behaved in a very different manner towards her, and that he might one day feel the consequences. — The writer added, that the poor girl had suffered greatly; but that it was designed to put her in such a situation as would make her ample amends; — "*she was so tenderly recommended to me by that person who was dearest to me in the world!*" The Count  
was

was charged to inculcate economy, and particularly admonished of the importance of the secret. This letter had no signature.

Some time afterwards, the young lady sent to M. de Cobenzel, enquiring, whether he had not received a letter concerning her? He answered in the affirmative; and said that she had been recommended to his care in the strongest terms. She replied, "I am much obliged to you for your goodness; but I will tell you honestly, that if I wanted any particular favour, I would rather address myself to God than to the Saints!"

In the beginning of the year 1769, the Count received some dispatches from Vienna, which contained several  
 very

very extraordinary circumstances respecting the stranger. The Court of Vienna had sent a requisition to that of Versailles, to arrest Mademoiselle La Fréulen, and to send her under a strong guard to Bruffels, where she was to be examined by M. de Cobenzel, and the first President, M. de Neny. Prince Charles, about the same time, received a letter from the Empress, enjoining him to be very careful that the prisoner should not escape—and bidding him spare neither pains nor expence in detaining her. Her Majesty's letter was concluded as follows—

*“ This wretch wishes to pass for the  
 “ daughter of our late royal master—  
 “ if there was the least probability in  
 “ the story, I would love her, and  
 “ treat*

“ treat her like one of my own children;  
 “ but I know it is an imposture :  
 “ and I wish every possible effort to be  
 “ made, that this unhappy creature  
 “ may no longer profane the dear and  
 “ venerable name of our departed  
 “ Lord.” Her Majesty recommended  
 the strictest secrecy in carrying on  
 the business—and added, that this  
 adventure had already made too much  
 noise, and that all Europe would  
 soon ring of it.

It seems the Court of Vienna was  
 informed of the affair in the following  
 manner. While JOSEPH II. was  
 on his travels in Italy, the King of  
 Spain received a letter, apparently  
 written by his Imperial Majesty,  
 informing him in confidence, that  
 his

his father, the late Emperor, had left a natural daughter, whose story was only known to his sister the Arch-dutcheſs Marianne, himſelf, and a few faithful and confidential friends—that the young lady had been moſt earneſtly recommended to his care by his father—and that ſhe was reſident at Bourdeaux. He intreated the King of Spain to ſend for her, and give her an eſtabliſhment at Madrid with ſome lady of rank, or in a convent, where ſhe might be treated with the care and reſpect due to her birth, till ſome plan ſhould be fixed on for the future happineſs of her life. He added, that he requeſted this mark of friendſhip of His Catholic Majeſty, becauſe he  
himſelf

himself did not dare to undertake these kind offices for the person in question, lest the Empress should by some means or other hear of it, whom he wished to remain in perpetual ignorance of the story.

The King of Spain, thinking this letter very extraordinary, transmitted it to the Emperor himself, who was then at Milan, demanding some explanation of the matter. The Emperor, who had not written the letter, nor had ever heard a syllable of the adventure, sent the packet to the Empress; who made immediate enquiries about the stranger, and dispatched a messenger to Bourdeaux to seize her. She was arrested in her own house, in August 1769, by

M.

M. Carel de Ferrand, Lieutenant of the Marechaufée of the Province of Guienne, who was her intimate friend, and whose nephew had solicited her hand; but this, for reasons that will afterwards appear, she had peremptorily refused. As soon as the rumour of her arrest was spread about the city, her creditors took the alarm; and Madame L'Englumée, the very person who had given such an advantageous character of her to M. de Cobenzel, came to insult her in so brutal a manner, that M. de Ferrand ordered her to be turned out of the apartment.

Fear and distress took off much of La Fräulen's beauty—she had continual spasms in her stomach, attended  
with

with spitting of blood, which obliged her to travel very slowly. At length she arrived at Bruffels, attended by M. de Poyot, an officer under M. de Ferrand. While she was on her journey, and almost immediately before she quitted the French dominions, a person unknown, dressed like a courier, put a billet into her hands at the coach-window, and then fled with the utmost precipitation. She begged her guide to read the billet, which only contained these words—  
 “ My dear girl, every thing has been  
 “ attempted to save you: keep up  
 “ your spirits, and do not despair.”  
 She protested, that she neither knew the courier, nor the hand writing.

On

On her arrival at Bruffels, she was immediately taken to the hôtel of the Count de Cobenzel. She was dressed in a gown of grey taffeta, a black cloak, and a veil of white gauze, which covered her face, and which she took off when she entered the minister's apartment. Her figure would have interested the most insensible heart in her favour. She was tall and elegantly formed—her air was at once simple and majestic—her complexion was fair—her arms were delicately turned—her hair was brown, and calculated to receive the embellishments of art to the greatest advantage. She had that freshness of colour which no borrowed tints can imitate; fine dark eyes, and a look, which

C                      expressed

expressed every emotion of her soul. She spoke French with a German accent, and appeared much confused, but without any particular symptom of female weakness.

Her alarm was soon dissipated by that confidence which M. de Cobenzel so well knew how to inspire—in her letters she had always called him her Father — when in his presence she addressed him by the same endearing name — she would have kissed his hand, but he prevented her, by catching her in his arms. He sat down near her—talked to her on the subject of her health—desired her to make herself perfectly easy—and told her she should have the utmost attention and the kindest treatment, if she would

would strictly adhere to truth.—She repeated several times, —“ Yes, my  
 “ dear father, I will inform you of  
 “ every thing—I am a good girl, and  
 “ never injured any human creature.  
 “ It is true I have contracted some  
 “ debts—but was that a crime? I had  
 “ been plentifully supplied with mo-  
 “ ney, and I expected a continuation  
 “ of my allowance.” All her distress  
 appeared to arise from the circumstance  
 of her debts—those she considered as  
 her only faults, and as the sole cause  
 of her having been apprehended.—  
 She inveighed against the cruelty of  
 Madame L’Englumée—she said, that  
 M. de Ferrand had assured her, the  
 sum due to that woman should only  
 be paid in part, as she had grossly  
 C 2                   deceived

deceived her in the price of every article that she had sold her. She expressed no concern whatever at her being a prisoner, and only asked M. de Cobenzel if she might not remain at his house. The Count frankly told her that this was impossible; assuring her at the same time, that she should be treated with all imaginable respect, in an apartment which he had prepared for her in the fortress of Monterel, at a very little distance from Bruffels; and that if she wanted any thing, she had but to express her wish, and her commands should immediately be obeyed. He promised to wait on her there the next day; and she took her leave of him, to all appearance in a state of perfect tranquillity.

quillity. She was conducted to Fort Monterel, under the guard of Major de Camerlang, a man of sense and good nature; and M. de Neny had taken care to provide a female attendant for her. The next day the Count went to see her—he found her in very good spirits; she seemed delighted with her apartment, and pleased with the conduct of those about her. The Count offered her the use of any books from his library. She thanked him; but said she never had a moment which hung heavy on her hands, so much was her mind taken up with visionary projects for her future life—the truth was, she could neither read nor write. M. de Camerlang taught her to sign her name, while she was in

confinement. The cause of this ignorance will presently be explained.

The next day her examination began. M. de Cobenzel and the President went to Fort Montereil, at ten in the morning. The Count de Neny, who had not as yet seen the prisoner, was extremely surpris'd at her striking resemblance to the late Emperor. They ask'd her, where she was born? she said she knew not, but that she had been told the place where she was educated, was call'd Bohemia. She was ask'd, if that place was a town? and what was the earliest incident in the course of her life that she could remember? she said, that the place where she was brought up, was a little sequester'd house in the country;  
that

that there was neither town nor village near it—and that before her inhabiting this house, she had not the least recollection of any thing which had happened to her. That in her infancy she had been under the care of two women, one about fifty years old, the other about thirty. That she called the first *Mama*, the second Catherine — that she slept in the apartment of the first-named woman, and that both of them treated her with much kindness and affection—that from time to time, an Ecclesiastic (as she has since suspected, a Jesuit) came to say mass in an apartment in the house, and to teach her the catechism — that the woman she named “mama,” had begun to instruct her

in reading and writing, but that the priest opposed it, from the moment it came to his knowledge; and from that time she was taught no more. However, she added, that he always treated her with infinite respect.

She said, that about a year after this, a handsome man, in a hunting suit, accompanied by another gentleman, dressed in the same manner, came to the house where she resided. That she was immediately sent for; when the stranger embraced her, placed her on his knees, caressed her much, and recommended it to her to be good and submissive. She doubts not that this person had seen her before, because she recollects that he thought her grown taller, and altered; but

but she never remembers having seen him at any former time.

About eighteen months afterwards, he returned, accompanied by the same attendant as before, and wearing the very same dress. She said, that, at this second interview, the features of her unknown visitor made so strong an impression on her mind, that had she never seen him more, she should not have forgotten them. She says, that he was of a middling size, and rather corpulent, that he had an open countenance, a ruddy complexion, a dark beard, and a little white spot upon one of his temples. She observed, that M. de Neny bore some distant resemblance to the person she spoke of, particularly in the lower  
part

part of his face—she said further, that at this second interview, remarking somewhat red that appeared about the stranger's neck under his riding-coat, she asked him what it was? he replied, it was a mark of distinction worn by officers — she, ignorant in every particular, enquired what he meant by an *officer*? “They are,” said he, “Men of Honour, Gallantry, and Spirit, whom you must love, because you are the daughter of an officer yourself.” She added, that at this second visit she found herself extremely attached to the stranger—and that when he took his leave, she shed a flood of tears; at which he appeared much affected,

affected, and promised her soon to return.

He did not keep his word—for he returned not till two years after; and when she reproached him with absenting himself so long, he told her, that at the time he had fixed for coming to her, he had been violently ill, in consequence of over-heating himself in the chace.

[N. B. Prince Charles recollected, that at a time corresponding with that above-mentioned, the Emperor was in fact taken ill on his return from hunting.]

This third interview, which was the last, furnishes the most interesting anecdotes. The stranger desired to be left alone with her. When he  
told

told her of his illness she shed tears—he was himself melted, and asked her why she wept? “Because  
“I love you.” He assured her that he felt equal love for her—that he would take care of her—would make her rich and happy—would give her a palace, money, and attendants; and that her domestics should wear yellow and blue liveries. He asked her, afterwards, if she did not wish to see the queen? she replied, she did not know what a queen meant. “A queen is the first lady in the  
“kingdom, and highly to be re-  
“spected as such; you would love her  
“much if you knew her—but that,  
“for the sake of her peace of mind,  
“you must never do.” — He  
then

then presented her with the two pictures, which she had sent from Bourdeaux to M. de Cobenzel. She said, she told the stranger, that one was his own picture—he allowed it; and bade her keep it as long as she lived, as well as that of the Empress: and a third picture, which he afterwards gave her, of a female, whose features were half concealed by a veil. This, he told her, was her own mother. The pictures were in a blue silk purse which contained a great quantity of ducats. The stranger, when he quitted the young lady, assured her she should soon be happy, and not have a wish ungratified; but that she must promise him *never to marry*, and to keep that vow always  
in

in her remembrance. After this he took leave of her with the utmost tendernefs, and ſhe was herſelf extremely affected.

She related, that in the interval between the ſtranger's firſt and ſecond viſit, there came one day, accompanied by two men, a lady, who aſked to ſee her. The lady was dreſſed in a ſtyle of great ſimplicity: ſhe was of moderate ſtature, fair, of a pleaſing aſpect, and rather inclining to corpulence. This lady looked at her with great earneſtneſs, and began to weep—ſhe aſked her ſeveral indifferent queſtions, and then embracing her two or three times, ſaid, “ My child, you are indeed unhappy!”— Her emotion was ſo great, that ſhe  
called

called for a glass of water to keep her from fainting—she drank it, and departed immediately. Mademoiselle la Fräulen said, that she could not be positive, whether the picture which the stranger gave her at his last visit, bore any resemblance to this lady or not.

When the examination had proceeded thus far, it was observed that the young prisoner began to prevaricate about the circumstances of her story. Yet even after this was discovered, she persisted in most solemnly declaring, that till now, and indeed till her quitting the house where she was educated, her narrative had been faithful in all its particulars. Every incident was thoroughly examined—

examined—the questions were put to her in every possible form, to observe if she did not vary in her replies; but she always repeated the above facts with the same circumstances, and the same simplicity.

She then told the story of her departure from the place of her education, in words to the following purport.

That a little time after the stranger's last visit, the Ecclesiastic who had taken care of her from her infancy, came to inform her, that her Protector was no more; and that before he expired, he had ordered her to be conducted to some convent in France—the priest said, “that she must  
 “set forward on her journey in a  
 “few days, and that he came to  
 “measure

“measure her for some apparel;” which he afterwards did, with a ribbon he had brought with him for that purpose. A week after this he arrived in a post-chaise, bringing with him four complete dresses, viz. two pelisses, a black gown, and a red one; till now she had only worn a dimity undress. The priest immediately made a parcel of all the young lady’s little property.—She put on a blue pelisse—he handed her and her attendant Catharine into the carriage and then got into it himself.

She wept grievously at parting with the woman she had called “mama;” but besides what she felt on account of the separation, she was terribly afraid of the convent. The enquiries she had

D

made

made of Catharine and her mama (in the week preceding her departure) had given her most frightful ideas of the life to which she thought herself condemned for the remainder of her days. She could not tell what towns she passed through; but she said, that on her arrival at Hamburgh, the priest, after dismissing her attendant, made her embark on board a vessel freighted for Bourdeaux. The moment she took ship, a man, to all appearance about fifty years old, came to offer her his services, saying, that he would take care of her during her voyage. On their arrival at Bourdeaux, this man, who had acquired great influence over her, took her to the house of a German merchant, who was settled in  
that

that city; and the wife of this merchant placed her with Madame Guillaumot, with whom she remained, during the whole time of her stay in Bourdeaux. A fortnight after her arrival at this lady's house, a letter was brought to her, addressed "to Mademoiselle Felicia Juliana de Schonau," a name which, at her leaving Bohemia, the priest told her she was in future to consider as her own. Madame Guillaumot, by her desire, read this letter to her.—It contained rules for her future conduct, and assurances, that she should be amply supplied with money—she was directed by the writer to remain with Madame Guillaumot; but she was advised to persuade that lady to dismiss all her other

boarders, and to devote her attention to her alone. This letter was concluded without either signature or date, and it enjoined her to be discreet, and to forbear making too curious enquiries.—Some days after this, a gentleman came to her house, and, without any preface, put a purse of a thousand louis-d'-ors into her hands; only adding, that he was commanded to advance her that sum for the purchase of furniture. She asked him, from whence the money came? he begged her to make herself easy, and not to be curious.—She says she has reason to think this man was an Ecclesiastic. She then took a house and furnished it. Madame Guillaumot went thither as her companion—and she lived at  
Bourdeaux

Bourdeaux amongst persons of the first consequence, till the day of her confinement.

The manner in which the stranger told the tale of her embarking at Ham-  
burgh and her arrival at Bourdeaux appearing highly improbable, M. de Cobenzel told her, it was evident that her story was untrue.—He bade her remember what he had said to her on the day of her arrival at Bruffels; “that the only way to obtain the fa-  
“ your and protection of the Empress,  
“ was to be ingenuous and sincere”—that it was on this condition alone he had offered her his best services; but that, as he found she had deceived him, he should now abandon her to all the consequences of her imposture.

As the Count said this, he looked at her with a fixed and severe countenance, which disconcerted her the more, as still now she had only seen that air of tenderness and politeness, which marked his general character. She was all confusion; and M. de Cobenzel having risen from his seat, as if about to depart, she held him by his cloaths, and throwing herself at his feet, said, with many tears, that it was true she had much to relate to him, but she could say no more in the presence of Monsieur de Neny's secretary. As soon as that gentleman had left the room, she fell down again on her knees, and, with renewed expressions of grief, entreated M. de Cobenzel to take pity upon her; confessed

essed that she had deceived him in the account of her embarkation at Hamburgh; but called Heaven to witness, that all which she had said of her education in Bohemia was true to the most minute circumstance. She afterwards always persisted in this assertion, nor ever varied in the smallest particular, when cross-examined at different times as to the former part of her life.—And thus she told anew the story of her departure.

When the priest came to take her from her house in Bohemia, he told her, that he was going to conduct her to a convent in France. Ignorant as she was, the little which Catharine and her mama had told her of a religious life, taught her to consider

a convent as an horrible prison, from which there was no escape: and this idea had so disturbed her mind, that from the moment of her quitting her habitation in Bohemia, she had formed the project of flying, as soon as possible, from such captivity.—During her journey to Hamburgh, she found no opportunity of executing her design—but her alarm was so much increased, when on her arrival in that city, she saw the sea, and the ships, that on the eve of the day fixed for her departure, she rose from Catharine's side as she slept, made a little parcel of one gown and some linen, took the blue purse with the three pictures, and the hundred ducats which the stranger had given her, and  
at

at break of day left the city. She walked a long time; till spent with fatigue and terror, *she took refuge in the barn of a farmer, and there fell asleep.* The owner of the premises found her, and, struck with her youth and beauty, civilly offered her a little room, and the best bed in his house, which she accepted.

Her fears not suffering her to continue so near to Hamburg, she soon quitted this retreat. She wished to give some proof of her gratitude to the honest people who had afforded her protection; but they would accept of nothing. From hence, mounted on a wretched carriage, she took the road towards Sweden. — The third day of her journey, she fell from the  
vehicle,

vehicle, and received so dangerous a wound in her head, that it was necessary to take her to a neighbouring inn, and call in the assistance of a surgeon.

It happened, that a Dutch family called at this inn in their way to Pomerania and Sweden—these people defrayed the expences of her sickness, and, out of compassion, suffered her to join their travelling party. (At her examination, she told the names of these Hollanders, as well as that of a Lutheran priest who was with them, and who, at this present time, is private tutor to a merchant's children in Hamburgh.) When she arrived at Stockholm, she quitted her fellow travellers, and went to lodge at the house of a German woman, whose  
husband

husband had a small post under Government. This woman, happily for Mademoiselle La Frëulen was a person of great integrity, and conceived the tenderest friendship for her. While she resided here, her hair-dresser told her one day, that the Count de Belgioioso, Imperial Minister at Stockholm, was making strict enquiries after a young lady that had eloped from Hamburgh. La Frëulen, who began to form an idea of the consequences of her flight, and whom the apprehensions of poverty terrified still more than the thoughts of a convent, told her informer, that she was the person sought after, and permitted him to make this discovery to the Ambassador. The next day she received

received a billet from that Minister, inviting her to his house. The billet was read to her by a girl that waited upon her, named Sophia—she did not hesitate a moment, but repaired that day to the Count de Belgioioso. He received her with great respect; asked her the circumstances of her departure from Hamburgh—and it being (as he thought by her replies), evident that she was the person whom he sought, he told her, that he was instructed to take the greatest care of her, and that he would go to see whether she was in convenient lodgings. He offered her money, which she accepted, for the blue purse was entirely empty. M. de Belgioioso went to visit her the next day—he told her  
she

she must stay no longer in such a place, and that he would procure her a more commodious apartment near his own house. In two days she went to this apartment — it was at the house of a tradesman: and Sophia continued about her person.—M. de Belgioioso sent her a lacquey, and furnished her with provisions from his own table. Not long afterwards, he told her that she had been still more strongly recommended to his protection, and that she must take up her abode at his house; and accordingly she went thither the same afternoon.

She says, that while she was at the house of M. de Belgioioso, she was so affected by the sight of a picture, perfectly resembling the stranger who  
came

came three times to see her at her dwelling in Bohemia, that she swooned away upon the spot. (The Count de Belgioioso has by letter confirmed this assertion; and it seems the picture was that of the Emperor Francis.) It was with the greatest difficulty that they recovered her from her fainting-fit; and a violent fever was the consequence, which very nearly proved fatal to her. She says she grew taller during this illness, which lasted six weeks, and was so much altered, that she appeared to be thirty years old, though she could not at this time have been above sixteen.

When she was perfectly recovered, the Ambassador told her, he had received advice from Hamburgh, that she

she had quitted that city in company with a young Englishman. She denied it in the most solemn manner, because she had no English acquaintance whatever: but M. de Belgioioso persisted in his accusation so long, that, wearied out with constant persecution on the subject, she confessed herself guilty of a crime which she knew was falsely laid to her charge.

This rash confession, as well as many other instances of imprudence in her conduct, she attempted to palliate, in a manner that very strongly proved her simplicity and ignorance of the world. Her ignorance indeed extended to such a degree, that M. St. Gere, Assistant to the Imperial Consul at Bourdeaux, who  
was

was sent for to Bruffels during the prisoner's examination, deposed, that while he was her secretary at Bourdeaux, she wished him to sign a feigned name to a letter—and when he remonstrated, that she could not make use of a name that was not her own, she replied, “Who can forbid  
 “my doing any thing that I wish?  
 “May I not assume any name, any  
 “signature, at my pleasure?”

It must be observed, that about the time of her elopement from Ham-  
 burgh, the daughter of a merchant in that city had been carried off by a young Englishman; and this adventure, being confounded with that of our heroine, gave the Ambassador those suspicions which she had the  
 folly

folly to confirm. It is evident that after this confession, M. de Belgioioso believed her to be the merchant's daughter, and not the young lady who had been recommended to his care: because a little time after this, he told her, he was mistaken as to her person, and advised her to return to Hamburgh. He gave her twenty-five louis-d'-ors for her travelling expences, and entrusted her to the care of a merchant who was then on his return to that city. On her arrival at Hamburgh, she anxiously sought after those persons, whom she had quitted with so much precipitation—she walked every day on the quay, and in the most frequented parts of the town.

E

At

At this time, a man, in appearance about fifty years old, and plainly dressed, who had followed her at a distance for several days, at last accosted her, and proposed to her to go to Bourdeaux. She consented to it the more readily, because she recollected that the priest had wished her to embark for that place—and she supposed, that by following the plan at first marked out for her, she should the more easily meet with those who interested themselves about her fate. The man whom she met on the quay embarked with her—her voyage was prosperous in every particular, and he attended her during the course of it in the manner she had at first related. The prisoner  
always

always persisted in saying that every circumstance she had mentioned, of her arrival at Bourdeaux, and her adventures in that city, was most scrupulously true.

Soon after she had taken a house of her own, to which Madame Guillaumot accompanied her, she received an anonymous letter, in which she was commanded to go to the Duke de Richelieu, and ask that protection, of which she stood so much in need. The writer pressed her the more earnestly to do this, because the Duke was already acquainted with the particulars of her story. Accordingly she went to the Duke's palace. He informed her that he had received a letter from the Princess d'Aversberg, re-

commending Mademoiselle de Schonau in the strongest terms to his care. He made her a thousand offers of service, and according to his custom, said more than a woman of honour ought to hear. She burst into tears, and on her knees implored his pity; and the Duke on his part made apologies for his imprudence.

A few days after this he came to her house, and earnestly recommended it to her to learn the French language, which as yet she understood very imperfectly. M. de Richelieu paid her several other visits, and always treated her with the highest respect. She was a constant guest at all his entertainments, and when any questions were asked him concerning her, he made

made this uniform reply—“ *She is a lady of great distinction.*”

The rest of the examination consisted of minute circumstances, foreign to our purpose; and chiefly respected the company with whom she associated during her residence at Bourdeaux. It must not however be forgotten, that she had there two very advantageous offers of marriage: the one from M. de —; the other from the nephew of M. de Ferrand, a counsellor of the parliament of Bourdeaux. She refused both; conceiving herself bound to perpetual celibacy by the promise she had made the stranger in Bohemia.

It is necessary to mention her pecuniary resources. We have already

E 3                      observed,

observed, that while she lived with Madame Guillaumot, a person unknown presented her with a purse containing a thousand louis-d'-ors. This same person brought her several sums of money afterwards, at different times; and she received through this channel about a hundred and fifty thousand livres\*, without ever learning, or being able to discover to whom she was obliged for this noble allowance.—As all this tended to confirm her in her ideas that she belonged to a very wealthy family, she spent this money as fast as she received it. On a sudden her remittances stopped. She had little or no money by her—so that in a short time, as she made no alteration

\* £.6250 sterling.

alteration whatever in her style of living, she contracted debts to the amount of sixty thousand livres, which remained undischarged at the time of her being arrested at Bourdeaux.

In the desperate situation to which the menaces of her creditors reduced her, she took the wild resolution of fabricating those letters, which when presented to her at her examination, she owned were dictated by herself. As, first, the letter to M. de Cobenzel, dated, "VIENNA—*From my bed—two in the morning.*"—Another, signed, "Le Comte J. de Weisfendorff."—Another to the Emperor, addressed to Florence.—Another to the Bavarian Minister at Paris.—And, lastly, the letter to the

King of Spain, which had led to the discovery. But though she frankly confessed the having sent all these letters, she declared at the same time her perfect ignorance of that signed “Le Comte de Dietrichstein”—and of several others, which the Counts de Cobenzel and de Neny had received from time to time concerning her.

It is observable, that her simplicity was so great, as to make it impossible to explain to her how highly criminal she had been, in procuring forged letters on subjects of such importance. She made the same reply now, that she had done to M. St. Gere, at Bourdeaux. — Nay, she innocently persisted in it, that she thought she had acted right — because

cause the extraordinary education that had been given her, the conjectures she had formed of her parentage, the portraits which gave such weight to those conjectures, and the considerable sums that had been remitted to her, could not but lead her to suspect, that she was in point of fact the late Emperor's daughter. She declared that she had never uttered her thoughts to any human creature: but finding herself all at once utterly forsaken, she concluded the person was dead, who had been commissioned to furnish her with money. And as she supposed that this person alone was acquainted with the place of her abode, she concluded that her supplies only ceased, because her residence was no longer known. However, as she  
thought

thought it highly probable that her father might have entrusted more than one person with the secret of her birth, she hoped, by writing to all the most illustrious servants of the house of Austria, to find some one, who knowing her history, might place her in that situation which her father had designed for her. She said further, that she did not write these letters in her own name, because she would not expose herself to the troublesome curiosity of those, who not being in the secret, would immediately make enquiry about her birth. That if but one of those letters had fallen into the hands of any person acquainted with her story, that person would immediately have known more particulars

particulars of her life than she herself could know. In the mean time, her suspicions being unsupported by positive proof, all that she could say would not prevent her passing for an impostor. She added, that a strong argument of her conscious innocence, and of her firm persuasion that she was really the Emperor's daughter, might be drawn from the circumstance of her having pointed out the place of her abode in all her letters; every one of which tended to put her in the power of the court of Vienna—that court, which was alone interested in punishing a fraud of this nature.—She affirmed, that she never had consulted any person whatever as to the steps she had taken  
—and

—and she particularly denied having written the letter, signed “The Princess d’Aversberg,” which the Duke de Richelieu received soon after her arrival at Bourdeaux.

One remark ought to be made upon this letter. The Duke immediately sent a polite answer to the Princess d’Aversberg, stating, “that in consequence of her recommendation, he would treat Mademoiselle de Schonau with all possible respect, and would afford her every service in his power.” This letter was delivered to the Princess by M. de Chatelet, at that time the French Ambassador at Vienna. We may naturally suppose, that if she had not written to the Duke in favour of the stranger,

stranger, she would immediately have answered, that she knew not such a person as Mademoiselle de Schonau; for no one would willingly second any imposture—but she made no answer whatever. It is natural therefore to suppose, that she did write the letter of recommendation—and that consequently she knew all the mysteries of the stranger's birth. This being the case, what motive could have induced the Empress so expressly to guard her ministers against asking any questions whatever of the Princess d'Aversberg? This would infallibly have led to a discovery of the whole story.

The account which the prisoner gave of the late Duke of York is likewise

likewise very important. As soon as his Royal Highness arrived at Bourdeaux, he sent to inform Mademoiselle de Schonau, that he had an affair of great consequence to communicate to her; and he requested her to appoint some time, when he might see her, without the knowlege of any person in the city. She replied, that if he wished for secrecy, she thought the most private hour would be at six in the morning, after a ball which was to be given by the Duke de Richelieu. His Royal Highness came at the appointed time. He told her that the intent of his visit was to learn the amount of her debts, and that he was commanded by a lady of quality to give her a sum of money. She confessed to  
him,

him, that her creditors importuned her greatly for sixty thousand livres. He desired her to make herself perfectly easy, and the same day sent her seven hundred louis-d'ors; informing her, that he would soon furnish her with money sufficient to discharge all her debts. His Royal Highness left Bourdeaux on the morrow.

A short time after this she fell sick. One morning, whilst St. Gere was by her bedside, a letter was brought her from the Duke of York, dated "Monaco." St. Gere began to read, as follows—*"I was about to send you the remainder of your money; but when I left your house, I received a letter, which positively commanded*  
*" me*

“ me to give you no more than a part  
 “ of it. I have written to the Princess  
 “ d’Av——”. St. Gere having read  
 thus far, she snatched the letter out  
 of his hands, and would not suffer  
 him to finish it. (All the circum-  
 stances respecting this letter have been  
 since proved.)

When she was asked, why she  
 snatched the letter out of St. Gere’s  
 hands? and who was the princess  
 mentioned in it? she replied, it was  
 the Princess d’Aversberg\*,—that she  
 herself did not know her; but the  
 Duke of York had told her that the  
 Princess interested herself much in  
 her

\* The reader is referred, for some most in-  
 teresting anecdotes of this extraordinary lady, to  
 Wraxall’s *Memoirs of the Court of “Vienna,”*  
 letter xxxi. vol. 2, page 342.

her behalf; and that *she* knew all the mystery of her birth—she said, that when she heard the first syllable of her name, she feared there might be something in the remainder of the letter more immediately respecting the princess; or that it might contain the secret of her own story, with which she wished St. Gere to be for ever unacquainted. At these words, she drew from her pocket the Duke of York's letter. M. de Neny read it aloud. The remainder was as follows:

*“ I have written to the Princess  
 “ D'AVERSBERG; and have requested  
 “ permission, at least to send you the  
 “ sum you want, in order to shelter you  
 “ from the pursuits of your creditors——  
 “ but ——!”* —— Here the letter abruptly terminated.

In a few days after her receiving this billet, the stranger heard of his Royal Highness's death. She sent to the persons who were appointed to examine his papers, requesting them to return her picture and her letters. One letter only was found, which was sent her, as well as her picture; and another portrait, which afterwards she presented to M. de Camerlang, at Fort Monterel.

The examination, after twenty-four sittings, being entirely finished, Messrs. de Cobenzel and De Neny seriously considered what steps were most proper to be taken in consequence of it. The Court having desired them to give their opinion, they agreed, "That the most prudent measure  
" sure

“ sure would be to place the poor  
“ girl in some distant convent, and  
“ there keep her, till time should  
“ throw some light on this mysterious  
“ affair.” At the moment when this  
opinion was to have been transmitted  
to Vienna, M. de Neny received a  
letter from his father (private secre-  
tary to the Empress) which stated,  
that from the examination, which had  
been sent from time to time to court,  
her Imperial Majesty had formed a  
very disadvantageous opinion of the  
stranger; and that she was determined  
to treat her with the utmost severity.  
After reading these dispatches, M. de  
Neny’s sentiments were so entirely  
changed, that he proposed sending  
the unhappy prisoner to Bourdeaux,

and there putting her into the power of her creditors. He even sent this to Vienna, as his opinion. But the Count de Cobenzel, whom no consideration whatever could induce to change those sentiments which honour and humanity dictated, feared not, in behalf of innocence, to displease his sovereign herself: and wrote as follows:—

“ Though it appears to me, that the  
 “ prisoner is not the daughter of the  
 “ Emperor, there are, however, cir-  
 “ cumstances in her story, which  
 “ throw a mysterious perplexity over  
 “ her birth; and in this state of un-  
 “ certainty, I cannot be of Monsieur  
 “ de Neny’s opinion. I likewise  
 “ think, that the measure proposed  
 “ by

“ by that gentleman, of sending her  
 “ back to her creditors, is repugnant  
 “ to the well-known clemency and  
 “ benevolence of her Imperial Ma-  
 “ jesty, and at the same time mili-  
 “ tates against her wish, that this  
 “ affair should be buried in silence,  
 “ as much as possible. If the poor  
 “ wretch be sent to her creditors,  
 “ she will be reduced to the fatal  
 “ and horrible alternative of pe-  
 “ rishing without relief in a prison,  
 “ or of seeking support in infamy  
 “ itself, by means of her beauty and  
 “ personal recommendations. — And  
 “ perhaps the Empress may be in-  
 “ duced to pity this unfortunate  
 “ young woman, when her Ma-  
 “ jesty is assured that her morals

“ appear to have been as yet irre-  
 “ proachable. Besides, to send her  
 “ again to Bourdeaux, would be to  
 “ give weight to those reports which  
 “ ought to be suppressed — be-  
 “ cause all the world will say, that  
 “ the imposture not having been  
 “ punished, the story of her birth  
 “ must needs have been in some  
 “ measure believed. The objection,  
 “ *that it will be necessary to pay her*  
 “ *debts, if we do not put her a-*  
 “ *gain in the hands of her creditors,*  
 “ appears to me trifling, when com-  
 “ pared with those serious evils,  
 “ which will result from following  
 “ my colleague’s opinion. Her debts  
 “ do not amount to sixty thousand  
 “ livres — she has effects of confi-  
 “ derable

“derable value at Bourdeaux, the  
 “sale of which will produce a great  
 “part of that sum; and the remainder  
 “appears to me below the confi-  
 “deration of her Imperial Majesty’s  
 “munificent heart. This generosity  
 “will give the Empress an absolute  
 “right to dispose of the unfortunate  
 “prisoner in such a manner, as to  
 “rescue her from the dangers of se-  
 “duction. My opinion therefore is,  
 “That her Imperial Majesty would  
 “do well to send her to a convent in  
 “the Tirol, or some other distant pro-  
 “vince of her dominions, where no  
 “rumour of the story hath hitherto  
 “been circulated. — She may there  
 “pass a life of peace and obscurity  
 “at a trifling expence to the Em-  
 “press;

“ pres; and if time should throw  
“ any light on her history, if she  
“ should appear to belong to per-  
“ sons of rank and distinction, as  
“ the large sums put into her hands  
“ lead us to believe, we shall not  
“ have to reproach ourselves with  
“ those misfortunes, to which this  
“ young creature will inevitably be  
“ exposed, if M. de Neny’s advice  
“ should be taken. Indeed, I look  
“ upon it to be dangerous on every  
“ account. I should even prefer the  
“ putting the prisoner to death at  
“ once, if this were not totally irre-  
“ conciliable with every idea of her  
“ Imperial Majesty’s clemency. Should  
“ the Court deign to listen to my  
“ opinion, the young lady’s property  
“ may

“ may be sold, and her debts paid,  
“ without any suspicion on the part  
“ of her creditors, that the Empress  
“ is concerned. And this they must  
“ not think, lest they should be led to  
“ suppose that her imperial Majesty  
“ is actuated by *something more* than  
“ mere pity. It will be sufficient to  
“ write, as from the stranger, to a  
“ banker at Bourdeaux; ordering  
“ him to sell her furniture and ef-  
“ fects, and to take an exact account  
“ of her debts: whatever it may be  
“ necessary to add may be sent in  
“ the young lady’s name—and her  
“ creditors, satisfied with being paid,  
“ and having been accustomed to  
“ see her in possession of considerable  
“ sums, will have no reason to suspect  
“ the

“ the benevolent hand, which affords  
 “ her this last succour.”

This wise advice was not followed; and that of the Count de Neny was impracticable. The Duke de Choiseul refused to grant the passport necessary to conduct the unhappy prisoner to Bourdeaux. In vain M. de Barré, (Secretary to the Embassy at Paris, and Chargé des Affaires in the Count de Mercy's absence) represented to the Duke, that her creditors would be injured, if their debtor was not restored to them. He seemed to think it a plea of no consequence, and persisted in his refusal.

The day before M. de Cobenzel's death, after he had received the sacrament, he said to a confidential friend,

friend, who had been made acquainted with every circumstance respecting the stranger: “ I have just received dispatches from Vienna, charging me to acquaint the Court with the prisoner’s whole history — by no means to dismiss her—and to take no step without fresh orders.” He alluded to a letter just received from M. de Kaunitz. The Count immediately burnt it; adding, by way of reflexion, “ *You see an honest man’s opinion will sometimes prevail.*”

He died the next day: and it is probable, that but for this misfortune, the affair would have ended in a very different manner. If similar orders came to any other person, they came too late.

Four days after his death, the stranger was taken out of prison—a Sub-Lieutenant of the Marechaussée of Brabant conducted her to Quiévrain, a small town between Mons and Valenciennes\*—fifty louis-d'ors were put into her hands—and she was abandoned to her wretched destiny.

\* About a day's journey from Calais, or Ostend.

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\* \* \* *This narrative is a faithful abstract of the twenty-four examinations which M. DE COBENZEL's nephew, the COUNT DE CORONINY, who himself was present during all of them, communicated to the Author.*

APPENDIX.

A P P E N D I X,

N<sup>O</sup>. I.

Extracted from the Newspaper call'd "The  
PORCUPINE" of Tuesday, Jan. 27, 1801.

---

D E A T H

O F T H E

L A D Y O F T H E H A Y - S T A C K .

LATELY died in Guy's Hospital,  
the once unfortunate celebrated  
Louisa, or Lady of the *Hay-stack*,  
who about eighteen years ago\*, was  
found to have taken up her residence  
under

\* She was first discovered in the year 1776.—  
See Appendix No. 2.

under *that shelter*, in the parish of Bourton, near Bristol, in a state of melancholy derangement. She then appeared to be under twenty† years of age. This very extraordinary woman, whose “tale of woe” was first told to the public by Miss Hannah More, has naturally ceased, for a considerable time past, to interest the general curiosity.

During several days of her abode under the hay-stack (from which she at last permitted herself to be removed with reluctance) she was visited, and regularly fed by the country-people, till the hand of more happy sympathy and compassion provided her better protection. As her  
name

† About four & twenty,—See Appendix, No. 2.

name was unknown, she was immediately distinguished by that of Louisa. It may be gratifying to many on this occasion to learn, that during a considerable interval, in which she afterwards remained in retirement, and before she was admitted as incurable into the asylum in which she died, she was chiefly supported by a voluntary subscription, under the management of Miss Hannah More and her sisters. Those active advocates of humanity, who never yet began a good work and grew weary of well-doing, having lost the pecuniary assistance of most others, continued to supply the extra wants and accommodations of the poor solitary stranger, at the expence of more than

than ten pounds per annum, till her decease. They would be the last to wish that such an instance of benevolence should be publicly mentioned; but it is a tribute due, not less to them, than to the interests of society.

The same kind, and much the same degree of mental derangement, which the "tale of woe" described, remained with Louisa to the last. In her general conduct she exhibited the various common evidences of the most confirmed insanity; which, in addition to the contraction of her limbs, from her exposure to cold in the open field, and from her constant propensity to remain inactive, rendered her an object of the strongest pity. But her insanity was uniformly  
remarkable

remarkable in this, that however disordered and childish her affections and resentments were, she never could be drawn into any explanation respecting her family, her connections, or her country: however affable and unguarded she might sometimes appear, the moment any person put a question, directly or indirectly, relative to those topics, or made any allusion to them, however distant, she always changed countenance, assumed an air of suspicion, grew grave, and inflexibly silent, or would instantly touch on some other subject. From her accent *she was undoubtedly of German origin*; but though she knew little of English, she avoided conversing in any foreign language. Her

G

manners,

manners, and occasional movements, indicated superior rank; and her frequent exclamations of "dear papa" and "dear mama," in connexion with ideas of equipage and ornaments, led to that conclusion.

Many endeavours were used on the continent, to trace her family, by circulating her description and story in the public prints, but without effect.

The mystery of this silence was too remarkable not to confirm the first opinion of her being a person above the common classes, with the additional probability of some unhappy and treacherous seduction. This last opinion, from the whole of the distressful evidence, inclusive of the personal  
sonal

sonal part which poor Louisa sometimes involuntarily furnished, is not doubted by those, who, with the writer of this article, early saw and closely observed her. The conviction that it is possible for any man, making pretensions to honour, or even of distinction from a brutal nature, so to betray, and so to abandon in a foreign land, youth, beauty, the strongest sensibility, and perhaps the most engaging innocence, fills the mind with horror of the deed, and with shame and indignation for the character! Such profligacy, in this instance, may have been of foreign production.— But comparatively happy would it be for this country also, if instances did not abound among us, of similar

atrocious, in the conduct of those, who on inferior occasions make high pretensions to honour and principle, but who seek every opportunity of seducing from the abodes of paternal affection, or of innocent employment, whatever is most fair and inexperienced; rioting in its ruin for a short season, and then committing the greater crime of abandoning it to infamy! The theme is, unhappily, too common to need proof, and too mournful to be dwelt on.

The poor departed child of misery, whose story is here revived, exhibits too strong an instance of suffering, and excites too much feeling, to be permitted to pass in the common course to oblivion, if it could be avoided. Under this impression, permit

mit me to attempt something in the character of an EPITAPH. But alas! poor Louisa's tablet of remembrance may only be found in the sympathetic bosom of a few surviving friends!

In yonder dust, unmark'd for public fame,  
Low rest the relicks of Louisa's frame.  
Poor hapless sufferer, of the maniac line!  
Thy wrongs no more a tortured breast confine.  
Enough for thee, that ling'ring sorrow's breath  
Found final rescue in the boon of death!  
Consol'd be they, who sought thy soul's relief;  
Tormented they, who overwhelm'd with grief!  
Accurs'd the crime, that 'rest thy reason's ray,  
Though thou be ransom'd for eternal day!  
And where frail innocence would vice repel,  
May guardian angels thy sad story tell!

*Bath, January 20, 1801.*

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A P P E N D I X,

N<sup>O</sup>. 2.

From the "GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE,"  
for October, 1785. (Vol. LV. page 791.)

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MR. URBAN,

AT the close of your review of a late publication, entitled "A Narrative of Facts supposed to throw light on the History of the Bristol Stranger, &c." you express a doubt of the possibility, that Mademoiselle La Fréulen, and the unhappy Louisa, can be one and the same person, grounded on a supposed difference

difference in point of age. I confess that the subject is involved in difficulty and obscurity; while, at the same time, there are some very striking coincidences, of which the public may hereafter be informed through the medium of your excellent Magazine. In the mean time I think it my duty to contend for the *possibility* abovementioned; and I therefore request the insertion of the following account of Mademoiselle La Frëulen's age, and the supposed age of Louisa.

At the sight of a portrait of the Emperor Francis, at the hotel of the Count de Belgioioso, at Stockholm, Mademoiselle La Frëulen was, or pretended to be, so affected, that an illness (whether real or feigned, it

matters not) was the consequence. She then *could not be more than sixteen*. This was in the latter end of 1765, or the beginning of 1766, for it was soon after the death of the Emperor, which event took place in the autumn of 1765. Mademoiselle La Fräulen was therefore born in the year 1750, or 1749 at the utmost; and, if now living, is about five and thirty years old.

It will not, I am sure, be denied me, that conjectures with respect to the precise age of a stranger must ever be liable to some degree of error.

I must avail myself a little, and shall very little, of this postulatum.

I am informed, on the most respectable and undoubted authority,  
that

that when Louisa was first discovered, in the year 1776, she appeared to be about *four and twenty*. According to the above statement, Mademoiselle La Fräulen's age was then only *six and twenty*; a very trifling difference, and not to be adduced in evidence against facts, if facts can be obtained on the contrary part.

Your inserting the above will be consonant to the candour with which your useful design is carried on, to the amusement and information of the public.

Your's, &c.

The Translator of

“A NARRATIVE, &c.”

APPENDIX

A P P E N D I X,

N<sup>o</sup>. 3.

EXTRACTS OF LETTERS.

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L E T T E R I.

*Bristol, June 29, 1785.*

OF the poor unfortunate creature who is the subject of your enquiry, I know but little more than you will find in the enclosed narrative.\* It is now near four years since she fell into my hands: she still continues in the  
same

\* The "TALE of REAL WOE," See p. xvii.

same situation in which she was then placed; it is a private house of the best reputation for the reception of persons in her unhappy circumstances. By the attentions of a very skilful Physician she is much mended in her health, but her intellects grow worse and worse; and for some time there has been more of idiotism than lunacy in her manners and behaviour. She has once, and I think once only, spoken German to a Danish person who tried her in that language, to whom she talked of Sleswick, as of a place at which she had lived. This was the only moment in which any thing of her native language or country ever escaped her.

When

When we first knew her, I think she could not have been above three or four and twenty; her beauty is now quite gone—she is miserably thin, and is really a melancholy spectacle.

I shall be impatient to learn what communications your friend has to make; although my hopes of a discovery have been growing less sanguine every day, and indeed for the last two years I have sat down in quiet hopelessness, and have discontinued every kind of enquiry. Before that time, no step has been left untried; Count Maréchal translated the little narrative inclosed into German; and a Lady of high distinction, resident in this country, had the goodness to send  
it

it to the newspapers of Vienna, and those of other large cities in Germany: it was published too in most of the great towns in France.

I forgot to say, that the disconsolate Louisa once confessed that her father had confined her in a Convent, in order to punish her for refusing to marry a man of *his* choice, and to hinder her from marrying one of *her own*; and that she had escaped from thence; that these misfortunes, together with the guilt of flight, and dread of detection had turned her brain. But when pressed again on the subject, she either did not remember, or else chose to deny that she had ever made such a confession.

LETTER

## L E T T E R II.

*Bristol, July 31, 1785.*

I purposely deferred writing to you till I had seen the poor Louisa. I went to her yesterday. I must tell you, that she does not live in Bristol, but at the distance of some miles from thence, at the house of a very humane and respectable person. I took care to furnish my memory with all the necessary documents from the "Narrative," but had the grief to find, that neither the repetition of the names or facts made the least impression. I could not obtain her attention for a moment; and when  
she

She perceived I wished to watch her countenance, she wrapped up her face in her blanket, the only kind of covering which at present she suffers to approach her.

As to the narrative, it is singularly curious and interesting in itself, abstractedly considered: its relation to Louisa is at least very probable; there is nothing which contradicts or opposes the *possibility* of the identity of Mademoiselle Fräulen and Louisa. I believe I never told you, that she has a particular passion for bracelets and miniature pictures, with the most sovereign contempt for every other ornament. Of a Queen Anne's half-crown she is vastly fond; she has sometimes desired to have one sewed on a  
black

black ribbon; said it much resembled her mamma; would wear it on her arm, and kiss it with great delight: but she has now no pleasure in any thing.

I must not omit one particular. A gentlewoman, born and bred at Altona, and wife to a Captain of a Danish ship, resident in Bristol, once went to see Louisa when she was under the Hay-stack; *with her she talked German*, and told her she had lived at Sleswick, had been in a convent, and had escaped with her lover. By a strange revolution of fortune this foreigner, (who is genteel and well-behaved) is reduced to be a superintending servant in the very house where Louisa is confined, and has the  
chief

chief care of her. Louisa, remembering the former confidence she had made her, was offended at the sight of her, and never could be prevailed on to renew the conversation; though she frequently speaks short sentences to her in German, particularly if she wants tea, or has any other favour to ask.

One striking circumstance which concurs with the narrative is, *that I never could prevail on her to look in a book\**. Being once pressed to it, she cried out, "No, reading is study, and study makes me mad." Books have been left in the room, but, though she has been narrowly watched, she has never been observed to read in any of them.

H

I

\* See "LOUISA," page 21.

I made the Danish woman talk German to her last night, which threw her into a violent passion. To this woman I have given the principal names in the narrative, with directions to mention them as she finds occasion. She never rises from her bed of straw—on that she lies quietly, and is harmless and stupid; but if they attempt to dress her, or put her on a comfortable bed, she is outrageous. It is happy, however, that she never requires to be treated with harshness; the utmost of her violence amounting but, to short fits of resentment, on being disturbed from her indolent repose.

LETTER

## L E T T E R III.

*Bristol, August 24, 1785.*

I had the favour, a few days ago, of a letter from your friend, dated from Buxton: but as he mentions being on a tour, he wishes me to address my answer to you, who are (I presume) acquainted with his present place of residence.

Your friend and you will be surpris'd that I can answer positively the very important and striking question respecting the wounds and scars of La Fräulen †; he is of opinion that if the same are found on the person of Louisa it would almost fully identify them. Now it is very certain,

H 2

and

† See "LOUISA," page 42.

and very singular, that poor Louisa has a very large wound on the lower part of her head, behind her ear; she has also a large scar upon her breast, which seems to have been occasioned by a very considerable wound; the latter we always suspected to have been a mark of violence, and I wonder it never occurred to me to mention it to you. Whether she has any wound upon her *scull*, properly so called, I have yet had no opportunity of examining; but those which I have mentioned, form surely a strange co-incidence.

I have written to a friend, who knew the Emperor Francis, to ask if the lower part of his face projected a little, or, as it is vulgarly called if he  
was

was under-hung. *That is the case with Louisa*; and I am assured that the faces of the present Emperor and the Queen of France are of that form—their pictures certainly are so.

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L E T T E R IV.

*Bristol, October 5, 1785.*

I do not think I have acted fairly in having kept from you for so long a time the information I intended to have sent you on a subject in which you have been so interested. Not satisfied with the former discoveries I communicated to you, I

H 3

caused

caused Louifa's hair to be cut very close, *and on her scull discovered the scar of an old wound\**. This is surely very strong evidence. Did I ever tell you, that I caused your book to be put into ——'s hands? I have however heard nothing from that quarter, tho' I wrote a letter strongly expressing my belief of the identity of La Frëulen and Louifa; but I probably shall have further information on this subject.

Judge of my astonishment the other day, to hear my name cried about the streets, in concert with that of Louifa, by an itinerant vender of dying speeches and half-penny ballads. I stopped the man, and bought one of his

\* See "LOUISA," page 42.

his papers, which will probably divert you as much as it did me. It is just such a mixture of truth, fable, and rash conclusion, as we find makes up the sum of most history, ancient and modern. I inclose it for your amusement.\*

\* "The wandering Young Lady||.—Being a faithfull Account of the Birth, Travels, and Sufferings, of the YOUNG LADY, who about 4 years ago was taken from a Hay Stack, at Bourton, in the County of Somersset, where she had taken up her Residence for near 4 years, and who as it since appears is a natural Daughter of the late Emperor of Germany. — Near four years ago a young woman stopped at the above village, and begged the refreshment of a little milk. There was something so attractive in her whole appearance as to engage the attention of all around her, she was extremely young and strikingly beautiful, her manners graceful and elegant, and countenance interesting to the last degree: she was alone — a stranger — and in extreme distress, yet

|| Printed *Verbatim* from the Paper.

yet she uttered no complaint, and used no arts to receive compassion. — Her whole deportment and conversation bore visible marks of superior breeding, yet there was a wildness, and want of consistency in all she said and did.

All day she wandered about in search of a place to lay her wretched head, and at night actually took up her lodgings under an old hay stack. The neighbouring ladies remonstrated with her on the danger of so exposed a situation, but in vain; their bounty supplied her with the necessaries of life, but neither prayers nor any means could induce her to sleep in a house, as she sometimes discovered evident marks of insanity, she was at length brought and confined in St. Peter's Hospital in the City of Bristol.

I pass over this period of her history — it is too touching for my own feelings: — It would too tenderly affect the sensibility of the reader. At length she made her escape, with all the speed her small remains of strength allowed, she flew to her beloved hay stack, though it was six miles from the place of her confinement. Her rapture was inexpressible on finding herself at liberty, and once more safe beneath this miserable shelter.

Hardship, sickness, intense cold, and extreme misery have gradually injured her health, and impaired her beauty, but she is still a most interesting figure; there is an uncommon  
sweetness

Sweetness and delicacy in her air and manner; she is above all that vanity so common to her sex, for she will neither wear nor accept of any finery or ornaments, but hangs them on the bushes as below her attention. — Her way of life is the most harmless and unoffending that can be imagined; every fine morning she walks round the village, converses with the poor children, makes them little presents of such things as are given her, and receives others in return, she will take nothing except milk and tea, or the most simple diet. No means have been left unattempted by the neighbouring ladies to prevail on her to live in a house, but her constant reply is, “that trouble and misery dwell in houses, and that there is no happiness but in liberty and fresh air.” From a certain peculiarity of expression, with a slight foreign tincture, in her pronounciation and in the construction of some sentences, some have been led to conjecture, she is not of this country, various attempts have been made at different times to draw from this circumstance some knowledge of her religion. About a year ago a gentleman spoke to her in the language of the Continent, she appeared uneasy, restless, and embarrassed, but when he addressed her in German, her emotion was too great to be suppressed, she turned from him and burst into tears. This Anecdote which is told in the neighbourhood was a few days ago related to

two gentlemen, who from humanity were led to visit this forlorn creature. One of them who spoke German fluently, made the experiment; she was evidently confused, blushed, and by accident, or knowledge in the language, answered some questions in English, but as if she had been hurried into an imprudence, she artfully changed the subject, and denied having understood what had been said to her in German.

This unfortunate lady being thus reduced to a state of idiotism, the benevolent Miss Hannah Moore, taken care of her, and provided a person to attend her at Bitton, in the County of Gloucester.

Now what renders it evident that she is the natural daughter of the late Emperor of Germany, is his having some time before his death, written to his Ambassador at Brussells, concerning her, and in which he recommends her to his care and protection in the strongest terms; and in consequence the Ambassador supply'd her with money and effects 'till after the Emperor's death. — Soon after which the Empress caused her to be arrested in France and put in prison, where she remain'd some time, 'till at length being discharged, fifty Louis d'Ors were given her and she was abandoned to her fate. — The Ambassador too dying about this time she had now no friend, and the Empress was her determined enemy, as may be seen by the following

Towing letter sent to her Ambassador at Brussels, to which place she had been sent from France to be examined.

“This wretch wishes to pass for the daughter of our late Royal Master—if there were the least probability in the story, I would love her, and treat her like one of my own children:—but I know that it is an imposture; and I wish every possible effort to be made that this unhappy creature may no longer profane the dear and venerable name of our departed Lord.”—Her Majesty recommended the strictest secrecy in carrying on the business—and added, that this adventure already made too much noise, and that all Europe would soon ring of it.

It is probable she soon after this came over to England, in hopes of finding some Friend who would espouse her cause, but it does not appear that any ever did 'till by her misfortunes she was rendered unable to give a proper account of herself, and no wonder she should lose her senses when it is consider'd that from being the daughter of the Emperor of Germany, should be reduced to a worse situation than the meanest beggar in the Kingdom, who at the worst of times have a place of settlement—as to the Empress's envy it is not to be wonder'd at, she being a love-child, must have naturally created jealousy in her breast—but totally to abandon her was the utmost cruelty, upon the whole,

whole, every one who reads this account, must pity the unhappy lady, who from being half sister to the present Emperor of Germany and to the Queen of France, is by her misfortunes reduced to the state of insanity, and supported by charity in a strange Country."

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## L E T T E R, V.

*Bath, February 9, 1801.*

The account of poor Louisa in the public papers was written by a gentleman who had witnessed her forlorn state under the hay-stack. He rather over-rates my services. I felt happy about three weeks ago in paying her funeral expences, and thankful that the poor irrational was removed

removed from this dark and disordered world to a world of peace and rest.

Of her latter years I have little to communicate. Finding the recovery of her limbs as hopeless as that of her understanding, and fearing that she might eventually be left in a situation wholly unprotected, I obtained for her an asylum in the Hospital, allowing a certain sum annually to cloathe her, and to furnish her with such comforts as she had been accustomed to enjoy. I visited her more than once in this her last retreat, till she had so far lost all sensibility or knowlege of me, as to make it no longer necessary. I inclose a letter which I received about three weeks ago from the person who had

had long been my agent in paying for and watching over poor Louisa\*. It will only mark the day of her funeral, and let you see that there is nothing to be collected about the close of her life.

\* See "LETTER VI."

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L E T T E R VI.

*London, January 12, 1801.*

MADAM,

I fully intended informing you long before this of the happy release of poor Louisa. She had been very ill some time, and could eat very little,

little, (nothing indeed but soft nutritious food) and was at last carried off rather suddenly.

*No alteration took place in her mind to the last.*

Louisa died on the 19th, and was interred on the 23d of December. She was buried in the ground belonging to the Hospital.

I dare not but say the change was merciful: her life was misery, and its continuation not to be desired.

THE END.



POSTSCRIPT

TO

“LOUISA.”

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Printed by P. Norbury, New-Brentford,

AND SOLD BY

W. COBBETT & J. MORGAN, R. FAULDER,  
J. HATCHARD, F. & C. RIVINGTON,  
AND F. WINGRAVE,  
LONDON.

—  
1801.

FOR THE

OF

"POLYMER"

BY

AND

BY

AND

AND

LONDON

1891

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## POSTSCRIPT, &c.

March 28, 1801.

††† The Translator, having just received the following authentic memoir from a most respectable quarter, is happy in being permitted to add it to his collections on the subject of Louisa.

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JANUARY 14, 1787.

*Memorandum respecting Louisa, the Lady of the Hay-stack, whom I visited, in company with \*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\**, Esq. at a village about four miles from Bristol, while she was under the care of Mr. Henderson, keeper of a private mad-house.

THE first circumstance which struck me was the appearance of youth exhibited in the countenance of Louisa; who had been stated to

be more than thirty years of age, as far as could be conjectured. I should have conceived her to be no more than twenty five; and, notwithstanding the injuries which her situation and mode of life must inevitably have occasioned to her looks, she has still a very pleasing countenance. Interesting it certainly is in a high degree, but it is not easy to say how much this impression is to be attributed to the previous knowlege of her story. She has fine, expressive, black eyes and eye-brows—her complexion is wan, but not sickly—her under jaw projects a little, and I fancied I could distinguish something of the Austrian lip; but it was not decidedly marked: her nose has nothing particular, is of

a moderate size, neither aquiline nor *retrouffé*—her hair is very dark, if not black, and in length about a year or a year and a half's growth, not being thick, but coming down on her forehead; her arm and hand are delicate, with small long fingers, moist to the touch.

Upon being addressed, she lifted up her eyes, and having articulated some incoherent words, she composed herself again. Being told “that the gentlemen were friends who came to see her,” she smiled, and moved her under-lip for some time without pronouncing a word. This practice, which exhibited more of the idiot than any other part of her behaviour, she soon left off, when we began to draw her into a sort of conversation.

B 3

“Where

“Where is papa?” — “Is mama come for me to take me away?” were the first words she uttered, which were frequently reiterated during our stay. By addressing her in a strain of familiar kindness, many replies were drawn from her, and she seemed gratified by our joining in her laugh; which under any other circumstances would be esteemed a very pleasant one.

The mode of her speaking English, tho’ imperfect, we could not absolutely pronounce to be that of a foreigner, but rather that of an infant; as she frequently omitted the connecting particles — and sometimes made use of childish epithets.

Our

Our first entreaty was that she would reach out her hand, in order that by this kind of salutation, we might gain an opportunity of observing the grace with which she had been said to move it. There was a delicacy in her manner of giving it; and we had further occasion to remark, that her motions and attitude (as far as her posture would admit) were those of a person who had been in no common line of life.

We were generally obliged to repeat a question several times, before she would return an answer; not because she did not comprehend it, but either from indifference, which gradually diminished, or wariness to avoid being entrapped by leading questions, against which

which it was very evident, in spite of her insanity, that she was constantly endeavouring to guard; though now and then, when her spirits were raised, she was led into replies that threw a glimmering of light on what she had laboured to conceal. This mysterious conduct, which was probably at first the effect of design and resolution, is now the consequence of habit.

Some of the many unconnected questions and answers which passed are as follows; but it must be premised, that, instead of adverting to what we asked, she more usually talked of "Mama's coming to take her away," and other sentences, which, as we were informed by those about her, she was in the habit of uttering.

"Do

“Do you find it cold, Louisa?”  
(the door standing open.)

“No, 'tis warm here.”

“Do you love the fire?”

“No, no, fire nasty,” (with an expressive frown).

“We are your friends, we are come to take you away from hence; will you go with us?”

“Yes, (with emotion) but mama must come and bring me clothes, I must be dressed,” (pointing her hands towards her neck and shoulders, and moving her fingers about, as when we describe the finery of female dress).

“We shall go in a coach and four horses, and we will make them gallop; and the people shall admire us as we pass along.”

Here

Here she burst into a fit of laughter and a sort of exultation, as if enjoying the idea of parade.

“And we shall let all the glasses down.”

“No, that will be too cold.”

By this answer, and other minute circumstances, she appeared to have a proper notion of a carriage, and to have been used to one.

“But where shall we drive to?”

“Home!”

“But where, to what home?”

“Oh, here and there, backwards and forwards, all round about,”  
(waving her hand).

“Shall we, Louisa, (pointedly) shall we drive to Bohemia?”

“*That is papa's own country.*”

This

This remarkable answer came from her in a perfectly fair and direct manner, after she had been in a train of talking and laughing, and when she might be supposed to be off her guard. We took the opportunity of joining in her laugh, and asking other questions before her spirits had time to subside, or her wariness returned; but our design was not successful. She would instantly assume a serious, and even a sullen look, when she thought our interrogations impertinent. Sometimes she evaded them in a different manner. She talked much about a sister. We offered to call her—

“But how shall we address her? What is her name?”

“She

“She will tell you when she comes,”  
(with a significant air).

“Is your sister like you, Louisa?”

She laughed.

“If she is like you she is very pretty.”

A sort of blush came over her cheek, and, casting down her eyes with a coquettish smile, she tried to hide her face in the straw of her bed.

When spoken to in French she seemed (but not very decidedly) to understand it, and particularly, when desired, in that language, to give her hand at parting, she reached it out; but the corresponding action on our part might possibly have induced her to do this, independently of the request; certainly, however, when addressed in French, she did not give less  
signs

signs of intelligence than when spoken to in English, nor did she express by her countenance any surprise at the change of language. She did not however speak a word of French. I tried a few words of German, at which she burst into immoderate fits of laughter, as if at my awkward pronunciation of it, and misapplication of words. No French phrase addressed to her had the same effect.

When the discourse ran on the subject of travelling, I mentioned a variety of towns in Europe, but without being able to perceive any concomitant emotion. When asked if she liked Brussels, she seemed to contract a look of displeasure or disgust—and I think the same, when Brussels-lace was mentioned

tioned to her. I talked about crossing the sea, and of sea-sickness. No particular words dropped from her, but she appeared to grow serious and reserved, and to discourage the subject.

She frequently talked of drefs, and by her action seemed to exprefs an expectation of, and a desire for fine clothes,\* but she concluded her broken sentences with faying, “They must be like this—and the colour of this,” pointing to the straw, and sometimes to the blanket which lay loofely over her. I believe she never mentioned drefs without that proviso.

“Will you have your hair drefsed, Louifa?”

“Oh,

\* In point of fact, she never could be prevailed on to wear them. This was therefore one of the irregularities of wayward insanity.

“ Oh, no, no,” (with a look of indignation, which was repeated when I talked of powder) “ my hair must be thus,” (pointing to and laying delicate hold of the ringlets on her forehead) “ and when I go home it will flow down my back and shoulders, or come down here,” pointing to them.

This last was expressed partly by action and partly by words, the particular phrase, excepting in short replies, not being always exactly collected, tho' her idea was perfectly intelligible.

The term *Papa* she applied in a vague and incoherent manner; sometimes to the gentleman (Mr. Henderson) who, has the charge of her, and at times to some unknown person  
at

at a distance, to whose home she talked of going.

There is a peculiarity in her enunciation, approaching, but not amounting, to a lisp, or as when the tongue slightly touches the under row of teeth. Her voice is soft and feminine, and I never heard her loud, except in her fits of laughter; but our interview did not exceed an hour, and her humours are said to be various—to us she was good-natured, and I might almost say, affable. After the door was locked on her, we could hear her laughing. In spite of the misery of her condition, she seems not to be unhappy.

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THE END.

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