

254 THE CHRISTIAN HERO.

Transported as you are with pious zeal,
Look inward, search your heart, and then confess
The love of heav'n excludes not sacred friendship.
Think if my task were your's, how you wou'd act.
Wou'd you not pause, conclude, retract, and pause
again

To the last moment of the time prefixt?
Wou'd you not count it virtue to contend,
Tho' against hope, and struggle with despair?
I know you wou'd; for tho' your tongue be mute,
Spite of yourself, your streaming eyes confess it.

ARANTHES.

My weakness is no precedent for you.

SCANDERBEG.

If thus the friend, what must the lover suffer?
Think good Arantes, if you ever lov'd,
What I endure: think on Althea's charms,
And judge from thence the greatness of my pain.

ARANTHES.

Why will you dwell upon the dang'rous theme?
The strength of Sampson prov'd too weak for love;
David's integrity was no defence;
The king, the hero and the prophet fell
Beneath the same inevitable power:
The wisdom of his son was folly here;
And he that comprehended all things else
Knew not himself, till dear experience taught
Him late repentance, anguish, grief and shame.
Then think no more but give us up at once;
Give up Althea; heaven demands it of you;
For while she lives, your virtue is not safe.

SCANDERBEG.

Is this a father's voice?

ARAN-