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LADY JANE GREY;

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE.

BY

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"ROYSTON GOWER," "RURAL SKETCHES," "FAIR ROSAMOND,"
"BEAUTIES OF THE COUNTRY," "A DAY IN THE WOODS," ETC.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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THESE VOLUMES

ARE DEDICATED,

WITH SINCERE RESPECT,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

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LADY JANE GREY.

CHAPTER I.

Her lonely hut stood in a darksome dell,
Where thick-set trees shut out the sun's bright ray :
And rumour did of her strange tidings tell,
And perils drear which unto those befell
Who lingered there beyond the close of day.

The Green Mantle.

BUT few of the thousands who wander through the princely avenues of Greenwich Park in the present day, are aware of the wild features it presented three centuries ago ; when its steep hill-sides were overgrown with thick underwood, and hundreds of old oaks bared their broad branches to the summer-sunshine, or shook their knotted arms in defiance at the black skies, and hollow winds of winter. There was then a savage and forest-like look in its scenery,

which bore but little resemblance to its present appearance, if we except the enclosure, still known as the Wilderness; and where a few straggling deer may even yet be seen, couched amid the dark green bracken, or carrying their stately antlers erect, among the picturesque and jagged stems of the aged hawthorns. For miles around, the country had then a grand but fearful look: a deep woodland threw its immense shadow over the high brow of Shooter's-hill, and stretched far away beyond the grey walls of Eltham Palace, thus affording a safe shelter to the numerous bands of robbers and rebels, who at this period infested the neighbourhood. Blackheath, which has been the scene of so many terrors and triumphs, where Roman and Dane have in succession encamped, where Wat Tyler assembled his rough but determined followers, and London poured forth her thousands to welcome back the chivalry of Agincourt, wore a far different aspect to what it does in the present day. The broad, bare, and dusky space which we now tread, was in summer-time

covered with thousands of gaudy heath-flowers, while the yellow furze and golden broom flaunted their bright blossoms, as if in mockery at the blasted and solitary trees, on which, during the reign of Henry the Eighth, had bleached the bones of so many of his victims. Nearly traversing the same direction as at present, a brown, rugged, high road, went grovelling its way beside the moss-covered, and weather-beaten palings of the park, until its winding course was lost to the eye, amid the dark umbrage of the distant hill. High above the surrounding scenery, and occupying the very eminence on which the Observatory now stands, rose the grey and battlemented towers of Greenwich castle, then a strong fortress, from which the warning beacon had so often blazed. Such were the general features of the landscape three hundred years ago: and to which we would now draw the attention of our readers. But it is in the interior of the beautiful park where our story first opens.

Almost all who have wandered through this

delightful spot, must have remarked the beautiful valley, which runs between the steep ascent of One-tree hill, and the gentle acclivity on which the park-keeper's house is situated. At the termination of this verdant slope, there stands a low, clumsy, square, brick pillar ; beyond this the ground is abrupt and broken, and here and there, scattered on the various knolls or little hills, may be seen a few stunted hawthorns, and a solitary oak or two standing far apart, as if to point out the forest-like character of the place. This spot, at the period of which we write, was thickly overgrown with trees, and, saving a winding footpath which led to a low thatched cottage, (the site of which is occupied by the present unsightly pile of bricks), was seldom traversed by any other footsteps than those of the inmates of the mansion, or some lonely fallow-deer which had wandered away from the herd. The cottage, or hut, was in no wise remarkable in its exterior, from those which are still built of "stud and mud," and are to be found in almost every old English village, in the

present day, saving, that its two small windows were glazed with squares of horn, like a stable lantern, in place of glass. There was, however, something gloomy in its appearance, but this was owing to the rising ground by which it was overtopped, and the dark green boughs by which it was overshadowed, and whose moisture fed an hundred varieties of moss and lichen, that vegetated on the thatched roof, and gave it that grey and melancholy look we so much admire in the paintings of a Gainsborough, or a Morland.

As the different parts of the park were distinguished by some particular name, such as Upper-covert, and Lower-covert, Oak-thicket, High-wood, Briar-dingle, &c., in order that the foresters might not be at a loss to discover the places appointed by the hunters, when they were ordered to be in attendance with the hounds, so was the spot on which our story opens, called the Dark Valley. Neither was there Verduror or Agistor found bold enough to pass through it after night-fall ; for one of the

keepers who had offended that irritable tiger, Henry the Eighth, had been hung on the oak which threw its broad branches over the hut; and it was rumoured that the ghost of Reynold the Ranger still haunted the Dark Valley. The hut itself would doubtless long before have fallen to decay, had not the capricious tyrant, (to quieten some qualm of conscience, before his death,) given order that the mother of the unfortunate keeper should continue to live in it unmolested, and it was still the residence of old Duskena at the time of which we write.

It was on a beautiful evening in June, and during the reign of the young monarch, Edward the Sixth, when the old woman was seated alone in her hut. The dim light from her ill-trimmed lamp, threw its dull beams through the horny casement, casting a feeble glimmering on the mossy stems that grew around, and just revealing a small portion of the footpath, which was in many places overgrown with tall withered grass, before it dwindled away into the deep darkness of the underwood.

Within the cottage sat the lonely and aged inhabitant, watching the contents of an iron vessel which was simmering on the fire, and sometimes taking up a wooden spoon, she collected the gathering skum and threw it into the flames. At length she took up the lamp, the better to ascertain the progress of her evening meal, and as she threw the full force of the light upon the iron vessel, by shading it with her trembling and withered hand, her own features were cast into a deep and mellow shade. Her countenance, which was naturally very dark, now wore a hue almost approaching to blackness, and rendered yet more striking the strongly marked outline of her features. The nose was large and hooked like the beak of a sparrow-hawk, and as old age had deprived her of nearly all her teeth, the mouth fell inward in proportion as the chin projected, which almost met the hooked and prominent member above. Her cheek bones also stuck out remarkably, and threw a shade over the fallen and sunken jaw, while her face was marked with an hundred different wrinkles,

some deep and dark, and branching into a variety of angles and fanciful forms. But the most striking part of her countenance was the deep-sunk and piercing black eyes, which seemed to glow with a fiercer fire than had ever belonged to her youth ;—as if, when all the rest had decayed, her spirit still reigned there with a power that bade defiance to years. It was a countenance which, when once seen, can never again be forgotten ; a face which haunts the memory of the beholder for ever, and keeps hideous watch over his troubled slumbers. The faded red hood which she had gathered around her head, also added to her strange appearance, (for the night air came in chilly through the numerous crannies) ; from beneath the hood, a few straggling and dishevelled locks of black hair fell over her face, as if defying time to turn them grey. Two or three times she dashed the locks aside with her brown skinny hand, then grumbling to herself, she at length tucked them under her faded head-gear.

When she arose from her seat, she was com-

pelled to support herself on a strong blackthorn walking-staff, the handle of which was tipped with horn, and worn bright through long and constant use. Old age and infirmity had almost bent her double, and ever as she moved to and fro across the rough mud floor, a large black cat followed her, and kept rubbing its head against her kirtle, the nap of which had long been worn away, and now showed the bare, coarse, and woollen ground. Her clothes were indeed, in a wretched plight: the old cloak which she had thrown around her was tattered and weather-stained, a dead brown had stolen over what had once been red, and even the grey and blue patches, which from time to time had been stitched over its many rents, were gradually toning down into the faded hue of the original garment; while her ragged gown, or tunic, seemed to be of the same age and colour as her patched and square-toed shoes.

The different articles of furniture, which were ranged around the apartment, were of a strange mixture, and, when taken in connection

with the forbidding form of the old woman, calculated to create the very reverse to a favourable opinion. On a mantel-piece, carved with hideous heads (and which had doubtless once ornamented some old monastery,) stood a large green hour-glass, and beside it the polished skull of her son Reynold; it was a boon she had obtained and carefully preserved after his execution; while on one side of the fire-place was reared a broom of heather, such as the witches of old were supposed to bestride when they rode on the storms of midnight. The table, which had no doubt been rescued from the plunder of some neighbouring convent, was solid oak, and stood on four ponderous carved legs, resembling cherubs: one leg, however, had been broken, and a rough piece of timber was nailed over the full cheeks and cross-wings, of this bodiless supporter, as if to prevent him from flying. A broken crucifix was also partially revealed in one corner, although an attempt had been made to conceal it by a pile of firewood, leaving, thereby, no doubt of the re-

ligion professed by the aged inhabitant of the hut.

On the wall was pasted a rude wood-engraving of the twelve signs, which had been worked off from the black blocks of some of our earliest printers. From various parts of the ceiling were suspended bunches of herbs, and along the large centre-beam, the dried skins of a weasel, pole-cat, and otter, which Reynold the Ranger had himself shot, and preserved. They hung just as he had left them; and when the wind blew aloud, they swung to and fro, and cast their shadows over the hour-glass, and his own skull, which seemed to stand ever grinning upon them. A heap of straw, over which was thrown a ragged covering, stood in one corner of the hut, and formed the couch of old Duskena; a tattered curtain stretched along a string, to ward off the draughts from this miserable resting-place; but the lower portion of it was worn and torn away, and only in one or two places reached down to the floor. A similar heap of straw was thrown together in another corner;

this was the bed of her grandson Gilbert, but he rarely found leisure to occupy it.

The old woman had by this time prepared the supper, which consisted of a small piece of rusty yellow bacon, and a few greasy stems of colewort or cabbage, and having covered it up in a brown earthen vessel with a wooden trencher, she trimmed her lamp, and sat down to peruse a well-thumbed, and black-lettered missal, which contained the prayers of the Romish Church. Beside her sat the huge black cat, sometimes looking up at its mistress, then again buttoning its eyes, and basking in the warmth of the comfortable fire. She was, however, suddenly aroused by a low knocking at the door, a sound which seemed rather to solicit than demand admission, when concealing the book under her tattered garments, and grasping the bright horn hook of her staff, she arose, and dragged her bent body towards the door, grumbling all the way at every step she took.

CHAPTER II.

And who is this so full of wicked faith,
That comes to take his council from the stars :
As if those pure and ever-shining orbs,
Were only made to register his fate,
Roll on, and light him to his devilish deeds.

The Fatalist.

“HAST thou come to disturb me at this late hour?” said the old woman, pausing before the door, and speaking in a voice which sounded like the wind, whistling through the hollow trunk of a tree.

“It is I, good mother, Henry Wardour, who have great need of your council; pray withdraw the latch;” was answered in a clear but tremulous voice, which sounded, as if the feelings of the speaker were deeply agitated.

Duskena undid the wooden bar, and gave admission to a tall handsome youth, whose years had not yet numbered a score of summers.

As he entered the hut, he took off the rich velvet cap, which had covered his beautiful brown hair, that was twisted in scores of natural curls, and prostrating one knee gracefully upon the floor, the old woman placed her hand upon his head, and said in a solemn voice, "The good saints bless thee, my son, and make thee an instrument to raise the Church of Christ, from the darkness and ruin with which it is now blackened and desolated!"

The youth arose, shook his head, sighed heavily, and covering his face with his hands, stood for several moments, in silence.

"I have heard all, my son," continued Duskena, again securing the door, and drawing forth a rude wooden stool, on which the youth seated himself, while the old woman resumed her chair; "I have heard all, and see as clearly as if the book of fate was opened before me, that it is the will of Heaven, that thou shouldst not take to wife the maiden on whom thy choice is fixed; the very difference of your faiths forbid it: the child of the true church must not enter

into an alliance with an heretic. Henry War-dour, thou must forget her; there is a new and evil league springing up, and she for whom thy heart yearneth is doomed to become a victim :— to fall a sacrifice to the ambition of others. Even thine own father, the Earl of Arundel, is opposed to thee, and the crafty Northumberland is raising a tower which shall fall down and crush him, together with all those who are aiding to build it.”

“Mother! good mother!” said the youth, springing from his seat, and throwing himself on his knees before Duskena, and seizing her withered hand, “Oh! tell me what danger it is that hovers over my beloved, that I may fly to warn her. Oh! did you but know all her goodness, her gentleness, her piety; could you but see her innocence, her youth, her beauty, her heart free from all guile, and selfishness; could you but look into her face, which resembles heaven, you would forget that she believed in any other creed than that of angels, and be the first to fly and save her.” He ceased,

and burying his face in the old hag's ragged garments, sobbed deeply.

As the old woman bent over him in silence, the dim light from the lamp fell upon her dark features, and for a moment the deep furrows of her brow were relaxed, as if the white wings of Pity, in passing by, had thrown their light for an instant upon her dusky features, then hurried away from so forbidding a resting place, and left the brown brow to settle again into its stern composure. "Henry Wardour," said the old woman, at length breaking the painful silence, "I was thy foster-mother, and have a love for thee, which could scarcely be surpassed by her who brought thee forth with all a mother's pangs. I loved not my own children better than thyself." She raised her head for a moment, and gazed upon the skull, which stood grinning on the mantel-piece; while a darker bronze seemed to fall upon her countenance as she proceeded. "I pity thee, my son, but my love for thee, must not get the better of my long-cherished revenge. I am sorry for this maiden, whom I

marvel not at thy following, with so blinded a passion, since no one giveth her an evil word; but I have sorrows of a deeper root, nor, were she my own daughter, would I save her, if by her means I could work out my deep-laid vengeance. But above all these do I seek for the re-establishment of our ancient faith, and it can only be done by blood—by blood!” As she repeated the last words, her whole frame shook, and she raised her skinny arms, and clenched her withered hands, while a grim and hideous smile faded over her dusky features, and gave to her the look of an evil demon, triumphing over the fall of some soul which it had long tempted.

The young lord sprang up in astonishment, and felt the blood run cold in every vein, while he gazed upon her; for never had he before seen human countenance assume so diabolical an expression; and while he hesitated whether to remonstrate with her further, or leave the hut, he was suddenly startled by a loud thundering at the door, which seemed as if the intruder had

a great inclination to beat it from off its hinges, unless it was speedily opened.

“Haste,” said the old woman, arising and withdrawing a sliding door, which to the eye had the appearance of a rough wooden partition, “keep thyself as mute as the buck when he harboureth: thou wilt soon see how I gather my knowledge of coming events. Speak not, nor breathe louder than a bird; thou mayest hear something which shall yet be of service to thee.” She closed the door and muttered to herself, “It is he, I will hasten the work of vengeance, and tumble their false faith to the ground.—Who knocks so loud at this unmeet hour?” added she, approaching the door.

“It is I, old hag,” muttered a stern deep voice, “undo the door.”

“Old hag! undo the door,” echoed the old woman, as she slowly raised the bar, and gave entrance to the daring intruder; “thou wert wont to address me in more measured terms,” said she, fixing her deep penetrating eyes on the visitor, “and methinks ‘good mother’ would

have come from thy lips with a better grace." As she spoke, a close observer could not but have remarked the suppressed sneer which rested on her withered lips, and the glance of contempt with which her censure was accompanied. Nor did it escape the keen eyes of Henry Wardour, as he stood reconnoitering the scene through a crevice in the partition.

"Good mother, or good devil, whichever thou likest best," replied the visitor, replacing the dagger, with which he had struck the door, in his belt, and throwing his richly furred cloak on the table, as he added, "I came not to quarrel with thee in the choice of titles, but have a deeper game to decide with the dice. Whose soul was the fiend and thee quarrelling for just now? methought I heard the Evil-one and thyself dispute in most excellent English."

"Thou hast been busied with the wine-flask since the evening-meal," said Duskena, "or thou wouldst not have come so brimful of false courage. Wouldst thou wish to see the form of him I held converse with but now?"

“ No ! no ! ” answered the intruder, who was none other than Dudley, the all-powerful Duke of Northumberland : and was, as the old woman observed, somewhat flushed with wine, though every moment he lingered seemed to abate its influence. “ Thou seest far enough into the future to tell who will next be advanced or degraded, and I doubt not but for thy knowledge thou wilt be damned hereafter. Canst thou not tell me the cause of my errand ? ”

“ Somerset is already dead,” replied the old hag, with scornful and cool effrontery, “ and as his blood is upon thine head, I cannot think that thou comest to me, to torture his soul after death, believing that thy considerate vengeance is willing to stop at the grave, seeing that it cannot extend further. Or, perchance, thou wouldst consult with me for a favourable time to put to death the persecuted bishops, who have too long encumbered the Tower : or, mayhap, wouldst have me find out the deepest donjon in the land, that thou mayest put both the princesses out of harm’s-way. Or, say,” added

she, fixing her glance on the duke, as if she would read his heart, "does thy loving kindness extend to the young and sickly king, and hast come to seek my aid to shorten his sufferings? Whichever it may be, thou canst not fail to prosper in it, for at this time, thy star is in the ascendant."

"Thou readest not my mission aright," said the Duke, suppressing his rising wrath, "though it would indeed advantage me somewhat to know whether or not the young king will again recover. But what thinkest thou," continued he, raising his voice, "if I come to drag thee forth to trial for a foul-mouthed witch, and a misbeliever? Have thy stars told thee aught of this? hast thou never seen a burning stake in the tail of the flaming comet that rules thy destiny?"

"Thou wouldst not linger long behind me an' I made a fair confession," answered the old beldame, undaunted; "but thou knowest what store I set by thy threats. And now what is thy business with me?"

The duke was rather startled by the sudden

and solemn manner in which the question was put, and placing his hand in the breast of his rich doublet, he fixed his eye upon the floor for a short space of time, as if endeavouring to collect his thoughts. The old woman kept her keen glance rivetted upon him while she rested upon her staff, and as her figure was almost bent double, she had to raise her bushy eye-brows, and draw up the dark pupils, that she might watch the working of his fine countenance; and as she thus set him like a wild cat about to spring upon its prey, his eye shifted its gaze from the floor, and looked full and steadfastly upon her. The contrast between the two individuals was very striking. The fine manly countenance of Northumberland, marked with the lines of pride; the broad nostril, curled lip, ample forehead, and clear penetrating grey eye, all lit and animated as he gazed upon Duskena, seemed to look more handsome, beside the stern, dark, and forbidding features of the wrinkled hag. The contrast was also heightened by his tall and erect figure, with

the broad chest thrown forward, and set off to advantage by the rich green doublet, his trunk hose of costly crimson velvet, slashed with white silk, while his square-toed shoes were also ornamented after the same fashion. At length the colour mounted his cheek, and the dark spot gathered on his broad intellectual brow, as he eyed the old woman thus narrowly, and found that her glance quailed not, and raising his voice in a more solemn tone than he had hitherto spoken in, he said, "Old woman, or old witch, both of which I believe thou art, if I once find that thou art tampering with me, by Him that died on the tree, I will have that withered body of thine chained to a stake, and without giving thee time to mutter a prayer, or even allowing thee the bare form of a trial, consume thy every limb to ashes."

Without once shifting her position, or removing her firm-set eyes from the countenance of the angry nobleman, the old woman replied, "Dudley, I fear thee not; I despise thy threats. Thinkest thou," added she, with the utmost

scorn, "that my life is so filled with pleasure that I fear to die, or that if thy hatred to me should prevail on the young king to turn me out of this miserable hut, and send me a houseless beggar upon yonder wild heath, that I should fare worse than the hundreds of those wandering children of the true Church, who have betaken themselves to the highways and hedges, and now beg their daily bread? I tell thee, proud duke, that I fear thee not. It was thy gold that tampered with the false witnesses, who swore away the life of Somerset; they are now in thine own service; beware that they sell not thee:—even the knave Cecil, Judas-like, betrayed his master; look to it that he gives thee not in barter to the next bidder. Heretic though Somerset was, he raised the grovelling secretary from the dust, and the base dog bit the hand that fed him. Thou art even now seeking to prop this new religion, by raising another to the throne, when Edward has gone, and withholding the rights from the Princess Mary. It may comfort thee to know that thou

shalt succeed for a time ; but, remember, that the hour of vengeance will assuredly come, that the very measures thou art now adopting will hasten it. Again, what wouldst thou with me ? tell me thy wishes ; for although I am thine enemy, I will deal fairly with thee, well knowing, that whatsoever thou doest will but hasten the mighty change."

"Thou art a stubborn and fearful hag," said the duke, struck with the bold bearing and firmness of the old woman ; "but I come not to quarrel with thee, it will be time enough to let thee feel the weight of mine anger, when I find that thou hast played me false." Then pausing for a while, he said "Whether thy power be from hell or heaven, I know not, but thou hast before told me my fate ; canst thou now tell me how long the young king has to live ?"

"But a brief space," replied Duskena ; "the grains of sand in his glass are numbered ; he will never see the golden harvest wave again ; the merry nights ye have kept up at yonder

palace of late, have shortened his days. It needeth no prophet to foretell this. I heard his deep and hollow cough when he last chased the fallow deer, and said ‘The voice of death is now speaking within thee.’”

“Can thy wisdom see aught in the future that concerneth myself?” said the Duke, after having long pondered upon what she said; for, like too many of the nobles of that age, he was imbued with superstitious feelings, and believed that the old hag could foresee coming events;—“aught,” continued he, “that foretelleth of death or marriage, advancement or abasement, weal or woe?”

“Not to thyself alone,” said Duskena, scowling darkly as she spoke, “although thy planet will traverse the eighth and twelfth houses ere long, and others in whose fates thou art interested shall come in conjunction, and some in opposition; thy fate will be subject to every aspect.”

“And will no mighty honours shower down their light upon these cross and gloomy pur-

poses," enquired the Duke,—“nothing sweeten the struggles and dangers of these coming events?”

“All, for a time, will fall out as thou wouldst have it,” answered Duskena, with a malicious grin. “Have I not told thee thy planet is in the ascendant? But remember, it is swift of course, and that its retrogradation will be more rapid than its rise. Thou aspirest to bring the crown into thy family; it shall be done; thou shalt not meet with any let for a time but such as thou canst master; thy gold will corrupt the base, thy power overawe the proud. Thou wilt succeed in wedding the maiden, Jane Grey, to thy son Guildford, although hearts will bleed, and fibres be torn asunder to accomplish thy wishes, and that blood will still remain unwashed from the crown which thou art aiming to place upon her head. The feelings of the people will be against thee; their opposition will roll along like a strong current, which at last will overwhelm thee.”

While she was speaking, a deep groan was

heard from the recess, which caused the Duke to look hurriedly round, and half draw his sword from the sheath, when, having satisfied himself that there was no danger, he thus proceeded :
“ Old woman, I would rather have heard more favourable things from thy lips, although I fear not to grapple with the difficulties, such as thou foreseest will beset my path. I need not warn thee to secrecy ; thine own safety depends upon it. Here is gold for thy advice,” added he, throwing down a handful of broad pieces on the table : “ with these thou mayest either feed thyself, or the famished priests with whom thou art in league. But remember, and let not thy mercenaries cross my path ; if thou doest, death is both their doom and thine.” So saying, he threw the rich cloak over his shoulders, held up his finger as he left the hut, and the sound of his footsteps was soon lost among the long grass, as he retraced his way to the palace.

CHAPTER III.

Painter. Oh! then, I see that God must right me
For my murdered son.

Hieronymo. How! was thy son murdered?

Painter. Ay, sir, no man did hold a son so dear.

Hieron. What, not as thine? — that's a lie,
As massy as the earth! I had a son,
Whose least unvalued hair did weigh
A thousand of thy son's;—and he was murdered.
* * * * Go in doors, go,
And this good fellow here and I
Will range this hideous orchard up and down,
Like two she-lions reaved of their young.

The Spanish Tragedy.

No sooner had the Duke departed, than the old woman withdrew the sliding door, and the young nobleman re-entered the apartment, with a blanched cheek and troubled look. But, however much the lover's fears might oppress him, he could not avoid remarking the sudden change which had come over Duskena, for there was now a fierce fire in her eye, and an

apparent firmness in her step, as she hobbled up and down the hut, waving her skinny arms, and exclaiming, "The poison works well; I have filled every crevice of his capacious stomach with it; now he will swell under his blowing dignities, till his ambition bursts him, and with him will fall all whom I hate. A few more moons, and my cup of vengeance will be filled to the brim, and I shall revel in my revenge." And the old hag laughed aloud, a shrill fiendish laugh, which fell with a frightful sound on the lover's heart, and chilled his very blood.

"Good mother," said he, in a conciliating tone, with much ado, smothering his disgust, "it giveth me great pain to see one of thy years, and one so near the grave, cherishing thoughts of vengeance in place of healing those wounds, which are already eating so deeply into the state. Methinks that religion which thou didst endeavour to instil into my mind when a child, teacheth thee to follow a different course to that which thou art now pursuing." The young lord spoke with deep feeling, for

he had hitherto looked up to the old woman with veneration, hallowed by a pity which he had ever felt for her troubles.

“Henry Wardour,” said the misguided old woman, pausing full before him, “seek not to turn aside the fierce current of my vengeance; they are the enemies of our faith against whom it is directed, and it is written that they shall perish. Behold this skull,” added she, seizing it with her withered claw, and pressing it to her skinny lips, while the light of the lamp fell full upon the polished bone—“This is all that I have left of my son, saving his painful image that still lives in the ungrateful boy, Gilbert,—this is all that remains of what I once madly loved. Yes,” continued she, raising her shrill voice, “and often in the stormy night, when the old trees have been clashing their gnarled boughs together, I have heard it call aloud to me for vengeance,—have heard it give shriek for shriek with the howling blast, and demand destruction on the heads of all these spoilers of our holy altars. Ah!” added

she, holding it from her at arms length, while the youth involuntarily drew back, "here grew those dark ringlets, which I have so often dandled with when he sat a child upon my knee! — The grave has consumed them all but one, and that I still carry nearest my heart, where it is ever pleading for revenge. Here rested those rosy lips, which I have a thousand times kissed, and which, when he had grown to manhood, were never borne to his pallet without a farewell salute for the night. Where are they now! My own eyes watched them day after day as they blackened in the sun above my roof-tree, and my own heart's blood grew darker as they changed. I had a daughter too," added she, dashing a scalding tear from her cheek, "but they have left me no remnant of her to mourn over: her fair body was burnt to ashes at the stake, an accursed hand signed the deed." She replaced the skull upon the shelf, threw herself into the rickety old chair, and buried her face in her hands.

“Thy sorrows have indeed been great, good mother,” said the noble youth, approaching her, “but oh! bethink thee how many beside thyself have at this time troubles weighty enough to bow them to the dust. But I am ill adapted to give thee comfort,” added he, with a sigh, “who, myself, come to seek it at thy hands.”

“Thou hast heard all,” replied Duskena, in some measure regaining her composure, for sorrow had ploughed channels overdeep in her heart to let the tide of grief flow long,—channels down which her passions raced like cataracts, headlong, fierce, and terrible —“Thou hast heard all; art thou strong enough to oppose thy might against the all-powerful Duke? for thy sake, and for the sake of her youth and many virtues, misbeliever though she be, I wish that his ambition had fixed upon a less worthy sacrifice. But her innocence will save her, trust me, no harm can befall the Lady Jane Grey. Thou mayst watch over her safety, nay, thou hast my consent to warn her of the storm that is gathering. But remember, she

can never be thy wife ; the king, the council, thy own father, are all in a masked league against thee ; the crafty Cecil is already deep in the plot ; they bare their councils to me, fools that they are, as if the helm of fate was in my own hand, and this shrivelled arm alone could guide their over-laden bark. But I talk to thee in parables."

"Can I save her?" said the noble youth, whose attention had, indeed, for the last few moments been entirely abstracted with other thoughts, and who was as free from all selfish motives as it is possible for aught human to be, resolving in an instant that if he could not wear her like a bright gem in his own bosom, he would at least watch over her safety.

"Thou must but warn her," said the old woman, "and I would give up half my hopes of vengeance, to see thy cheek wear again its natural bloom. But beware that Northumberland discovers not thy intent ; there are numbers of ruffians who feed daily at his board, and spend his gold in the taverns, who have ever their

daggers ready at his beck. Thou hadst better leave her to fate. She is in the hands of those over whom nor thou, nor I, have at present controul."

"Mother," said the brave youth, his fine features crimsoning, and his eye kindling as he spoke, and giving him a look, which a sculptor might have copied for the features of a god, "I set but light store by my life, when weighed beside her safety. I love her, my own heart only knows how madly, how devoutly, and every drop of blood that now flows through it, will I willingly shed in her service. Yea, although she never can be mine!" A deep sob checked for a moment his utterance; but by a powerful effort he checked his swelling heart, and again proceeded. "I may not feel so deeply, so acutely, for poor Reynold as yourself; although he first taught me to bend bow, wield a sword, and take aim with the deadly pistol. I have paid my tribute of tears to the memory of my foster-sister, with whom I have many a time wandered in childhood to gather wild-berries in

this very park. I have felt a pang for them ere now ; but if not so deep, so harrowing as your own, neither can I look for you to love her that I would save, as I myself do, well knowing that you are unacquainted with those virtues, to which my heart is captive. Did you but know her as I do, had you but heard her speak, basked in the light of her heavenly countenance, felt her innocent heart overflow with its goodness, seen how much youth and beauty were allied to purity and love, that might become an angel ; even your blinded vengeance would be thrown aside, and you would be ready to rush and save her from the ruin which already threatens her. But you will not,—you cannot feel what I do now.” He ceased, sat himself down upon the rude stool, and wept like a child.

“ Henry ! dear to me as my own children,” said Duskena, now deeply moved, “ I am but a feeble old woman, worn down with many years and many sorrows : the very power I possess over those above me, is but a mere

shadow wrought into an imaginary and fearful reality by their own blindness. My passions are only kindled when vengeance seems standing at the threshold. I was wont to sit down and weep even as thou dost now. I have shed tears enow to drown a thousand troubles, but not to quench my revenge: it grew on tearless and dry, like the knotted and giant oaks that still shoot amid the cold and pebbly heights of this park, sterner and harder for want of moisture, until it seemed rooted in iron! Thou art one of the few living beings that I feel pity for: the boy Gilbert I have nursed up like a wolf's cub for vengeance. I almost marvel why I should be mixed up in these forthcoming events; but wrongs are bitter fruit to store up, and will keep through many a winter. I would stretch out my arm to save this maiden for thy sake, had I but the power to do it; but I am no stranger to the character of her cruel and deep-designing mother, who will drive her into the golden net which Northumberland has already prepared for her. No! thou must forget

her, my son ; it has long been the dream of the young king, to prepare the way for her becoming queen after his death. Heaven curse him !” added she, with a bitterness that made the young nobleman shudder. “ The shallow boy thinks to prop up this new creed, on which his heart seems fixed, by her means ; but there are longer heads than either his own or this upstart Duke’s to over-reach. But thy thoughts are wandering to her even now, thou payest no regard to my sayings.”

“ The birds are already astir on the branches,” said the anxious, but hopeless lover, “ and since thou canst not aid me, it is time that I were gone. I may at least prepare her for what is in store. If I cannot save her, I may yet render her some service, although I perish in attempting it, and death without her will, indeed, be welcome.” So saying he looped his rich doublet up to the very throat, thrust the pistols and dagger still further into his belt, and gathering the sword under his arm, traversed the wet and winding paths of the Dark Valley,

and crossed the park in the chilly day-break, with a feverish brow and an aching heart. Dusken lifted up her wrinkled hands to bless him as he departed, then retired to her straw pallet, to dream over her long and deeply-cherished revenge.

CHAPTER IV.

We have strict statutes, and most biting laws,
(The needful bits and curbs to head-strong steeds.)

SHAKSPEARE.

A JOURNEY from Greenwich to London, in the year 1553, was a matter of much greater importance than it is at the present day. True, there were roads in abundance, such as they were, from the deep rutted lane that went winding into Bermondsey, to the present old Dover-road, which ran through the miry streets of the ancient borough of Southwark, beside numberless bridle and footpaths, across the low marshy land around Deep-ford or Deptford, as it is now called. Boats were also ever in readiness at the old palace-stairs, and day and night, numbers of weather-beaten tars were constantly on the look-out for a fare before the "Royal

Harry," for such was the name of the old tavern, which then stood adjoining the palace, and on its sign bore a rude painting of the large ship of war, from which it was called.

Day was fast breaking, and the first faint streaks of light already flashed on the broad bosom of the Thames, as Lord Wardour reached the ancient landing-place, from whence so many kings had embarked. The watermen ceased their rocking motion, as the sound of footsteps approached, and withdrew their tarry hands from their bosoms, while one of them exclaimed, "Boat, your honour?—just have time to shoot the bridge before the tide turns."

"Shut your foul-weather jaws, Jack," said another. "How the devil do you know his honour's going so far? Perhaps your worship only wants putting across, and I'll do it in a jiffy, in the tight little Nancy," added he, edging closer to the youth, as he spoke. But Wardour, without replying, leaped into the first boat, and bade the sailor make good speed to London. No sooner did the others perceive

that their chance of the fare was gone, than they began the attack right and left, both upon their comrade and his passenger.

“Land him at the shipwright’s at Rotherhithe,” said one of the disappointed applicants, “he’ll make a famous figure-a-head, and may be seen in the dark without painting.”

“The wind would never blow within a mile of him,” said another, “he smells so cursedly of court scents.”

“Drop your gab,” said an old man, “I see a gale brewing in the young blood’s face; he looks as stormy as the Bay of Biscay, and by gad, if he leaps ashore again, and unlooses the brace of bulldogs in his belt, he’ll rattle some of your cannisters.”

The hint was taken in good time, for the blood had already mounted the young man’s cheek, and he was preparing to leap ashore, when their rude jests were thus put a stop to.

Lord Wardour’s thoughts were too much engrossed with more important matters than to pay attention to the waterman’s long account,

of the strange fish which had appeared off the Nore, and the two dolphins which were seen the day before sporting abreast off Blackwall. Nor did the war, and bloodshed, and death, which his garrulous companion prophesied they had come to give warning of, in the least arrest his attention. They came in sight of old London bridge, just as the sun was gilding the walls of the ancient houses which overhung or stood upon it, and as the tide was already turning, and the passage of the bridge could not be accomplished without considerable danger, they landed at Fish-hill stairs. The young lord threaded his way through one or two of the old arched passages which narrowed the circuit to Cheapside, passed that long and even then populous street, the old wooden cross of St. Paul's and the huge building itself, which rose high with its wooden spire above the surrounding houses, and reached Ludgate-street as the watchmen were extinguishing the lights in the smoky cressets. His progress was, however, arrested by a well known voice calling upon

him from out of a crowd of ten or a dozen people, who were assembled before the St. John's head on Ludgate hill. Lord Wardour drew up, and to his amazement beheld Gilbert, the grandson of Duskena, struggling to release himself from the grasp of a red-nosed pot-bellied man who, in spite of kicking and twisting, still retained a firm hold of the collar of Gilbert's ragged doublet.

"How now?" said Wardour, stepping boldly into the centre of the little group, and accosting the unfortunate Gilbert, whose roguish features assumed a peculiar expression, when he saw such unexpected and powerful aid at hand. "What new scrape hast thou got into now? It is but two nights ago that I gave bail for thee to the City-watch."

"It is no great matter, my lord," replied Gilbert, whose very looks proclaimed him a vagabond; one of that class who have forsworn all work, and are determined to take things easy, let the world move as it may,—"no great matter; but this fellow is bent upon making me a

drawer, whether I will or no. And I know no rule whereby I should be compelled to aid in killing people, by serving out his muddy ale, or giving them the gripes with his crab-verjuice, which he miscalls wine."

"He is a base varlet, my lord," said the host, shaking him; "a sturdy beggar whom I have known of old; and I claim him by the statute-book. My name is Ninion Saunders, master of this tavern," continued he, pointing to the front of the house, on the overhanging gable of which was the sign of St. John's Head. "I pay watch and ward, king's dues, and corporation claims, and now lay such claim to this lazy knave as the law giveth me."

"I am at a loss to know by what statute thou seekest to establish thy right to his person," said the young nobleman, "believing him (unless he hath committed some misdemeanour) to be as free as myself."

"You know not the law, my lord," said Ninion, making such a bow as only a host of the olden time could make; "he is poor, ergo,

he is a vagabond. He came into my parlour last night to beg a draught of old October, ergo, he is a beggar, and had not wherewith to pay for what he called for. Now what saith the act passed within the present year?" and fumbling in his huge leathern pocket, he drew forth several pieces of soiled parchment, and read as follows " 'Samuel Syston:—Item, one pint of Rhenish,'—no that is not it—'To William Modeley, carpenter, for repairing the shovel board, item'—no, it is here, copied in my own hand from Alderman Guttle's statute-book—'Edward the Sixth, by the grace of God' and so on—'It is enacted that henceforth every person, not impotent, and not having any visible regular means of living, found loitering or wandering about, and not seeking work, shall be considered as a vagabond, and may be seized and set to work by any one willing to give him meat and drink for his services; that if he run away, he shall be branded on the breast with the letter V,' for villain, vagabond, very varlet, or whatever way you like to inter-

pret it, my masters," added he, looking round on the audience who now encircled him; "'and further, that he be judged to be a slave to his employer for two years, during which time it shall be lawful for his said master, only giving the said slave bread and water, or small drink, and such refuse of meat as he shall think fit, to force him to work, by beating, chaining, or otherwise, in such work and labour, how vile so ever it be, as he shall put him unto.'"

"May God's curse fall upon all the framers of such brutal laws," said a joiner who had stopped a moment to listen with the saw in his hand, as he was proceeding to his labour; then clutching the handle of the saw tighter, and grumbling deeper to himself, passed on.

"Who speaks against the laws?" said Ninion; there was no answer, and he read on. "'And further, that if the said slave runs away again, he shall be branded on the forehead, or the ball of the cheek with the letter

S, and be adjudged a slave to his master for ever: and finally, if he run away again, he shall be held to be a felon, and shall suffer the pains of death."

The old host read the act aright, for such was the law in force at this period against beggars, and with but few modifications remained so, up to the time of Elizabeth.

"Now," continued the master of St. John's Head, folding up the parchment, and putting it in his pocket, "I have no wish to put in force any part of this law, although it giveth me a full claim to his body; but if the knave will abide with me, (for I like his wit, vagabond though he be,) he shall eat and drink of the best, and have no cause to regret the day that he became drawer to Ninion Saunders, at the St. John's Head, Ludgate Street. Speak I the thing that is fair, my masters?"

"All fair! all fair!" replied half a dozen of the bystanders, whose names might be spelt at full behind mine host's parlour door, each placed above his own unpaid reckoning.

“ Well, what sayest thou to this proposal, Gilbert?” said the young nobleman ; “ methinks thou mightest manage to lead a merry and an easy life with this worthy host ; he speaketh thee fairly : but choose for thyself,” added he ; “ he shall not detain thee another moment if it be against thy will.”

“ Why, for the matter of that,” said Gilbert, hesitating a moment, “ I dare at any hour match my light heels against his barrel-belly, when I am wearied of his service. And as he gave me a good supper, and I have passed a merry night at his expense, why I will e’en turn drawer for a time, of my own free will. You, my lord, will tell granny that I have taken up a -new trade,” and kicking up his heels, he exclaimed, “ So heigh, Gilbert, for the wine pots.”

“ Pots, Gilbert — Pots !” shouted the bystanders ; “ that shall henceforth be thy name.”

“ Whatever you please, my masters,” said Gilbert, taking off his cap and making a bow

in imitation of the host : “ will it please you to step in and taste our vintage? Prime Canary, bright as a morning-star, and cheering as the sunshine ; Rhenish that will make a man tell six lies in the short space of time that it now takes him to tell one ; muscadine and sack, such as is only fit for honest men, and would go sour for want of drinking, were it not for honest rogues like myself. Or what say ye to a cup of right bastard, such as will make a man forswear becoming legitimate again ? will ye not step in, right worshipful gentlemen ? ” Then muttering to himself, he added, “ It shall go hard if I do not, before long, cry quits with this villanous host, in spite of his statutes. I shall remember his V, while he is a vintner, and his S, while I serve out every cup of sack.”

“ By the mass ! ” said Lord Wardour, “ thou art a merry knave, Gilbert, and I care not if I break my fast with a cup and a mouthful ; and thou shalt tend on me for want of a better guest,” and, ushered in by many a low bow of

the host's, which was mimicked in the background by the ragged wag, Gilbert, much to the amusement of the bystanders, the whole party entered the tavern.

CHAPTER V.

Thou first shalt sigh, and say she's fair,
And I'll still answer, past compare ;
Thou shalt set out each part o'th' face,
While I extol each little grace ;
Thou shalt be ravished at her wit,
And I that she so governs it ;
Thou shalt like well that hand, that eye,
That lip, that look, that majesty ;
And in good language them adore,
While I want words and do it more.

SIR JOHN SUCKLING.

LEAVING the young nobleman for a short space, at his refreshment, we must now transport our readers to the splendid mansion of the Duke of Suffolk, for to such a high station had Henry Grey, the late Marquis of Dorset, been raised. Without occupying our space with a description of the building itself, which, like all other noblemen's mansions of that period, abounded in brick turrets, overhanging gables, bay-windows, or oriels, and innumerable needless an-

gles, such as may still be seen in old houses, we need only add that it stood in the Strand, and had behind it a beautiful old-fashioned garden, or pleasance, which sloped down to the very edge of the Thames, and terminated in a smooth and pleasant terrace, very similar to that which is still to be seen in the Temple gardens. The sweet sunshine of a June morning fell full upon the huge rambling building, giving a brighter green to the tender leaves of the shrubbery, and throwing a warmer light on the smooth terrace, while the broad river seemed like a mass of flashing silver, and dazzled the eyes with its rippling splendour. Nor was the beautiful scene without its admirers, for even at that early hour, two young ladies were walking beside the river, and inhaling the sweetness and purity of the morning air. Woman's lovely eyes seemed then made for other purposes than to be dimmed by late revels and midnight merriments; the sun shone not so late upon those sweet sluggards as it does now. Beauty was up,

and met the morning face to face, leaving the sun to rouge their cheeks, and the air to breathe its own perfume, and trusting to the healthful breeze for the colour of their complexions. Let no bright eye flash angrily over this passage; it is written by a dear lover of the gentle sex; and the truth must be told at times, even in romance.

The young lady to whom we must now draw the reader's attention, did not appear to be more than sixteen, although her countenance was stamped with a deeply intellectual expression—a kind of beautiful thoughtfulness that seemed to light up her youthful features with a spirit that far outgrew her years. Her countenance was clear and perfect, and though delicate, yet distinctly marked. There was a firm expression in the small but beautiful mouth; the thin rosy lips were compressed, and looked as if a smile was ever about to break from them, so sweetly did they repose upon each other. They looked like lovely barriers, from which nought but wisdom, and modesty,

and goodness could emanate ; as if no evil expression dare ever to contaminate, or pass over such purity. And when she spoke, it was in so sweet a voice, that the beholder forgot the level lines of pearly teeth which those opening roses revealed, and felt only a strange music playing about his heart—a deep sinking of gentle sounds, that went thrilling through every sense, and which, even if breathed over the couch of the dying, would almost make the sufferer forget his pangs, and fancy that he heard the music of heaven. She looked as if sovereignty was seated in her countenance. Her eyes were also so exquisitely soft and piercing, that their very colour was obscured by their brightness ; they beamed with a clear, but indescribable light—tender and holy, and star-like, as if such orbs were only made to open and light up so angelic a countenance. Her sweetly pencilled brows spanned in beautiful arches beneath her clear and ample forehead, like two bending and dark veins figured in the purest marble, as if in contrast to its

surpassing whiteness, while her fine Grecian nose gave a rich and sculpture-like finish to her features, as if the face of a youthful Venus had infused its likeness into that of the Virgin-mother watching over the sleeping God-child. Her light bright hair was parted Madonnawise in front; and on it rested the starred border of her head-dress, like a rim of daisies; behind rose a silver band, studded with pearls, and was surmounted by another tire of becoming ornament, where the coif terminated in a loose screed which fell gracefully behind her head. Her long hair hung loose down her back, and sometimes the wind tossed it to and fro in playful and pleasing forms, like pendant flowers sporting in the breeze. Her slender and delicate neck was also encircled by two rows of costly pearls, at the front of which was suspended a rich jewel, but they seemed rather to receive beauty than give it to the silver column around which they were hung. Hers was a countenance, in short, for which a man might own himself blessed if but

allowed to kiss the empty air through which it had passed. Her gait also was most graceful, giving a thousand pleasing and undulating forms to her drapery as she moved along, and revealing the beautiful symmetry of her figure; while her small feet peeped out from time to time as if to look up at her sweet face, but were repulsed by the envious kirtle. Her boddice, which was of costly material, fitted tight to her well-formed body; and threw its deep crimson over the full outline of her bosom. She held a book open in her fair small hand, and sometimes her eyes threw their light upon its pages; then she paused to gaze upon the river, or pointed out to her companion the beautiful forms which the blue and silver of the sky had assumed.

Such, and even more lovely was the Lady Jane Grey, whom we must now bring before our readers. Her attendant was also young and good-looking, but the eye scarcely rested upon her while she was in presence of her noble mistress.

“And so thou hast a dislike to the noble Duke, my gentle Amy?” said the Lady Jane to her attendant, resuming their conversation: “And yet thou knowest that we are taught to love our enemies, and methinks he hath never shown himself any other than friendly to both of us. But surely thou lovest his son, Guildford?”

“Not so well as the Lord Wardour,” replied the attendant, who stood on the most familiar terms with her noble lady, and loved her above aught on earth. “Were I your ladyship, and was left to the freedom of my own choice, I should prefer him to Lord Dudley. And yet,” added she, with a sigh, “I would rather that he followed our own faith. As to Northumberland, I cannot like him if I would. Pardon me, lady; but I like not those long closettings which he holds with your noble parents. And rumour says that he played a foul game with the Duke of Somerset. I dare not talk thus to any other than yourself.”

“My dear gossip,” said the lady, laying her

hand on Amy's shoulder, "thou must learn to think more charitably of mankind; the sun still shines on brightly behind the dark cloud, even when to our eyes his glorious rays are obscured. All human actions spring from some motive or another. When the dagger of Brutus struck the heart of Cæsar in the senate, (evil although the deed was,) the high-souled Roman believed it to be a necessary act—a crime which his country needed; but had the heart of Brutus been a sharer in our holy faith, he would have left his punishment to God. And yet," added she, musing, "the divine Plato was a heathen; and where lives there a Christian whose virtues outnumber his? But I am wandering. You spoke of Lord Wardour, Amy! I should respect him the less if he could change his faith for the sake of me. Religion is not like a garment, which may be taken up and worn or laid aside at pleasure; it is the only raiment the soul wears—the only covering that we can stand in before our Creator—the mantle that, if once sincerely put on, must be worn

through all eternity. I could not change my faith for the wealth of the wide world. I would not do it to save my life." As she spoke, she turned her beautiful eyes heavenward, and the bright sunshine fell upon her angelic countenance like an approving glory thrown around her by some invisible spirit.

"But, Lord Dudley, my lady," continued her companion, who had really her young mistress's happiness at heart, "has not seen thee above thrice, and then in brief visits; and assuredly there has not been opportunity enough to judge of him. I would at least choose my husband with more caution than my tunic; nor would I even take the mercer's word for that, unless I had before obtained a clipping, and examined its qualities closely."

"Hey, Amy! Amy!" answered the lady, in the most familiar manner, "thou little knowest what sacrifices my duty would compel me to make to pleasure my good mother. But consider how kind she hath been to me of late. I once thought that she bore but little love

towards me; but it has cost me many, many tears, for thus wronging her." And a bright drop, that put to shame the brilliants on her bosom, rolled down her lovely cheek as she spoke.

"My heart will break," said the affectionate Amy, bursting into tears as she spoke, "if I give not utterance to the thoughts that I have too long kept to myself. Oh forgive me, my dear lady, if what I say offends thee; but if I am never to see thy face again, I will part from thee with a consciousness that I have been honest;" and she sobbed like a child as she proceeded. "Can I forget," continued she, "the time when good Master Ascham visited us at Broadgate, and while thy father and mother, with their attendants, were out hunting in the park, thou wert reading Plato, and explaining to me divers passages in English, that I also might understand his works: one among the number of thy many kindnesses; for thou didst first teach me to read. Oh! I shall never forget that day; for thy lips never made known

to any other than him and good Master Elmer what thou didst then suffer."

"I did wrong to name aught prejudicial to my parents even to them," replied the lady, with a deep sigh; "but go on, I will at least listen to thee."

"I knew thou wouldst," said Amy, kissing her mistress's cheek, then leaning on her fair shoulder a moment to weep." "The good old man," continued she, " marvelled how thou hadst attained so much knowledge—so far beyond what even learned men acquired. And thou didst tell him, whilst the tears rolled down thy cheeks as thou didst hold his friendly hand, that one of the greatest blessings God ever gave thee was, that he sent thee such sharp and severe parents, and so gentle a schoolmaster; for that when thou wast in their presence, whether thou didst speak or keep silence, sit or stand, eat or drink, be merry or sad, either at thy sewing or playing, thou wert forced to do it all as if by measure, or else thou wert sharply taunted, threatened, and even

beaten, in ways such as were only known to ourselves, and such as thou wouldst not, for their sakes, tell to him ; and that thou hadst no peace only when thou wert either asleep, or with good Mr. Elmer, who taught thee patience, while the tears streamed down his cheeks, and he often retired apart to pray to God to change the cruel heart of thy mother ; and so thy books became thy only pleasures. I remember the tears falling upon the kerchief I was embroidering, until I could not see to take a stitch for very sorrow, well knowing that thou hadst not then told him a tithe of what thou didst undergo ; and when I would have spoken thou beckonedst to me to be silent, while good father Ascham dried his tears on the skirts of his mantle."

"I remember all this well," said the lady, a shade of sorrow clouding her beautiful brow as she spoke ; "but I doubtless deserved all my good mother's rebukes ; and thou knowest that she treateth me not so now."

"I would that she did," answered Amy,

weeping bitterly ; “ we could still sit and cry together for companionship, and though she locked us up again, as she hath many a time done, without our meals, we could forgive her for that ; and though she dragged thee forth by the hair, as she hath done before time, until thy poor head ached, and thou couldst not sleep, yet I could arrange it again, and make it smooth with my tears, as I have done ere now. But, alas !” added she, burying her face in her hands, “ I fear that she meditateth greater evils than these. They sold thee like an article of traffic to the ambition of the Lord Admiral ; but death was his doom ere he turned thee to his evil account. Thy mother is now about to barter thee to Northumberland, for what purpose I am ignorant : but I fear me it is an ill one. She but smiles on thee when thou art about to do her service. I would to God that she were not thy mother.”

“ Amy,” said the lady in a kind voice, which was mingled with a mild reproof, “ remember that she is still my mother, and it is written

that we should obey our parents. Thy love for me causes thee to look with an evil eye upon her actions ; some one, I fear, hath misled thee ; but hark ! there are footsteps approaching ; dry thine eyes ; I know thou meanest me well." She ceased, just as Lord Wardour came in sight along the winding path of the shrubbery.

The noble youth approached, and having doffed his cap and paid his morning salutation in a difficult and embarrassed manner, such as only can be done by one who is deeply in love, and in the presence of her he adores, played for a moment with the plume in his bonnet, while his face changed from crimson to almost a deadly paleness, and then he said, in a faltering voice, " Lady, I feel that I am now an intruder here. I found it difficult to gain even access to your presence ; but I come as a friend, and not——" he would have said, " as a lover," but his feelings checked the utterance, and he added, " I come for the last time ; may I be heard for a few moments ?"

“My Lord Wardour,” said the lady, with difficulty stifling her own emotions, “I would rather that my mother was present at this interview ; but at this early hour——” she paused, as if unable to proceed.

“Hear him, my dear lady,” said Amy, “there is nothing but honour in the soul of Henry Wardour. I would trust thy life to his keeping.”

“And I would guard it better than my own,” added the noble youth, then blushed, and looked on the ground, as if ashamed of what he had said. “But I come to speak with thee on matters which deeply concern thine own welfare. As for myself,” continued he, in a melancholy voice, “I care not what may befall me ; but it would throw a brightness around my last dark hour only to hear of thy happiness, though certain that it was shared by another.”

“Oh talk not thus, my dear—— my lord,” said the lady, checking herself, for her own heart pleaded too deeply in his favour. “I

have ever loved thee as if thou hadst been my very brother—more I must not—more I dare not do. It is my mother's wish that I should not see thee—forget thee I cannot—not even at her bidding. Memory can never be subdued; and although our very religions are dissimilar, we both worship the same God, with the same sincerity of purpose. But, oh, Henry! seek to know no more. I am not my own keeper. Seek not to awaken those feelings anew which I have attempted to eradicate, by tears, and prayer, and deep penitence. I must not—cannot listen to thee. If thou hast any pity for me, oh leave me! Alas! I feel that——” She threw herself on the bosom of her faithful attendant, to hide her fast-falling tears.

But we will not prolong the scene; for what danger could Lord Wardour warn her of when he himself knew not in what shape it would come? Could he advise her not to enter into marriage with Lord Dudley, without making it appear that he was in no wise interested in breaking off the alliance? Could he warn her

of the ambition of Northumberland, and shew her any other way to escape from his toils than by rejecting his son in marriage. None! none! All these thoughts came in upon him at once, like an overwhelming current, and then were as speedily swept away when he heard her own sweet lips confess that he was still the chosen one of her heart, and that whoever might obtain her hand, he had still a deep share in her affections. He hurried away, like one beside himself; and oh!—dreadful vortex into which disappointed lovers plunge!—he applied those lips which but a few minutes before had imprinted a last parting kiss on the purest hand in Christendom, to Ninion Saunders' filthy wine-flasks.

CHAPTER VI.

“ Oh how wretched
Is that poor man that hangs on princes' favours!
There is, betwixt that smile we would aspire to—
That sweet aspect of princes and their ruin,
More pangs and fears than wars or women have.”

SHAKSPEARE.

WE might now occupy a goodly number of our pages with the wooing of Lord Dudley, and the subtle arguments brought forth by the ambitious Duchess of Suffolk to hasten the Lady Jane's marriage ;—or fill up a large space with descriptions of how the fair victim wept in private when she recalled the image of Wardour ; and how poor Amy, while she endeavoured to console her beautiful young mistress, too often awakened thoughts and feelings which called up in more vivid colours, the forlornness of her situation ;—and that still, amid

all this surrounding darkness, there broke forth one lonely and consolatory ray of light—that of being united to one of her own faith. Nay, further, we might give a long description of her marriage; how her cheek was blanched when she stood blazing in jewels before the holy altar; tell of the rich dresses which were that day worn, and who bore the trains of purple and crimson velvet—wore flowers of gems and rich crosses, Georges and golden garters, carcanets and great pearls, with a long list of garments fastened with gold buttons of crymery work; aglets and chains, silks and plumes; girdles of silver and tassels of gold; all of which the old chroniclers have minutely detailed. All this we might do, but as it would add but little to the interest of our story, and only retard the more important objects at which we aim, we shall trust to the reader's fancy to fill up the blank, and again resume our story a few days after the period of her marriage to Lord Dudley.

We must now turn our attention to those dark laboratories which have been erected in all ages of the world, where ambition works out his secret operations for reducing mankind to his power, and from which centre spring those thousands of unseen snares in which the feet of the unwary are entrapped;—those spots in which the huge state-spiders sit, and study new forms for their nets; until at last, like some of their black species which throw web over web on the crevices of ruined walls, they are unable to break through the thick entanglements, and so die in the midst of their own meshes;—places in which the black archives are kept that teach men to climb above their fellows—to raise themselves on their bowed necks, until they can never again carry their heads erect, so stiff do they become through long subjection. It is in these foul recesses, where the shrines of the ancient Druids still stand; those dark political altars which are stained age after age with blood and tears,

and on which human sacrifices are offered up daily; for innocence and youth, beauty and virtue, are no safeguards when a victim is needed,—spots which ought only to stand by the volcanos of hell, and be fed by the eruptions of the damned!

In a large old wainscotted room within the ancient palace of Greenwich, sat the Duke of Northumberland alone, before a table which was covered with numerous documents. He had taken up one from a pile of letters, (the seals of which were unbroken,) and was intently perusing its contents, and from the shade which gathered on his brow, and the quick quivering of his lips, the matter seemed very unsatisfactory to his wishes. “So he pleads illness when I have the most need of his services,” said the duke; “but will, if health permits, endeavour to wait upon me this evening. — Well, that is better,” added he, laying down the epistle. “But beware, Sir William Cecil,” continued he, unconsciously

giving utterance to his own thoughts; "I suspect thee! Thou didst play a double game with Somerset; but if once I find thee trying the old trick upon me, off goes thy head." And like a man who at once adopts a resolution which he means adhering to, he instantly turned his attention to the other epistles. "The fellow is a fool!" said he, jerking the letter across the table, "to think that a man cannot follow the stag, or stay an hour later at the banquet without drenching himself next day with his hog's wash, his wood-sage, and wood-betony, and diluted messes. But if they all were such good-natured asses as Lord Audley," added he, "they would be the easier to drive." So he proceeded with the next, and throwing it also away as soon as his eye had run over it, said, "Cranmer hath as great an itching to burn these poor misbelieving devils as the most fiery papist that ever clapped a light to a faggot. I thought, Joan, the Kentish girl would have stayed his

stomach for a time. Give him the reins and he would soon sweep over the land; but he must not have the old witch Duskena, while she can be of service to me." So he ran over the whole pile, and shook his head over Arundel's letter, and gave an approving smile while he read one from the Duchess of Suffolk—a growl at a petition from the imprisoned Bishop Gardiner, and a shrug at another from the French ambassador; then threw himself back in the large stuffed chair, and silently ruminated over what he had read. And could all the thoughts within that lofty brow have been laid bare, we should have seen the subtle threads by which mighty nations are kept in subjection—those shapes which are nursed and fed within the brain, and when ready, leap forth at once into power. But still, over all his meditations, the dark and withered form of Duskena presided. Wherever there was a weak point in the character of the ambitious duke, there her power was felt. She seemed

like the great ruler of his destinies ; and the more he resolved to forget her, the oftener she occupied his mind, until he got up, and pacing the room, cursed her for a foul hag who had taken possession of his brain.

His thoughts were, however, soon turned into another channel by the entrance of an attendant, who came to announce that Sir William Cecil waited without ;—then retired to conduct the deep-plotting politician into the room. The countenance of the aspiring Secretary, (who first contrived to raise himself in the service of the Protector Somerset, and then to advance in Northumberland's favour, by aiding in the downfall of the former,) wore not then that forbidding look which we trace in the portraits of the future Lord Burleigh. True, there was still the same high pile of forehead ; the deep-sunken eye, and that immense length of feature which we see in the Bodleian portrait ; but at the time he became a chief mover in our story, there was a blandness and pleasing

expression in his features, in place of that sternness which after-years of care brought. He was then the smiling, but cunning courtier; the man whom but few of the readers of history would believe him to be; for it is only by the publication of the late letters from the State Paper Office that his true character has been brought to light. But even in his younger years, one skilled in reading the human face would have concluded that he was not a man to be trusted, unless his own interest tallied with the affairs in hand. There was a restlessness in his deep penetrating eye—although at times his piercing glance fixed itself upon those with whom he came in contact, when unobserved, then wandered to another object the instant it was detected:—as if afraid that his eyes might betray what was then passing in that capacious mind.

There was something cold and cautious in the manner in which the duke received his powerful secretary—a kind of stiff deference, such as may often be observed in one holding

a high station in life, who is, nevertheless, compelled to avail himself of the clearer judgment and mightier mind of his inferior in rank.

“I regret to hear that you have been unwell of late,” said the duke, after the stiff and cumbrous compliments had been gone through, “but I have sworn in Sir John Cheek as an assistant secretary, that the business may fall somewhat lighter upon you.” The duke looked closely into the countenance of Cecil as he spoke, to see what change this unpleasant announcement would make in his features ; but he had to deal with one who was a deeper dissembler than himself, and who allowed not a trace of his feelings to be seen.

“Your grace is ever considerate of your humble servant,” said the wily statesman, bowing low, and throwing a smile into his countenance, “and doeth nothing that is unbecoming of your superior wisdom.”

Northumberland bit his lip ; he felt the full

force of the insincere compliment, but it was one of those home-thrusts which even a great man must bow to when it is accompanied by such a smile ; for his "superior wisdom" was then about to be displayed by consulting Cecil on the very objects which weighed heaviest upon his mind.

"Better seat yourself, Sir William," said the duke, ringing a small silver bell, and ordering the attendant to bring in wine, and retrim the lamp. "We must not cause a relapse by our neglect."—And so he ran on with his compliments, which were just as interesting and unmeaning as they are in the present day. But Cecil was determined to come to the matter of business at once, and drank long life and health of the king, adding, "How fareth his gracious highness by this time? I have not had mine eyes blessed by the light of his royal countenance for these three last days."

"Our beloved sovereign hath his health but

indifferently," said Northumberland; then adding, while he kept his eye upon Cecil, "He hath scarcely tasted a cup of wine since he drank happiness to the nuptials of our son Dudley, and our most virtuous and pious daughter the Lady Jane Grey."

"Doth then his highness's complaint baffle the skill of the leeches?" said Cecil, pressing the matter still closer, for he was fully prepared for the duke's answer. "Or do you not think that the cares of state, though greatly lightened by your grace's wisdom, are somewhat too weighty for his weak health, and tender years?"

"Thou hast hit it, good Sir William," said the duke, seizing the silver drinking cup, and quite elated that the Secretary had, as he thought, by chance stumbled upon the very heart of the business. "It is that which preyeth upon his spirits; and fearing that his days may be but few, he hath also a dread that the old religion may again spread over the land, and render null and void all that

has hitherto been done to establish our new faith;—and it is on this matter,” added he, after a brief pause, “that I would fain have thy opinion.”

“I fear me,” said the crafty Secretary, who was not ignorant of the height to which Northumberland’s ambition soared, “that the Princess Mary hath too long enjoyed her religious forms without let, to change them now; but, assuredly, she who has been dealt with so leniently, will let others enjoy their own faith unmolested.”

“That will but be a sorry trust,” replied the duke, shaking his head; “thou must be well aware, if his gracious highness was to be called from us to-morrow, and Mary proclaimed queen, that both Gardiner and Bonner would be liberated; and it needs not the foresight of an owl to tell how matters would then be guided. Besides, as if with an eye to the necessity of some change for the better establishment of our holy faith, thou canst not have forgotten that our late most gra-

cious sovereign, Henry the Eighth, caused an act to be passed, which leaves the princesses no claim to the crown ; nay, even branding them with illegitimacy, by declaring his marriages with Katherine of Arragon and Anne Boleyn null and void."

"Your grace argueth rightly," answered Cecil, though well aware that the putting in force of such an act had never been contemplated by its framers. "The Duchess of Suffolk hath then a near claim to the crown. But, bethink your grace, will it not be a dangerous experiment to wave the right of descent, which, in spite of all acts, truly belongeth to the princess Mary? Will the people consent to make this sacrifice for the upholding of our religion?"

"But what if, in addition to that which is already done," said the duke, "our Sovereign Highness also passeth another act for the future settlement of the crown ; one that receives the

sanction of the whole council;—who then will be found bold enough to oppose it?”

“The people, my lord,” said Cecil boldly, “have not shown themselves backward in opposing what they have considered an invasion on their rights, and there are now no lack of disaffected priests, who but wait the opportunity to wake anew the sedition.”

“Then thou wouldst allow the Papists to step quietly into power?” said the duke, looking fixedly at Cecil—“advise us to bow our necks once more to the yoke of Rome, and be beheaded, or burnt at the stake for the struggles we have already made; and more than this, pay no regard to the will of our sovereign, who can have none but the holiest of motives for setting aside the lady Mary, and whose mind is racked night and day with the fears, that after his death, the land will again groan beneath the power of Popery.”

“If our beloved sovereign is indeed actuated by such holy motives,” said Cecil.

“*If* he is,” said Northumberland, catching at the word, while a dark frown gathered on his brow — “Thou dost not assuredly misdoubt my words. I tell thee, sir, that I have heard him groan such groans as would make even thy heart ache, and seen him shed such floods of tears as would soften a soul of iron, and all for that love which he bears to our blessed creed, and the fear lest England should again sink back into her former degeneracy,—be priest-ridden, and Pope-abused, and given up as a prey to that vengeance which has too long been cherished against her.”

“I am but your grace’s servant,” said the secretary, “and in everything bound to fulfil your wishes; and when it pleaseth you to consult my poor judgment, I feel it my duty to give an honest opinion, well knowing that your grace’s superior foresight will see clearly which path to pursue. But I have not yet heard the name of the noble personage to

whom our gracious sovereign intends bequeathing the crown."

"To the Lady Jane Grey, now the Lady Dudley," said Northumberland, laying a strong stress on the latter word. "And on a worthier brow it could not be placed."

"She is indeed most worthy, my lord," said Cecil, speaking in sincerity; "but bethink your grace what misery this change may bring upon us all, should our enemies in the end prevail, which God forbid."

"Thou bringest as much cold comfort to our cause," said the Duke, rising deeply agitated from his chair, "as a croaking raven to a sick man's couch. I tell thee that she shall be Queen; and woe be unto those who dare to oppose my wishes! Neither is it my will alone. There is a secret power that presideth over all our destinies; that power has been invoked by one who is a bitter enemy to our creed, and it hath declared in our favour."

“I seek not to throw a coldness on the cause,” my lord, replied Cecil, who now saw that he had ventured far enough in his opposition; “but am willing to aid it, in so far as I can in safety and honour. And I feel confident that your grace’s goodness would neither seek to endanger the one, nor subvert the other.”

“Thou dost not seem to enter heartily into my plans,” said the duke, with much ado subduing his passion; “thy feelings kept better time with me when thou didst lend thine hand to pull down the haughty Protector. But go,” added he, waving his arm, and knitting his dark brows as he spoke, “I leave thee free to follow thine own choice; thou must venture body and soul with me, or I have no further need of thy service. But remember, if I catch thee in any wise plotting against me, I will have thy blood, though I die the next hour for it.”

“Your grace does me wrong,” said Cecil,

kneeling before the imperious duke, while his countenance was pale as death, and in his heart he had determined to oppose him. "Many who have promised more, have served you less faithfully than myself; and if I have ventured to point out the difficulties which may militate against your wished-for measures, it has been with a good intention, that your grace may be the better prepared to encounter with them. Small cause have I, beyond all men, to oppose your worthy plans, as my happiness or misery is linked with yours, and as I am now what your bounty hath made me."

"Thou hast said enough to satisfy me," replied the duke, permitting Cecil to kiss his hand, who, Judas-like, intended to betray him. "I will believe that thou meanest well to us. To-morrow thou wilt join our council in the hall of the palace; until then, well may you fare; and I trust," added he, looking with a deep meaning at Cecil, "that your illness will not again prevent your attendance."

No sooner, however, had Sir William Cecil departed, than Northumberland summoned an attendant, and bade him dog the secretary at a secure distance, and mark closely with whom he conversed ; and when again left alone, he said, " I will not trust him too deeply in this enterprise. He hath been closeted of late with the Earl of Arundel, who beareth but little love to me." 'Tis strange," continued he, musing, " that there is no other road to power than by climbing on the necks of those we suspect and hate—that the path to greatness is paved with a thousand perils ; but who would care to venture upon it," added he, again drinking deeply, " if, like the highway, it was open to the footsteps of every beggar. And this new religion ! what care I for it more than its sensual founder, who ruined many a goodly abbey, that its wealth might flow into his own coffers, and feed his own gross pleasures. But I will play out the great game," continued he, draining the massy goblet ; " the end of the old

hag's prophesy may yet be wrong." And he sunk down on his seat, to meditate on his plans for the morrow, while his thoughts often wandered to Duskena and the Dark Valley; for, with all his power and ambition, he was still a slave to superstition.

CHAPTER VII.

For now I stand as one upon a rock,
Environed with a wilderness of sea,
Who marks the waxing tide grow wave by wave,
Expecting ever when some envious surge
Will in his brinish bowels swallow him.

SHAKSPEARE.

MORNING, three hundred years ago, broke upon a thousand cares and heart-aches, just as it does now, and so will it continue to do, when the reader and writer of this history are gone. Many, like Cecil, pass a sleepless night—their slumbers broken by the power of some one in office. Others, like Northumberland, lie down and dream of future events: it comes to them in visions of the night, only to disturb their rest. Some, like Duskena, are visited in sleep by the gratification of long-nursed vengeance;

for the busy devil loseth no opportunity to forward his plans, but leaveth after-regrets to come too late. Others, like King Edward, are the slaves of good intentions, and find no peace until they are satisfied that the measures, on which their hearts are fixed, will be followed up when they are no longer concerned in them. Too many, like Lord Wardour, seek to steep their sorrows in forgetfulness, — to poison memory in the wine-cup, while grief fattens on the dregs. Others, alas! like Lady Jane Grey, lie down to rest suspecting no evil, and unconscious that there are busy workmen awake, forging golden fetters, which they are doomed to wear, and never enjoy their unbroken repose again.

So broke the morning above the tall tree-tops of Greenwich Park; bright and beautiful as the sinless smile of an infant, it gilded the oaks that over-hung Duskena's hut, and flashed upon the walls of the distant palace, regardless

of all the contending passions that were assembled therein. The same rays that threw their splendour on the broad bosom of the Thames, glanced goldenly along the care-covering roofs of old London, and found their way to the humble couch on which Gilbert Pots slept, forgetful of the unjust means by which Ninion Saunders had sought to enslave him. And old Latimer rose to peruse his Greek Testament, by the same light which streamed upon Bishop Gardiner, through the narrow loopholes of the Tower. The world was the same then as it is now, filled with good and evil, happiness and misery, and all those opposing pains and pleasures, which find their end in the grave.

The morning found Sir William Cecil an early stirrer, for his mind had been on the rack throughout the night, and he sought in vain to bury his cares in sleep. He left the apartments, (which as an attendant upon Northumberland

were allotted him) in the palace ; and with a feverish brow and haggard look, went forth to recruit his spirits in the fresh air of the Park. He wandered along, scarcely knowing or caring whither, until making a circuit above the Dark Valley he found himself on the high summit of what is now called One-tree Hill. The eye of the unhappy and ambitious secretary gazed over the wide landscape that basked in the sunshine along the opposite shore. In the distance rose London, dim and vast, and even then seeming to stretch far away to where the venerable Abbey of Westminster heaved up its towery bulk like a huge boundary to the City. Fronting him spread out the green marshes now known as the Isle of Dogs, and round which the River Thames swept in the morning sunshine like a belt of silver. Here and there the face of the river was dotted with boats, or some noble ship went sweeping with broad blown canvass along the immense bend. Below him stretched

the old town of Greenwich with its piles of steep roofs, and antique chimneys, from many of which the blue smoke already curled. At his very feet lay the deep green valleys of the park, the tops of the tallest trees seeming on a level with the brow of the hill on which he stood. The thatch of Duskena's cottage gleamed dimly through the masses of foliage by which it was partially overhung. The unhappy secretary gazed upon the surrounding landscape with a heavy heart, and thought himself the most miserable of mortals that breathed amid the vast space which surrounded him. Ill at ease, however, as he was, he saw clearly that the plan which Northumberland's ambition was fixed upon, was attended by a thousand dangers. He knew that the nation hated the haughty Duke, and that as he had built himself up on Somerset's ruins, the nobles eyed him with fear and jealousy. "And yet," said he, speaking unconsciously to himself, as

he stood with his arms folded, and his back resting against an oak, "I must play my game with caution. What if he calls upon me to draw up all his proclamations: to write, and answer his letters? Shall I not with my own hands sign the damning proofs, which if he fails will consign me to ruin. I must, — I will evade them. But then he suspects me, looks upon me with a close and jealous eye; believes my late illness to have been feigned, and is convinced that I am no true advocate to his cause. Nay, above all, doubts Arundel, and has, I fear, some knowledge that we are leagued against him, and woe worth both our heads! if he should but once have proofs of it. Yet, to whom can I unbosom myself? to whom make known my doubts? Arundel and Darcy, may be true, yet I fear to commit my neck too far in the noose with them. Cheek and Paget would climb the same hill as myself; but what if I show them the dangerous side? they may shun

it and reach the summit before me. I have then no true friend! none but poor Alford, whom I dare trust: and on such dangerous ice does ambition blindly venture. Would that I were again safely ensconced beside my humble hearth at Bourn. But the internal devil, Pride, whispers me that the man, whose lowly parents the proud Northumberland honoured with a visit, can never return there again as the humble William Cecil. 'Would that I could fall back again to what I once was with safety, and without disgrace; but the stag that the hunter has once sought out, must by his own daring become the leader of the herd, or be shunned by them, and left to die alone in the thicket.' He hung down his head, sighed heavily, then glancing cautiously around, as if for the first time remembering that his meditations might have been overheard, and remained silent.

“What unhappy wretch is babbling his secrets here?” said a sharp piercing voice, which sounded

from behind a clump of hawthorns, the stems of which were half buried in tall bracken, and whose sound made the blood of Cecil run for a moment in a chilly torrent through his veins. "Wise men trust not their own ears with their thoughts; but keep them secret as the unwelcome confessions of the victim on the rack. But mine ears are quicker than mine eyes," said Duskena, stepping forward, with a bundle of sticks under her arm; "and yet methought I heard the name of Cecil."

"You heard aright," said the unhappy secretary. "Old woman, your ears have not deceived you. You need but hasten to tell Northumberland all I have said, and he will give you gold for your tidings; and the cares of state will not weigh upon me beyond another sunset."

"But I have heard nothing new," said the old hag, fixing her keen eyes on Cecil, while her hideous features were lighted up by a

fiendish grin ; “ what can we look for from the man who has sold one master, but that he is only waiting the best bidder for another ? And your statesmen are the same cunning hunters, who employ their slaves until they suspect that they have learnt the trick of baiting the trap ; then entangle them, or take on others who are less wary,—I have learnt nothing new.”

“Thou judgest too hastily of me,” said Cecil, “ whatever I have done, I had just cause for doing it.”

“ So say they all ! so say they all,” answered Duskena, with the same bitter sneer, “ from the base judge who takes a bribe, to the robber that stops the traveller on the highway ; the one satisfies his conscience that he had need of the gold, and the other that the way-farer had gathered his wealth unjustly. Gardiner had just cause for being sent to the Tower. Cranmer to be raised to the primacy. Henry the Eighth to sack an hundred churches, and turn

loose and houseless into the world a thousand inoffensive priests. Northumberland to bring Somerset to the scaffold, and now to seek to raise another to the throne. So say they all! though I, a foolish old woman, may deem otherwise."

"Yet thou art lending thine aid to his present plans," said Cecil, "art spurring on his ambition, by the secret powers which men attribute to thee, — art feeding his superstition, until he believes that even the stars are bending to his course. Nay, although I am a misbeliever in thy supernatural power, yet can I see that thou art mounted upon his back, and determined to ride him head-long to the devil."

"Ah! ah! ah! canst see all this," said the hag, with a horrible laugh, "then thou knowest how much I hate him! Yes," added she, raising herself on her staff, while the breeze on the high steep rustled through her "looped and windowed raggedness," he shall live to accom-

plish all that I have told him, then fall like the sere leaf of Autumn. The golden ray on which his eye is fixed shall fall just where he wills it ; but scarcely shall his glance have time to mark where the bright beam rested, before a deep darkness shall settle upon the spot for ever. — ‘This day,’ added she, pointing through the trees to the turrets of the palace which stood at their feet,—“ this day, and within yonder walls shall the seal be affixed to all his wishes. He hath wrought the king up to his ambitious purpose, and more hands than thine shall sign away the crown to the Lady Jane, who are now plotting for the Princess Mary. His course for a time shall be unobstructed as that of a mountain torrent, until it rolls blindly on, and is dashed at once upon the sudden and opposing rock, at the foot of which it shall sleep like a black and stagnant pool, and no human arm shall save those who are driven along with

him. The deep sea on which his folly floats, shall open and swallow up all."

"Tell me then," said Cecil, "how I, who have no wish to join in this general wreck, yet am chained down like a galley-slave to the decks of the vessel, shall escape."

"By solemnly swearing that thou wilt be at my beck when I have need of thee," answered the old woman. "Yet," added she, waving her withered hand as Cecil was about to swear, "I have no need of thine oath. I know enough to have thee hung upon the first tree in this park, if thou playest me false. I need but whisper in Northumberland's ear that thou art the planet which threatens to cross his course, and thy light will be extinguished for ever. Thou wilt come to me," said she, stooping down, and gathering a sprig of heather, "whenever thou receivest this summons."

Cecil bowed in acquiescence.

"I am content," continued Duskena, looking on the plant, "it will not be long before I need

thee : the young king can scarcely survive the sunshine of another sabbath."

"But thou forgettest, good mother," said Cecil, "that as secretary to Northumberland, all his schemes must come through mine own hands, and that it will be no easy matter for me to forswear a knowledge of the documents which are to bring about this change, and which I shall in some measure be compelled to hasten, albeit against my wishes."

"And who," said Duskena, "will be better prepared than thyself, when the time comes, to overthrow the ambitious Duke. I tell thee that what thou doest with the one hand, thou must undo with the other. Thou must be like the disguised cut-purse, who when the traveller inquires of him the way, sends him along the very path where his companions are on the look-out for plunder. Remember that he who is in the devil's confidence, knoweth more of the secret plans by which he seeks to entrap men's

souls, and is better able to warn them of the danger than another. Thou mayest shrug up thy shoulders. But go thy ways, and fear not, while thou remainest faithful to me, I can, and will protect thee: thou canst not play false without my knowledge. I have those who watch over, and inform me of all Northumberland's secrets; see that thou keepest nothing from me. The hour will soon come when I shall have need of thee. Begone before some jealous eye from the loop-holes of yonder palace observes us. And remember the signal, and whatever message the bearer of it may deliver, at the peril of thine head, refuse not to obey him."

So saying, the old woman gathered her ragged garments more closely around her, and threading her way through the jagged hawthorns, and entangling underwood, retraced her steps along the steep brow of the hill, until she gained the easy declivity which led to her hut. Sir

William Cecil struck down the steep descent, and wandered alone in the wooded solitudes of the park, there to meditate over the different plans which agitated his mind; for he felt like a man, who, treading upon a narrow and insecure neck of land, trembles at the hideous pitfall on the one hand, and the deep and dangerous quagmire which threatens to swallow him up on the other. He knew the power that the hag possessed over Northumberland, believed her threats, and trembled.

CHAPTER VIII.

Why, how now, gentlemen?
 What see you in those papers that you lose
 So much complexion? Look ye, how they change?
 Their cheeks are paper.

* * * * *

The colour of the king doth come and go
 Between his purpose and his conscience,
 Like heralds 'twixt two dreadful battles set.

SHAKSPEARE.

NORTHUMBERLAND was as constant in his attendance on the young monarch, as any poor but distant relation on a wealthy relative, who is in the hopes of finding himself the possessor of a good legacy. But he played his part so well, by creating evils, and leaving the sickly Sovereign to propose remedies for them, that he at last had him wholly in his power, until nothing could be done without first consulting the crafty Duke. And so far had the plans

of Northumberland succeeded, that the chief managers of state affairs were on that day summoned to the palace to sign the document which King Edward had drawn up with his own hand, and which, after his death, settled the sovereignty on Lady Jane Grey. How all this was accomplished, what deep schemes were laid by Northumberland, what stratagems, manœuvres, and even force and threats were had recourse to, would, if even only slightly run over add but little to the interest of our story. We shall, therefore, re-open our scene on the morning which found Cecil in the park, and the plotting Duke beside Edward's couch.

The youthful King had chosen for his sleeping-room the large gothic chamber which overlooked the majestic Thames; and when in his low moods, he would sit for hours watching the little ripples float in the sunshine, or fix his eye on some tiny breaker that wasted itself on the shore, and draw from it some melancholy image

which bore upon his own brief career, for he well knew that the close of his life was fast drawing nigh.

He was awake when Northumberland entered his chamber, and though his pale face was half-buried in the rich velvet of the pillow, he held out his thin white hand when the Duke approached. After the usual enquiries about his health, and how he had passed the night, Northumberland said, "It gives me pleasure to find your Highness so greatly improved, and ready to put a finish to such matters as have, I fear, too long preyed upon your mind."

"It hath, indeed, wrought deeply upon me," said the feeble monarch, "and if I have done wrong in urging this change of the succession to the crown, God above knows, that I have been moved to it for the furtherance of his glory, and the more firmly securing our religion from Popery."

"It was the hand of Heaven that moved you

to this holy change," said Northumberland, who afterwards died a firm catholic; "believe me, my liege, it could do none other than guide your mind aright."

"I believe it," said the King, his utterance checked by a deep hollow cough: "yet Cranmer was against the change, and that hath often pierced me deeply, as I reverence his sincere piety. Chief-Justice Montagu was also opposed to it; Sir Richard Baker, Gosnold Griffin, and Cecil, on whose honesty I have great faith, entered not into it heartily; and yet," added he, "they proposed no other plan by which I could leave our holy religion secure."

"They have thought differently of the matter since then, my liege," said the Duke, "and although I have hopes that your highness will yet live long to uphold our true faith, yet you will find them all ready to subscribe the document according to your royal wishes. Shame on them!" added he, his haughty lip

curling as he spoke, "that they should have dared for a moment to oppose the will of so kind a master, and set their faces against so holy a cause."

"Nay! nay! good cousin," said the kind-hearted king, "fret not thyself any more about this matter; it will be finished to-day, and I shall die contented. Trust me, there are those amongst them who bear no less love to me than thyself, and with them this prolonged business has been a matter of conscience. And it grieveth me thus to wrest these rights from the princess, my sister; but thou knowest I endeavoured by persuasion, and even force, to set aside her idols, and her masses, and all was of no avail."

"You have indeed shown great forbearance, my liege," answered the Duke, feelingly, for he well knew that if he himself had possessed the power of the young King, he would long before have left many of them, whom he had sworn 'to

fight in his shirt,' shorter by the head ;—" great forbearance indeed, but I fear that so long a conversation may distress your highness."

" No! no!" answered the young King, half rising, and resting himself on his elbow. " I feel that this is the last day's toil I shall be called upon to go through, and God, in his great goodness, will grant me strength to endure it. And how fares our fair cousin, the Lady Jane?" enquired he, casting his dim eyes on the pillow, as he spoke.

" Well," answered the Duke, " considering that she grieveth so much for your Highness's health. Poor lady! she seemeth to crave nothing so much as to end her days with yours, which Heaven send may be long years first."

" I had hopes," said the king, while his countenance was suffused for a moment with a deep hectic flush, " once to have shared my throne with her. But those hopes," added he, with a sigh, " are now fled. Heaven bless her!

she will find that a crown is encircled by a thousand cares ; it will sit heavily on her young and beautiful brow. Hers is the only image that seems to float between me and heaven ; but lend me thine arm to rise, good cousin. It becomes not one who is so near the gates of death, to brood over blighted hopes, and faded pleasures. I must now learn how to die."

Northumberland spoke some words of comfort, which he never felt, and whilst he assists the enfeebled king to dress, we must glance at another group who were shortly after assembled in the hall of the palace.

Some old writer, whose name we have forgotten, regrets that mankind were not so formed, that we could read one another's inmost thoughts, and ascertain the true state of each other's feelings. Supposing only for a moment, that we all possessed this power, what a mighty change would this world undergo ; for the very best of us have more or less of in-

sincerity in our natures: there is none thoroughly honest, no ! not one of us. Our very delicacy, or miscalled respect for others' feelings, causes us to keep secret some kind of deception or other. And did this imaginary state exist, (unless the world was filled with upright and perfect people,) we should be eternally tearing at one another's throats. And after all, we are so constituted, that whatever mask we may wear, it will sooner or later be torn away, and we must all stand forth such as we really are. Even the character of Cecil, though much of it that was unknown has slumbered in the dust of nearly three centuries, yet the industry of an historian has brought many of its failings to light, and well might he exclaim with a sigh, "Of such stuff are your great men made!" But the great secret that causes men to seek the misery of power, has yet to be discovered: it is an old and familiar failing in human nature, and has blinded the sight of many a philosopher

who has set out in search of it; we know not yet, how much littleness is necessary to uphold apparent greatness, how much meanness false honour is encumbered with. The human heart shown up naked, and with all its failings, is indeed a sorry sight.

Before noon there were assembled in the hall of the palace, many whose names are familiar to the readers of history, — many which are a stain to its pages, and whose treachery brought ruin and death on the most beautiful and accomplished of women. Some stood in moody silence, as if ashamed of the deed they were about to commit: a few there were whose countenances were free and open, believed that the purpose for which they were assembled was a worthy one. Some cared not a straw about the religion which they but made a peg of to hang their plans upon, but only flattering themselves that the queen whom they were about to raise to the throne, would readily bend to all their purposes.

There stood the broad-browed and deep-designing Earl of Arundel, his whole soul centered in the overthrow of Northumberland. Sometimes he held a conversation with the double-dealing Cecil, who was ready to damn his soul if he could but keep office. Cranmer, who afterwards died for his faith, stood halting between two opinions,—his duty to the young king, and his own conscience; the last of which he falsely bartered. The Chief Justice Montagu, who, in spite of his former bold bearing, now bearded by Northumberland, stood waiting to sign the deed. Darcy, who hated the Duke with a bitter hatred, but stood ready to welcome him with a smile. Paget and Cheek, those state lick-spittles, such as in all ages stand like plague-spots on every government—the filthy dregs which have been handed down through every drinking-cup, that the lips of polluted politicians have hung their slaver on,—these and many others, whose likenesses are not

wholly effaced, and who are bred up in the rotten manure-heap of corruption, that stinks and smokes as every faction empties its filth out, age after age, stood ready to do the dirty work of duke or devil, whichever might bid highest for their services. Human leeches who wait to suck out all that is generous and noble in kingly blood, and leave their own poison in its place, until a very beggar would scorn to be inoculated from such a stock. Dry rots that eat up the stately and oaken pillars of a realm, until the polished outside, if struck, crumbles down into unsightly dust. Such men were assembled there, who felt no accusing pang afterwards, in bartering that religion which was sealed by the blood of martyrs for the favour of a queen, whose eyes only brightened while glutting upon the agonies of the victim writhing at the stake: whose smile could only be awakened by a shriek, and who, when all other persuasions failed to prolong the

stay of a favourite ambassador, trusted that he would wait one more day, to see a poor heretic beheaded.

Let those who think that our picture is too highly coloured, turn to the pages of history, and they will find that the highest passion which romance can kindle up, falls far short of what is awakened by the perusal of those harrowing truths.

While the group stood whispering apart, or musing to themselves, the young king entered the hall, leaning on the arm of Northumberland. He expressed his gratification in brief but apt terms, at seeing so many of them assembled to aid him in accomplishing a purpose which he had so long had at heart, and proceeded to unroll the deed which willed the crown to Lady Jane Grey, and which was again read by Sir William Petre, the Secretary of State. The young monarch glanced his eye around the assembly, then called upon Cran-

mer first, to sign his name. The Prelate stepped forward, doubled up his sleeves trimmed with costly ermine, dipped the pen in the inkstand, and said, "God is witness that I do this to please your highness, more than of my own free will," and without waiting for a reply, affixed his name to the document, while the brow of Northumberland grew dark as death. When the Archbishop had written his name, he shook the ink from the pen upon the floor, and laid it across the golden stand, as if determined to give no aid to the next comer.

The Lord Chancellor was summoned next, but before he took up the pen he run his keen eye over another document, which had received his own seal, and, satisfied that it was correct, and involved all alike for what they were about to execute, affixed his signature in a clear bold hand. The Marquis Northampton followed his example with hesitation. The Duke of Suffolk came next, and wrote his name

slowly and carefully, paused to re-spell it, then replaced the pen. Then came the proud and plotting Duke of Northumberland unbidden: one haughty stride brought him to the table, as he said, "Would that all hearts were as ready in this good cause as mine own." He wrote his name in a hurried hand, and replaced the pen. Next followed the Earl of Arundel; he approached the table with an apparent composure, subscribed his hand to the document without hesitation, dipped the pen again into the ink to add an extra flourish, and blotted out the signature, and by attempting to remove the stain, nearly obliterated the name of Northumberland. He muttered something about a bad beginning having a good ending, gave the pen to Northumberland, and when the duke had once more signed the deed, again added his own name. The Earls of Bedford, and Shrewsbury, Huntingdon, Pembroke, Clinton, with other lords of the Council then followed in succession, until

it came to Judge Hales, who, when called upon, refused to sign.

“Traitor !” exclaimed Northumberland, laying his hand upon his dagger ; “dost thou, who art thy sovereign’s servant, refuse to do his bidding ?”

“I do,” answered the fearless judge, “in this matter, which accordeth not with my conscience. I came at my liege’s summons, because it was my duty to obey him. I have before boldly uttered my opinion on this matter, and although I have no wish to influence the minds of others, yet am I resolved never to sign this deed.”

Had the fiery glance of Northumberland possessed the power, it would have struck him dead on the spot. Thrice did he grasp the dagger in his belt, and again withdraw his hand, while his haughty lip quivered with rage, and his broad nostrils dilated like those of a war-horse that “smells the battle afar off” as he

exclaimed in a voice of thunder, which seemed to shake the apartment, "Seize the traitor, and compel him to sign!"

"Touch him not," said the young king, arising, while he seemed for a moment kindled with the spirit of his father, as the crimson deepened over his pale brow with excitement, and he added, "let him begone, and never enter our presence again. He shall hear from us speedily. Begone!" said he, raising his feeble voice to its highest pitch, "while thy course is unmolested, lest we should be tempted to deal with thee according to thy deserts." He then reseated himself in the chair of state, while his frame shook beneath the deep hollow cough which instantly followed this excitement.

Sir William Cecil was the last to sign, and his hand shook like a leaf in the storm, when he took up the pen, although he merely had to add his name as a witness. He muttered something about his unsteady hand and late illness, nor

was he aware that the pen was dry with which he had run over the word Cecil, until reminded by Northumberland, when he again took it up, and finished in a black unsightly hand.

The young monarch then ran his eye over the names, and added his own signature in several places to the document. He then arose and addressing them, said, "It would have pleased us better had we had all the hearts as well as hands, which are here subscribed; but since we must attribute many of these signatures more to the duty than the will of some here present," glancing at Cranmer as he spoke, "we must rest content, having still a respect for their consciences. What we have done, we call God to witness, has been done only that we may leave stronger the foundations of our holy faith, and better secure our religion by leaving the sceptre in such hands as with your good guidance, will sway it rightly." Much more he added on the same subject, alluding also to the

regret with which he in some measure swerved from the will of his father; then attempting to prove in the next sentence that he fulfilled it, by leaving the crown to Lady Jane Grey.

Northumberland then followed, and spoke at great length on duty, religion, the sacredness of the King's wishes, and many other things, which he neither cared for, nor believed. But there were shrewd minds there, who well knew that there was something wrong in the state, which appeared more conspicuous through all this clumsy patching, and that in spite of every plausible argument, they had no right to disinherit the daughters of their late master; that the act they had just been guilty of was in every way unjust, and that whatever the religious principles of the Princess Mary might be, she was, beyond a doubt, the rightful heiress to the throne.

But they arose and separated, as many an assembly has done, both before and since that

time, satisfied that they had done the best they could, considering their own interests. That night, however, many of them lay tossing on uneasy pillows: these were the old venerators of legitimate royalty, believers in the "right divine," and that gout of the brain, conscience, gave them many a sore twinge. Others lay awake, and traced the legitimate line up to William the Bastard, running through all the ins and outs of sovereignty, from the field of Hastings; and their pliant consciences were the first convinced how glorious a line had sprung from a strong arm and a sharp sword, backed by a few thousands of Norman robbers. But these were in heart radical rascals, who grinned again when they thought of their honoured escutcheons, —worshippers of any golden calf that might be erected while the true Moses was up the mount, —dogs whose dregs have even come down and defiled the present age—woe worth 'em!— who had no more reverence for a crown than a cur, and

set no more store on real royalty than on a rush, —men who believed that the scratch of a pen, the sound of a trumpet, the raising of a few voices, and a bar or two of paltry gold bent around the brow, were all that the veriest beggar needed to make him right royal. But why should the memories of such disloyal knaves interrupt the progress of our story?

CHAPTER IX.

Not poppy, nor mandragora,
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,
Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep,
Which thou hadst yesternight.

SHAKSPEARE.

UNCONSCIOUS of what had transpired at the palace of Greenwich, Lady Jane Grey (for such we shall continue to call her) still remained a resident of Durham house, the princely mansion of Northumberland. On the morning following the scene which we have described in our last chapter, she was seated in the summer-parlour which overlooked the Thames, sometimes perusing the pages of Plato's Phædon, or turning her glance towards the broad river, on which numbers of small craft were already floating. The young lady felt less at ease than she had

done for some time; the conduct of her husband Lord Dudley, had appeared mysterious for the last few days, and when interrogated, he gave only vague answers to her enquiries. He was engaged in some secret and important service for his father the Duke, all of which he had promised she should in time be made acquainted with. Added to this, she was also deeply affected by the illness of the young King, her slumber had been broken during the night by frightful dreams, for in sleep she fancied herself wandering among high rocks, along narrow and dangerous paths, which overhung chasms and deep defiles, into which aught that fell alive must meet with instant death. Hitherto, she had been a stranger to such melancholy feelings as these; but now her spirits were sorely depressed, and without knowing why, she had much ado to restrain her tears.

But these feelings are as old as the world; and hundreds are living in our own time, who

believe that such states of despondence are forerunners of some approaching evil. The changes of the seasons are made known to us by thousands of natural objects, and many wise men have been believers in dreams and omens, and if we are spiritual creatures, why should there not be some link between our souls and the future, some mysterious chain that communicates with the Great Hereafter? These may be wild dreams, yet how shall we disprove them?

Similar thoughts to these floated through the mind of Lady Jane Grey, while she sat meditating upon the past visions of the night, until she was at length startled by the sudden opening of an inner door, as her mother entered the apartment.

The Duchess of Suffolk was still a beautiful woman, although forty summers had shone upon her brow, and if she carried herself somewhat too stately, it must be remembered, that she

drew her blood from a long and haughty line of kings,—a truth she never had need to be reminded of. But though her countenance might be considered handsome, there was something forbidding in it, a cold kind of chiseled pride, the very loftiness of which seemed to freeze the beholder,—a look that awakened more of fear than love, a great deal of what an old writer has happily termed “marble in her nature.” Her dress too was studiously correct ; every fold in her rich tunic seemed made to fall by measure ; not a wrinkle in her boddice stood wrong ; every gem with which she was adorned seemed to know its accustomed place, and she strode into the room “every inch a duchess.”

She approached and kissed the matchless brow of her beautiful daughter, who stood up to receive her starched salutation, but there seemed to be more of form than affection in the embrace, something of the formal homage which is paid to the hand of a superior, in place of

that fervour which unconsciously emanates from a fond mother's heart, for not a change passed over her cold haughty features.

“So thou art still reading, daughter,” said she, instead of saying, ‘God bless thee, my child,’ and feeling her heart swell while gazing upon so perfect a creature, as that which called her mother,—“still reading, as closely as if thou wert compelled to earn thy groat, by studying a part for some forth-coming mystery.” So saying, she swept her silken train across the floor, and seated herself as stiff and erect in the high-backed chair, as if she was the Goddess of the hoar-frost. “Lord Dudley,” continued she, has not yet returned. “Has any tidings of the health of his Highness the King reached you, at this early hour? I was with his grace of Northumberland late yesternight, and he gave but little hopes of the Sovereign's recovery; promising also to communicate with me betimes,

should there be any sudden change. In sooth, I can scarcely wish him to linger longer in his misery, and think that our loyalty will not be a whit lessened, by praying for his speedy removal."

"God forbid it!" exclaimed the Lady Jane, turning her lovely eyes heavenward as she spoke. "I fear me that the nation would be driven back to its old forms of worship, and that too by ungentle hands, were aught to befall our sovereign, but the will of HIM be done!" added she, with the devotion that might have become an angel,—“who alone knoweth how to accomplish His own mighty ends. And although it becomes not us, good mother, to examine the workings of His wisdom, yet believe me, it is our duty to pray for the recovery of the King, who has so fearlessly maintained our faith."

"It may be true, lady," said the unfeeling duchess, arranging her jewelled collar as she

spoke, which was half a finger's breadth awry. "But few places are sooner filled than thrones; high stations are never long unoccupied; and had death been a little busier of late, I might myself have worn the crown, as many of my kindred blood have done before me." While she spoke thus, she sat far too erect to be comfortable, but her dignity required it. "And if it had been the will of fate, I doubt not but that I should as well have become the honour as another. Tell me, daughter, if amid all your gathered knowledge, you have found out aught that leads you to believe in future events; by dreams, signs, or omens? The Duke, your father, and myself, have long had our reasons for supposing, that there is a course marked out by fate at our birth, which it is impossible to shun; and that there are those superiorly gifted, who, by their art, can foretel when these changes will transpire."

The young lady started when she heard her

mother talk thus, nor could she perhaps, at any other time, have produced so strange an effect upon her feelings. It was like some one, who, while reading a story of the supernatural, is, in the very height of excitement, alarmed by an unexpected groan; and prepared to look upon the form, which already fills the heated fancy, and she scarcely knew what she said, while she faintly uttered, "These very thoughts were haunting my mind but now."

The Duchess instantly forgot her dignity, and sank two inches in her seat, for she had the night before been closeted to a late hour with Northumberland, and drank in every word that he had communicated to her of Duskena's prophecy; and she believed at once that her daughter, even without human aid, was destined to become a queen, without the will which Edward had signed in her favour. But the Lady Jane knew nothing of what was then passing through the mind of her ambitious mother. Let the reader

bear in mind that the light had as yet scarcely broken upon the deep night of superstition, and that our story is founded in an age, when the wild and wonderful were too fully accredited.

“ I scarcely know how to answer thee, dearest mother,” continued the young lady, in some measure recovering herself; “ many learned historians have written on these matters, whom I dare not misbelieve. It is on record that Cæsar was forewarned of his death, by the clattering of armour in his palace,—that before Germanicus was poisoned, a trumpet sounded of its own accord,—that the swarm of bees which hovered around Plato in his cradle, foretold his great wisdom. These and many other similar accounts have been handed down to us by the wisest of men, and found credence in every age; and I know no more reason for rejecting them, than other things which they have left on record. But why

mother, dost thou ask me concerning such matters ?”

“ I scarcely care to tell thee,” answered the Duchess, with an affected carelessness, wishing to work up her daughter’s curiosity to the highest pitch, — “ some foolish fancies which I have long entertained respecting thyself,” then adding ; “ but they are not worth the remembrance.”

“ Nay,” said the Lady Jane, who with all her talents, had a leaning towards the superstitious, and moreover that inkling to know all, which is the common failing of her lovely sex, — “ It can do me no harm to be made acquainted with these thoughts, which you seem to doubt, and yet believe in. But if it be not your pleasure, I will not seek to know them.”

“ Well then,” continued the crafty Duchess, “ I dreamed, last night, that thou hadst a crown upon thy head, and sat on the throne of Eng-

land. And when thou wert but a child thy nativity was cast by the wise man of Westminster, and he foretold that ere thou hadst reached thy seventeenth summer, thou shouldst attain the highest honour in the land. But thou wilt say," added she, with a forced smile, "that this sounds like an old woman's tale."

"Assuredly thou wouldst not wish me to receive it otherwise," answered the Lady Jane; then musing, she added; "but a crown hath ever been considered to denote honour to the dreamer, though I place but little credit in these freaks which fancy plays us in our sleep, and still less in the casting of nativities. Nevertheless, dear mother, I pay great respect to your opinions touching such things."

"Still there is wisdom, daughter, in holding ourselves in readiness for any change that may suddenly transpire," continued the Duchess, fearful to strike at once into the subject. "Have

I not heard thee say that thou hast some faith in astrology?"

"I know some little of the writings of Heliodorus, Ptolemy, and others," answered the lady; "but Father Ascham bade me place but little faith in their doctrines. I have also heard of one Duskena, who liveth in the park of Greenwich, as being a wonderful woman. If I err not, his Grace of Northumberland, made mention of some strange things which had come to pass as she foretold. But his conversation was addressed to Dudley."

"She is, indeed, a strange mortal, and can read the stars as thou readest in a book," said the Duchess; "and whatever she asserteth will assuredly come to pass. She it is, daughter, who hath prophesied, that before another moon hath waned thou shalt be England's queen."

"That I shall be Queen of England, mother!" exclaimed the lady, springing up as if a serpent

had stung her. "God forbid that her prophecy should ever be fulfilled! But it is madness," added she, again seating herself, "to suppose for a moment that such things can ever come to pass. And yet——" she hung down her beautiful head, burst into tears, and remained silent.

"Thou wouldst not shrink from aught that Heaven might assign thee, to uphold our holy faith," said the Duchess, without consoling her: "ran not thy thought thus?"

"I would die for my religion," said the Lady Jane, with deep emotion; "but never usurp that state, which is another's birthright, to maintain it, nor do aught that might be offensive to God, in my zeal to establish that faith, which needs no human support."

"Let not what I have said move thee so deeply, fair daughter," said the Duchess, rising to depart. "What, if it is thy fate to become a queen, methinks such a change ought sooner

to awaken a smile than a tear. But I will leave thee to recover thyself;" so saying she left the apartment.

The crafty Duchess could not have come at a more fortunate moment; every circumstance was in her favour, and every word she uttered had left its effect: for at no other time could the mind of the young lady have been found so susceptible of receiving an impression, or her feelings in so fit a state to be played upon. Lady Jane Grey seated herself upon the chair and began to reflect; she attempted to turn her thoughts to other subjects, but all in vain; her mind was filled with mingled doubts and fears; she ran over all the strange things which she had read, recalled events which had been foretold ages before they came to pass; and although she had no wish, nor saw any possibility of becoming a queen, yet she began to have a secret dread that such a change might by some strange fatality befall her. Could her own

mother only awaken such thoughts to disquiet her? No! her innocent heart was pained at such a thought. And this wonderful woman, Duskena, what interest could she have in sending abroad such rumours: and Northumberland too, whom she looked upon as a wise and honourable man, strange that he should lend his ear to such a prophecy. So her thoughts wandered along in their darkness, for she was utterly ignorant of what had transpired at the palace; and although her mother was well acquainted with every secret movement which was at work, yet she had not breathed a word of it to her daughter. Proud, crafty, and ambitious, she had even kept her plans a secret from Northumberland, and had set about to prepare the mind of the unsuspecting lady, in the way which we have attempted to describe. Nor did she herself for a moment dream that there were minds as crafty as her own, plotting against her, or that any power dared to show

itself bold enough to oppose Northumberland. When Amy entered the room, the Lady Jane attempted to draw forth her opinions respecting a belief in future events, and found that her attendant had treasured up a thousand strange stories of the wild and marvellous, which she fully accredited. For her mind was rich in ancient lore, which she had gathered from her blind old grandmother; respecting witches, wizards, and warlocks, conjurers, magicians, astrologers, diviners, interpreters of dreams, fortune-tellers, omens, sounds, sights, and every forgotten devilry which furnished matter for conversation during the long winter nights in many an English cottage, three centuries ago. Although the young lady could scarcely refrain from smiling, while she listened to the wild legends poured forth by her companion, she could not turn her attention from the conversation which she had so lately passed between herself and the Duchess. She doubted, dis-

believed, yet still thought, and in vain attempted to recover her former calmness by perusing the pages of Plato. But her mighty spirit was not yet kindled, she knew not her own strength.

CHAPTER X.

To make short my tale, he breweth nappy ale,
And maketh thereof port-sale,
To travellers, to tinkers, to sweters, to swinkers,
And all good ale-drinkers ;
Who drink till they stare, and will nothing spare,
But bring themselves bare.
With now away the mare, and let us slay care,
As wise as a hare.

Tunning of Eleanor Rimming.

“ MARRY, but it is strange,” said Ninion Saunders, talking to himself as he sat in his little apartment in the St. John’s Head, and through an opening of which he could, without being observed, see all that was going on amongst his guests, — “ very strange ! I know not what to make of this Gilbert Pots, as he calls himself. Here comes one lord’s serving-man after another, to speak with him in private ; but I will fathom all these mysteries before I have done,” con-

tinued he, nibbling the end of a savoury neat's tongue, to give a relish to his liquor. "Yet never was so much custom drawn to the house before, as this knave bringeth by his wit. And yonder he is, drinking with one, and laughing with another," said he, peeping through the little opening in the partition, "while Dick the under-drawer is doing all the work."

"Score a cup of canary to the Lincolnshire grazier," shouted Dick, "it makes three in all."

"Then I will clap him down four," said Ninion, taking up the chalk: "he means to drink himself drunk before he goes to bed. It will take him some even cups before he is helped up stairs, and he cannot grumble when he is sober at paying for ten. Many an host would drink cup for cup with him at his cost; but, hang me, I was born with a conscience." So saying, he raised up his unwieldy body, and made his way into the old-fashioned wainscotted parlour. A merrier group of toppers were never assembled

together than that night met at the St. John's Head. They were men of all ages and all professions, from Peter-black-the-paper, as he was called, through being a printer in the employ of William Tottel, to Christopher, the drunken clerk of St. Paul's; Mark, the wealthy mercer of Ludgate-ward, and Hans Carvel the goldsmith, with many another, who had their say at the Guild, yet thought it not beneath their dignity to crack a joke, and quaff a cup at the St. John's Head. The candles were burning brightly in the sconces, and although the smoke from the street cresset sometimes sent its volume through the parlour window; yet the jovial guests were too much engrossed with their own jokes to pay any regard to trifles like these.

Between the rich goldsmith and the huge Lincolnshire grazier, sat Gilbert Pots, happy as a prince, and only deigning to fill the grazier's and goldsmith's cups, (out of which he drank in

turn,) when they were empty. And when he said aught that called forth a roar of laughter, Hans Carvel joined his voice in the merriment, and then stroking his beard said, "Mine cod, but dat is goot."

"Drink, Gilbert lad, drink," said the grazier, his great fat frame still shaking with the subsiding laughter which the last joke had awakened. "Never thee mind what Christy the clerk says about the church. I will stand between thee and all danger, if it costs me the price of ten fat bullocks."

"Christy is very piously given, even in his cups," said Gilbert, drinking, "and would fain convert all that belongs to him to the church. He fastened up his mongrel with the very chain that used to secure the Bible to the reading-desk in Paul's porch; but the cur broke loose, and with the holy fetter about his neck, went and stole a sheep's head from the nearest slaughter-house, which proves that a dog will

still have a dog's habits, although you link him to a saint."

"Thou art a sad knave, Gilbert," said the old clerk, laughing, "and wilt never amend thee, I fear, unless thou art taught a soldier's discipline."

"A soldier, saidst thou, Christopher?" echoed Gilbert; "what, wouldst thou have me trail a pike to Blackheath as thou thyself hast done, to put to the rout some poor Hot-gospeller. Marry, I have heard the Verger tell how thou didst run away at the smell of gunpowder, vowing, that in future thou wouldst stick closer to the smoke of a goose than a gun, sooner toss a pancake than pike, and carry the fume of ten wine-cups in thine head, rather than the weight of a helmet outside of it. I saw thee to-day assail a string of sausages valiantly; but woe worth thy courage, if they had been soldiers! thou hast a warrior's stomach for aught but valour, Christy—art a better man at a

trencher, than a trench, wouldst face Belzeebub as soon as a bullet. Stick to thy pick-axe and thy book, man; thou canst better bury than kill. I drink to thee."

"Mine cote! but dat ish goote," said the goldsmith, "it beeze de sharp shoot, for de Christy."

"I'll tell thee what thou wouldst do for," said the clerk, writhing under the attack; "thou wouldst make a most excellent liar."

"Dost think so?" said the good-natured Gilbert; "then, by the mass, I am fit for any office in the state, and am with such ample qualities at a loss to choose me a profession. Lawyer, traveller, tradesman, or tavern-keeper. I shall thrive in every branch, and will clap you ten lies into one for profit. Oh! how the city-wives will flock to me, when they have taken their airing late; how I shall be assailed by your spendthrifts, who want to have another pull at the estate. I should then swear gilt

was gold without blushing, and sell an ox that had seen ten summers for one that had but been two years at grass. Then how useful would lying be to me, if I turned tavern-keeper," added he, glancing at Ninion. "I should have a long license as drawer."

"He hits hard," said the honest grazier, clapping Gilbert on the back, while the goldsmith shrugged his shoulders, and said, "Dat is sharp, verish," and the host only gave a disapproving growl, then said :

"Saw ye ever such a drawer? who gets up to serve when it pleaseth him, and that but seldom, unless it be to quench his own thirst."

"Which is created by the salt of thy stock-fish, neat's tongue, and dried herrings," said Gilbert, who had long ceased to care for his master,—“all good things create a thirst, and very plentiful at the St. John's Head. If thou ever brandest me on the cheek with S, I shall swear it came through eating too much salt."

“And I will slice off his ears to put in pickle,” said a swash buckler, one of Lord Wardour’s friends, — “if he ever dares to touch thee. Here, Gilbert, fill me another cup of the thief’s best bastard.”

“Nay, he is no thrall of mine,” said Ninion, to his drunken guest: for he dreaded a brawl, and was well aware that the way in which he had sought to avail himself of the services of Gilbert would not stand investigation. “He is free to come and go when he pleaseth, though I should be right loath to part with him. He has six marks by the year, and sitteth at free cost over his cup,—hast not, Gilbert?” added he, turning his head, as the drawer entered with the replenished cup.

“Hey, that have I,” said Gilbert, who never forgot old Ninion’s having read to him the abhorred act, and winking at the grazier, he added, “and a licence to play with his monkey in rainy weather. And if a wench in yellow

taffety kicks up a brawl, am empowered to show her the street, unless my master wisheth to reprimand her to himself in the inner-room, then my authority ceases." A loud laugh was raised against Ninion by these remarks, and though he secretly hated the drawer, he was determined to wait his time, and only remarked, "Thou wilt be Lord Mayor, some day, Gilbert."

"Not so," said Gilbert; "I should then have every knave to comment upon my conduct as he does on thy liquor; not a link-boy but would hold up his light to show my failings. I should be like the cresset,—have to direct every reeling varlet. I would rather be a big-bellied Alderman, who snores quietly through a sermon, and is wakened by a psalm just in time for dinner, and has a foot-boy to hold his sides while he laughs."

"Mine friend, Gilbert, but dat ish shlander-ing de Guild," said the goldsmith, whose eyes

were gradually growing less. "Mine Lord Mayor a cresshet ! for vot ? he meddle none vid de dirty coal, and tar and pitch ; he beeze de Lord Mayor, mine very goote friend, goote Gilbert."

"The best man, living," said the clerk, glad to have a spoke in the wheel against the saucy drawer.

"And counted his horse-nails in Westminster Hall without having to number his fingers," said a Radical cordwainer ; "there is he most learned, for he can number ten without winking, and do this, and hold his finger still," added he, moving his fore-finger, while a loud laugh rung through the apartment.

"Mine goote friend, master cobble-shoes," said the goldsmith, rising and endeavouring to draw his sword, "me vill slash your upper-leather, an unrip de welt of your shoul, if you do speak once more again."

The printer rose and swore that he would fill

all his types up with black, if he pointed his weapon at the man of leather again. The storm was gathering when the swash-buckler staggered into the midst of the room, and holding up his round shield, exclaimed: "Peace, you smoky citizens! I bear arms under the Earl of Arundel, and carry a magnet in the centre of my buckler, which will draw down the points of all your weapons, and keep them there while I belabour your lazy shoulders, with the flat of my sword. Can you not be trusted with toasting-forks, without wanting to spit one another over your cups. Peace, master copper-gilt, and keep your threats for your own 'prentices, without using them amongst freemen."

"Mine cote, goote sair," said the choleric goldsmith, "vot you call mine goote gold, copper-gilt?" and uplifting his sheathed sword, he fetched the swaggerer such a blow on the helmet, as sent him sprawling all his length on

the floor, adding, "Dere, you great man, me has cracked your magnet, and dat did draw down de blow."

The enraged soldier rose up, and brandishing his sword, gave vent to a volley of oaths, while the host bawled loudly to Gilbert to call in the city-watch; for these formidable head-breakers were even then in being. "Peace, my goote friend, Ninion," said the goldsmith, "sit down goote Gilbert, and my very big friend master Christopher, me will try his magnet, if he will just walk in de yard one very little while."

The uproar was increased by the sudden entrance of Dame Deborah Saunders, who rushed into the room, brandishing a ladle in her hand, while her face was like the rising sun, through drink and the heat of a sea-coal fire, before which she had stood to superintend the cooking.

"Art thou not ashamed of thyself, Ninion Saunders, to encourage such brawling and

squabbling under this roof," said she, beginning the attack upon her husband, as if she had hopes, that by raising a fresh storm, the old one would abate: "art not ashamed, of thyself I say," added she, raising her voice above all the other tumult, "to bring the oldest hostile in the ward into such evil repute? I warrant thee, thou wert ensconced in thy kennel like a lazy dog, thinking about thy trulls, in place of endeavouring to make peace amongst thy guests."

"It is no fault of mine," answered the hen-pecked husband, who was nearly twice the age of his jolly-looking dame; "but your spoiled drawer, Gilbert, whose tongue you have of late encouraged to run at such a length, that he is not satisfied without passing his jeers on my company, and setting them together by the ears. But I will be rid of him," muttered he in a tone which he did not intend to reach the ears of his crooked-rib.

"Then ye shall be rid of me too," replied the

high-mettled hostess, who had succeeded in quelling one uproar by raising another: "I will let you see that I can play lady to your lord any how. You took him on for your own pleasure, and shall not turn him off until it is mine. You never-do-nought old sospot. You are only fit to sleep a-days, and snore a-nights, and take a dislike to everybody one does a good turn to. Heed him not, Gilbert," said she, turning round to her favourite; "I'll let him see that I am both master and mistress when I begin."

Ninion slunk into the bar like a kicked cur, contenting himself by giving vent to a few subdued growls, for experience had before taught him that it was useless to wage war with an offended woman. Nor was this the first outbreak between them about Gilbert, and which had increased his hatred against the drawer.

"Saw ye ever the like of that now?" whispered the grazier to the man of black-letters; "why

she gores him with her tongue as bad as an ox would with its horns."

"That is a comparison coming too near the head of the subject," replied the printer, in a suppressed tone. "Never speak of horned cattle before a young wife and an old husband."

"Mine cote! but dat ish a matter to make dem more crosch den when dey are cutting deir teete," observed the goldsmith who had by this time regained his composure.

All further conversation was for several moments suspended by the entrance of Lord War-dour, followed by two attendants. Dame Deborah suddenly dropped the ladle, smoothed her kirtle, and arranged her head-gear, while she made her best curtsy, and drew near enough to offer her cheek to the new comer; but he was not in the mood for fooling. He beckoned Gilbert to him, ordered lights to be brought, and a flask of wine, and they were shown into another room, which was only separated from

the little sanctum where Ninion Saunders was seated by a partition of wood.

Ninion saw all, and was on the alert to make the most of it, suspecting that it must be some business of a very extraordinary nature that caused a lord to be in private with a penniless drawer, and as there were no lack of crevices in the old wainscot, he set both eye and ear to work. From what he could observe, Lord Wardour seemed deeply moved : he emptied a cup of wine without a word ; then pausing for a moment, looked full upon the countenance of the drawer, and said, "Gilbert, can I trust thee with a secret ?"

"I have never yet betrayed a friend," answered the drawer, with a firmness which seemed unusual to his character ; "if you fear me, trust me not."

"I do not fear you," answered the young nobleman, and said something which escaped Ninion's attentive ear, then added in an audi-

ble voice, "Have you any power over the old woman?"

"None," replied Gilbert with a sigh; "I have done but little to deserve her favour. But she must have a great love for your Lordship to trust you with these secrets."

"An accident made me acquainted with most of them," said Lord Wardour: "I chanced to hear Northumberland in conversation with her;" (Ninion strained his ear closer to the partition) "as for the rest, I had it from the Earl my father. Your being here will serve as a cloak from all suspicion. I had Duskena's permission to entrust you, and she bade me prepare you to hold yourself in readiness whenever you might receive the secret sign."

"I was in hopes," answered Gilbert, "that I had escaped from her cursed sprig of heather. Many a chase has it caused me, in bloom and blight, rain and storm, darkness and daylight. Sometimes to the wood with food, where a score

or two of starved priests were concealed, for abbots and monks were hidden in every hole and corner of the park, and it was 'Gilbert, take this to one holy father, and that to another,' until I wished the devil had King Harry for destroying the monasteries. But I doubt not," added he, with a grin, "that his horned highness hath long had him in safe keeping before this time. But whom is Northumberland about to make queen in place of the Princess Mary?"

"The Lady Dudley," said Wardour, speaking as if the words would have choked him.

"The Lady Dudley!" echoed Gilbert, then pausing, he added, "I know not whom you mean."

"Curse on thine ignorance, that compels me to name her name;" said the young lord, and again emptying the wine-cup, he added, "she that was the Lady Jane Grey."

"Forgive me, my lord," said Gilbert, "for unconsciously putting you to so much pain; I

would sooner have suffered the tongue to have been torn from the roof of my mouth, than have named her to whom I have so often conveyed from yourself many"—

“Say no more,” said Wardour, sternly, “I know thou meanest kindly. But let us think how we may yet save her from the machinations of Northumberland; remember, Gilbert, thine will be a perilous undertaking.”

“It will be nothing new,” added the drawer; “I have moved through paths in which the wild-cat would have been shot dead had those who watched but have heard her stir. But a beggar’s rags carried me clean through without shaking the leaf of a bramble. My old grandmother hath long ago had proof that I have therefore more lives than a cat, although I have heard it sworn that they have nine. But who will suspect that a drawer knoweth aught about either queens or thrones, or those who place them thereon? Let not old Ninion overhear

us, and we are safe." If Lord Wardour had but seen the eaves-dropping host shake his fist and grin behind the wainscot, he would at once have driven a bullet through the panel; but Ninion was safe.

"I would not trust the old rascal," said the nobleman, "but there need be no fear of him. And should he make any outcry about thine absence, it will be a sufficient answer to tell him, that I have sent thee about business of mine own. When thou wilt be called upon, I know not; but Duskena assures me that his Highness cannot survive much longer, and whatever mission thou mayest be sent upon, she hath promised me, that the safety of the lady I spoke of shall be the first thing cared for. Should she act otherwise, thou wilt not fail to acquaint me with it."

"If she hath promised this," answered Gilbert, "I will not fail to tell, should she deceive thee. But I have never yet played her

false, but what she hath discovered it ; I know not how, but she possesses some power which almost enables her to read my very thoughts."

"She is, indeed, a strange woman," answered Lord Wardour ; "I would not wish thee to play her false, but to this point she hath pledged herself. Nay, I leave thee free to deal with me, according to thy honesty, for so shalt thou be rewarded." He drew ten rose-nobles from his pouch, and attempted to force them upon the drawer.

"Nay ! nay !" said Gilbert, putting them back, "such a sum would lay me open to suspicion if it was found upon me, and many a man hath been murdered of late, who possessed not a tithe of that wealth ; I could not sleep even under a hedge in safety. Beside, I have not heard thee name any service I may yet have to do to deserve it ; I will take no pay until this game is played out ; then your lordship will be able to judge, whether or not I am deserving of any."

“Thou art but a fool after all,” thought Ninion Saunders, whose fingers itched to be touching the red gold; “but it shall go hard if I have not a share in the prize, in spite of my termagent wife.”

“Well then,” said Lord Wardour, forcing him to take a couple of gold pieces, in case he should need them when he was sent for, “thou needest not fear to communicate with Sir William Cecil, Lord Darcy, or my father, shouldst thou be in danger, for they are all in league against Northumberland, and thou wilt whisper to any of their followers this pass-word,” added he, speaking low, “they will protect thee. But it will be better if thou canst first apprise either Duskena or myself of aught that may be entrusted to thee. I cannot explain more, for I am ignorant of the errand thou wilt be sent upon.”

“Thou shalt see that I can be serious, my lord, when it is needed;” said Gilbert, and

draining the wine-cup which the young nobleman filled up for him, they separated.

“It is an ill wind that blows no one profit,” said Ninion to himself, when they were gone, “and had not my thief of a wife’s bell clapper driven me to seek shelter here, I should never have learnt what I have. Well, master Gilbert Pots, look to it, or the old rascal, as his lordship called me, may yet be too much for you both. I may make more gold by this matter, if I but set about it rightly, than I should by watering twenty tuns of wine, or weakening twice that number of brewings. So Cecil, Arundel, and Darcy, and I know not how many more are leagued against his grace of Northumberland? and this Lady Jane Grey is to be a queen; I thought something would spring from all those great marriages. Well, I have only to seek the duke out, and my fortune is made. But how shall I get at him? Why, write him a letter; but that might fall into this Cecil’s hands, whom I have

heard is his secretary ? Then seek an interview ; but these great men are difficult to come at. But I will to bed and sleep on it, and it will be something new, if I hit not on a plan before the morrow ; yet after all it would perhaps be better to watch and wait until I see more clearly how the wind sits." So saying, he went grumbling up stairs in the dark, his hatred to Gilbert increased, by beholding as he passed, the merry drawer seated at supper, with his own wife, who smiled and helped him to all the tit bits. "Thank God, the old brute has gone to bed," was dame Deborah's parting benediction. How late she sat up with Gilbert Pots, our story sayeth not.

CHAPTER XI.

Macbeth. Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased ;
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow ;
Raze out the written troubles of the brain,
And with some sweet oblivious antidote,
Cleanse the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart ?

Doctor. Therein the patient
Must minister to himself.

Macbeth. Throw physic to the dogs, I'll none of it.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE policy of a state is like a vast machine worked by a thousand concealed wheels, the least of which, if it runs wrong is soon felt. Many a skilful engineer has his eye upon its movements, and many a proud revolving axle rolls round as if it gave motion to the whole, unconscious of the lesser powers by which it-self is worked. So Edward deemed that the whole movement of the council was set in

motion by himself, never dreaming that Northumberland had the deepest interest in the fulfilment of his own wishes. Arundel calmly watched its working, and but waited the moment to snap the great lever, by which all was set in action; while Cecil, sheltered beneath, was ready to cut through the threads as they were spun. But above all, hung the unseen form of Duskena, ready to tear away the woof, and with an eldrich scream shake it over their heads. Others worked blindly on in the dark, unconscious of the power that directed them, although they were the great mechanics of the community, and needed only to withdraw their shoulders to stop the whole machine.

Like a driver of this splendid slavery, sat Sir William Cecil, in the apartment allotted him in Greenwich palace, biting his nails, and looking as unhappy as a poor sinner on the first day that he is ushered into the regions of

despair. He was exquisitely miserable, writhing under the undigested ambition which he had so greedily swallowed ; hesitating whether or not to cut his throat, or fly and bury himself in obscurity until the storm had blown over. He felt like a man, who having bartered his soul to the fiend, has entered upon his last hour, and expects every moment to feel the claws of the Evil-one fastening upon him.

At the table sat his underling, Roger Alford, reading aloud from a pile of letters, the accumulation of the last three days, for Cecil's mind had been too distraught to attend to any of them ; and he was conscious that even then, (though so late at night,) one of Northumberland's emissaries was watching without, and that others were in ambush in every direction to prevent his escape. Such was the position of the future great, though perjured statesman at this period.

“ Any reply to this epistle ?” said Roger, up-

lifting his head, and awaiting the answer of the secretary.

“What is it?” enquired Cecil, for he had not heard a word that the under-writer read. “My mind was busied with other matters.” The letter was read over again, and was from the princess Elizabeth, begging of him to procure her a living for one of her yeomen, whose salary was not sufficient to maintain him as she wished, and trusting that if any vacancy occurred in any church which brought in fifty pounds a-year, and for which a priest might be procured for ten, he would not fail to speak to Northumberland and obtain it.

“Let it be answered by all means,” said Cecil; “promises cost us nothing, and the day may come when the lady will be of service to us.”

“A letter from Lord Audley,” continued Roger; “it has lain unanswered for several days, and he has already called twice to-day to

enquire after your health, and intendeth looking in again before he sleeps.”

“Read it,” said Cecil, “that I may be prepared to make some reply to him when he calls. He is a fool, but may for all that be made useful in these dangerous days. Some recipe, I dare be sworn.”

Roger Alford drew the lamp nearer, and proceeded to read as follows :

“Good Mr. Cecil,*

“Be of good comfort, and pluck up a lusty merry heart, and thus shall you overcome all diseases ; and because it pleased my good Lord Admiral, lately, to praise my physic, I have written to you such medicines as I wrote unto him, which I have in my book of my wife’s hand, proved upon herself and me both, and if I can get anything that may do you any good,

* *Sic* in the Original. See Tytler’s Letters from the State Paper Office, illustrative of the reigns of Edward and Mary.

you may be well assured it shall be a joy to me to get it you.

“A GOOD MEDICINE FOR WEARINESS OR
CONSUMPTION.”

“Take a sow-pig of nine days old, and flea him, and quarter him, and put him in a stillatory with a handful of spearmint, a handful of red fennel, a handful of liverwort, half a handful of red nepe, a handful of celery, nine dates clean-picked and pared, a handful of great raisins, and pick out the stones, and a quarter of an ounce of mace, and two sticks of good cinnamon bruised in a mortar, and distil it together with a fair fire, and put it in a glass, and set it in the sun nine days, and drink nine spoonfuls of it at once when you list.”

“Curse his pig-broth !” exclaimed Cecil ; “if it would but upset Northumberland’s plot, I would swallow a butt of it—that is the disease I labour under. Hast thou done ?”

“Here is another item,” answered Roger,

proceeding with the letter : "it is headed —

‘ A COMPOST.’

“Take a porpin, otherwise called an English hedgehog, and quarter him in pieces, and put the said beast in a still with these ingredients, Item, a quart of red wine, a pint of rose-water, a quart of sugar, cinnamon, and great raisins, one date, twelve nepe.

“If there be any manner of disease that you be aggrieved with, I pray you send me some knowledge, and I doubt not but to send you a proved remedy. Written in haste,

“By your true hearty friend,

“JOHN OF AUDLEY.”

“What a pig’s posset,” said Cecil, “and written in haste too : why that very epistle has been the labour of half a day. Not an item would be added without his calling to his wife to know if it was a handful, or only half a one, a quart or a pint, to be taken at the full or fall of the moon. I have written, folded and seale d

a score of letters in less time than he has finished such a one in haste. And now I must tell him a thousand lies, and swear that his sickening dose is in preparation, lest he should talk me to death with his prescriptions. And coming to-night too, saidst thou ? that is indeed unfortunate ; but he has been of service to me, and must be borne with. It will not do, in these days, to be too choice in the selection of the tools that we may work with."

"A letter from Arundel," continued Roger, "to be opened by none but yourself; it was sent after sunset to-day."

"Read it," said Cecil ; "I have no secrets but what thou art acquainted with."

Roger read as follows :

" Good Cecil :

" We have sold ourselves to the devil by signing his bond, and must be cautious how we cheat him ; he called upon me after the noon-day meal, and expressed some doubts respecting

yourself, but I put on a bold front, and have at least lulled his suspicions. Nay, promised to keep a watchful eye over you: have you yet found an opportunity to apprise the Princess Mary of what has occurred? Remember, that if this manœuvre is discovered, off goes your head; should I find a chance, I shall at once communicate with her. Burn this, and remain true as

“ ARUNDEL.”

“ Destroy it instantly,” said Cecil: “ Arundel is too venturesome to trust such documents with his messengers. Let but such a slip of paper as that once fall into Northumberland’s hands, and neither of our heads would sit securely upon our shoulders an hour after. I must warn him of this; there are too many keen eyes on the look-out now, to run such risks. Our very whispers ought to be guarded. Are there no other letters of importance?” enquired he.

“ None,” answered Roger, “ but such as I

can answer. I need not remind you of the wild-looking monk who brought the sprig of heather this morning, and bade me deliver it to your own hand."

"I have seen to that affair," answered Cecil; "it came from the old hag in the park; be sure that thou neglectest not to acquaint me, whenever she may send the same token; for much dependeth on her. Thou wilt think it strange, Roger," continued he, "when I tell thee, that yonder old woman leadeth Northumberland like a child in leading-strings, and through him can guide the affairs of the realm, almost as she listeth. One word of hers, solemnly uttered, could lay low the highest head in the land, if she did but swear that his life was inimical to the Duke. On such a slender thread do all our lives hang—yet she herself hates him to the death. She is a fearful woman."

"But why keep it a secret from his Grace?" enquired Roger Alford; "would not the very

showing of him, how she maintaineth her power, be sufficient to reinstate you fully in his favour, and stifle all further suspicions of our plans for the present?"

"The very reverse," replied the long-headed politician; "it could not be done without babbling our own secrets—endangering our own lives—making an enemy of one who is working with us—placing armour on the very part, where, like Achilles' heel, he can only be pierced. It would in a word be undoing all that we have done, or ever hope to do."

"So much depending on a ragged old woman!" exclaimed Roger, in astonishment.

"Ay, indeed is there," answered Cecil, with a sigh; "the fortune of many a great man has been made by calling some ugly child beautiful, or praising the wit of an idiot. A mere plum has before now swayed a state—a sigh well put in procured a rogue credit for ever. A sympathetic whine, used judiciously, is worth twenty

years application. The man who endeavours to make his way only by honesty is a fool; for up comes your deep-sighted villain, and sees at a glance a weakness that may be worked upon; seizes the advantage, and leaps into power."

"I shall learn something under your tuition," replied Roger, "though I can scarcely think that you are in earnest when you advise me to become a rogue."

"Not that altogether," answered the great secretary; "thou wilt do the best by keeping honest, good Roger; thou wert born with such-like talents. Thou hast not cunning enough to carry thee safe through (if thou wert to set out on a voyage of thine own) for one short day. But I am wasting time with thee," added he, "when the great game of life and death is about to be played out, and it is yet uncertain which may be the winner." So saying, he applied himself seriously to the perusal of the different documents which were placed

before him, and which were principally connected with Northumberland's plans for establishing the Lady Jane Grey more firmly on the throne; taking care, however, to note down every hint which he thought might be rendered available to overthrow all these schemes. He was like a man, who having marked every card before it comes to his turn to deal them, may, by crossing the corners, drop the best into his own hand, beside having the advantage of knowing all that his opponent holds. But he was suddenly aroused by a coughing from without, and turning to Roger, he said "Here comes Audley, with his cough and his cures, to physic our patience."

The man who entered the apartment was an elderly personage, one who had the looks of having in his day been a powerful man, until he played tricks upon himself with his wife's physic. He was several seconds before he could unloose the rows of flannel which his

lady had folded over his mouth, ere she would let him venture forth into the night-air. And as he kept on talking while they were still secured, not a word that he uttered could be distinctly heard ; but no sooner was the obstacle removed, than he began to patter away, like a man who sits down determined to make the experiment of " talking a spider to death."

" Well, my good Sir William," proceeded he at full gallop, " I fear you have hardly had time to try the most excellent recipe which I copied from my wife's family medica, and which has cured several persons of distinction. But here," added he, placing a jar upon the table, " is a little of the same material which my good lady always keeps by her, for her most particular friends ; you had better take nine spoonfuls now, without further loss of time ; you will find yourself greatly relieved before morning. It may sit rather heavy on the stomach until near daylight, and prevent you from sleep-

ing for a few hours; but after that, you will find that you can slumber sound enough till almost noon."

Cecil declined trying it until bedtime, and the garrulous old Lord proceeded.

"How is your little daughter Tannikin, my little lady Anne, as my worthy dame calls her? She bade me remind you that it would be necessary to give her a draught of mint-tea, three or four times a-day, at this season of the year, for the heat of summer is almost as dangerous as the changes of the spring and fall. A few young mice distilled into a jelly, with the leaves of ragwort, isinglass, apples cut thin, a pint of whey, the same quantity of sugar, and a good fair cup-full of white-wine, taken between meals, she bade me advise you, would make her vomit, when she felt her stomach oppressed."

"It would make the devil himself vomit," thought Cecil,—then added aloud, "I will trouble your worthy bed-fellow to send me the

recipe to-morrow ; she is a most considerate lady."

"Ay, marry is she," said the old Lord, rubbing his hands with delight : "When I was first married, and before I became acquainted with her valuable recipes, I was perplexed with a most unhealthy appetite, could eat like a famished hound, and sleep the sun to bed and up again. But by her skill and restoratives, she soon reduced my dangerous and robust health, made me so that I scarcely felt a wish to eat once a-day, and so rooted out my drowsiness, that I could lay awake all night. True, I groaned a bit at first while the disease lasted, but now my body's in so wholesome a state, that nothing but her preparations seem to agree with me."

"She hath indeed wrought some marvellous cures," said Cecil, "and I believe that many of her medicines possess that rare virtue of either killing or curing speedily."

“That is what makes them so much sought after,” said the foolish old Lord. “If they do not cure, they seldom prolong the pain; and many are of opinion that they make even certain death, somehow more quick and comfortable; so that, as one may say, they do even a dying man good; and while that is the case, what pleasure they must afford to those who recover, and live to feel their benefit! Her dispatch drops, which makes a speedy alteration either one way or another in three hours, you would scarcely think, how much they are sought after by young wives, who have old and ailing husbands.”

“I have no doubt but that they are,” replied Cecil; “but what business has detained you to this late hour at the palace? I fear me that you will find the night-air but chilly as you return to Deptford.”

“It will but be swallowing three pints of camomile tea, and taking four spoonfuls of

snail jelly," answered Audley, "and I find it necessary to take cold now and then, that I may sneeze more clearly. It is only observing when your body is in a fit state to take it. My business hath detained me longer than I calculated upon, for I sat up somewhat late last night, in looking over our book of infallible remedies, with my wife, that we might discover a sure cure for his Highness, and I have long been in consultation with Northumberland on the matter. But his Sovereign Grace seems to have a great wish to try that old impostor Duskena, so that the Duke dare do nothing in the matter. Though I will be sworn that the old witch cannot administer anything half so fitting for the King's disorder, as a spoonful of the dust of the yellow butterfly's wings, taken in the milk of a white mastiff-bitch, twice a-day, and every other hour, a small portion of distilled hedgehog, such as I have prescribed for your own complaint."

“And what said his grace of Northumberland?” enquired Cecil, “did he enquire of you respecting mine own health?”

“Yea, marry did he,” answered Audley, “and it seems that he taketh an uncommon interest in you, for he told me that he had given you such a prescription a few nights agone, as would cure you of the falling sickness for some time to come. I was ignorant till then that he studied the healing art.”

“The devil he did!” muttered Cecil, the colour fading from his cheek; then added, “he possesseth some skill in curing an aching head; his prescription for the Duke of Somerset, I have not forgotten. But spoke he of no other matters?”

“Yea, that did he,” replied the garrulous old Peer, “and copied down a recipe with his own hand, for his fair daughter-in-law, the Lady Jane Grey; an excellent cure it is for the depression of spirits. And bade me, in par-

particular, to let him know the names of any noblemen who were suddenly afflicted at this period, that he might with my advice consider their particular cases.”

“The politic hound!” murmured Cecil, to himself, “he is suspicious, and we must be wary;” then added, “did he inquire after the health of any in particular?—for having no doubt heard rumours of Lady Audley’s cures, he would expect to find in your skilful self a regular register of all invalids.”

“Yes, of many,” answered the unsuspecting Lord; “some in especial, whom he seemed to have expected at the council the other day; but who were so suddenly indisposed that they could not attend.”

“Hey,” said Cecil, “there is something in the atmosphere at this period, which does not agree with all constitutions. A kind of fearful depression and moodiness, which causes men to have studious fits. I have felt it much of

late. A little blood-letting, they tell me, would not be amiss."

"His Grace of Northumberland is of the very same opinion," replied Audley, "and thinks that it would sharpen the wits of many who at present appear dull. But I argued the subject with him, and almost brought him to a belief that our recipe of sucking-pigs would do better, and he admitted that it was not amiss, if they would but think so; nay, even pressed upon me strongly the necessity of advising you to try it, in preference to letting blood."

"I thank him for his kind consideration," answered Cecil, who well understood the hint, "and beg of you to tell his Grace, when next he enquireth after me, that the virtue of your former medicine, hath almost wholly restored me, and that saving a pain in the hand, which is increased by too much writing, I am nearly whole again."

"I will not fail," replied Audley, "and after

having again enforced upon the secretary the necessity of taking his pig-broth regularly, he then bound his jaws carefully in flannel, and departed.

“Thou seest on what slender ground we stand, Roger,” said Cecil, deeply moved; “one slight slip, and down we topple to immediate death. Would that it might please Heaven either to restore the King or remove him to another world, very speedily. This delay gives the Duke too much leisure to think. Our movements have not been so secret as to bury all suspicion. He is like some jealous captain in a calm, who, when his crew are inactive, fancies that they have more time to plot, and mutiny; but when the storm gathers, is too busied in attending to the helm, to give leisure to such thoughts. He wants action,—he cannot rest amid this suspense,—he must either be busy or mischievous. He mistrusts me, and not without cause: it is after all, difficult to play a part, that is un-

natural to one, to assume a feeling we possess not, and to bring the mind to bear on a matter that we have not at all at heart—to gild the rusty spite which cankers underneath, with smiles,—the petty tinsel that soonest deceives. It is the mere tilting of the tournament with blunted lance, instead of the sharp earnest combat, when soul and body bring all their might to the fray.—Well,” added he, greatly excited, “I am prepared for the worst, and let me but once hear that the Princess Mary is making any head, and that all our secret movements are fairly at work, and I will speedily be with her. Are my horses in waiting at Charing Cross, according to my orders?”

“They are,” answered Roger, “and I bade the groom give it out that they belonged to a gentleman from the country, whose name was Hardinge, and who had come up on some business connected with the law.”

“’Tis well,” replied Cecil; “the boatman

ever holds himself in readiness, and with the disguise which I have prepared, there is still a chance left, should all be discovered."

Shortly after, Arundel, Darcy, Sir Edward Hastings, and several others who were in heart opposed to Northumberland, entered the apartment, and remained in deep consultation until past midnight. And however disreputable it is to the character of Cecil, in thus playing a double part in the drama, still his clear views, and comprehensive mind, developed many schemes on that memorable night, which were afterwards acted upon, and were the chief means of bringing about that mighty change, to which our story is hastening.

CHAPTER XII.

Between the acting of a dreadful thing,
And the first motion, all the interim is
Like a phantasma, or a hideous dream:
The genius and the mortal instruments
Are then in council; and the state of man,
Like to a little kingdom, suffers then
The nature of an insurrection.

SHAKSPEARE.

No sooner were affairs arranged in accordance to Northumberland's wishes, than he began to wish for the death of the young king. His impatience every moment increased; he was like some captain, who, having embarked with the rich treasure he has stolen, meets with a dead calm at sea, and fears that the rightful owners may overtake him. Asleep or awake, he found no rest; he was afraid that the prize might yet be wrested from him by some stronger

hand than his own. But there were others less impatient than himself, and who, although the physicians had given up all hopes of the king's recovery, were anxious to prolong his life by every means in their power.

The fame of Duskena had reached the palace of Greenwich before this time, and many wonderful cures had been attributed to her skill in the healing art. Some believed that she wrought her cures by supernatural aid : others that she possessed superior knowledge regarding the virtues of herbs, and that when her bent form was seen passing along the heights of the park in the moonlight, instead of holding communion with the evil powers, she was culling plants at their proper seasons, and under those choice influences, which gave to them such healing powers.

No sooner was the young monarch made acquainted with these things, than he expressed a wish that Duskena might be sent for ; nor

could Northumberland, when consulted, oppose the request, without awakening some suspicion. He therefore offered of his own accord to visit the hut, (although it was late at night,) and either by persuasion or threats, bring the old woman to the palace, should she refuse to come.

Thrusting a brace of loaded pistols into his richly embroidered belt, and carrying his ponderous sword unner his arm, he crossed the pleasance, or garden, that shed a sweet perfume on the night-air, and opening the postern in the lower wall, entered the park unattended. When he felt the soft greensward under his feet, and saw the shadows of the trees sleeping in the moonlight, he paused, as if for the first time he felt himself alone. A deer that dashed through the underwood made him start, and place his hand on the hilt of his sword ; then he paused for a few moments, looked carefully around, and pressing his hand to his forehead, stood for

several minutes absorbed in thought. A new light had broken upon him; a lurid and fearful streak, like the ominous crimson that fringes the edge of the thunder-cloud, brighter, yet more terrible to look upon than the gathering darkness that makes awful the face of Heaven. Such a thought had never crossed his mind before that night; but no sooner was the name of Duskena mentioned, than the devil whispered him that she would be a fit instrument to remove the King at once from his path. "He might yet linger for weeks," thought the evil-minded Duke, "although the leeches have given him up. I saw no alteration in his countenance. And what if those whom I have compelled to sign the deed should turn upon me? Every hour leaves them time to plot against me, to overthrow all that I have done. Besides, death will but be ridding him of his pain. And should the old hag refuse to do the deed, when I have made her acquainted with

my wishes? It will but be leaving her dead in her hut; and who will accuse me of the murder when it is done? But she dare not." So resolving within himself, he hastened with a troubled conscience and hurried step, along the winding path of the Dark Valley. He paused a moment before the door, for he heard some one talking loudly within the hut; he attempted to look through the horny casement, but could see nothing distinctly. At length he discovered a chink in the door, and applying his eye to it, saw the old woman pacing to and fro, and tossing her withered arm aloof, while she muttered to herself, "Speed on, ye slow-winged hours! why lag ye so long with your load of vengeance? Has it grown heavier through being reserved for tedious years, that ye move with such leaden pace? No, it is slow, but sure to come; the dark clouds that hurry over the angry sky with speed, soonest shoot forth their lightning; it is the slow-gathering storm that is most

terrible, and sends forth its sultry breath, until the dusky crimson of its wrath darkens, and the heaving mass moves leisurely to destruction. Then it pauses and gluts its fiery gaze upon the victim it is about to strike, until nimble death darts down, and the loud shout of triumph shakes the deep foundations of the earth. Oh vengeance long nursed, how sweet is the eve of thy fulfilment!—sweet as the smell of blood to the hungry wolf that has pined all day in the thicket. But it will come anon, and, like the wild boar, I will sharpen my tusks, and shake my own solitude with the sound, that I may be prepared to rend and tear when the hour for the bloody banquet arrives. I will then fly like a ravenous vulture to the slaughter!”

Northumberland broke short her soliloquy by striking the door with the hilt of his sword, as he muttered to himself, “The devil has been here before me, to prepare her for my

purpose ; he is ever ready to lend a helping hand."

Duskena knew his voice, and at once admitted him. For a moment or two they stood aazing on each other in silence, and with a mutual hatred, for the duke was at loss how to open the evil business he had come upon. "Well," said the old hag, first breaking the silence ; "all has gone on as I foretold to thee. What wantest thou further with me?"

"The King is given up by his leeches," said Northumberland, "and I want thee to accompany me instantly to the palace, to try thy skill in the healing art, and if thou canst, to preserve his life."

"Northumberland," said the old hag, rivetting her eyes upon him, until he quailed before her ; "thou liest : thy plans are all ready, and thou wantest me to cut short the few brief hours which he might yet live."

"Thine old age protects thee," answered the

Duke, "or by the rood of Calvary, I would have struck thee dead on thine hearth, for thus giving me the lie to my teeth. I tell thee, old she-wolf, that such was mine errand to thee from the King himself. Although I would not trust the healing of one of my stag-hounds to thy care, I have but spoken his wishes."

"I crave thy pardon," said the hag, with a sneer, "although I well know that such wishes are none of thy own. I will go and rescue him from the jaws of death, I have still the power."

"Stay," said Northumberland, seizing her arm, as she made a feint towards the door of the hut; "and remember, that if he perishes under any dose that thy hand may administer to him, thy life shall be instantly forfeited:—no power upon earth shall save thee from death."

"Gramercy for thy threats," answered Duskena, who saw at once through the Duke's designs. "I need but free him from the noisome drugs which these unskilful leeches

have administered to him ; give him a syrup distilled from an hundred healing herbs, and before another moon has waned, the death-cough shall leave him, and he shall again be seated in his saddle, and chase the dun-deer in this very park. I have yet power to undo all my prophecies, and guide the planets in what course I would will them."

"Thou art indeed a witch," said the Duke, pacing the hut, then stopping suddenly short, he exclaimed, "Canst thou not destroy as well as save?"

"I can," answered the hag, "were my mind so given—why askest thou the question?"

"How am I to know," replied the Duke, again evading the thoughts that were uppermost in his mind, "but that thou wouldst go with a determination to take away the King's life? I have heard thee say, ere now, that thou didst hate him, and that to gratify thy revenge, thou wouldst but hold thine own life lightly."

“Hast thou not told me that death shall be the penalty I must pay unless he recovers,” said Duskena; “and what if I drink from the same phial which I hold to his lips, and wait a sufficient space of time to convince all around that it neither makes the eye dim, nor the voice weak; thinkest thou any one will then doubt me? Or that I would peril myself for the life of him, whom I need but leave a few days longer to die a natural death? Come, let us begone, lest mine aid should arrive too late.”

“If thou savest his life, thy reward is to be an hundred gold-pieces,” said Northumberland, without moving a step. “Now, between the devil and thyself, would not double that sum make thee as ready to destroy him before sunrise?”

“Between the devil and thine ownself,” said the hag, “thou hast at last delivered thine errand; and wouldst give that sum to shorten his life. Thou didst come with that intent.”

“And what sayest thou to mine offer?” said the Duke.

“I accept it,” answered the hag, without a change passing over her countenance; then muttered to herself, “it is a deed of vengeance I have long coveted — But mark,” added she, “if any danger befalls me, I will confess who urged me to undertake it. I would live a little longer.”

“No danger shall befall thee,” said Northumberland; “I pledge me hand and glove for thy safety. But how comes this sudden change? Beware! if I once find thee tampering with me, thou hast lived thy last hour.”

“Save thy threats for those who fear thee,” said Duskena; “hadst thou offered me my own weight in gold, I would not have saved him. Thinkest thou I knew not thine errand? Let us begone; I shall set about this work of vengeance with a keener relish than thyself — thou knowest not how great a debt I owe him.

Cursed be all his race !” She took out a phial from the recess, held it up a moment before the lamp, then replaced it, and sought in vain for another. “ My memory fails me in all things but vengeance,” said she, “ unsheath thy sword and raise up this board.” She pointed to the floor, and Northumberland obeyed her commands ; when, kneeling down, she thrust her bony arm into the cavity, and brought forth a small bottle, and replaced the board, adding, “ Now let us begone, and quench this boyish royalty.”

She put out the lamp, locked the door, and concealed the key under the threshold, then led the way along the Dark Valley. Sometimes a straggling moonbeam that found its way through the overhanging branches, fell upon her bent form, and tattered garments ; then she passed along into the distant gloom, and the figure of Northumberland was revealed a moment, until he also glided into the leafy dark-

ness. A nightingale perched on a spray on One-tree-hill, made the gloomy valley ring again with its melody, and all beside seemed as still, as if the very leaves held their breath, to listen to her sweet harmony. "The croaking raven, and the barking ban-dog, would be more in unison," muttered the hag. Northumberland replied not, and they entered the garden of the palace in silence. "Stay," said Duskena, "I do my dark work with simple weapons," and she gathered a handful of flowers at random in the moonlight; then sprinkling them with the liquid from the phial, bade him lead on, only adding, "He will need no other odour until he reaches Paradise; then he may cull flowers to his own liking."

"Hush," said Northumberland, "remember that the very walls have ears," and slipping a purse of gold into her hand, he added, "Here is half of thy reward; I will give thee the re-

mainder when thy work is done ; when will that be ?”

“ Before the day dawns,” replied the hag, following him into the hall of the palace.

Had Sathanus himself, with saucer eyes, club-feet, tail, horns, and nostrils breathing forth fire and smoke, and with his skin, “ dark as a black bull’s hide,” entered the palace and ascended the ample stair-case, he could scarcely have created a greater sensation amongst the menials, than did the appearance of Duskena. They shot off in every direction, helter-skelter, head over heels, and rushed into kitchen and hall, then stood gazing like idiots upon each other. The face of Gilbert Pots was seen grinning in the gallery.

“ The Lord have mercy upon us !” said Cornelius, the cellarer, who stood in the gallery, gossiping with Lucy and several others, and had dropped the wine flask in his affright,—“ to think of the old witch following the Duke up

stairs, and he never knowing there was aught behind him. Oh, for Heaven's sake, somebody go up and tell his grace."

"What would be the use?" said another, his teeth chattering in his head, "when she can vanish away like a mist in a minute. But you see she couldn't come in of her own accord; she was forced to wait until the door was opened."

"I saw nothing," said another, a great heavy-headed fellow, who sat snoring on a bench, but was awakened by the uproar, and ran away amongst the rest; "what was it that made you all stare like a parcel of stuck rats, and run off so quick, frightening one?"

"There, there," said Lucy, "that's just what my grandmother said, when she saw the spirit of old Hannah Cawkwell at Eltham palace, darting across the draw-bridge; and although she pointed it out to her sweetheart, Miles Morley, yet he could see nothing, and he died that

very year. Now I'm quite certain, that spirits and witches only appear to some folks."

"Who, or what have you seen?" enquired an old falconer, who was busy with a huge pasty, and a black-jack of good old ale, and was not in the gallery during the confusion.

"Seen?" said Lucy, "why, the old witch of the Dark Valley, who followed his grace of Northumberland up stairs, but just now."

"As much a witch as thou art," replied the falconer, who was an old man. "True enough, since poor Reynold was hung, and Joan went away, she's strangely altered; but I believe the poor old lady's only cracked a bit with her troubles. A witch would never have cured me when I was stung with an adder, about ten years ago, as she did. No, Lucy, she's no witch."

"Don't tell me," said the superstitious maiden, "have I not seen her in the shape of a raven, sit croaking hour after hour, on the

oak-tree, above her own hut, after poor Reynold was dead?"

"Like enough you might see a raven or two," said the falconer, "especially as they chanced to have a nest there, about that time."

"And haven't I seen her on One-tree-hill," continued Lucy, "and before I'd gathered a handful of pot-herbs in the garden, she had vanished."

"Down the hill-side," replied the unbeliever, "and gone to her hut, after having gathered a few rotten-sticks in the underwood. Come! come! give the devil his due, Lucy."

"But I've seen her as plain as the nose on my face," said sleepy-head, "mounted astride a green broom, and sailing over the castle-towers, on a clear moonlight. What think you to that, my master?"

"Why, I think its a lie!" answered the falconer; "and that your great sleepy-head was dreaming, or else, that you was drunk. You

may have seen the old banner waving in the moonshine; but devil of aught else, for you couldn't see a bird fly across, unless you was very near. I tell you what, old hood-wink, I've given her many a bird that my falcons have struck down, and she's been very thankful for them. Now if she was a true witch, as you say she is, why she need only mount her broom, and bring them down herself, without being beholden to me, or any body else but the foul-fiend, — that's what I think, my master."

"Lord," said Lucy, "how you talk; do you think any body but a witch would live in that lonesome hut, and go wandering at night, up and down that doleful Dark Valley, that every body says is haunted? Or do you think that aught but a spirit could come into the hall as she did to-night, and follow his grace up stairs without his knowing? You go up and see now if she is not there, in the shape of a black dog."

“ Hey ! and get my neck broken down stairs for an inquisitive fool, by some groom of the bed-chamber or other,” replied the falconer.

“ Like enough, his Grace of Northumberland has been to fetch her, for I’ve heard a many say, that she’s worth an hundred of your leeches, who talk nonsense, and give ailing folk any stuff that comes first. Who knows, but that she’s come to cure the King ? God bless him ! —the very hawks sit moping and mewing on their perches, as if they knew there was something wrong,” added the falconer.

“ The King will never holloa to hawk again, I fear,” said the cellarer, with a melancholy shake of the head. “ Talbot has been howling all night, and I saw a blue-light burning before moon-rise in the opposite marshes. The owls too have been whooping the death-note, just as they did when Henry the Eighth died ; and last night the death-watch ticked so loud, I could scarcely sleep ; and I heard loud knocks

on the wainscot, and smelt a church-yard smell in the air this morning—dreamed of coffins and cross-bones, and was awakened by a low wailing music. No, I fear me, he will never holloa to hawk again. God grant that he may!”

Gilbert Potts grinned and showed his teeth, but made no remark.

Leaving the domestics to their guesses and their fears, we must now glance at the death-bed of the young king.

CHAPTER XIII.

Within the hollow crown,
That rounds the mortal temples of a king,
Keeps Death his court, and there the antick sits,
Scoffing his state, and grinning at his pomp ;
Allowing him a breath, a little scene
To monarchise, be feared, and kill with looks ;
Infusing him with self and vain conceit,
As if this flesh, which walls about our life,
Were brass impregnable : and, humoured thus,
Comes at the last, and with a little pin
Bores through his castle-walls, and farewell king.

SHAKSPEARE.

It seemed like some living illustration of those tales of the wild and fabulous, to see the decrepid and ragged old woman following the steps of Northumberland, through those princely halls and galleries of the palace ; which were so rich in all the splendour and plunder that Henry the Eighth had wrested from his subjects. Many a rich recess was filled with massive vessels of

gold and silver; cups which had been dedicated to the holy sacrament, and embossed plate which for years had graced the dark crypts of many a venerable monastery, and were only used at the solemn and imposing celebration of mass, — were red with the dregs of many a midnight revel, which the bloated tyrant had held in his day. The old hag paused while passing through one large room, in which hung the portraits of Henry and his unfortunate wives, and while she gazed on the broad features of the royal savage, her skinny lips quivered with emotion. She ran her bright deep sunken eyes over the faces of those beauties, who had fallen a prey to his hellish passion, and hasty dislikes, while a grim smile faded over her hideous features, when she thought how soon others were doomed to follow their steps, and leave behind only similar traces of what they once were. Duskena felt no pity for the sufferings they had undergone: the broken and

aching hearts which had once beaten under those jewelled boddices, which Hans Holbein had so faithfully copied, touched not for a moment the feelings of the hardened old woman. The fair necks which had been severed, and the flowing ringlets which had been dabbled in blood, and the bright eyes which seemed to look out from the carved frames, as clear and unclouded as when they beamed upon the masks and revels which had been held in that very room, awoke no emotion, but that of horrid pleasure, as she muttered to herself, "I have seen ye all lay down your crowns, and your purple robes; they should have painted the royal tiger in his den, and strewn your bones at the mouth of it; then one picture would have served for you all!" And contenting herself with this savage comment, the old hag struck her staff with greater force upon the oaken floor, and followed her conductor to the chamber of death.

Could aught have awakened in the bosom of Duskena a feeling of pity and awe, the sudden transition from the room she had just passed, (which blazed with an hundred lights that flashed far across the broad bosom of the river,) to that wherein the young monarch was confined, would have called it forth. Two tall wax-lights stood in the rich candelabras of silver, and threw a glimmering twilight over the apartment, which seemed to deepen the shadows in the niches, and here and there threw many a dark fold on the velvet coverlet, while it gave to the pale features of the dying monarch a yet more deathly look. At the foot of the bed stood Archbishop Cranmer, his hands still uplifted towards Heaven, as they were while in the act of prayer. Latimer stood beside him, the old Greek Testament suspended from his girdle, while he himself rested with his head bent downwards, and leaning on his staff, as if he was still buried in deep devotion. Arundel and

Cecil stood on either side of the couch, while Edward with his hands compressed, and his eyes closed, seemed (but for his faint quick breathing) already dead. In the background stood the physicians, their arms folded, and their eyes fixed on the floor, like images of despair, meditating in gloomy silence over the scene. Even the heart of Northumberland sank within him, as the dying youth recognised him, and put out his hand, while he faintly whispered, "Has she come?" The Duke made no reply, but pointed to where the hag stood, glutting her savage gaze upon the King. Her eye had already wandered round to every face in the group: with Arundel she exchanged a glance of recognition and deep meaning,—to Cecil she gave such a look as made the colour for a moment abandon his cheek, while her eyes flashed with hatred and vengeance as she gazed upon the countenance of Cranmer. And had the prelate at that moment known the

strange being that stood before him, or heard her there thunder forth the cause of her hatred, his very frame would have shook, at the thoughts of the deed, which all his prayers and tears had not then washed out, and which even sat heavy on the soul of the dying monarch. As the glances of the old hag wandered from the features of Cranmer to the royal invalid, and then seemed to settle on the floor of the apartment, her thin withered fingers ran hurriedly over the handle of her staff, like the talons of a dying hawk, which in its last agony, possesses the will to strike, even when its strength has failed. Her whole frame seemed moved by some strong inward convulsion, — her brow became dark as midnight, and her haggard bosom shook, until, grasping her staff with a firm clutch, she closed her eyes, and by some powerful effort, soon stood again as collected, as the calmest observer in the group.

“ It was a custom in these days,” (says one

of the old chroniclers,) "for those who visited the chambers of the sick to carry in their hands a nosegay, believing that by constantly smelling of it, they should avoid catching the disease if even if it was ever so much contagious." Dusken a well aware how popular this tradition was, made no secret of the bunch of poisoned flowers which she held in her hand; but ever and anon, kept lifting them to her face, although taking care at the same time to hold her breath. Meantime a consultation was held, in which Northumberland made known the King's wishes, by declaring that the sovereign had, of his own accord, sent for the old woman, and as a last resource, was willing to trust himself to her care. Giving them also to understand, that he should be guided by their judgment and decision in the matter, and that if they had any mistrust, it was not yet too late to withdraw her. No one saw any reason for opposing the King's wishes, and it

was agreed to, even by the physicians, that he should be left to the skill of Duskena, providing they approved of that which she might propose to administer to him.

Their decision met the sanction of the invalid, and the whole group gathered closer around the couch, to witness the scene.

Undismayed, Duskena grasped the offered wrist of the King, and while she seated herself in the royal chair, which was emblazoned with the arms of England, numbered the pulsations by the beating of her staff, and kept her eye fixed on the minute-glass, which she had drawn from underneath her ragged cloak, and placed on the table. It was a wild, but solemn scene, to witness the shrivelled form of that fearful old hag, in her tattered garments presiding like some evil spirit over a death-bed. To see her unsightly rags blend with the rich escutcheon, and mingle fearlessly with the grim and golden lions that blazed on the crimson covering of

the chair, while the heavy tapestry, which dropped its folds over the very couch, where so many ill-starred beauties had slept in royal state, beside the departed Voluptuary, fell down and buried half her form in deep shadow, and save the rippling of the river, which went murmuring through the deep midnight, all was silent as the grave.

“Is there any hope, good mother?” said Edward, in a faint voice, which scarcely exceeded a whisper, yet fell distinctly on every ear in that apartment.

“None!” answered Duskena, in a solemn tone, which sounded through every heart. “The hand of Death is upon thee.” She then released his arm, and uplifting the nosegay, gazed upon him for several moments in silence, while a deep sigh escaped the monarch’s lips, as he muttered to himself, “Then all is over!”

“Wilt thou not essay thine art upon him?” said Cranmer, “peradventure it may

be the means of prolonging his life a few more days."

"The houseless beggar who shelters beneath the sharp-hawthorn," said Duskena, "and feels the cold night-wind bite through his very skin, will soon find an end to all his miseries, if his blood floweth as feebly as the King of England's. Not all the broad lands of this realm, if sold, could purchase him life beyond the morrow."

"Old woman," said Latimer, now speaking, "if it pleaseth the Almighty God, he can, in His great mercy, yet prolong his days for many to-morrows yet to come. With HIM, there is nothing impossible. *Spes mea in Deo.*"

"If the last blood of England's Kings were alone centered in his veins, it would before sunrise be cold," answered the old hag, who let fall the poisoned flowers, as if by chance upon the coverlet, and saw the feeble monarch draw them towards him, and after smelling,

gaze ardently upon them; "before another cock-crow, ye will believe the truth of what I have said. Neither medicine nor prayers will be of any more avail."

"Wilt thou not then try thy skill upon His Highness?" said one of the physicians.

"I have answered ye all," replied Duskena. "He, whom ye call His Highness, will soon be no more than the starved wretch whom the traveller findeth dead upon the highway, and whose name and kindred are all unknown."

"We have administered to His Highness's Grace, a sleeping draught, which may bring on a repose until the dawn," continued the Leech, without deigning to reply to the bold expressions which she had so fearlessly uttered. "He will then be freed from all the power of our medicine, and perchance, when he awakes, thou wilt think differently."

"I hear thee," replied the hag; "trouble me no more. When he sleeps again it will be the

sleep of death. Listen, his senses are already wandering. Disturb him no more, but let his spirit pass freely." And the old woman partly threw open the window as she spoke, and let in a strong current of air, which drove the flames of the candles aside, and shook the rich curtains: while she muttered, in half suppressed tones, "heat and cold may now fall on him alike, he shall never feel the effects of either again."

The physician was about to remonstrate against so unusual an act; but Northumberland beckoned him to be silent, and he obeyed, while Duskena again seated herself in the chair of state, and resting her head on her staff remained silent.

Meantime, the dying King seemed utterly unconscious of what was going on around him; neither the conversation which had passed, the rustling of the curtains, nor the now audible roar of the river, arrested for a moment his

attention. For some time his thin fingers continued to play with the flowers, and his memory wandered to other scenes as he talked to himself, and thus ran his thoughts. "Frail emblems! how ye resemble myself, plucked thus early from your stems to wither and die. The sun will shine upon your fair companions when ye are no more; the refreshing dews can never cheer ye again; the soft summer-showers have fallen their last upon your leaves. Other buds will blow in your places, now you are gone,—like me you will soon be forgotten. Ye die, and have no ending, while I live again after death. Death!" echoed the young King, after a long pause; "mysterious change after a few brief years of care! what art thou? I have set my feet upon the tranquil grave, where flowers, fair as yourselves, bloomed, and thought how after a few years there would be no trace that aught human slept there. Nought to tell that the heart which once beat with joy or hope, or

ached with care and pain, slumbered beneath those flowers, — nought that might distinguish the sovereign from the slave; for all alike mingle in the same common mould. ‘The small and great are there, and the servant is free from his master. There the prisoners rest together, they hear not the voice of the oppressors. There the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.’ But will all appear alike before the great tribunal of HIM, whose all-searching eye looketh through our inmost secrets; before whom all motives and all human actions are laid bare? Alas! I fear to know: my soul shrinks back alarmed into its inmost depths, as if it called upon me to shelter it. Would to God that I had obeyed all its dictates! it appeals to me now when it is beyond my power to save it. God of Mercy, my hope is in thee!”

“On whom hope was never fixed in vain,” said Latimer, whose attentive ear had drunk in

every word. "Keep thine eye steadfastly fixed on the throne of His Mercy," continued the venerable old man, "and despair not, for He bendeth his ear to all who call upon His holy name, in humility, sincerity and truth : He never disregardeth the cry of the contrite sinner, —never ! never !"

"Never?" muttered Duskena, without raising her head. "Vengeance is mine. saith the Lord, and I will repay it, and all evil-doers shall perish. Cain, where is thy brother? and where are those who once made a light in my dark path?" continued she, meditating to herself. "None came to pity me—no, not one. I sat alone in the midst of my own grief, and nursed my sorrows in my own solitude—no one came to mingle a tear with mine own—no friendly voice spake to me a word of comfort—no tongue told of hope and mercy. I heard but one voice, and day and night it whispered me on to revenge. I cen-

tered my hopes in hell, and drove away the thoughts of heaven that disturbed me ; my only happiness was in the pleasure of adding to the numbers of the damned ; and can I also yet be forgiven ?—never ! never ! I have begun the dark work which fate allotted me at my birth, and am doomed to finish it.”

“ If the faith which I have followed,” continued the dying king, “ is that which pleaseth Thee best, Thou wilt uphold it through all contention, and the gates of hell shall never prevail against it. If in my blindness I have been too rigorous in enforcing it, Thou well knowest that I have only done it with an eye to Thy glory, and for the firmer establishment of what I have been taught to believe is the truth, and for no other motive,—never ! never !”

“ Never ?” exclaimed Duskena, in so loud a voice that it drew all eyes to where she was seated, while she continued to sit motionless, and without raising her head.

“What voice spoke?” said the King, half starting up from his couch. “Cranmer there is blood upon my hand, I told thee then, that it would cling to me at the hour of death, yet thou wouldst force the deed upon me—but I forgive thee! I forgive thee!” The group looked aghast upon each other, for the word was echoed in so sepulchral a tone, that no one knew who had spoken it. Latimer only ventured upon consolation, and spoke such words as fell upon the heart of the desponding King, like a shower upon the withering herbs of a desert. Cranmer replied not, for the deed to which Edward reverted, sat with a heavy load upon his soul. The royal sufferer soon fell into a doze, but in sleep his spirit was restless, the poison which he had inhaled, was fast impregnating his brain, and he broke forth at intervals into wild ravings, words of deep import to one or two there present, but to the rest they were a mystery. He slept, but it was a restless sleep,

that, could he, the monarch of England, have sprang up and exchanged his high estate, for that of the weary peasant, who, forgetful of his toils, dreamed only of future May-games, and merry Harvest-homes, oh ! how gladly would he have done it. But the inheritor of a crown, in those days, found himself the heir to a thousand cares, and a thousand crimes ; and happy was he who could throw off such a damning load in peace. The May-queen, who sits enthroned with her diadem of wild flowers, never dreamed in her innocent mockery of the

golden care

That keeps the ports of slumber open wide
To many a watchful night."

He slept, but it was a fearful sleep ; the deep dreamy slumber that startles to find the soul awake, and wandering on the dreamy borders of the valley of the shadow of death. And ever and anon he started in his sleep, and bade Cranmer begone. " Did I not tell thee," said

he, raving in his unquiet state, "even with tears in mine eyes, that it would be a wicked act in the sight of the Lord? Did I not kneel to thee and weep to spare her, and yet thou wouldst force me to the horrid act? Oh Lord, forgive me my sins! I feel the flames that consumed her, scorching my very brain! Oh! that a frozen icicle was laid upon my brow, it is hot: it burns, oh! how it burns! Who called to me?" said the dying king, in whose ears sounded the dashing of the waters.

"Joan Boacher," muttered Duskena without looking up, while all eyes were turned to the open casement, for the voice sounded as if it came from thence.

"It is her voice that calls me," exclaimed the unhappy monarch, starting up again and looking wildly around him: "her spirit is waiting to conduct me to the gates of perdition, and start them from their hinges with the shrieks which she shrieked at the stake! Great God,

save me from her power!" and he hid his head beneath the coverlet.

"God of mercy!" said Latimer, prostrating himself beside the couch of the dying king, "if it be Thy blessed will, permit his spirit to depart in peace. Let not the dark waters of destruction thus roll over him black and desolate; send down the white dove that hovered over Thine holy Son, that its shadow may rest upon the unsunned depths of death. Oh! comfort him in this the great hour of trial. Stretch out Thine helping arm to save, for there is none powerful to help but Thee. Give light unto him that is in misery, who longs for death and it cometh not, and digs for it more than for hid treasure. Drive away the evil fiend which has come upon him, the thing which, like Job of old, he greatly fears. Send down Thy forgiveness which is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea: stretch over him the wide wings of Thine eternal mercy."

Latimer prayed long and fervently, while the tears streamed down his aged cheeks ; even Northumberland seemed deeply moved ; but not a change passed over Duskena's features : the same savage expression still pervaded her face, or if her countenance had changed at all, it seemed to have grown more diabolical.

When Latimer ceased, the dying monarch lay still, with his hands clasped together, and his fast glazing eyes turned towards heaven, as if he was looking upward to that starry land, from whence hope can only come at the last dreadful hour. A faint smile, like a solitary sunbeam that falls for a moment on the grave, settled upon his features as he died, as if to proclaim that all within was at peace. Something he muttered to himself before the spirit departed, but it was in so feeble a voice that no one heard it distinctly, though the name of Lady Jane Grey sounded as if it was coupled with the name of God in his last prayer. And so he died.

Though solemn beyond all description as was that death scene ; yet it interested but few who were there present, beyond the moment that it was past. It would be a revolting task to analyze the various feelings of those who surrounded the couch, and stood gazing upon the dead ; to point out the different paths in which their thoughts wandered, and show how unconcerned most of them were about the change which had so suddenly taken place in their sovereign.

Northumberland was the first to leave the chamber of death, and having given some orders to the attendants in the palace, he waited in the large room which had so strongly arrested Duskena's attention as she passed, the approach of those who still lingered beside the couch. The old hag was the last to leave the apartment, and when all were gone but herself, she took up the bunch of poisoned flowers which had hastened Edward's death, and

threw them through the open window into the Thames. She then stood for several moments in silence gazing on the face of the dead, and at last said in a low voice, "So thou didst weep to save her! would to God that I had known this earlier! I would sooner have seen the cursed gold melted and poured drop by drop on Northumberland's heart, than I would have touched it, or aided in shortening thy few brief days. But thy confession has but sharpened my vengeance. Peace to thy spirit!" While she stood gazing upon the corpse, the first faint glimmering of day broke into the apartment, and showed her sharp features, now softened down for the first time for many a day, into an expression of compassion. She gathered her ragged garments closely around her, took up her staff, and throwing open the door, passed through the large chamber that was filled with a blaze of light, and in which Northumberland, together with those who were

present at the king's death, were assembled. She passed through the group without once raising her head, and went slowly down the wide stair-case, muttering a curse at every step she took.*

* Several of our old chroniclers have recorded the incident of the poisoned flowers, which they suppose to have been instrumental in hastening the death of Edward, and nearly all agree in the statement, that he was left in the charge of some old woman, who undertook to work his cure, after he had been given up by the physicians.

CHAPTER XIV.

When clouds are seen, wise men put on their cloaks ;
When great leaves fall, then winter is at hand ;
When the sun sets, who doth not look for night ?
Untimely storms make men expect a dearth :
All may be well ; but, if God sort it so,
'Tis more than we deserve.

SHAKSPEARE.

DUSKENA entered the lower hall, and cast her keen eyes around in search of Gilbert, whom she observed standing at the farther end, near the door which opened into the pleasance, and communicated with the park. Beside him stood the falconer, grasping a partisan in his hand ; his companion on guard, lay stretched upon a mat opposite. The old woman made a pause before the door, as if she but waited for

it being opened, and having stood in silence for a few seconds, she said, "Why standest thou there like a wooden statue? undo the door, I would begone."

"Pardon me, good mother," answered the honest falconer, who was well acquainted with the old hag; "I am stationed here by his Grace of Northumberland, and it would be at the peril of my head, if I even permitted a bird to leave the palace without his command; and if I were, you could not escape, for there are centinels placed without, as thick as the trees in a forest."

"Ah! are such his commands?" said the old hag, in astonishment; then added after a moment's pause, "but they extend not to me; I passed through the banquet-room but now, and had the Duke any wish to have detained me, he would have named it; go up and tell him that it is my wish to depart." The falconer

took the massy key in his hand, and did as he was commanded.

“Is he asleep?” said the old woman, looking at Gilbert, then eying the slumbering centinel on the mat.

“Sound as a dormouse, and drunk as a Duke,” replied Gilbert, “but be quick, why was I summoned hither?”

“For what, I fear, will be difficult to perform now,” answered Duskena, “since all egress is cut off saving for myself. What commands has Northumberland issued since you were here? you gained access through the feint I spoke of, in bearing a message to Cecil, did you not?”

“I did,” replied Gilbert, “without difficulty, and was ordered to wait until he came down. The Duke has given commands that no one leave the palace without his consent; and has also dispatched a messenger to ride for life, and

summon the Princess Mary to the palace, to see the King before he dies. Be speedy in what you have to say ; for I hear the foot of the falconer upon the stairs."

"Give the sprig of heather I sent you," said Duskena, "to Cecil, and tell him to devise by some means your escape from the palace. Then speed as if for your life, and warn the Princess not to come near London for some time ; tell her the King is dead. You cannot escape with me now ; it would create suspicion. Show her the token I sent to you, and she will attend to the warning. Speed, speed, for life ! No more,—he comes."

The falconer approached, and undid the door, saying, "My orders extend only to yourself," and giving the watchword to the sentry without, Duskena departed, leaving Gilbert in the hall.

Meantime, Northumberland was in close consultation with the nobles, in the upper room ;

for although he well knew that no one would be bold enough to dispute his commands, still he thought it advisable to take their opinions respecting future measures. The first step was of course, to prepare Lady Jane Grey for her new dignity, and while on their way to Durham House, call at the Tower, and at once make sure of that important fortress, by putting it into the hands of his own followers. No one thought it wisdom to raise any objection to these proposals, and as the barges were to be in readiness in half an hour, each set about preparing himself for the change.

Cecil contrived to get Gilbert into his chamber, before he departed, for Duskena had apprized him that her grandson was in waiting. The dauntless drawer stood before the cunning statesman unabashed, and gave him such answers as he thought would best serve his own purpose, taking care to say nothing of the

matter which Lord Wardour had made him acquainted with.

“And how long is it since the Duke dispatched this messenger to the Princess Mary?” said Cecil, after having asked him several questions.

“It is near an hour ago,” answered Gilbert, “and the horseman must by this time have cleared the skirts of London, for he had orders not to slacken rein, or spare spur.”

“This order must be dis-commanded,” said Cecil, speaking to himself, “the Princess once in his power, he will then have all in his own hands,” then adding aloud, “didst thou inform Duskena of this?”

“I did,” answered Gilbert, “and she bade me hasten to warn the Princess not to come near London, and to bear with me her well-known signal. A curse on the heather! my legs have had but little rest, since she pulled

the first sprig, and adopted it for her signal. But guards are already stationed around the palace," continued Gilbert, "and at the peril of their heads, no one is to pass in or out, but with the permission of Northumberland, or I should have gone ere this."

"Ah! is it so, in very deed?" exclaimed Cecil, in astonishment, "will not the cat wink a moment, lest the mice should play? But we must unknit our brows lest he should be jealous of our thoughts. Thou must go out with me, as one whom I have taken into my service," said he; then pausing, he added, "but this might awake some suspicion: I know not how to get rid of thee, and every moment that thou lingerest here, becomes of more serious importance."

"This window," said Gilbert, "is not so high but that I might drop from it, and as it is without the walls of the palace, there is no one to

prevent my escape. Could you not lower me down a few feet to break my fall?"

"I see no other way," said Cecil, throwing open the casement, "but what if we should be discovered? But haste thee, there is not a soul moving without. Here is a roll of new flannel, which Audley sent me," said he to himself,—"fah! how it stinks of his drugs:" then added, "climb up the sill, and I will hold one end; trust me, it will bear thy weight, and when thou art once down, get thee a horse or boat, and hasten as if the devil himself was at thine heels. Here is that will defray the expences of thy journey; stay not a moment, until thou hast seen the head of the Princess's horse turned towards Norfolk. Give our greetings, and tell her that she shall soon hear from him, who sent thee." So saying, he undid the bale of flannel, which had perchance been steeped in Audley's celebrated pig-broth, and Gilbert

seizing one end securely with both hands, reached the ground in safety, and went joyfully away from the palace.

“What tools are we compelled to work with!” said Cecil, when the drawer had gone. “Now if yonder low fellow chanceth either to lose his way, or to get drunk with the money I have given him, I would not give the toss up of a grey groat, for Mary’s chance of wearing the crown. For, once in Northumberland’s power, she is sure either to end her days in a donjon, or perhaps be shown the shortest road out of the world. As for the Lady Elizabeth, it is not her turn yet, but I have her safely in my power. Her doings with the late Lord Admiral are in my own keeping; and now,” said he, throwing a silk bandage around his neck, and letting it fall half down his breast, “I will carry my arm in a sling, and swear that I have lost the use of it; I cannot write letters for the Duke,

that may one day cost me my head." So saying, he struck the back of his hand a sharp blow on the wainscoat, quite forcibly enough to cause a swelling, and replacing it in the bandage, took the jar of "pig-broth" under his arm, not a drop of which he ever intended to taste, and made his way to the barge. Northumberland was waiting for him in the hall, where all the nobles were assembled, and when he reprimanded Cecil for delaying them, the cunning secretary pointed to his hand, which he said he had been fomenting, hitched his "pig-soup" higher under his arm, and passed on. Arundel smiled to himself but said nothing.

When the doors which fronted the river were thrown open, and abreast of which the splendid barges were moored, an old man rushed forward in mourning robes, and planting himself by the porch, exclaimed as the nobles passed, "Of your charity, pray for the soul of

the high and mighty prince, our late Sovereign Lord Edward the Sixth, departed to God.”

Northumberland stepped up, and with a countenance flaming with anger, struck the old man such a blow as felled him to the earth, while he said: “Silence, rascal, and let me but hear thee again breathing a word of his death, beyond these walls, and I will stick up thine head to preach upon a pole.” Then turning to the chief officer in command, he added, “Let not so much as a dog escape the palace, to carry away the tidings of the King’s death, until you hear further from us. It imports us much that these things should be kept secret as the grave. I will communicate with you anon.”

The officer bowed so low, that the plume of his helmet almost touched his knee, and went away to enforce the Duke’s commands, and every gate of the palace was guarded as securely as a prison.

Northumberland was the last to enter the barge, keeping his keen eye fixed on the nobles as they passed before him, and numbering them as a shepherd does his sheep when they pass through a gate. Not one was wanting. The signal was given, and the rowers in their rich coats and badges, tugged at the oars, and impelled the splendid barge onward, with a velocity which would have made a city-Alderman on a Lord Mayor's day stand aghast. The sun shone brightly upon the broad bosom of the Thames, gilding the jar which held the salvation of Cecil, and falling upon the silver beard of the venerable Latimer who sat by his side, listening to a long account of the virtues of Audley's medicine; while the narrator was wondering to himself how Gilbert Pots speeded on his journey. Cecil had a happy knack of talking of one thing, and thinking of another at the same time.

But we will leave them afloat, with all their

crimes ; could they but have read each other's thoughts, the barges would have been lightened of half their burthen long before they had reached London. Instead of the measured plashing of the oars, there would have been the ringing of cold steel, and Cecil with his pig-broth around his neck, would have been pitched to the devil before his time. But the hour was not yet come, and they went on as quietly as an assembly of black-legs, over their cards, each convinced that his companion is a rogue, yet with eye and hand alert, determined to play out the game. But we will outstrip the fleet motion of the barge, and carry our reader to the presence of the Lady Jane Grey.

CHAPTER XV.

There was a lady once, ('tis an old story,
That would not be a queen, that would she not,
For all the mud in Egypt.

King Henry VIII.

LEAVING Gilbert Pots to pursue his journey, our story now carries us into the very heart of these stirring times, and to the presence of the Lady Jane Grey. It would be a dry and unwelcome task to analyze her feelings, from the time that her quietude was first disturbed by her ambitious mother, up to the period of the death of Edward. Suffice it to say that the crafty Duchess continued to work upon her at every opportunity, beset her morning and night, in a similar way to that which we have attempted to

describe in a former chapter, until she could occupy her mind with no other thoughts, than that Fate had destined her to become a queen: and the beautiful victim half lent her reluctant ear to its belief, wept, sighed and prayed, yet could think of nothing else. Her mind was filled with the thoughts which had been forced upon her during the day, until her rest was broken; and in sleep she saw visions of crowns, beheld beheaded relatives, heard the fires crackle, and saw the faggots blaze, which were consuming all that were dear to her: then she awoke, and wet her pillow with tears—went to sleep with a sigh, and dreamed over the same dreams again.

Her mind was gradually and unweariedly prepared for the great part which she was destined to play. The poison was administered in slow but sure doses; her unfeeling mother was constantly holding the chalice to her lips, and she drank without knowing when. Pages might

be dedicated to the plans of the attack, and even rendered interesting, but they would not forward our story a jot; they were revolting, cold-blooded and devilish, yet she saw not through the designs of the tempter. But we will throw a veil over them; such scenes are too common; they transpire in every age: the game played for may not be so high, but the parent who edges on the daughter to marry against her consent, only enacts a similar part to that which was played by the mother of Lady Jane Grey.

To proceed with the more important incidents connected with the development of our story;—a confidential emissary of Northumberland's had started off to apprise the Duchess of Suffolk of the King's death, a short time after, an express was dispatched for the Princess Mary; thus preparing the ambitious lady for the scene which was so speedily to follow. Early as the hour was, (for it was scarcely six o'clock,) she sent a message to the Lady Jane,

begging of her to arise immediately, as she was waiting in the Summer-parlour to speak with her on matters of great import.

“She must now know all,” said the unfeeling Duchess; “Northumberland, and the Lords of the Council, are already on their way hither, and all this child’s play must now have an ending. A queen she must and shall be: and yet, methinks, this new honour would not have sat amiss upon myself; — but she comes. “You may guess, daughter,” added she, without betraying a symptom of emotion, “at the business which has caused me to seek an interview at this early hour.”

“I fear my heart tells me aright,” said the Lady Jane, the tears gushing from her lovely eyes; “the King is dead!”

“He is!” replied the Duchess, “and I am the first to congratulate you on your new dignity. You are now a Queen!”

“Mother!” exclaimed the Lady Jane, catch-

ing hold of a chair to support herself, and turning pale as death; "my heart is too full to jest. Edward is dead! and this is no time for mockery."

"There is neither jest nor mockery in what I utter to your Highness," answered the ambitious mother; "Edward bequeathed the crown to you before his death, by a deed which bears the signets of all the English nobles."

"Great God support me!" exclaimed the Lady Jane, sinking into the chair, and burying her beautiful face in her hands, while she gave vent to a flood of tears. At that instant her husband entered the room—

"Save me, Dudley!" said she, springing up, and grasping the sleeve of his rich doublet; "I am thy wife! wilt thou suffer them to drag me away, and make me a queen? Oh, save me from this misery!"

"I know of no misery, my love!" said

Dudley, with a coldness that went to his lady's heart ; " nothing but happiness and honour awaits thee ; take comfort, my fair Queen, a whole nation is in waiting to obey thy wishes."

" Cold comfort have I from thee," said she in a sorrowful voice, and with a mournful shake of the head ; then turning to her mother, she threw herself on her knees before her, and seizing her kirtle, said : " Dear mother, I am thy daughter, oh ! rescue me from the coming evil ; if thou lovest thy child, save her ! and she will bless thee for it. Throw not a load upon me which I am unable to bear, and which it has long been my fervent prayer to be saved from." She buried her face in the costly drapery, and clasping her mother's knees, sobbed as if her heart was breaking.

The unfeeling mother looked down for a moment upon the beautiful victim that knelt before her, and exchanging a glance with Dudley,

whose eye was as cold and collected as her own, she placed her daughter on the chair, and thus proceeded: " 'Tis useless waging war against fate ; that which was long ago foretold has now come to pass ; I cannot undo what the late King, with the sanction of the council, has done. Come, dry those tears ; there is nothing to weep for as yet ; remember, daughter, that by becoming a queen, you are saving England from many troubles ; a thousand miseries are in waiting, if you refuse the crown, to rush in and overwhelm her."

" Think not that the weighty affairs of the realm are destined to fall upon yourself, my fair Queen," said Dudley, taking up the tone of persuasion ; " Many a wise head will pass long and sleepless nights in deep council, to lighten thy brows from the cares of state. Thousands of brave men, will ever wait with their hands upon their swords to protect thee ; an hundred

ships will be ready to plough the broad sea at your commands, and carry your name in thunder to distant shores. You will move like the sun above your subjects, and by your light and beauty inspire them with happiness and love."

"Tempt me not, my lord," replied the Lady Jane, "by gilding over the bitter pill of sovereignty — by bareing its transitory smiles, and seeking to hide its natural sorrows. The slave, though chained in golden fetters, must still be wretched: the heart aches on under purple velvet, just as it does under grey freize. Wouldst thou have me seated on a throne only to command and take my pleasure; to preside like a painted puppet over masks and revels, and hold no sympathy with the thousand cares that are cankering without? To be wrapt in silks, and hushed to sleep by music, reckless of the misery that reigns in many a home? No,

Dudley, I will not be Queen : I could not sleep if I thought that one in my wide realm wanted a meal to eat, or a roof to shelter under."

She paused a moment, for there was a noise of footsteps without, and before she again proceeded, Northumberland, Suffolk, Pembroke, Arundel, Cranmer, and several others entered the apartment, and prostrating themselves before her, exclaimed as with one voice,

" GOD SAVE THE QUEEN !"

She was unprepared for a scene like this ; it burst upon her unawares. Had a thunderbolt fallen at her feet, she could not have been more startled. She rose almost unconsciously to receive them, then blushed, until her neck and face was the colour of a rose, when she found herself, thus suddenly, before so many of the English noblemen ; and when she saw them bend their knees before her, she trembled from head to foot, and as their voices rung upon her

ears, while they hailed her as Queen, her eyes closed, she gave a faint shriek, clasped her hands together, and would have fallen on the floor, had she not been caught by her husband. When she recovered, she found only her attendant Amy in the room, who, with tears in her eyes, had been busied in bathing her temples, and kissing her forehead, while she called upon her "dear young mistress to look upon her once again."

"Are they gone?" said the Lady Jane, in a hurried voice. "Where am I? speak, Amy, have I not been dreaming? my head hath been sore troubled of late."

"They are gone," replied the affectionate attendant, "and there is no one but your own faithful Amy with you now! But they will come again anon! I heard your mother invite them to take their morning meal with her. She told them that you were subject to such fits,

and would soon recover. Ill betide her tongue, that first broke your peace of mind ; but we must all abide our fate," added she, heaving a deep sigh.

"We must, we must," said the Lady, in a melancholy voice ; then casting her eyes on the table, and springing up, added, "What have we here, Amy ?"

"The crown that they have brought, to make you Queen with," replied the attendant ; "Don't be alarmed at it, my dear Lady ; let me put it on your head, and see how you look with it on."

"Touch it not," said the Lady Jane, gazing attentively on the diadem, which had so lately decked the brows of Edward ; "touch it not, Amy," and she put back her hand. "Thou knowest not how much care is concealed beneath that small compass, how much blood it has caused to be spilt, how many of its wearers

have been murdered for so paltry a bauble : the head that it once encircles never sleepeth soundly again. Alas ! that I should be destined to wear it."

"Speak not so sadly, my Lady," said Amy ; "methinks I could wear it for years, and sleep as soundly as I was wont to do, if my doing so, would make you happier. It looks no such mighty matter, pretty as they have made it."

"I doubt not but that thou couldst, my dear Amy," replied the Lady Jane ; "but thou wouldst never feel its weight as I do now, even without wearing it. But put it on thy brow," added she. Amy obeyed, and stood admiring herself for a moment in the mirror : "there, now you have only need to be clothed in royal robes, placed in a chair of state ; then turn in the herd, to bow and flatter, and utter fulsome praise, and lo, you are a Queen ! Then, Amy ! they would discover virtues that you never had, find

wisdom in your words you never thought of, stand abashed at every sentence you uttered, never dreaming all the time that you was still my tender-hearted Amy. Would this, were all! and that there were no more cares than to wear a purple robe, a few bars of graven gold, and a tire or two of jewels,—then would I not fear to become a Queen.”

“What more would they have you to do?” said Amy, taking off the crown: “surely, saving only when you sat upon the throne, we should live and talk, and be as we are now.”

“Not so, my dear girl,” said the Lady Jane; “we should then have a thousand cares, that we never dreamed of; then we must move, and talk, and think in form,—assume an unnatural stiffness to inferiors,—put on a greatness that becomes us not,—smile, though we feel the heart more ready to weep,—hear empty praises muttered in set forms, professions of love and

loyalty, mere sounding words, uttered in such like tones, as a drowsy bellman's when he proclaims the hour of night. Be ever at the busy Council's beck, signing deeds that we understand not, deciding matters that are beyond our comprehension : hear this knave's opinion, and that fool's suggestions, when all the time their object is only to benefit themselves,—decide on death or life, war or peace, make fetters for men's conscience, and call them laws. Discard an honest man, at the importuning of some stronger villain ; while every sound would be made to reach our ears though only spoke in whispers ; and then a cringing pardon craved for that which accidentally reached us, as though dropped unaware, when days had been spent in shaping it to overthrow some envied rival. While a thousand jealous eyes would ever be watching round the throne, like angry bull-dogs, ready to bark and bite at every one that ven-

tured to come near. This, Amy, is to be a Queen,—a splendid slave, chained up in gold, and every link hid by a cunning hand, that you may sit and dream how free you are.”

“I will not be a Queen,” said Amy, with a sigh.

“What virtue is there in this gold?” said the Lady Jane, disregarding her, and placing her hand on the crown, while she was still carried away with her own thoughts. “What secret charm concealed in this ‘golden sorrow?’ where is its power, its hidden wisdom, its greatness? what better should I be by wearing it, than I am now? Poor paltry bauble! what use art thou, more than the nobles locked up in misers’ chests, hoarded in bags, or buried in the earth? How many hearts wouldst thou make happy, coined into marks and given to the poor? I could be just as much a Queen without this, were my brows wreathed with wild

flowers, as they were in childhood. And these gems might throw their light on mask or revel, blaze there, and do no harm. Were I Queen, they would not make me rule the better, I should be no wiser through wearing them."

"Give it me, and I will throw it into the Thames," said Amy, "then they cannot make thee a Queen;" but the Lady Jane heard her not, for just at that moment she was placing it on her own head.

"Oh, what a weight it feels!" said she, pursuing the same train of thoughts as she had hitherto been absorbed in. "How heavily all its cares seem already to bear upon me! I could never sleep with such a load upon my brow. To think that all a nation's happiness is here, its emblem sordid gold! That which sets brother against brother, house against house, friend against friend, and has caused more bloodshed than a thousand quarrels; cold-

blooded murders in the midnight, on lonely travellers, in dark highways ; and caused many a peaceful door to be broken open, to let out life. Alas!" added she, again placing it on the table, "could they find no other emblem for royalty?—oh, what wise mockery! the Prince of Peace was crowned with thorns, and what can be more thorny than a crown? Poor, paltry toy! a thing mechanics made, hammered and graved, that every day looks still the same. A wreath of simple flowers would better become my brow ; they are God's work,—things that would fade and die, and every morning be renewed, reminding me how frail and uncertain is all a sovereign's state. And now I have laid it aside, where is its awe, and Majesty? Yet, what a weight it felt, a load of oppressive royalty, enough to deaden the brain. What am I different now, than when I wore it, saving that my forehead aches not beneath its weight?

Needless load of 'glittering grief,' thou couldst not prolong the life of him who wore thee last a single moment; thou couldst not check the arm of Death!—he would not be bought by so poor a bribe. Yet Edward bequeathed it me with his dying breath," added she, after a long pause, "and with it the guardianship of our holy faith."

"Then take it," said Amy, now speaking loud enough to arrest the attention of her fair mistress: "His Majesty also promised to leave me a ring when I was with him one day in the Park. I marvel much whether or not he remembered his pledge. If he has, I shall wear it for his sake, and so I would the crown too, on a Sunday, if he had left it me; but I would have it altered, for it would make pretty head-gear."

"It is not a thing to be left like a remembrance, Amy," replied the Lady Jane; "but like

the enchanter's garment that we read of in the old romance, it will bring death to the wearers, unless they have right claim. That claim is the Princess Mary's ; and yet," said she, with deep emotion, " it will be a woeful day for England when she wears it."

" I fear me it will," replied Amy ; " many have long dreaded that day. Do, my dear Lady, save us from her power—"

Her further speech was interrupted by the re-entrance of her mother and the nobles, who came armed with every persuasion that art could invent, or interest devise, to induce her to become a queen. It would fill one of our volumes, were we to give all that was said on the occasion. Northumberland, her father and mother, her husband and Cranmer, all bore down upon her in succession with their appeals, mingling their arguments with tears, and even asserting that she would be sinning

against Heaven if she refused to accept the crown.

“Think, lady, but a moment,” said Cranmer, after the others had spoken, “what will befall England if the power of Rome is again unloosed. The vengeance of the priesthood will know no bounds; they will come like a desolating blight upon the harvest which we have reared, and destroy it, and again sow the ground with hemlocks and thistles. Then wilt thou regret, lady, when our limbs are stretched on the rack, and our bodies scorched in the flames, that thou didst not save thy country from all this misery.”

Cranmer forgot at that moment that he himself was the chief cause of Joan Boacher being burnt at the stake.

“God forbid that this should ever come to pass,” exclaimed the Lady Jane: “I would die to maintain the faith I believe in; none of ye

could do more. Tempt me not then to uphold it by measures which my own conscience whispers me are wrong. God will support his own just cause, by means which are unknown to ourselves; he will not suffer our religion to fall to the ground, if it is pleasing in his sight. It but ill becometh one of my years to speak on these matters before thee, reverend father," continued she: "but let us not speak too lightly of those forms of worship which our fathers have believed in for so many centuries; that faith in which they lived and died, in the full hope of eternal happiness hereafter. God looketh to the heart, and not to outward form; let us then be charitable to all men. Plato and Socrates were but Heathen Philosophers; yet who will say that they were not good men?"

Cranmer replied at great length, extolled those views of charity which she held forth,

and dwelt upon the advantages the kingdom would derive from one so highly gifted as herself, and so well adapted to quell those religious feuds which ravaged the land. Northumberland praised her wisdom and her clemency, and the happiness which would ensue from one so virtuous wielding the sceptre. Cecil and Arundel out-flattered all the rest, lest they should be suspected of showing a luke-warmness to the cause, and their real designs be seen into. While her husband, who had no doubt of becoming king, if his young wife accepted the crown, poured forth a long and eloquent speech, the composition of which had cost him a sleepless night. Then came the voices of her father and mother, with more influence than all the rest. And when all the three threw themselves upon their knees and implored her to save them, no marvel that they overcame her.

It would but be a useless prolonging of our story to record all the arguments that were brought forward, or portray the feelings they awakened. Lady Jane Grey was a dutiful and affectionate daughter, and when she beheld her father and mother kneeling to her to save them from the vengeance of Gardiner and Bonner, and those who were professed enemies to her faith, her resolution gave way. She felt that it was in vain any longer to wage war with fate. She yielded to their wishes like a sickly captain, who, seeing that all his crew have given themselves up to despair, by one desperate effort wars against nature, and seizes the rudder which he feels himself incompetent to manage, determined to save them, though the trial should cost him his life. But the comparison is feeble, when contrasted with those holier and higher motives by which the Lady Jane Grey was actuated,—feelings of re-

ligion, love, and duty. To have seen her stand with her eyes bent upon her parents, her hand enclosed within that of her husband,—to have beheld her in that moment of indecision, with every eye rivetted upon her, every breath hushed, every lip apart, waiting for her first sweet utterance, and to have felt what she then felt, and to think that she could still have refused, would be to outrage human nature. Historians may argue that she should not have yielded; commentators show why she did wrong; wise men point out the course she ought to have adhered to; but throw father, mother, and husband, and the weight of opposing statesmen into the opposite scale, then think that she was but a young lady scarcely seventeen, her mind not yet strong enough to rule her affections, no one to persuade her to the contrary, her superstitious feelings (which all possessed to a great degree in that age)

strongly wrought upon, and who under such circumstances could have acted otherwise?

She clasped her hands together, and sinking into a chair, faintly exclaimed, "I will become your queen. Leave me,—leave me alone."—Each stepped forward and kissed her pale and motionless hand, then retired.

When she found herself alone, she fell down on her knees beside the richly-carved oaken chair, and poured forth her feelings in prayer. But we will not attempt to withdraw the veil of Heaven, to put on record those holy aspirations which float through the blinding glory that encircles the throne of the Omnipotent,—that brightness which causes the angels to veil their faces with their wings, yet is pierced by the power of prayer. We can but see her as she knelt before her Maker, with folded hands and tear-bathed cheeks, and the lids of her azure eyes down-dropped, the sunlight glowing

around her in all its splendour. But the words she uttered were intended for the ears of God alone; it may be that a listening angel caught the floating echoes as they stole along the golden dome of Heaven, and leant upon his harp to weep, as he glanced at the future that came heaving up like a laden thunder-cloud. But to no mortal ear was a word recorded.

CHAPTER XVI.

Petruch. Thy gown? why, ay :—Come tailor, let us see it,
 O mercy God! what masking stuff is here?
 What's this? a sleeve? 'tis like a demi-cannon:
 What! up and down, carved like an apple tart?
 Here's snip, and nip, and cut, and slish and slash.

* * * * *

Kate. I never saw a better-fashioned gown,
 More quaint, more pleasing, nor more commendable.

Taming of the Shrew.

HER mind now freed from all suspense, and although compelled to act in every way against her will, the Lady Jane began to prepare herself for the mighty part she was about to play. She had heard all the weighty reasons which the nobles brought forth, and saw at once the danger to which her dearest friends would be exposed if Mary came to the throne; and the names of father, mother, and husband, still pleaded in her heart until she felt it a duty

to obey them. No dreams of dazzling glory entered her mind, pomp and pageantry were far from her thoughts; she resigned herself to become a queen, as she would have entered a dungeon to have saved them; and amid all the gloom which seemed for some time to gather around her, one bright ray of light darted down: it was the hope that she might raise up the true religion from its then almost prostrate state. She became a queen to save her friends from the block, her protestant subjects from the flames, and to free the nation from the fetters of Rome. But amid all these urgent reasons, her conscience still whispered her, that she was depriving another of her right to the throne, although stern necessity, and not her own choice, compelled her to pursue such a course. These and many other thoughts passed through her mind as she sat alone in her chamber, waiting for her attendant, Amy, to bring in the

robes which her mother was looking out, that she might deck herself as became a queen.

Her maiden was not long before she entered the room laden with finery, splendid articles of dress which the Duchess had provided, unknown to her daughter, for the occasion.

“Oh! my lady!” exclaimed Amy, whose affections only centered on two things, — the love of her mistress and fine clothes, — “saw you ever such beautiful tunics, such lovely partlets, and splendid sleeves? Here is a stomacher rich enough for an angel, and a kerchief that would carry a prince’s heart away. Oh! how I should love to be a queen, were it only for a day, to wear this jewelled boddice; come, let me try it on you. If Lord Wardour only saw ye in this dress he would drown himself for you before night.”

“Speak not of him again, Amy, unless thou wouldst lose my love,” said the Lady Jane, in

a sorrowful voice, then glancing at the robes, added, "Could they not lead me to the sacrifice without adorning me as the heathens did their victims? Put away that trumpery, I will none of it; mourning garments would become me better, and seem more meet for the change I am doomed to undergo."

"Nay, my lady," said Amy, "be not angered; and if you will not robe yourself like a queen, do put on a dress that will become the daughter of an English noble. Remember that you would not stir abroad even on an ordinary occasion, in the morning-dress you now wear, though it well becomes you, and I shall never love you the better when you are covered with gold and jewels. Do, my dear lady, do something, or I shall sit down and cry again, if I begin to think of things."

"Thou art right," said the Lady Jane. "I must yield to the follies of the age, and in these

things be like the rest of the world. Reach forth my bridal dress. I have never worn it since I came from the altar, and I will now enter into this new marriage with my country, with all my heart. Bestir thyself, lest this resolution melt away. What I am compelled to do shall be done with all my might. I will dedicate myself to God and my people. *Vox populi, vox Dei.*"

So saying, she proceeded to undress herself, while Amy took out her bridal garments from the richly carved wardrobe.

"Let this tunic be packed up with the other articles, which must be removed to the Tower," said the Lady Jane, giving the gown which she had just taken off to her attendant. "God is witness how unwillingly I have divested myself of it. And when it is His holy pleasure, that I should throw off this dignity which I am compelled to assume, I will gladly don it again."

As she stood half disrobed, with her silken ringlets drooping in disarray over her beautiful neck and bosom, and her fair arms glancing bare and bright in the sunbeams, which streamed in through the stained lattice, she looked too lovely to belong to earth. Her long eyelids drawn down in modest wise, while she remained a moment in deep thought, and her sweet lips slightly apart, with her arms dropping motionless by her side, and her shoulders catching the stream of light, which gave its crimson to half her cheeks, would have served an artist for a fine model of Hebe, standing mute before the throne of Jupiter, and waiting with down-darting eyes until he drained the golden goblet.

She then sat down, and Amy proceeded to arrange her hair in the same form as it was on the morning of her marriage, by twisting the long tresses into beautiful curls with her slender fingers. "I fear me," said Amy, as she divided

tress after tress, and made every ringlet fall in its place, down the lovely neck and shoulders of her lady—"I fear me! that the weight of the crown will spoil my busking to-day, and discompose all my pretty devices. Shall I leave the long love-curls in front, my lady, as they were wont to hang when Lord Wardour craved so anxiously for one of them?"

"That name again!" replied the Lady. "No! throw them behind with the rest; we will carry as little of our folly before as we can. As for the crown disarranging thy tiring, thou needst not fear that; I shall wear the simple caul of gold net-work, it is most becoming."

"But you must wear something more, my lady," said Amy, putting on the simple net-work of gold, which just served to keep the ringlets in their places,—“something more to look like a queen: this plain silver band, set with pearls, will just do to keep the love-

locks behind, and it composes well with the colour of your hair."

"Well! well! then let it be so," answered her mistress; "but do not array me like a boy-queen in a mask. I must bring something more than tawdry garments to a throne."

"Your head-tiar is just done as it was that night when young Lord ——, if my tongue was blistered I could not forget him," said Amy.—"But you know all eyes will be upon you, my lady, and if you are not dressed something like a queen, how will they know you from another?"

"I shall but be as I was, Amy," replied the Lady; "dress me as thou willest, saving that I shall have more care, and need more patience, and sleep less soundly than the thousands who are robed in simple frieze. I am about to enter upon a fearful trial. God grant that I may not abuse the power he entrusteth to me!—Thou

knowest not, Amy, how aching a brow a crown conceals ; thou didst little dream, my dear girl, when thou twinedst the roses of summer in my hair, that it would come to this. But reach me my partlet, we will go through our trial right queenly."

Amy put on the rich front or habit, to which was appended the beautiful curving collar of white satin, embroidered with strawberry leaves in gold, and flowered with seed-pearl — just so far as it revealed the throat, — which was left bare, saving for the string of brilliants which clasped her ivory neck. Over it drooped the graceful ringlets like the curled tendrils of a vine, revealing here and there glimpses of the interwoven gold.

"Now the stomacher," said the Lady ; "come, let us get through this busy day. Ah ! how I wish that I had undergone the scrutinizing glances of those haughty ladies, who will be prepared to receive me at the Tower !"

“ Will you not wear the one that your mother sent ?” said Amy, holding up a vest which blazed with gold and diamonds ; “ look how beautifully these lions are embossed, rearing up with their mouths open, and their eyes all rich diamonds ; and these golden crowns ! they would show well through the cross-lacing of the tunic. Do,—do put this on, my Lady, it looks so grim and grand, as if it was only fit for a queen.”

“ Throw it aside,” said the Lady ; “ I will bear no such savage emblems on my bosom. I, who would not harm a lamb, shall ill play off my embroidered lions. He must have loved blood, who selected a savage beast of the forest to represent royalty ; throw it aside, I will wear no such brutal baubles, and give me the boddice that matches with the collar.”

Amy obeyed, though not until she had spread it over her own bosom, and admired herself a moment in the mirror. She then reached the rich but becoming boddice, which buried the

even plates of the beautiful habit, and was made of white satin velvet embroidered with oak-leaves and acorns, all wrought in the purest gold. This Amy laced behind, for it was only the front that was intended to be seen, and when it was properly put on, and the accompanying kerchief secured after having bent half a dozen silver pins, the Lady Jane Grey stood up with the full outline of her lovely figure revealed, such a form as would have driven a poet mad, and sent him raving after Hebe and Venus, and Diana, all the rest of his days. She was almost too lovely to look upon; the rising of her bosom, the rounding of her shoulders, that stately neck, surmounted by such a head as the world will never see again; and those eyes so softly bright, and serene, clear as heaven, when only one cloud mingles its silver with the azure, and darts down a bright dissolving light, on which we look until we cannot

tell where the blue begins, or where it ends, so beautifully are the blue and the bright blended. Then her mouth, soft, crimson, and sweetly parted, as if love slept there pillowed on a bed of rosy kisses, and pouting in his slumber because those lips were not his own. Hers was a face lovely enough to draw an ascending spirit from the skies, though it knew that after one embrace, the doom of perdition was fixed.

“When you are queen, my Lady,” said Amy, as she threw down one pin after another, “the first law that I would make, should be one to compel these pin-makers to solder the heads faster, and temper them better than they do. I am sure if they had them to use, they would never leave them in this unfinished state.”

“I have heard thee also complain of their golden hooks and eyes,” said the lovely Lady, with a smile; “might they not as well be mentioned in the same act, with a few additional

clauses for clasps and skewers, lace-points and bodkins? But reach me my tunic, or my mother will grow impatient."

Amy reached the tunic, or gown, which was also made of the richest white satin velvet, embroidered with oak and vine-leaves, and fastened at the wrists with bracelets of gold, the gift of King Edward, and engraven with the motto, which in English signified, "The gift of Love." The tunic was open in front to show the rich stomacher, and laced diamond-wise with a golden cord, which composed well with the rich flush of the costly velvet. Next came a belt of silver, blazing with an hundred precious stones, and making a light round her lovely and small waist, like the bright circle which we sometimes see surrounding the moon; her shoes were also of the same material as her tunic, and slashed with gold into beautiful and quaint devices, and now that she was fully

attired she stood up, and looked more like the queen of Heaven, than of earth.

Her eye wandered unconsciously to the large mirror which stood opposite, and when she saw her own beautiful figure flashed back in such imposing array, her face and neck crimsoned like a blushing cloud, which opens to receive the setting sun. She stood half ashamed of her own loveliness ; she felt that she had done wrong in only for a moment looking at her own figure ; a form which even an angel might have been forgiven for kneeling to. But our angels are only imperfect sketches of such a woman ; such figures seldom cross the vision in our brightest dreams of heaven ; the stained lattice seemed to blush while looking on her ; and those forms with which the old masters had peopled their glories, seemed as if hesitating whether or not they should leap from the casement, and shine on in the heaven of her eyes.

Even Amy gazed on her for several moments in mute astonishment. She never remembered her looking so beautiful. There was a majesty, and a sweet dignity in her countenance, which she had never before seen; for the soul of Lady Jane Grey had never till that hour kindled up. The mighty spirit was but newly awakened, though as yet she scarcely knew herself. She looked every inch a queen.

She descended into the apartment where the nobles were in waiting, and as they again knelt before her, she cast her lovely eyes upon the floor, and stood in bashful silence. But in her modest beauty she seemed more striking, than if she had entered with an air of assurance; like a rose that overtops all other flowers, yet is unconscious that it reigns queen of the garden. A low murmur escaped the lips of the assembled peers when they beheld her; a subdued feeling of breathless admiration, more impressive than

clamorous praise, for every eye was fixed upon her as if by a charm. Even Arundel for a moment forgot all his plots, and the deep-browed Cecil was lost in admiration. She burst upon them in all her quiet beauty, and bashful modesty, like a spirit of light, that divests the soul of every earthly impulse.

Without raising her eyes, she said in a voice that went through every heart, "Now, my lords, I am ready to attend you." Then rose the loud shout of "God save the Queen!" which was echoed by Northumberland's followers. But not a silver trumpet rang out; there was no sound of music to send its redoubling clangour across the river.

The door was thrown open, and the nobles led the way to where the gaudy barges were in waiting, at the foot of the pleasance, each taking care not to set foot upon the carpet which stretched to the brink of the river, and was

spread for the young Queen. She walked a few steps upon the greensward of the lawn, but Northumberland offered his arm, which she accepted, and so measured his step, as to lead her more to the left, where the carpet was spread, and tread with her step by step ; it was a quiet movement, but the Lady Jane understood it, and though she would have preferred the velvet sward, passed on without making a remark. Arundel and Cecil, who followed close behind, exchanged glances with each other,—one of those brief deep-meaning looks which said as much as if they had uttered aloud, “The Duke shares her new dignity; he rules, and she obeys in silence.”

She entered the royal barge leaning on the arm of Northumberland. At the upper end was placed a rich canopy, and the crimson cushions were elevated above the rest; but these things she saw not, for her eyes were still

bent downward, and when the Duke motioned her to be seated, she drew back as if to give him the preference, and was even unconscious, when he declined the honour, that the arms of England were emblazoned in gold above her head.

The rowers exchanged looks with each other ere their sinewy arms pulled the first stroke; and pride beamed from every eye as they cleaved their way through the flashing waters; they were proud of the lovely burden entrusted to their care, and each one felt her safety devolving upon himself,—a pride such as an Englishman feels when a beautiful woman is in his charge, when his honest heart, scorning all grimace, vows it will protect her though every drop in his veins is shed in defence of her safety.

Although the sun shone brightly upon the river, and blazed upon the silver badges of the

rowers, and the gold embroidery with which the dresses of the nobles were ornamented, still there was nothing cheering in the scene. There was no firing of culverins, rustling of banners, ringing of bells, sounding of music, or raising of voices. If the procession struck the eye of some solitary waterman, as he rowed past in his wherry, he rested upon his oars a moment, glanced at the gay barges, and marvelled what was the cause of so much splendour being afloat in silence. Then he concluded they must be maskers on their way to the palace of Greenwich.

Northumberland tried to rally the spirits of the company, but all was of no avail. Arundel smiled at what he said, but in another instant his countenance sank into its former thoughtfulness. Pembroke made some courteous reply, and, in the next moment, was again buried in his own meditations. Even the Lady Jane gave

incoherent answers to her mother's remarks; and when Cranmer was speaking of the sacrifice of feeling which all ought to make for the benefit of religion, she replied, that the ways of Heaven were mysterious, and she was now convinced of the folly of opposing Fate.

They were startled by the man at the helm calling out to a small craft, that was approaching to pull to shore, or it would be run down. The waterman in the wherry just heard the signal in time to save himself: although, in pulling round, he grazed the gilded bulwark of the state-barge. The shock startled the old woman, who was seated in deep meditation at the stern of the boat, and the colour fled Northumberland's cheek, when he looked up, and beheld the form of Duskena. The piercing eye of the old hag glowed upon every countenance in the barge, ere they swept by; and the Lady Jane grasped the arm of her mother unconsciously, while she

said in a whisper, " I have seen a face like that old woman's a thousand times in my sleep."

" It is the witch of the Dark Valley," muttered Northumberland, as he shrugged up his shoulders; " I would have given my glove full of gold rather than she should have stumbled upon our path." But the last sentence was rather thought than said.

" Ye float on bravely, now," muttered the old hag to herself, when they had passed; " but the dark and troubled waters are a-head; the surge but sleeps that will soon dash upon your silk vestments, and throw a gloomy eclipse over your garish gold. The snare is set, and ye are hurrying fast into it. The pitfall is already dug under your feet. Sail on, proud Duke, thou wilt strike upon the hidden rock at last. The waves of death will boil, and roar above thine head; and when thou callest for

help, there shall be none at hand ; no one shall pity thee in the hour of thy trouble. Cranmer, too, must perish ; but the net in which he is caught must be cunningly woven : the hatred of Gardiner, and the bigotry of Bonner, must be set to entrap him. He must fall a victim to this new faith. There is blood upon his mitre, and his pastoral crook has been changed into a rod of persecution. I would not wish to live an hour longer when he has perished. Oh vengeance, what iron food thou art ! How hard, and how long, do we live upon thee, until every nerve becomes like iron, and only heats in the furnace of our hatred, until a touch of it would burn the coldest steel, and all the flames of hell could never make it hotter. And yonder pale-faced girl, why should I endeavour to save her ? she belongs to the brood of the serpent that has stung me—stung me until my very blood is black and poisonous. No, I will leave her

to her fate. If she escape, well: if she perishes amid the rest, why let others bemoan her. I have not a tear left for any one. The flames scorched up my heart years ago; and now my eyes are dry. Let Wardour weep for her; he cannot sorrow younger; but had she been his wife, I would have saved her. Fool that he is, why should he yet thirst for the cup on which the poison of a Dudley has hung? There is death in all that their accursed race touches. But my vengeance is working well."

Leaving the hag to curse, we will follow the course of the barge, which shot safely through the narrow arch of the old bridge, and reached the Tower without accident. In landing, however, the foot of the Lady Jane slipped, and she would have fallen, had she not been supported by Northumberland. She looked upon her mother, as if to say, 'This looks ominous.' The Duchess understood her meaning,

and whispered, that "Such a summit as she was climbing to was worth a few stumbles." Guards bearing partizans lined the way through which she passed, and many of the English ladies of high rank stood in the hall of state to receive her. The Lord Mayor, and several of the aldermen, were also in attendance. The young queen (for such she now was) took her seat upon the throne which was prepared for her, and received the homage of her subjects, with a modest dignity that became her well. True, there was a sneer on the lips of some of the haughty dames, who approached to kiss her hand, but she saw it not: for if she mustered courage for a moment, to raise her eyes, in another instant they were again cast down. She took the oaths which were administered to her with becoming solemnity, and, in a brief, but appropriate speech, declared with how much reluctance she had accepted the crown, calling God

to witness that it was an act forced upon her, and not her own choice; but that, as the late king had left the care of the Holy Church to her guardianship, and she was called to the throne, both by his will and the voice of the Council, she would watch over the interests of her people, until the sceptre fell into abler hands. Every word she uttered did credit to her honest heart and innocent feelings; and the wisdom which fell from her lips called forth many a burst of honest applause from numbers who were there assembled.

But we must leave her for a short space, surrounded by the chief of the English nobility in the Tower, hemmed in by friends and traitors,—those who were studying to serve, and those who were plotting to overthrow her. And a meet place was it for such spirits to assemble in. Oh! could the grey walls of that ancient fortress but find a tongue to tell all that they have witnessed, what secrets should we become ac-

quainted with ! What sighs and prayers, and heart-rending groans, have found utterance there ! What hopes have those iron walls crushed ; what aspirations have they stifled ; what blood and tears have fallen unregarded upon those cold floors ! There love and beauty have found their graves. Guilt and innocence have perished there indiscriminately together ; despair has clapped her fevered lips to the cold walls, and vented her miseries on the unfeeling stones ; for they mocked her not like men.

Valour, spirit-crushed and heart-broken, has lain down there to die ; while cold-blooded villainy grinned upon him through the iron bars. The very stones are worn hollow by the footsteps of death. Cruelty, harder than the iron cement of the walls, has there fattened itself for hell, and dropped down into perdition with a blaze, that even startled the damned. Oh ! what shrieks have sounded below the deep

waters of the moat ! what blood has besprinkled those barbicans ! what feet have crossed those bridges, unconscious that they were passing to the grave !

The lovely voice of woman has called aloud there for help, when there was none to hear her,—when her fair white arms were fettered down, and she could not even raise her head to dry her cheeks with her flowing hair.

Children have called upon their parents in those dungeons, but no one came to their aid ; perchance they lay weltering in their gore, in the adjoining cell.

Men who have shed their blood in defence of their country have died there unheeded.

There have the servants of Christ suffered ; there have their limbs been tortured on the rack, and their flesh seared with heated irons, and they died with their faith deep printed on their hearts,—no torture could erase it. From

its dark dens many a fair spirit has soared to Heaven, while their tormentors have descended into hell. Oh ! there is a smell of human blood about the place—let us leave it, and follow the footsteps of Gilbert Pots ; on the success of whose errand so much depended.

END OF VOL. I.

LADY JANE GREY.

—

VOL. II.

LADY JANE GREY;

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE.

BY

THOMAS MILLER,

AUTHOR OF

‘ ROYSTON GOWER,’ “ RURAL SKETCHES,” “ FAIR ROSAMOND,”
“ BEAUTIES OF THE COUNTRY,” “ A DAY IN THE WOODS,” ETC.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



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LADY JANE GREY.

CHAPTER I.

Once yet again, of you I would now fain
 Why come you not to court?
To which court? to the King's court? or to Hampton-court?
Nay, the King's court should have the excellence,
But Hampton-court hath the pre-eminence.
And York-place, with my Lord's grace,
To whose magnificence, is all the confluence,
Suits and supplications, embassies of all nations,
Why come ye not to court?

SKELTON.

WHEN Gilbert Pots made his escape from the palace, his head was so confused for a moment or two, with the importance of the business he was dispatched upon, that he was compelled to halt for a few seconds to arrange his ideas, and consider what road he should take for the nearest. To walk all the way to Waltham-

cross, round by Deptford, and Bermondsey, through Southwark, and over London-bridge, the cautious drawer thought, was making the most of a journey ; so he wandered down to the landing-place, from which Lord Wardour had before embarked, thinking that if he could get a cast across the river, he might cut off a large portion of ground. Great, however, was Gilbert's astonishment, to find himself accosted by the same waterman whom we introduced on a former occasion, and who, on his appearance, said, "Come, move those limbs of thine a little quicker, and don't lag thus like a ship in a calm ; I have been waiting for thee this hour."

"For me?" said the drawer, "who told thee I was coming?"

"Who the devil should tell me?" replied the boatman, in a low voice, "but she who hoists the signal of the heather-branch : come, bundle in, and ask no questions ; she and I have rowed together before to-day."

Gilbert obeyed, without putting another

question, and as the current was in their favour, they were soon cleaving the water at a fair speed, on their way to London.

The drawer sat for some time at the stern of the boat in profound silence, revolving in his own mind, how he should address the Princess, and thinking of the consequence that might ensue, if he should, by any mistake, communicate his business to a wrong party. But his reverie was soon broken by his companion.

“Thou lookest as glum as a pirate, stuck upon a sand-bank, when the enemy is bearing down upon him,” said the sailor: “A groat for thy thoughts, man, whatever the matter may be.”

“Agreed,” said Gilbert, “thou shalt have them; I was thinking over the old couplet that says:

“When the rain raineth, and the goose winketh,
Little wotteth the gosling, what the goose thinketh.”

There now, give me thy groat.”

“Nay, I am no gosling, to be so winked out of my money by a goose,” replied the waterman. “Come, Gilbert, thou must sail upon another

tack. I was born web-footed, man, and can give thee back saw for saw ; for

“ He is not wise that against the stream striveth,
Dun is in the mire, Dame, reach me my spur,
Needs must he run, that the devil driveth,
When the steed is stolen, spare the stable door,
A fair gentle hound should never play the cur,
It is soon espied where the thorn pricketh,
And well wotteth the cat, whose beard she licketh.”

Come, have at thee again, if thou art for Master Skelton ; I have heard him spin such rhymes as these through a live-long night, when we drank together at the hostel of Eleanor Rumming ; ay ! and have seen bluff Hal there too, and rowed Prince and Poet down to Greenwich together, after a merry night's revel, when Hal gave the City-watch a taste of his walking-stick ; thy grandmother remembers those days well.”

“ They were before my time,” replied Gilbert. “ But what knowest thou of my grandmother ? she seemeth to have many sharers of her secrets.”

“ She has in troth ;” answered the sailor, “ and they all are good men and true ; she has been trying long to bring the old hull into har-

bour, which put to sea when such a storm blew down our old religion ; and in spite of the battering the old bark has stood, Duskena remained true to the helm, and not a man flinched, though we received so many shots between wind and water, as we did, were put upon short allowance, and left to sink or swim, just as the devil thought good to show us favour. I was an old friend of thy father's."

"Wert thou so?" said Gilbert ; "then, perchance thou canst tell me why he fell a victim to King Henry's vengeance ; I have often enquired of Duskena, but she only shook her head, and refused to answer me."

"Ay, marry can I," replied the waterman, still tugging with all his might at the oars ; "the old woman has never seemed what she was since his death ; it was for a merry word spoken at the tunning of Eleanor Ruming, when the nappy ale was in our brains, and the caution out. Thy father was ever a wag, and would have his joke over his cups, and once said that fat Hal was about to prove himself the head of

the Church, by cutting off all other heads, and beginning with his wives ; and when the affair of Kate Howard and Dereham was found out, Reynold merrily proposed that bloated Hal should in future stick to a widow, or marry some one who had been fed through iron bars like a lion, and had seen none but she-keepers all her life,—with many another rough joke, which made the roof ring, and which was carried to the King's ears on the morrow, and before sunset, cost thy father his life. I could tell thee of thy sister, too, but we are nearing the Tower, and my order is to land thee at Billingsgate stairs, and thou hast a long journey to perform if I understood Duskena aright."

"I know not what the distance will be until it is run," said Gilbert, "but if thou knowest aught of her that sent me, thou art aware that no grass must grow beneath the feet of him that bears the sprig of heather."

"And has for his errand, the safety of a Queen, to look after," said the waterman; "thou seest I have thy secret ; but make good

speed and all will be well. A day or two ago, she was in the neighbourhood of Buntingford, and if she hath not since returned to Norfolk, thy journey will scarcely carry thee beyond Waltham-cross: keep thy weather-eye open, and God speed thee."

"When shall I see thee again?" said Gilbert, "that we may crush a cup together."

"Before sunset," replied the waterman, "if thou hast a fair breeze to blow thee back to old Ninion's in that time. Duskena is about to hoist sail for London, about the hour of noon. What wind blows her thither I cannot tell, but it is no common cruise that sends her from a neighbourhood which she hath scarcely left for this last twenty years. Now, well fare thee."

So saying, they separated, Gilbert to thread his way through the city, and across Finsbury-fields; and the sailor to row back to Greenwich, from whence he brought Duskena, as we have before narrated.

The drawer halted at an hostel in Moorfields, which chanced to be open at that early

hour, drank a cup of sack at a draught, got the leg of a cold capon, and a slice of bread, paid his reckoning, and chucked the buxom hostess under the chin, then hurried along eating his morning meal, as he walked across the archery-grounds of Finsbury.

Sometimes he exchanged a joke with the handsome milk-maids, that he passed, whistled in chorus with the birds that sang around him, jumped over a stile at the risk of his neck, then struck up a stave of Skelton's, beginning with :

“ By Saint Mary my lady,
Your mammy and your daddy
Brought forth a pretty babby,
My maiden Isabell.”

But the sterling old English tune to which he sang it is lost, and the old roof-tree of Eleanor Rumming's hostel, beneath which it was so often trolled, has fallen to decay. The merry ward of Ludgate will never ring back those echoes again. The old volume on which our hand now rests is all that remains to tell of those by-gone revels.

Gilbert reached Tottenham High-cross, and

stood a moment on the beautiful eminence, which old Izaake Walton has immortalized. Oh, how different was it in those days! The morning sun streamed upon a rich expanse of hill and valley, and sent a golden throb along the green veins of the earth, which made even the heart of the humble drawer dance for joy. Above his head burst forth the carol of the sky-lark, filling the azure vault with melody, and raining down its music like a shower of silver. Around him stretched sweet uplands, carpeted with a thousand wild flowers; while the smoke of some solitary grange mingled with the summer foliage of the trees, and gave to the landscape a repose and a beauty which made Gilbert curse the garret of Ninion Saunders, and swear he would never again become an indweller of the stifling city. He threw his cap over a hedge, jumped after it as if he was mad, and stretched out his arms as if he would fain fly and mingle with the sunshine, and leave the plots of Northumberland and Duskena, and his message to the Princess Mary, to be delivered

by the Devil, or any other emissary who had a mind to dabble with them. The cup of sack had still influence over Gilbert's brains; and he felt that, if he had but the knack, he could pour forth as good rhymes as Master Skelton. Then he began to troll the old ditty of

“ Hey, merry Margaret,
As midsummer flower,
Gentle as a falcon,
Or hawk of the tower.”

So he remained in the same merry key until he came to a brook near Enfield-wash, and there he performed his morning ablutions, drying his face on his cap, and running his fingers through his dark hair. He then adjusted his trunk-hose, twisted the buckle of his belt to the front, pulled down his jerkin, stuck the sprig of heather in his cap, and made himself look as spruce as any gallant in the ward of Ludgate; for Deborah Saunders had provided him with some goodly apparel. When he reached Waltham Cross he made a pause—“Should the Princess,” thought he, “still remain in Hertfordshire, she will by this time be near at hand,

and may have stayed to take her morning meal at the Abbey;" so he seated himself at the foot of the cross.

Had Northumberland himself passed, he would never have dreamed that the jovial drawer, who was trolling forth "Hey, merry Margaret," and casting stones at every sparrow that chanced to come near, was by a few words about to overthrow the chief pillar of his plot,—for, if he had but once got the Princess Mary into his power, all his plans must have succeeded. But by such weak instruments are your mighty men overthrown. Had Gilbert either have got drunk or mistaken his way, Northumberland might have been virtually King, the calendar shorn of a goodly list of martyrs, and hundreds of volumes remained unwritten; while the great Elizabeth might have passed her days in some "feudal flirtation," such as history records she indulged in with the Lord Admiral, who too often visited the apartments of the mighty maiden Queen.

Poor human nature! when thy trappings are

torn off, what a sorry earth-worm thou art! Gilbert Pots would have stood unrolling with the greatest royal mummy that was ever wrapped in the swaddling bands of a fatherly state, if we leave the god-like dust of the Saxon Alfred undisturbed. The ashes of our greatest kings are of the earth, "earthy." Our glorious Reformation was brought about by a human brute. Let us not then paint the devil blacker than he is, while we are indebted to so many of his chosen followers for so much good. While God hath permitted the evil one to rear up such rank harvests, then by one stroke of His own mighty hand, shake off the gathering blight in a moment, and render it meet for His own holy garner. Guided by the broad blaze of historical truth, how incompetent are we to point out those mysterious and hidden springs, by which the mightiest changes have been wrought. The tyrant and the patriot spring up like the flower and the weed—side by side, and we knew not that the earth sheltered such seeds. The sun and the shower beam and beat

upon the brown clod ; but who shall tell what it will bring forth ? There is a powerful Mechanist at work, who sets at nought all human knowledge ; who brings forth the daring chieftain from the cottage, and drags the pampered idiot from the purple cradle ; who thrusts a sceptre into the hand of a Cromwell, and a block under the head of a Charles, and smiles at the efforts of such dotards as ourselves, while we waste our days in searching for the cause of these mighty changes. Gilbert Pots, watching on an old cross and pelting sparrows, changes the destinies of a nation ; Duskena lives in a tumble-down hut, and moves kings and queens as a child does a painted puppet with a string ; and Ninion Saunders sits and snores, not certain whether he shall have half a score noblemen hung to-day, or beheaded to-morrow ; while poor Lady Jane Grey sighs, and weeps, and prays, and is doomed to become a sufferer for the crimes committed by others, like the angels who shed tears for the sins of our fallen race, though they themselves are in heaven.

Such was the great world in which men lived three hundred years ago; even such as it appears in the pages of our romance, by bringing to light the dark and dreary colours of history.

While Gilbert sat watching beside the ancient cross, he heard the prancing of horses in the direction to Hoddesdon, and his heart beat high; the sound drew nearer; it was only a troop of travelling merchants with their pack-horses, returning from some distant fair; they but enquired the hour of the day, and passed on. A drover came by with his sheep; the mischievous drawer whistled off his dog, then bandied a few jests with him, and watched the flock move off in the distance, until the cloud of dust which they had raised was no longer to be traced, and the barking of their guard was scarcely audible. Gilbert grew impatient, and thought of returning to London; the solitude and the time grew alike tedious; he had no one to abuse, nor any chance of procuring a cup of bonny brown bastard, to wash the dust out of his throat.

At length he heard the sound of hoofs coming at a rapid pace, and he sprang up from his recumbent position as the cavalcade drew in sight.

Gilbert rushed into the centre of the road, and disregarding the holloa of the outriders, stood motionless, as if he expected that his presence would cause the whole party to halt; and great was his astonishment to find, that instead of lending an ear to what he had to say, they began to lay heavily on his shoulders with their staves, and call him a stupid drunken brute.

“How, now!” said a lady, reigning up her jennet, and causing the whole cavalcade to halt. “What hath this poor man done amiss, that you should beat him thus unmercifully?”

“Placed himself in the middle of the highway, like a drunken brute as he is, and refused to move aside when he was bidden,” replied one of the outriders.

“I told the fool my business was to speak with the Princess Mary,” said Gilbert, his anger getting the mastery of all bashfulness;

“had I brought the pig-headed brute a platter to have licked, he would have understood the matter like another dog.”

“Peace, I charge you!” said the lady, waving back the menial who had again uplifted his arm to strike. “I am the person you have named,—what is your business with me?”

“This emblem will tell your Highness by whom I was sent,” said the drawer, touching his cap, but without taking it off; “and I was bid to deliver my message only to your own ear.”

“What emblem?” said the Princess; “I see none; beware, sirrah,—if thou art trifling with us, I will give thee up to be scourged by every groom in my train.”

Gilbert took off his cap, but the sprig of heather was gone; he scratched his head for a moment, and looked very foolish, when, casting his eyes upon the ground, he saw it lying beneath the horses’ feet. It had been struck from his head by the blows he received; he snatched it up, all over dust as it was, and presented it to the Princess.

“ Ah !” exclaimed Mary, changing colour instantly, “ there is treachery afloat. From whom hadst thou this ?” Then turning to her attendants, she added : “ Ride on beyond hearing, I will be with you instantly.”

Gilbert cast his sharp eyes on every horseman that rode by, and was glad to find that Northumberland’s messenger was not amongst them, and when they were left alone, he said—

“ I am the grandson of Duskena : Sir William Cecil lowered me from the window of the palace, to warn you not to come near, for King Edward is dead, and they have made the Lady Jane Grey queen. He bid me caution you against falling into Northumberland’s power. I have delivered to your Highness all the secrets I am entrusted with.”

“ The King dead !” exclaimed the princess, her hand instantly grasping the string of beads which hung from her rich girdle ;— “ Jane Grey, the wife of the fourth son of the upstart Dudley, to be queen !—I see, I see it all !” continued she, musing to herself, “ I must back before it be too late.—Dropped from a window

too!—Then they would keep his death a secret until I fell into the snare.—Here,” added she, as if suddenly remembering that the bearer of the tidings was present; “here is gold for thy news; be secret to all but those who sent thee,” and she emptied the contents of the silken pouch which hung at her belt, into the hands of Gilbert. “The blows that thou hast this morning received shall be put out to good interest: I will not forget thee!” So saying, she motioned with her hand for the horsemen to approach, and placing herself at their head, exclaimed: “To Norfolk, with all speed: let the best mounted ride on for life, and have relays of horses in readiness. King Edward is dead! and there is treason afoot!” The whole cavalcade was speedily out of sight, nor did they draw rein, or bite or sup, until past the noon of day.

Without pausing at present to draw the portrait of the Princess Mary, we shall again turn our attention to Gilbert, who stood gazing in astonishment at the handful of gold she had given him. He seemed as if he could scarcely

believe his eyes ; he had never taken so much money for the longest reckoning he had received at Ninion Saunders'. He began to calculate how many cups of bastard such a sum would purchase ; but the labour was too much for him, and by the time that he had summed up and divided two nobles, he gave up the task. He looked around in vain for a tavern, and cursed the very landscape which he had before so much admired, and thought that a tree never looked so beautiful as when turned into a sign-post for a hostel. He overtook a country-lad, and enquired if there was ever a tavern within the neighbourhood ?

“None nigher than Tottenham-cross,” was the answer. “Old Nat Warren keeps it, and he sells capital yale.”

“Ale !” said Gilbert, turning up his nose ; “does he not hang a bush out ? Sure a man that sells ale, must keep something better for his own drinking ; hast thou never been into his house for wine or sack ?”

“Yes, I once went in for a gill of sack,”

replied the lad, "which my master treated himself to on the morning his uncle died, when he left him ten thousand pounds; but he's such a niggardly man he drinks nothing else but water himself."

"A gill of sack, and ten thousand pounds!" echoed Gilbert, "the miserable old curmudgeon! Come, put thy best leg foremost, and I, who thought myself richer than a prince with only twenty nobles, will treat thee to a cup of muscadine with an egg in it, if such a thing can be had for either love or money, under Nat Warren's roof."

Gilbert kept his word, drank and sung at the hostel by Tottenham-cross, until sunset; made the merchants who were halting there to bait, stay all day to laugh at his jests, and at night mounting one of their pack-horses he rode to London. But the drawer had too much money, and the hostess too handsome a face for him to pass the tavern in Moorgate, where he had taken his morning draught. So he alighted, and drank the host to sleep, and the merchants

to bed ; while the buxom dame who had slapt his back a score times during the night, when all persuasions failed, endeavoured to drag him up stairs by main force, but in the scuffle the light was extinguished. What became of Gilbert for several hours our story sayeth not ; nor is it on record whether the noise made by him and the handsome landlady, awoke the host, who was snoring soundly on an oaken settle.

CHAPTER II.

Buck. I bade them that did love their country's good,
Cry, God save Richard, England's royal King!

Glos. And did they so?

Buck. No, so God help me, they spoke not a word;
But, like dumb statues, or breathless stones,
Stared on each other, and looked deadly pale.

King Richard III.

As Northumberland well knew that no time must be lost, he gave orders for the proclamation on the following day, and at an early hour in the morning, an immense crowd had congregated at Charing-cross. It was of course soon bruited abroad that Lady Jane Grey was to become queen, and a matter of such unusual occurrence as set aside the rights of legitimacy, made no small stir among the worthy citizens of London and its suburbs. And, although the Lady Jane was herself somewhat a favourite,

through the religious principles she espoused, yet the Duke was hated by the lower orders, for having cut off the popular Protector Somerset, a man who had ever advocated their privileges.

It would form a strange contrast to the manners of the present day, could we bring before our readers the vast crowd that was assembled without Temple-bar, on the morning of the tenth of July, in 1553, waiting to see the heralds' procession demand entrance into the city through that ancient portcullis, and those massy and iron-studded doors. To recall those high and old-fashioned houses, with their bay-windows, and curious gables, ornamented with carved wood-work, and to see the number of faces which protruded from every height, to gaze upon the forest of heads below. It would be a pleasure for us to dream and speculate upon their looks, to point out every carved nook, and fantastic angle,—those door-wards, where wooden cherubs stood showing their full cheeks to the passengers; those window-sills,

rudely ornamented, and the windows themselves projecting and overhanging each other, until the topmost one was roofed,—all famous recesses for gossip and love-making in the olden time, where nought but the wooden heads at the angles could look on to tell tales : right gladly would we revel in a few pages to describe all these old-fashioned and homely things, did we not fear that it would weary the patience of many of our readers.

Then, what accounts could be given of the various dresses worn on that memorable day?—of gallants whose rich doublets were slashed to shreds to show their fine lawn shirts ; of caps laden with ostrich feathers ; cloaks of murrey (or purple), blue and crimson, with sleeves which were only made for show ; collars of velvet, fur, and satin, trunk-hose, puffed out like balloons ; jerkins of black velvet, and damask cloaks of russet, or camlet, varied with the blue gowns of the apprentices, many of whom had not found time to stitch their nether socks, or stockings, properly to their upper hose, but hurried along

laughing and elbowing the proudest, quite regardless of their bare knees : young women chattering and flirting as they hastened on, with their hair hanging loose, or only partially gathered under the caul of thread work : old women with their hoods drawn over their ears, hobbling by in costumes of all colours : cut-purses on the look-out to sever a pouch from the first girdle that offered : thieves and beggars of every grade, as ready to laugh at a heretic in the flames, as a gallant who had lost his shoe, or a grave citizen who had thrust his elbow through a window : bullies from Alsatia with pistol and dagger in belt, laughing at the passengers they jostled from the pavement : rogues of every grade, who had on that day given the Sanctuaries the slip : swash-bucklers without either credit or cash : clients who had been cleaned out by their counsel : fishwives smelling strongly of burnt sack, and giving proofs to butchers and sailors, that Billingsgate was already celebrated : vintners who had that morning been practising the miracle of Cana,

to make up for their day's loss, all swearing, thrusting, and elbowing each other; yet amid their squabbles and clatter, bustling along in the true old English style. Anon the tide of human faces rolled back again; the toper swept by the host whom he had bilked of his bill, and had not met for months before; friends who had not seen one another for years, exchanged looks, and were again impelled onward by the torrent: foes set their teeth at each other, and again were borne away. Then came the sounding of trumpets, echoing through the narrow streets, and ringing up the crowded alleys; banners heaved in sight above that sea of heads; dragons, and boars, and eagles, rustling in silk, and blazing in gold. Then the sunbeams flashed upon suits of costly armour, and on the rich dresses of trumpeters and heralds, and all the pomp and pageantry that marked the feudal ages, drew up before the gates of Temple-bar.

But amid all this glittering of armour, rustling of pennons, and sounding of trumpets, there wanted the loud huzzas of the multitude.

True a struggling voice was heard up and down, exclaiming, "God save Queen Jane!" but the sound seemed to come lonely and far between; — no simultaneous burst kindled with it; no responding shout rent the sky: caps and scarfs waved at intervals from the windows, but there was none of that sudden thundering of the heart, which strikes like an electric shock. The soldiers sat still in their armour, with lances erect, and only shouted "God save the Queen!" when the Proclamation was read; then each and all remained silent, with their eyes fixed upon the heads of their horses, for they saw too well that there was no responding feeling in the crowd. Even Northumberland's own followers looked blankly at one another; they remembered how different the reception of Edward was to the throne; they shrugged up their shoulders, and coldly did their duty. The mob was noisy enough, but it was in quarrels, or conversation amongst themselves; they had made a holiday, and were determined to enjoy it some way or other; and as their

feelings were not enlisted in favour of the chief business of the day, they amused themselves by annoying one another.

At length a pursuivant-at-arms advanced between two trumpeters, and struck the City-gates with the butt-end of his lance, and after three loud blasts were sounded, which rang out clear and shrill through the vaulted gateway, the City Marshal undid a small wicket, which just revealed his face, and enquired in a loud voice, "Who comes there?" to which was answered, "The pursuivant-at-arms, who demands entrance into the City to proclaim our Sovereign Lady, Queen Jane." The wicket was closed, and the Marshal retired to communicate with the Lord Mayor.

Some time elapsed before the gates were thrown open; and during the period that intervened, the crowd began to enter into conversation with one another.

"Ah!" said an old bearded merchant from Steel-yard, "there were different doings to these when bluff Hal came to the throne, bad

as he turned out. Then the conduits ran with wine, and the house-roofs were crowded ; and there was such shouting, that it would have cracked the drum of a deaf man's ear. Different doings in those days, Gaffer Girdlebrace. But Lord, how the world's altered to what it was even in our own time !”

“ Hey, marry, has it,” replied Gaffer Girdlebrace, with a deep-meaning shake of the head ; “ and we shall see greater changes before we die, neighbour. I warrant me that they will not open the city-gates now, for the bidding of any other than the Princess Mary. It's a shocking thing, neighbour Threpton, to put aside the true blood : the right of descent ought to be maintained. What would you think if I was to leave my little scrapings to any other than my son Grimstone ? wouldn't you think I had no love for my own legitimate offspring ?”

“ Legitimate devil-spring !” murmured an Alsatian bully who stood by. “ Grimstone's too much the looks of Bluff Ben, the Dead-shot, to be one of your breed, old Girdlebrace. What

the devil, man, dost thou think that there was no boy of the blade and the batoon had courage enough to comfort Dame Girdlebrace while thou wert out with thy pack-wares, hawking thy leathern belts from fair to fair? Shame on Alsatia, if there were not a good round score, it would be but a sorry brotherhood."

"And a sorry one it is, Bully-rook!" replied Gaffer Girdlebrace, colouring up at the laughter of the bystanders; "a foul ulcer upon the state. Your den deserves building up at the one end, and setting fire to at the other, to burn you all out. A parcel of roving scabs, scoundrels of the stiletto, midnight brawlers, and street marauders. But let us begone, neighbour Threpton, from such vile cut-throats."

"Hey, hey, jog off and rub your brows with some Alsatian salve," exclaimed the bully, "and tell Dame Girdlebrace to bind your forehead well, for horns are harder to cut than teeth. Tell her I shall call when next you go to Stow-green fair, and remember me to the legitimate Grimstone." The old belt-maker shook his fist

at the bully, and made his way, as he best could, through the crowd.

“ Lord ! if the Mayor should not open the gates,” said an old woman in another corner to her gossip, “ what deed will be done ? Is it true, neighbour, that the King ’s forced to give up his crown every time he comes into the city ? ”

“ Hey, that it is,” replied the gossip, “ or else those two giants in Guildhall would come to life, and take it off for him. All those liberty charters are enchantment. They say that the freedom of the City lives in the stone in London Wall. Jack Cade once tried to burn him out ; but he couldn’t get at him,—he lives so far underground.—But see ! they are opening the gates ! and look how the sunshine goes through. Now they have let in the Sovereign ; but you can’t see her—it’s all enchantment ;—but you may hear the trumpets, and the man read from a parchment—that’s all real. They use a deal of parchment when they make a new sovereign.”

“ Lord have mercy ! ” said the other : “ I thought they made them all of gold, and not out of sheep-skins.”

“ But they do though,” replied her gossip ; “ all the law’s calf and sheep-skins covered over with black. If a man’s done wrong, they hang him by a skin ; if they make another a Duke, they give him a piece of parchment. If they were to give you and I a piece, and say ‘ Duchess,’ why, we should be Duchesses, when we opened our sheep-skins. I dare say you never thought of this when you was boiling a sheep’s head, or supping your broth. The trimming of my cloak would do marvellous things if it was blacked by a pen. I often think of this when I am rubbing the dirt off the border. It’s all enchantment, neighbour—all enchantment ! If you have lost anything, and go to the Wise-man, does he not look at the scrawls on his calf-skin ? When my grandfather came by all that money, how do you think he got it ? Why, he found it on a bit of parchment, same as this Lady Jane finds her-

self a Queen :—King Edward left it her on sheep-skin.”

“ I see clearly now,” answered her neighbour; “ that’s what makes our mutton so naked ; they never let us get a bit with the skin on, for fear we should find ourselves Queens ; that’s the cause of all this bother about wool lately, to get our skins. Lord, now if they would but shew the devil a bit, and drive him away altogether by law, what a saving it would be to the nation. I wish the priests would lay their heads together, and give him a piece of parchment.”

“ His back’s too hot,” replied the other ; “ it would curdle up and vanish away ; the Pope’s shown him enough to make jerkins for all London ; but he roasts his cattle whole, and sets no store by their hides. But come along, let’s see them make the Lady Jane a Queen ; they’re at work now ; didn’t you hear the trumpet blow ? We shall be too late to see the sheep-skins. The herald always pulls his cap off before he looks at it. Let’s make haste.”

So saying, they hastened through the gloomy

archway, never deigning to give a glance at the portcullis, which stood grinning with its iron teeth above their heads. After the proclamation had been read within Temple Bar, the procession wound along Fleet Bridge, and up Ludgate Hill, while the bells in the wooden tower of St. Paul's filled the air with their melody, and a measured firing was kept up from the cannons at the Tower. The heralds again halted at St. Paul's Cross, and went through the same preamble, and the soldiers again shouted "God save Queen Jane!" But scarcely had the sound ceased, before a cap was seen thrown high above the heads of the crowd, and a loud solitary voice exclaimed, with all its might, "God save Queen Mary!"

Had the sound come from Heaven, or the face of the daring speaker been seen in the sky, it could scarcely have created a greater sensation amid the multitude, than did that voice. The lances of the soldiers were instantly placed in their rests. The trumpeters paused with the uplifted instruments in their hands,

but not a blast was blown. The halbert-bearers held their partizans with a firmer grasp, and every eye was turned to the spot from whence the challenge came. The pursuivant-at-arms was the first to break the silence, by exclaiming, "Halbert-bearers, seize the traitor!"

A rush was instantly made upon the mob, who had, however, contrived to open their dense ranks in the rear; and who should be seen bolting off, bare-headed, and at full speed, but Gilbert Pots, for it was none other than the drunken drawer who had created the sensation. After Gilbert sped the halbert-bearers at a rapid rate, glad that their prowess was called into action against an enemy who shewed such a ready inclination to quit the field, instead of an infuriated mob. The drawer shot by the wall that inclosed St. Paul's, at more than a drawer's speed, and having reached Ludgate Street, like a fox that takes the earth, sought shelter within the St. John's Head. Ninion Saunders was standing at the door, when Gilbert made so unceremonious an entry; and had not the portly

host stood aside, ten to one but he would have measured his length upon the floor. Up came the followers, many of them worthy citizens, who on that day, held a partizan in their hands, in place of the ell-wand, which they could so well wield to their own advantage ; and one of them, a fat pury glover, who blowed like a grampus, exclaimed, " Where is the traitor ? Drag the rascal out by the heels, the villain who dare to raise a shout for the Princess Mary, when we were proclaiming our sovereign Lady Jane Queen. Bring out the seditious scoundrel !"

" We have no scoundrel here," said Dame Deborah Saunders, stepping forward as if to dispute the further entrance of the halbert-bearers ; " whom seek ye ?"

" Our villanous drawer," said old Ninion, " who has just run up stairs. I always thought he would bring his pigs to a pretty market some day. Come on, gentlemen, and I will show you the rascal's hiding-place."

" Malicious old villain !" exclaimed his affec-

tionate spouse; and uplifting her hands, she was making ready to plant her loving nails in his cheek, when one of the men dropped his partizan between them, and prevented the rencounter.—“What harm has the poor youth done?” continued she; “I dare say, that if he did call out Queen Mary, it was but a slip of the tongue; would ye hang him for mistaking a word? Oh! thou hard-hearted old wretch,” added she, calling after her husband, who was leading the way up the broad-stepped ladder, for stair-case there was none; “mayest thou break thy cursed neck in coming down again. Oh! they will hang my poor Gilbert;” and she lifted the corner of her apron to her eyes.

“Who dares to hang Gilbert?” said a voice issuing from a dark recess at the end of the room: and in another instant Duskena drew up before the light, while the men fell suddenly back at her presence. “Was it of my grandson ye spoke, Dame Saunders?” added she, casting her searching eyes on the hostess; “has he then come, after I have tarried so long to see him?”

But before Dame Saunders could cease her sobbing, to answer the old woman, Gilbert himself made his appearance, as he was dragged in an unceremonious manner down the ladder.

Like a falcon stooping to seize upon its prey, so did Duskena, at one stride, spring forward, and seizing the collar of Gilbert's doublet, she shook her staff in the face of the men who held him, and they instantly fell back; then glancing with an eye of fire, like an enraged lioness, from one to another, she said, "What hath he done, that ye handle him thus roughly? an' he were a savage beast that ye were dragging forth to the death, ye could not show it less mercy."

His crime was again repeated, even to the very circumstance of throwing up his cap; while Gilbert, who was somewhat sobered by the affright they had put him into, hung down his head, and said nothing.

"An' that be all," said the fearless old hag, "I see not what great evil he hath committed. Thousands, even now, are ready to make the air ring again with shouts for Queen Mary;

they but lack the courage to do what their hearts would lead them to, and what I myself dare to do. God save Queen Mary!" exclaimed she, making the apartment echo again with her cracked voice. "Now tell the upstart Northumberland that an old woman hath dared to raise a shout for the rightful heir of England; and see, if he will lay a finger upon her. Nay, come not near me," said she, uplifting her hand, and bending her fingers, the nails of which were sharp as an eagle's talons. "Come not near me, an' ye have a love for your cheeks, for I will tear the eyes of the first who dareth to plant finger upon me."

The look of Duskena was at that moment as savage as a tigress about to be bereaved of its young, as she held Gilbert with one hand, and bent her nailed claws at the men, while her withered fingers were in motion as if already tearing the skin from their cheeks.

"Fall back," said one of the halbert-bearers, who bore the badge of the Earl of Arundel upon his sleeve. The men gladly obeyed the

summons. "Would you stand parleying with an old woman all day? You must give up the prisoner," said he, approaching Duskena; "the pursuivant-at-arms hath decreed that he shall stand in the pillory two hours. What other punishment the Duke of Northumberland or the Queen may afterwards inflict, I know not."

Duskena released her hold in an instant, and Gilbert kicking up his heels, exclaimed, "The pillory is no killing matter, the only difference between it and the stocks, is, that you cannot sit down. My legs have been acquainted with the wood a score times, and now my neck must have a trial,—turn and turn about is fair."

So Gilbert was led forth, amid the loud huzzas of the mob without, just caring as much for the pillory, as a hardened school-boy does for being placed upon a form; for he had met with too many rough encounters in the world to be daunted by trifles; and was what is emphatically called in the present day, "case-hardened." Nay, there was a pride in the eye of the drawer, as he walked up Ludgate-hill between the men-

at-arms, when he thought that he was about to be placed in "durance vile" for showing his loyalty to the Princess Mary; and had Satan himself have given him such a handful of gold, it is a question whether or not he would have shouted in favour of his Satanic majesty.

The man who had been so instrumental in the capture of Gilbert, had scarcely time to whisper a word to Duskena before he was called aside by Ninion Saunders, who, mistaking him for some confidential follower of Northumberland, beckoned him into another apartment, and gave him some hints of the conversation which he had overheard between Lord Wardour and Gilbert, and which our readers were made acquainted with in a former chapter. The villainous old host complained of the reception which he had met with from the servants of the Duke, when he had twice or thrice sought an interview with his Grace, and each time been unsuccessful, as every lackey wanted to know his business. A system which has descended to the menials of the present day, and does

much to keep up that ill-feeling now existing between the higher and lower classes, and ought to be abolished.

The soldier heard all that Ninion had to say, and by much deep manœuvring, and many promises to bring him instantly to the presence of Northumberland, managed to fish out a good deal of the secret, which so fully revealed the plotting of Mary's party, and endangered the heads of Arundel and Cecil.

But what Ninion Saunders divulged, was nothing new to the halbert-bearer, who had the chief rule over Arundel's followers, and had that day received commands from the earl how to act, with strict orders to bear himself leniently to any one who should speak in favour of Mary; clearly understanding that they but waited the opportunity of placing her on the throne. For had he really been a follower of Northumberland's, ten to one the leaders of the plot would have been beheaded before sunset.

The soldier cast his eye around the gloomy apartment, and felt a strong inclination to draw

out the dagger which was concealed under his girdle, and bury it in Ninion's heart ; but such an act, he well knew, would endanger his own safety, so he desisted. He then bade the old villain by no means to breathe a word of what he had uttered to any one, promising instantly to see Northumberland, and either come himself, or despatch some trusty messenger to escort him to the Tower, where he would be sure to meet with a reward. He then shook Ninion's hand, ordered a cup of brown bastard of Dame Saunders, beckoned Duskena to him unseen, whispered her to meet him at an appointed place, and departed.

CHAPTER III.

He only sat and laughed while in the stocks,
Grinned when doing penance at the village cross,
And in the pillory he twitched up his face,
And made such strange grimaces, that the crowd
Burst into laughter, and with mouths agape
Drank in his biting jests.

The Merry Beggars.

THE old pillory which stood by St. Paul's Church-yard three centuries ago, was but a clumsy affair; it was formed of solid oak like the Cross and stocks, which stood ranged on the same row, as if to tell how near akin in those days were punishment and prayer. Gilbert ascended the heavy platform with a light step, and a waggish leer, and suffered the wooden bar which secured him, to be fastened without a murmur, and when his face appeared through

the opening which was in the form of a horse-collar, made such a face as caused the whole crowd to burst forth into laughter. Hundreds of the mob were acquainted with the merry drawer of the St. John's Head, for taverns were not so plentiful in those days as they are now ; and many of them stood with their mouths agape in expectation of some drollery or other, for they saw that the mercurial spirit of their old friend was not, even in that humiliating situation, a whit daunted. Gilbert had met with too many trials to be afraid of this, and although he had never been elevated so high as the pillory, he had sat many an hour in the stocks, and had many a narrow escape from the whipping-post ; while prisons were to him old familiar resting-places, for during many a cold night, he had exercised his wit on the City watch, that he might provoke some of these surly guardians to give him a lodging until morning ; for fines and fees were less in fashion in those

days, and a man might get "civilly drunk" if it was his free-born pleasure, without any dread of the law.

The pillory was so constructed that the delinquent confined could turn his face to every quarter of the globe at pleasure, which was no small convenience to an unpopular prisoner, as he might thereby avoid the showers of rotten eggs, and other offensive missiles which were too often collected and thrown at him. But Gilbert only turned round for his own pleasure, and to show some new grimace, (for the fumes of the wine-cup were yet in his brain,) and that wight who dared to have hurled anything at the unlucky drawer, would have stood but a sorry chance amid a crowd so well disposed towards him. Many a sharp joke was, however, launched at his expense, some of them more with an intent to elicit a keen reply, than from any ill-feeling, for the laugh was always loudest in Gilbert's favour.

“I say, old chap,” shouted a tall slip of a man, who looked as if he had been reared up between two deal boards, and who had an immensely wide mouth; “You would make a capital sign for old Ninion now, and would draw him plenty of custom.”

“Not so much as you, old lance-shaft,” replied the ready-witted Gilbert, “especially if the bellman was to go round and tell the people that a man might be seen there, who was dry-nursed by a fishing-rod, and fed with a malt-shovel instead of a pap-spoon: a fellow whose mouth, instead of only reaching from ear to ear, reached from here to yonder. Whose phiz a pedlar might make a fortune by, through selling his picture for Goliath of Gath, and swearing that it was taken after the Philistines had fed him three-moons on gridirons and graters.”

The tall man had caught a Tartar, and slunk off as well as he could amid the laughter of the bystanders, while an hundred voices shouted out “Bravo, Gilbert Pots!”

“He’s potted and pickled too!” said another, who wore the livery of an Alderman, and spoke loud enough for Gilbert to hear him, then added loud, “Shall I fetch the priest, Gilbert? your head is in the block, and you are now twelve feet nearer heaven.”

“No occasion for that,” answered the undaunted drawer; “your own ugly face is enough to put us in mind of our latter end; go home, and kill the fleas in your master’s puppies, and see that the kittens are free from knits. Or hunt for your father among the crowd, for thou hast the look of nine or ten that I know. Thou talkest of Heaven, and thy very countenance brings hell before me, for thou wert a cross between the devil and a dust-woman.” The man of lace bore the attack bravely, and laughed as loud as the rest, for he fully expected what he should get.

“Thou art a saucy knave!” said a swash-buckler, who stood with his sword under his arm, and his cap placed very jauntily on his

head, and who was indebted to the livery-man for many a secret help when he visited his mistress's daughter after night-fall; "and were I near thee, I would crop thine ears to give thee the true look of one who had paid a visit to the pillory."

"Thou couldst not find in thine heart," said the mischievous drawer. "Thou art a man of such kind feeling, that thou wouldst tremble to see a blow struck. I have seen thee turn pale when only looking at the man thy mother washed for. Thou art very brave when thy foe is a mile off; and I have seen thee kicked with a patience that would have done credit to Job, — nay, have heard that thou couldst tell how many stitches there were in the shoe that kicked thee, and give a shrewd guess as to what leather it was made of. I once saw thee threaten to cut a man's throat in the city, and run off with all speed to sharpen thy sword on the horse-block at the village of Charing. Wert

thou not kept by a retired Tripe-man, who was too fat to take out-door exercise, and amused himself by kicking thee an hour in a morning to create an appetite?"

The bully shook his fist, and looked daggers at Gilbert, but a tall black-bearded smith coolly ripped up his doublet behind, as he said, to see if his mother was a good washer-woman; and he slunk off amid the loud laughter of the multitude, without a reply.

"Give us a sermon, Gilbert?" said a fellow, with a hoarseness strong enough to stop a horse. "A sermon! a sermon!" shouted a score or two of voices. "Thou wilt never stand before a better congregation!" added an old friend of the drawer's; "come, out with thine homily." The men who guarded the pillory with their partizans, looked up as if to encourage him, and vowed that they would sooner keep company with so merry a wag, than dine at a second table after a Lord Mayor's feast.

“ A sermon then be it,” said Gilbert, proud that he was such a favourite with his motley audience. “ My brethren, here am I, nearer to heaven than any of you, and if you hope to be saved from being run over, I would advise you all to get into the pillory as speedily as possible. Here you may overlook the world, and see how it is that fools have the best fortune, and knaves the greatest luck ; and if you take pattern by myself, you will all soon arrive to eminence. If any of you are troubled about your characters I beg you will shake off such an expensive luxury ; it is a thing that requires more looking after than a large house,—too costly for a poor man, and sometimes very inconvenient to the rich ; it is only fit for those of a large fortune, and has sent many an honest man a begging with his shoulders up. Conscience is a worse matter ; and though a man may sleep sounder upon it when it is good, yet he too often awakes to put on a thread-bare jerkin, and pick the

remains of skeleton stock-fish. It is a thing to die on, but not to live upon; therefore, it is better to be fat than honest."

"Glorious, Gilbert!" shouted the mob, while a voice with which our readers are familiar, exclaimed, "Mine cote! but it ish a queer religionish."

"Poverty," continued Gilbert, "is a grievous sin in the eye of the law, and is a pleasure for which all poor devils are daily punished. Murder is punished with death unless committed in the proper costume, and on a large scale, then it is rewarded. The man who saveth his neck by his gold-bags, is the greatest friend to justice; but he who is poor and dies, only puts the law to a greater expense. Respect the lord of the soil, for be sure that some one of his forefathers were damned for it; therefore, meddle not with the devil's matters."

Several of the guards here interposed, and one of them threatened to gag poor Gil-

bert; but the mob were in his favour, and would have scattered the few halbert-bearers like dust before a whirlwind, had it come to an open rupture. But amid the cries of "Go on, Gilbert," which were raised, another voice interposed: it was no other than Lord Wardour, who, at the head of a score of his father's followers, was on his way to the Tower. "How now, Gilbert?" said the young lord, reining in his steed, and gazing at the unfortunate drawer; "what new mischief has brought thee here?"

"The wine-cup, and my own infernal tongue," replied the drawer; "and a slight help," he added in a lower tone, "from old Ninion."

"Ah! indeed," muttered the young nobleman; then turning to the chief of the halbert-bearers, he enquired his crime.

"No crime at all," replied the man, who was a stickler for legitimacy, and spoke in a low voice: "he but shouted 'God save Queen Mary!' at the proclamation to-day; and it

grieves me to the heart to keep guard over him for it."

"That was unwise," replied Lord Wardour; "but by whose orders was he placed in the pillory?"

"By the captain of Northumberland's guard," replied the old soldier: "had the Earl of Arundel been by, the stocks would have served for half an hour, and been penance enough, for what we are all guilty of in our hearts. But give me the word, and I will release him, though I lose my head for it."

Lord Wardour hesitated a moment, while he muttered to himself, "Northumberland! is there none bold enough to beard him? By Heaven, I will release him! The Queen would not let her old favourite linger there a moment, if she knew of it;" then added aloud, "set the prisoner free, and on me rest all the blame."

The old halbert-bearer sprang up with an elasticity, which would have done credit to a

younger man, and in spite of the remonstrances of his companions, set Gilbert at liberty, and shook him heartily by the hand, amid the loud huzzas of the multitude, who made the air ring again with the shouts of "Long live the house of Arundel!" while some were bold enough to add, "Down with Dudley!" "Death to Northumberland!" "Vengeance for the blood of Somerset!" "Huzzah for Queen Mary!" And many another cry was raised, which was so soon to be echoed throughout the land; for the feelings of the populace at this time ran high, although but few dreamed of the mighty change which was ere long to be brought about.

So the crowd dispersed, while the young nobleman proceeded to the Tower, and Gilbert, followed by several of his acquaintance, retired to a neighbouring hostel. But we must return to the halbert-bearer.

CHAPTER IV.

Thou talkest of 'buts' and 'ifs;' thy 'yeas' and 'nays'
Fall cold as Winter on our purposed plans;
Here is a course, clear as a broad highway,
The rest is dangerous, all uncertain, doubt.
What need this rounding when the way's before?
The road is safest still that leads to death.

The Butcher of Bourn.

THE soldier who had been so instrumental in capturing Gilbert, and who seemed to have so good an understanding with Duskena, lost no time in apprising the Earl of Arundel of the intention of Ninion Saunders to communicate to Northumberland the secret he was master of regarding their conspiracy. The Earl looked sorely dismayed, bit his lip, and kept his eye fixed upon the floor of the apartment, for he was at a loss what course to pursue; and the first thing he resolved upon, was to send for Sir

William Cecil, who was also within the Tower. Cecil entered with his right hand in a sling; a swelling, and the Lord knows what beside, had caused him to lose the use of his fingers: he could not even draw up the proclamation for the Lady Jane; could not write a single letter for Northumberland, but was forced to keep himself very quiet, and take the pig-broth which Lord Audley had prescribed; he was indeed ill, from a surfeit of the Duke's politics.

“A pretty matter this,” said the Earl of Arundel; “yonder is an old dolt of an host, who keeps an hostel on Ludgate, who has fished out all the secret of our plot, speaks as familiar of Arundel and Cecil and the rest of us, as boys do of school-games; and is only waiting to be conducted to Northumberland, that we may either groan out our days in the donjon, or bare our necks to the block.”

“Indeed!” said Cecil, glancing at the soldier in waiting; “if this be true, had we not better

retire, and devise some plan to prevent such an interview?"

"No occasion to retire," replied the Earl: "Halbert, my henchman, hath been often tried, and never found wanting. It is to him that we are indebted for this warning; he is one of my few followers that I trust."

"What hast thou discovered, then?" said Cecil, like a shrewd statesman, eager to ascertain all the soundings before he put to sea; "speak, good Halbert, and keep nothing from us."

"The old fox was careful not to reveal too much," answered the henchman: "but I gathered sufficient to know that he had overheard some conversation between Lord Wardour and a drawer of his, who is none other than the grandson of Duskena; and that he had more than once attempted to obtain audience of Northumberland, but had hitherto been unsuccessful. And from what little I did gather, I am certain that he is acquainted with

most of the movements afloat for placing Queen Mary on the throne." He then entered into a long account of the part he played in capturing Gilbert, and how he himself had been mistaken for a follower of Northumberland's, and concluded by stating that he had made an appointment with Duskena to be in waiting without the Tower, and that if she could but gain admittance secretly, he doubted not but that she would devise some speedy plan for the removal of Ninion, especially as the old host had rendered himself obnoxious to her by betraying the hiding place of her grandson.

"Thou art already half a statesman, Halbert," said Cecil with a smile; and forgetting all about the pig-broth, and the loss of the use of his hand, he took up a pen, and wrote out an order to the keeper of the private postern (who was in the service of Mary) to admit Duskena secretly, and conduct her without a word to Arundel's apartments. "This man must be

looked to," continued Cecil, giving the order to the henchman, and putting his arm again carelessly into the sling: "I have heard of him before to-day; he is a deep designing knave, who would sell his own soul, if he could but meet with a bold bidder."

"The old woman will hit upon some plan that will secure us," replied Arundel; "for she seems to have agents both above and underground. Curse on Wardour's tongue for leading us into such scrapes; the lad is discreet enough in some matters, but I cannot teach him how to play a double game. But he will become wiser as he grows older: thou sayest rightly, this busy meddling host must be taken care of, nor must we be seen interfering in the matter. Northumberland is yet too strong for us."

So they remained in conversation until Duskena arrived, for the decrepit old woman was the mighty lever by which all their plots

were kept in motion. She entered the room without the least display of ceremony, glanced at Cecil and Arundel from under her deep shaggy brows, then stood as if waiting for either of them to break the silence.

“You are no stranger to the matter in hand, good mother,” said Arundel: “can you advise us how to escape the threatening danger that is near, and is fraught with so much evil to our plans?”

“There needs none of my advice,” replied the old hag, in one of her surliest tones; “ye have men and means in your own power. Why should ye seek mine aid in every trifling danger? Had ye removed him before now, my grandson would have escaped the pillory.”

“True! true enough, good mother,” said the politic Cecil; “yet out of evil springs good; and had it not been for this breach of Gilbert’s, Northumberland might have become acquainted with our plans. That we have means to do

much, we well know ; but if we stir and are discovered before our purpose is fully ripe, what then will all our plans avail us ? This Ninion, or whatever his name may be, must be removed quietly, nor must we be seen to meddle in the affair. Were we to send an armed force and commit him to some place of security, such an act would soon be bruited abroad ; and thou well knowest that we are not yet strong enough to cope with the Duke openly. Come, try if thou canst not devise some scheme, in which, if need be, we may assist thee."

"There can but be one scheme to be safe," said the stern old woman, knitting her dark brow as she spoke ; "and it needs but little consideration. Ye can accomplish it without my aid."

"Name it then without delay," said Arundel.

"He must die !" replied Duskena, striking her staff upon the floor of the apartment ; "the dead can tell no secrets."

“Is there no other method to get rid of him in safety?” said the Earl, first breaking the silence which had reigned in the room for several moments. “Bethink thee, good mother, his crime is scarcely deserving of death; he hath but played the eaves-dropper; and had Wardour and Gilbert but been more guarded, they might have kept their secrets to themselves. We but acted unwisely in trusting them with such weighty matters. I have no wish that the old man should die. Could he not be removed, and put in some place of safety for a few days? Surely we have friends enow who would keep strict watch over him.”

“Do that which pleaseth you best,” answered the old woman. “If ye can secure him so easily, what need have ye to trouble me? But mark me! if by any chance he escapeth, or findeth means to corrupt those who are placed over him, then down tumble all your plans to overthrow Northumberland, and ye yourselves

will be no better than dead men. As to his not deserving death, he hath ever been an oppressor, a reviler of our faith. He hath accumulated weath, by an evil hand, by seizing the poor and the wretched, and making them bondsmen. Nay, when he gave up my grandson, Gilbert, to the City-guard to-day, I heard him mutter to himself, 'Now they will hang him, and I shall have my revenge.' I tell ye that he hates all who belong to our faith, and for it he must die. Better that a thousand knaves should blacken in the sun, than that a whisper of what we have on hand should reach the ears of Northumberland. Me he dare not touch; but as for yourselves, he would lead ye to the block without even the form of a trial, and spill your blood with no more regret than he would cast upon the floor the dregs of a wine-cup. Remember the fate of Somerset, and be wise!"

"There is much reason in her arguments,

my Lord," said Cecil, after a long pause. "Charity begins at home, and pity is but another name for folly, when our own safety is at stake. But setting aside all the dangers that might befall ourselves, the great cause which we have undertaken requires that we should not stick at any trifling sacrifice. And it were better to shed the blood of this man silently, than let the secret which he is master of be blown abroad, and endanger the lives of us all."

"Well, then, since it can be no better, let it be done," said Arundel. "But I would rather that it were the haughty Duke himself, than this unfortunate fellow. I like not to dabble in such base blood; the scourge and the stocks would be punishment enough for such a knave. I tell thee, Cecil, that if we hew off every offending branch without striking at the root of the tree, we shall find labour enough. The world is full of knaves, but it is your greater

villains that first make them so. The law that enabled this host to take bondsmen at pleasure, was but made to strengthen our power over the serfs. I raised my voice against it, but in vain. If we would win the good will of the people, we must not weigh them down with fetters, which we would sooner shed our own blood than wear. I would not treat the common herd less kindly than my own hounds. But let the fellow die,—what doth his life concern me ?”

“This consideration for the common people speaketh well for your own feelings, my Lord,” said Cecil, who would have flattered the devil himself, if he had but seen a chance of promotion,—“and cannot fail of securing you in their affections, when you attain that eminence which your unequalled merit so justly entitles you to, and which, under the sceptre of Queen Mary, you are secure to reach.”

“Ye are all honest until ye attain power,”

said Duskena, with that fiend-like sneer, which was so natural to her. "I have seen many of your people-loving men in my day, and they have all turned out alike at last. I have suffered and been in want, and appealed to those whom I had served, but they had no longer need of me, so began to be sorry and pitied me, until I despised them. But I shall yet live to set my foot on many of their necks. No ! deceive not yourselves : ye look upon the poor as slaves, and set up as rulers over them ; every law ye make is but to keep them more in subjection : they are ground down to better their morals, — their recreations cut off lest they should become vicious, — their hours of relaxation limited lest they should grow idle, — their dresses regulated, for fear they should be too proud. Kind, considerate rulers, that ye are ! their very food is weighed out by law, lest they should eat too plentifully and become gross. But the time will assuredly come, when

they will shake off all these fetters, when every man shall sit under his own homestead, and none have power to make him afraid, — when noble deeds shall alone ennoble a man's name, — when honesty is rank, and the head is only bared before virtue. But these things I shall never live to see. I should not wish to see them. My own life has been a continuance of misery and crime ; but your great men made me what I am, and I shall die revenged on them. In my early years my heart was full of kindness. I loved even the poor little children. I fed the beggar. I saw no one want that I could relieve. How then have I been rewarded? And now I hate every thing that is happy, — almost abhor all that is human ; even my zeal for religion, is but a new shape for my vengeance. I would that my work was ended !” And she rested her head on the handle of her staff, muttered a few deep curses at her enemies, then stood silent as a statue.

“Poor woman!” said Arundel, with a sigh, and almost in a whisper, “she but utters the truth. Few have suffered so much as herself. I have heard her history from my son. No wealth could make her happy. I have sent her gold times without number; but she would never accept of more than was necessary for her mere wants. The hand of God can alone administer to her comfort.”

“It grieves me,” said the hardened Cecil, “to disturb her meditations; but danger is too near the door to pause now.” Then added in a loud voice, “Come, good mother, take comfort, all may yet be well. Thou hast not yet made known to us, thy plan for removing this knave, Ninion.”

“Curse thee for breaking my reverie!” exclaimed Duskena, raising her head. “My mind had wandered back to the bright dreams of other days, when my hours passed happily away, and my hands were free from blood.

Look on me !” said she, raising herself more erect than she had stood for years. “ This face, which is now so hideous that the children fly from me, and scream, once drew the eyes of men upon it. They called me the flower of Blackheath ; the nobles of the land would rein up their steeds to gaze on me ; proud knights have worn the heather-bell in their plumed helmets for my sake : for then I loved to wander wild among the heath-flowers. I went singing all day like a bird among the broom. My hair was long and black, and flew loose. I decked it with heath-bells ; my eyes were bright as the morning-star ; my step light as the fallow-deer’s. I had no care. I fell a victim to a villain, — to Henry the Eighth, before he was king. I married to conceal my shame. My son Reynold was the son of the royal monster : his own father doomed him to death. I sought an interview after he was condemned ; but the crowned savage refused to see me, and

so my son was hung. I have his skull now. I have slept with it in my arms for long nights, and rocked it when the wind roared. I have washed it white with tears. I was mad a long time; but that was years ago. I had a daughter, and she was burnt. Her skin was white; but the flames scorched it, until it became darker than my own. I would have stabbed the tyrant that wrought my ruin; but could not. I have waylaid him when he was alone hunting an hundred times; but I never could do the deed. I could not forget how he was wont to look upon me, when we met in the solitudes of the park. Oh! the tiger was beautiful when he was young. He never loved but me and poor Katherine, and she died of a broken-heart. I have outlived them all, and am now but a scourge upon the earth."

She again rested her head upon the staff, for the torrent of her feelings flowed like the lava of a volcano; her heart was like heated iron

while she spoke, hot and hard, yet susceptible to the heavy strokes, which nature beat upon it. Even Arundel could not conceal his emotion; there was a compassion on the countenance of the veteran statesman, such as but rarely was seen there; but the features of Cecil underwent no more change, than the pavement on which he stood. For no sooner had the old woman paused, than he said: "The day is wearing away apace, and if we neglect this business, it may yet prove serious to us all."

"I am ready," said the old hag, rising up suddenly, as if nothing had occurred to weaken her purpose; "I need but speak the word, and the matter is done. Ye may rest secure, he hath called down my vengeance, and only one living being yet escaped it. Were either of you to awaken my hatred, secure as ye may seem, I would be revenged upon you. Let me begone; I will send a messenger, as if from Northumberland, and summon this hateful host

to the Tower. There is many a deep bed in the river where a man may take his last sleep undiscovered, many a dark whirlpool, at the bottom of which only the ravenous pike shelters: one of these shall be his couch to-night. The bridge is dangerous to pass under. I know those that live upon it, who have sunk, and saved ere now. Let me begone, and send Satan another forerunner, to tell him that my own time is drawing nearer. How bluff Hal will stare to see me. Ha! ha! ha!"

And she laughed aloud one of those horrid laughs, such as a maniac sometimes raises, and which falls colder upon the heart of the hearer than the lament raised for the dead. Halbert was called and (through the aid of Cecil and Arundel, who had contrived that their own party should hold possession of several important points of the Tower), a boat was procured, and the old woman sent afloat on her mission of death.

“And this is a human being like ourselves,” said Arundel, when she had gone—“one whose heart once overflowed with kindness, who loved, and was beloved again, had all a fond mother’s feelings,—had a tear for the poor, and a sigh for the sorrowful. And look at her now, Cecil. What feeling can power create so strong as that by which she is actuated?—what passion can ambition kindle, equal to that which she possesses? Crushed and trampled upon, her affections all poisoned,—her love turned to hatred,—her blood to the bitterest gall,—I marvel not that she has so changed. That spirit which has borne her up against so many adversities, what might it not have been, had it been kindly fostered? But I will think no more of her; we but study the human heart, to become convinced how little we know. We may fathom its weaknesses; but the deep beds of human feeling like the springs of the ocean, are yet undiscovered.”

‘Not so,’ replied the deep-sighted Cecil; “the human face is like the open pages of a book, and in it we may read all that was concealed, while the covers were closed. Show me your man, and I will read you his heart. Your deep calm brow may puzzle for a time; but once get under it, and you will soon see all that is hidden there. I read Somerset, and found him vain, weak, and ambitious. Northumberland superstitious and headstrong, he fights like a man in a deep passion, a cool opponent will pierce him through — ”

“And Arundel,” said the Earl, “what is he?”

“Nay, my Lord,” said Cecil, with a smile such as only a true courtier can assume, “your face wears no disguise, you are, indeed, what you seem.”

The Earl smiled, and swallowed the compliment, thereby proving the doctrine of an old writer to be true, who says: “A vain man could

spend a long night in comfort with the devil, if he only fed him well all the time upon flattery.”

But our story again carries us to the hostel in the ward of Ludgate.

CHAPTER V.

O Lord! methought what pain it was to drown!
What dreadful noise of water in mine ears!
What sights of ugly death within mine eyes,
Methought I saw a thousand fearful wrecks,
A thousand men, that fishes gnawed upon.

King Richard III.

THE setting sun was throwing a deep crimson upon the steep roofs, and gable ends of the houses, when Ninion still waited impatiently for the messenger, who was to conduct him to Northumberland; and as the shadows began to deepen in the old parlour, and the night draw nearer, he gave up all hopes of seeing the Duke until the morrow. The host had of course, heard of the liberation of Gilbert from the pillory, and coupling this, with what he had before picked up, he had no doubt but that the

Duke would see at once how matters stood, and reward him amply for the news he brought. But Ninion, though a landlord, was reckoning without his host, for he never dreamed that a plot far deeper than his own was laid to entrap him. Sometimes he paced the low parlour with slow and deliberate steps, casting a glance now and then at his busy dame, who, with a frown upon her brow, and a look of bitter hatred, every time her eye encountered her husband, still continued to attend on her customers. Anon, Ninion planted himself in the doorway, and watched the crowd as they branched off in every direction, some of them drunk, and giving full vent to those opinions which during the day they had kept to themselves. A few there were, who recognized the portly keeper of the St. John's Head, and who had heard some vague rumour of the part he took in the capture of Gilbert; from these he was greeted with groans and hisses, and although the presence of his wife seemed to make the inside of the house too hot for him, he was again compelled

to confine his impatience to the limits of the parlour.

He was, however, at length, aroused from his reverie, by the entrance of the waterman, whom we have already brought before our readers. The man beckoned him aside, and whispered him to follow without delay, as he had orders to convey him by water to the Tower, where Northumberland already expected him. Ninion glanced at the man a moment suspiciously, for he anticipated that he should be carried thither in state, or at least, that the Duke would send some of his chosen followers as an escort; then he thought that as the errand required secrecy, his Grace might have chosen such a humble means of conveyance to avoid suspicion. "It will soon be dark," said Ninion, following his guide down a narrow street which led to the river.

"The darker the better, for our purpose," answered the man, hurrying along at a pace which but ill suited his portly companion. The wherry was in waiting at the foot of the old

dilapidated stairs, then but seldom used, and the sailor warned him to look to his footing, as many of the steps were broken. The very neighbourhood had a solemn and ominous look ; the houses which stretched to the edge of the river, were a complete pile of ruins ; and only the heads of one or two women were seen thrust through the broken casements, looking out on the dark and narrow streets, or feasting their imagination on the light breeze, which just rippled the face of the water.

“ Have a care, old hogshead,” shouted one of the women, “ that is but a frail craft, to carry such a ton of iniquity as you. If you are guilty of any more sins than a sucking child, she’ll sink with you.”

“ Keep your head in, you blethering thief,” answered the waterman ; “ your very head-gear makes the night-air stink more than a tallow-chandler’s boiling-house in the dog-days ; was your whole body out, the neighbourhood would be poisoned.”

“ Keep out of his boat, old barrel-belly,”

shouted the woman, as Ninion was seating himself in the stern: "I know the rascal; he's one of those who, when he gets a fare far enough down the river, robs them and throws them overboard. He's paid by the Billingsgate company for feeding the fishes, and has a good round sum for every man he drowns."

"I pay no regard to what that woman says," said Ninion, making an effort to rise, "but as the night is already becoming dark, and the current of the river is strong, and to shoot the bridge at this hour will be a task of danger, I will defer my business till the morrow."

"Sit still," said the waterman, who had already pushed the boat off; "if you stir we shall be swamped. I wish the devil had them that sent me for you at this hour."

"Is it then dangerous?" said the host, clapping his broad hands on either side of the boat; "if so, put to shore again, I will make up double the loss of the fare."

"It would be safer if we had more light," replied the man, abruptly, "but, sink or swim, I

must obey my orders. What kind of a devil's errand must you have come on, that I should be sent for you so late, when not a fly is seen skimming on the river, and the houses on each side look as black as hell?"

"My business concerneth the Government," answered Ninion, the teeth already chattering in his head; "but this is a frail bark to carry a man of my weight in. Hark thee, friend, I will give thee two golden pieces to set me ashore, on either side the river: I dare not venture beneath the dark arches of the bridge, in so slim a craft, and with such a headlong current."

"Sit still," said the waterman, in a hoarse determined voice: "if you move an inch on either side, over we go. And to tell you a truth, friend, if your business is connected with matters of the state, I have no wish to go to the devil in your company; some hanging affair in hand, I dare be sworn; and you are in haste to handle the blood-money. But all trades must live, they say, and for my part I've generally found rogues more ready to pay a high fare than honest men."

“We are none of us over honest,” said Ninion, his alarm increasing, for beside themselves not a soul was seen afloat on the river. “As to the tidings I was about to communicate to his grace of Northumberland, I have changed my mind, and will not now go. So land me before we near the bridge, and I will double the gold I promised thee.”

“Ah, ah, ah! thou art afraid,” said the boatman, with a forced and savage laugh, which made the blood of Ninion Saunders run cold. “Come, man, cheer up; a right conscience and a good heart will carry thee through, and thou need’st not then care for meeting the evil one. We may or we may not clear the bridge in safety, but take up thy beads, man; thou wilt be none the worse for numbering them.”

“I am not of that faith,” said Ninion, hesitating for a moment, whether or not he should have a struggle for the possession of the oars; but the brown bare sinewy arms of the waterman, as they were seen in the deepening twi-

light, told him too well how such a struggle must terminate.

“Not of that faith!” echoed the boatman, “then I am sorry for thee. Come, I have a string and a crucifix, which was blessed by the hand of Gardiner himself, if thou hast any belief in their sanctity, they are thine. Better prepare thyself for the worst.”

“Put me ashore,” said Ninion, his utterance almost choked by fear; “put me ashore, and I will do whatever thou wishest me. I have a fear that something will happen. I have been a great sinner, and do repent me of the errand on which I have come.”

“I dare not,” replied the waterman;—“I received my orders from one who has more power than thou, and I must obey them. But we are nearing the bridge, and the arches look as dark as the gates of Death. If thou hast ever a prayer at hand, I would have thee repeat it. Be quick! and I will leave the boat for a few moments to float at her own pace.”

“Save me!” exclaimed Ninion, clasping his

hands together, "and I will enrich thee. I have a strong oaken chest in my own chamber at home, filled with broad Harrys, every one of which shall be thine if thou wilt but put me safely ashore."

"I cannot if I would now," answered the waterman: "we are already descending the steep current that tears through the bridge.—Hark! what a roaring the water makes!" He raised his voice as if calling to some one a-head, and instantly a light was seen from one of the houses on the bridge. Feeble as the glimmering of the lamp was, it revealed the boiling eddies which foamed around the abutments of the bridge; and just gave light enough for Ninion to see that the boat was tearing along at a headlong rate, and was bearing full upon the central supporter of the bridge; and before he had time to raise himself erect, she struck with a tremendous force against the starling and sunk. The waterman had watched for the awful moment with a steady eye and firm nerves, and keeping his glance fixed on a rope

which had been purposely lowered, and to which several pieces of white rag were tied, that he might be better enabled to see it, he made a sudden spring, grasped it fairly in his hand, and was drawn up in safety. Not so with Ninion ;— he rose from his seat just at the moment the boat struck, and by the shock was thrown headlong into the current, and instantly vanished under the dark archway, even before he had time to call upon Heaven for mercy. The crash had, however, been heard, and boats were instantly on the look out above the bridge; but their assistance came too late—the deed was done ! The boatman was hauled up, and drawn in at a window by the assistance of two men; and when he entered the house, he saw Duskena seated by the fire.

“ Hast thou already got rid of him ?” said the old hag, looking out from beneath her bushy eye-brows, without raising her head.

“ He will never trouble you more, unless the dead come again,” replied the boatman; “ nor could I have saved him if I would in so frail

a craft, for she must have perished in shooting the bridge with such a fall, and I also have gone perforce to the lower deck with him."

"It is better that thou art saved," answered the hag, "and for what is done, thou must blame the river. Had the fool but minded his own affairs, he had done well. But he has paid the penalty, and there is an end. The keenest revenge loseth its appetite after death. I will think no more of him;" and she sat motionless with her fearful eyes fixed upon the fire.

Just at that moment a loud knocking was heard at the door without, and when it was opened, a man entered, and brought tidings of the re-capture of Gilbert by Northumberland's followers.

"Ah! is it even so?" exclaimed Duskena, springing up instantly;—"and carried to the Tower, sayest thou? But what matter! he hath friends enow there, and will soon escape; and he knoweth the hiding-place. But Lord Wardour is there also," continued the old woman, "and the Duke hateth him with a bit-

ter hatred, and wanteth but a fair opportunity to take away his life. Well, well! my old limbs will carry me no farther to-night—I must see what the morrow produces. I know not what I could do for them at this hour.”

“ But bethink you, good mother,” said the man, “ of the facilities such a place offers for any meditated deed, — the deep dungeons, and impregnable walls. And perchance the Earl of Arundel is unacquainted with his arrival: at least let him be warned.”

“ He could not enter so secretly but that some of our friends would see him,” replied Duskena. “ And he standeth high in favour with the daughter of old Suffolk, whom they have raised to the throne, and I have no fear of his safety. Besides, I know not but that he is better there than wandering at large; for he hath a foolish love for the Lady Jane, and would overthrow all our deeply-laid plots to serve her. Had he not babbled our secrets, I had not been here to-night, nor the waters have been polluted with such carrion. Begone! and

wait at the gates of the Tower; whisper my name to the warden, and no one will molest thee: should they escape, conduct them hither. If thou hearest aught of their being in danger, hasten back to tell me. I know that which will make the Duke quail more than any murder can refresh him. Begone, and fear nothing! I will await thy return."

The messenger departed, accompanied by the boatman, who had received his reward for the death of Ninion, and went to spend his ill-gotten wealth at the nearest tavern.

When they had gone, the men who were left behind, and who were in the employ of Mary's party, proceeded with their work, which was the filling up of innumerable circulars, signed by such of the Council as were opposed to Northumberland. And during the night, more than one horseman drew up before the door on the bridge, and then galloped off in the direction which had been previously arranged, to deliver their credentials to the different parties who were to muster under the banner of the Princess

Mary. The letters which were sent off during the night were in the hand-writing of Cecil, for he had long ago sold himself to Arundel, and was working the overthrow of Northumberland as he had before aided in the downfall of Somerset.

Duskena sat with her eyes closed beside the fire, sometimes muttering to herself, and holding communion with her own dark thoughts; while the roaring of the waters, heard beneath the house, dashed on with a deep and sullen sound, and seemed meet music to her gloomy reveries.

But we must leave her for a time, and return to the Tower, where many things were now passing, the recording of which is essential for the working out of our story.

CHAPTER VI.

“ No—to the dungeon with him!—what! shall we
Calmly sit down and see ourselves defied,
Be pointed at, and mocked, while all our forms
Are by a bearish rabble turned to jest?
No! by the holy rood! were he the proudest lord
That e'er wore belt or spur, we would not bate
His punishment a jot.”

The Dauntless Duke.

WHEN Lord Wardour entered the Tower, it was his intention to seek out the Queen, and be the first to communicate what he had done, in liberating the unfortunate drawer from the pillory; but he was informed by an attendant that her Majesty had retired to her chamber for the night. He waited for a few moments in an ante-room which was empty, and despatched one of his own followers in quest of writing materials, thinking to leave a note with the Sovereign Lady, explaining that all was merely

a drunken frolic of Gilbert's; trusting to her clemency for his pardon, and believing that what he himself had done in the affair was such as she would approve of. He had, in fact, arranged the matter in his own mind, and was only waiting the return of his attendant, when Northumberland, with four of his followers, bearing partizans, entered the room.

Lord Wardour saw at a glance, by the angry countenance of the Duke, that he was already acquainted with the matter.

“Close the door!” exclaimed Northumberland as he entered the apartment,—“and let a guard be stationed without.—How is this, sir?” continued he, addressing Lord Wardour, while his dark brows met together with an awful frown. “Is it true that you had the boldness to release that traitorous knave from the pillory, who, during the solemnity of our proclamation, raised his voice for the Princess Mary?”

“Most true it is,” answered the young nobleman, his fine countenance reddening with anger. “He is one of those reckless varlets,

who, when excited by the wine-cup, say anything that comes uppermost, without meaning harm. I can see nothing either so bold or so traitorous in the affair."

Northumberland pulled his bushy beard—an old habit of his when deeply enraged—and exclaimed in a voice which made the attendants tremble, "By the rood of Christ! you speak as if ready to do such another act if it offered itself, in place of shewing penitence for what you have done. Seize the traitor, and bear him to the donjon! we will see if bolts and shackles will bring him to obedience."

"Keep back, slaves!" said the undaunted nobleman, and, unsheathing his sword in an instant, he severed the head of one of the halberts at a blow, then drew a loaded pistol from his belt, while he exclaimed, "I will shoot dead the first that dares again to raise his weapon!" and, turning to the Duke, he added, "I will be adjudged by the Queen, or the nobles, for this offence. Think not, proud Duke, that thy word only is to consign a free-

born noble to the gyves and the donjon, because thou chancest to stumble upon him when he is alone, and without his followers. Why should that which I have done concern thee more than any other peer of the realm? Or when did I ever swear myself liege-man to thee? On my soul, I will sell my liberty dearly; for I well know the doom of all who fall into thy power." He ceased, and placing his sword under his arm, drew the remaining pistol from his belt.

"Put up thy weapons," said Northumberland, with a look of scorn; "I am too old a soldier, to be daunted by either the flashing of a pistol, or the sight of a sword: I need but stamp my foot to fill the room with armed men, who would soon put thy valour to the test. As to the right I have to consign thee to the donjon for the offence which thou seemest to exult in, no one saving thyself has ever dared to question it. I will, however, wait the opinion of the council until the morrow, and see if there is one rash enough to take thy part. Wert thou my own son, and showed so little remorse for so

daring a breach of the law, I would not spare thee." He cast his searching eye around the apartment, to see that it was safe, then charged the guards, on the peril of their heads, to keep a secure watch without, and added, "Here you must remain a prisoner until to-morrow," and as he was about to depart, Gilbert Pots was led into the room between two soldiers.

A few words served to explain who the new culprit was, for Northumberland had given orders for his recapture, and as other matters of importance called for the attention of the Duke, he commanded Gilbert to be placed in the same room with Lord Wardour, adding with a sneer, "As he has run himself into so much danger for this seditious drawer, he cannot surely object to his company for the night." Indeed the Duke thought that he should be humbling the pride of the young nobleman, by leaving him so mean a companion for a prisoner, for he was ignorant that either of them were acquainted with Duskena, and never dreamed that Gilbert could make himself as happy in a

prison, as a palace, both of which purposes the Tower was now indeed converted into."

There was a strong contrast in the conduct of the two prisoners when left together. Gilbert looked up with a waggish leer to the countenance of Lord Wardour, as if in expectation of some sort of recognition ; but the young nobleman was too irritated to take any notice of his companion for the present, and paced the apartment like an enraged lion, whose den seems too small for the compass of his wrath. But the humble drawer had been banged about too much in the world to feel annoyed ; so seating himself on a bench, he began to drum upon the oaken table with his fingers, and hum over his favourite air of the "Lady Isabell." As he proceeded, the hurried step of Lord Wardour gradually became more slow, his frowning brow began to relax, and as his rage cooled, he threw himself into a seat and confronted Gilbert.

"Here we are," said the drawer, still drumming on the table and nodding his head to the tune he was beating. "I hope they will not

forget to bring our suppers ; the air I have been breathing from the height of yonder pillory, hath somewhat sharpened mine appetite."

"I wish it had silenced thy tongue," replied Wardour ; "had it not been for thy confounded folly, I should not have been here now, a prisoner. Why couldst thou not hold thy peace during the proclamation, and look on quietly, without running thy neck into danger?"

"I would I had," answered Gilbert, "since my folly hath also drawn yourself into the same snare ; as for my own part, I am as well here as at any other place. But to tell thee the truth, the chinking of the Princess Mary's gold-pieces rung in my ear, and together with the fumes of the sack, caused me to shout whether I would or not."

"Well! no matter," said the young Lord. "But when I once am free, I will raise a lance against this proud Duke : he hath lorded it over us too long. But hark ! some one is approaching."

The massy bolts were withdrawn, and two of Northumberland's attendants entered, and began to make preparations for supper.

"Come hither, good fellow," said Lord War-dour to one of the menials; the man drew near. "Couldst thou not contrive to apprise the Earl of Arundel, that I am close prisoner within the Tower?"

"It is his Grace's orders, my Lord," replied the man, "that we hold no communication with any one. And we are forbid, on pain of death, even to mention your name, should any one enquire whom we keep guard over. The Queen passed along the gallery but now, and paused to ask the sentinels whom they had in keeping, but the men evaded her question." The latter communication the attendant made while his companion had left the room.

"But I passed one of my father's followers as I entered the Tower," said the young nobleman, "and he must assuredly have seen me, and communicated with the Earl."

"He did, my Lord," answered the man;

“but it was rumoured that you again went out by the private postern.”

“I thank thee for thy tidings, friend,” said Wardour, giving him two rose-nobles. “If thou canst, without endangering thine own safety, communicate to any of my friends, that I am here, thou shalt be further rewarded.”

“I will do my best,” answered the man; then added in a low voice, “I liked not the look of the Duke, when he parted from thee; I saw him whisper with Black-bearded Harry the Halbert-bearer; be on thy guard; thy father hath befriended me in his day.” The man retired, and kept his promise.

Supper was placed on the table, and Gilbert did ample justice to it. Wardour ate but little, for he began to foresee, that his situation had become dangerous; not that he had any fear of his life, but thinking that Northumberland had some suspicion of his father’s real intentions, he himself might be kept in some one of the numerous donjons in the Tower, as an hostage. He well knew that the Duke was a

daring man, and would stick at nothing, to attain his object. He was also well aware that he had rendered himself obnoxious to Northumberland long before, by aspiring to the hand of Lady Jane Grey, and had heard that, since her marriage, the brow of Dudley had been seen to darken at the mention of his name. These thoughts would never perchance have crossed his mind, had he not found himself so unexpectedly in the Duke's power.

The cloth was at length removed, and they were again left to themselves, when Gilbert, who had made as deep an inroad into the wine as the food, began to give his tongue the reins.

“You seem not overmuch in love with your lodging,” said the drawer, gazing on the fine but solemn countenance of Wardour. “Now methinks if you were inclined to take up your abode in any other part, yonder window looks as if it would offer but little resistance: true, there is the moat, but that is a slight obstacle to such a swimmer as yourself.”

The young nobleman raised his eyes to the loop-hole, which was secured with thin iron bars, gazed a moment on the blue sky which was seen through it, then shook his head and remained silent.

“Nay, despair not!” continued the drawer: “I have been over the Tower before now, and seen stronger stanchions than those, which have been forced. This is so slightly guarded a cell, that a child might almost force its way through it. I knew a prigger of prancers who would have worked his way through the wall, letting alone the window.”

“A prigger of prancers!” said Lord Wardour. “What is that?”

“One who steals horses,” answered Gilbert. “But I forgot you have never been among the Clapperdudgeons, and seen how they trick the Queere-cuffins, after having filched a lag of duds, or sacked a score of margery-praters.”

Lord Wardour pleaded his ignorance of the cant-terms (for such they were) which were in use at that time among thieves and beggars,

with whom Gilbert had too often mingled; and he only said, "Yours has been a wild life."

"Ay, marry has it," answered the drawer, glad to talk, no matter upon what subject. "I have played the Abram-man, or mad beggar; tied up my arm, and sworn I lost it in the wars; rolled up the whites of my eyes for three hours together, and passed for sand-blind; been bear-ward, and led a dancing-ape; played the pipe and tabor at a morris; conjured and raised the devil; roasted sausages at Bartlemy fair; and been tied in a skin all day to enact the part of the learned pig; played the character of Joseph the Carpenter in a mask, and was fined a groat for getting drunk, and not following the flight into Egypt. I have dined with Duke Humphrey in Paul's Walk, and gone to seek an appetite under the trees in Moorfields, like many another well-dressed beggar; then prayed among the sinners of St. Antlin's; nor should I care the toss-up of a grey groat to dance again in my beggar's rags."

So Gilbert ran over his "strange eventful

history," until Lord Wardour grew weary of listening to him, and betook himself to the grated window to look out upon the night.

The sky was blue and beautiful; the stars looked down from the azure vault with their golden eyes upon the earth, and the round moon rode serenely over the face of heaven, scattering her silver light on the roofs of the distant houses, and trailing her splendour along the rippling waters of the moat, which flowed under the casement with a low melancholy murmur, as it emptied itself into the Thames. While he stood thus contemplating the face of heaven, his mind wandered to the young Queen, and he thought that she might perchance be gazing on the same scene, and even, amid other things, turning a passing thought on himself, unconscious that he was a prisoner within those walls.

But we must leave him to his meditations, and turn our attention to another apartment in the Tower, where Northumberland was in consultation with a stranger.

The man, whose business engrossed the attention of the Duke at so late an hour, was one of the guard who had aided in the capture of Gilbert, and to whom Ninion Saunders had communicated the business he was about to go upon to the Tower. And as the host had not returned home, and no tidings had been heard of him since his departure with the boatman, the whole hostel of Ludgate had been thrown into confusion. The man had made enquiries at the Tower, and found that no boat had arrived there. Northumberland had also dispatched messengers in every direction, both by land and water; but no one had seen a wherry shoot the bridge at dark hour, and it was the opinion of several old bargemen that, if such an attempt had been made, the boat had perished.

Although the hour was late, Cecil had been summoned into the apartment, and the very soldier who had promised to aid Lord Wardour, was stationed as a guard at the door.

“Made he no mention of the business he was coming upon?” said Northumberland.

“None, an’ it please your Grace,” answered the man, “saving that it touched upon some plot, which was in existence, for the seating of the Princess Mary upon the throne, and that he had overheard the names of the conspirators.”

Cecil looked pale as death.

“And call you this, nothing?” continued the Duke: “marry, I would have given him my gauntlet full of gold pieces for such tidings. Answer me plainly, sirrah, for I hate your round-about replies; did he not let slip the names of some of these traitors?” The secretary held his breath in suspense.

“Not one, your Grace,” answered the man: “from what I could gather, it was but a conversation which he picked up, that transpired between his drawer and Lord Wardour.”

Cecil breathed again.

“Then we have nothing to fear,” said Northumberland, “for they are already in my power, and we have the means at hand to make them confess all. What sayest thou, Cecil, is

not the rack worth an hundred of our paid spies?"

"It is, my lord," replied the Secretary, with such a smile, as a man puts on, when he is writhing under the tooth-ache. "But pardon me, your Grace, and remember that he is the son of our ally, the Earl of Arundel, on whom so much at this time depends."

"Were he my own son," said the Duke, "and I found him playing false in this cause, by the thunder of Heaven! I would not spare him. I tell thee he hath already bearded me once to-night, defied me to my very teeth, set at nought my power, and there breatheth not the man who hath done this twice to my face. I do suspect me, sir, that we are beset with traitors, and the first discovered I will make an example to the rest. By the rood of Calvary! he shall die, were he twenty times nearer akin to Arundel; the Earl is no friend of mine, if he seeks to shelter a traitor. Here, fellow,—here is gold for thy tidings," added he, emptying his pouch of all the gold it contained; "if thou

canst but bring me to speech with this host, thy fortune is made ; begone, and remember my promise."

The man obeyed, and with many a low bow, took his departure.

"Well," continued the Duke, addressing Cecil, "thou hast fished out many a secret plot,—what is thy opinion of this matter?"

"That there is but little or no truth in it," replied Cecil, with matchless effrontery, "and that the whole story has but been got up to impose upon your Grace."

"But how wilt thou reconcile this with the absence of Ninion, or whatever his name may be?" inquired the Duke. "Beside, he was the very man who gave up this drawer, whom Wardour was bold enough to liberate from the pillory without sanction. Come, beat thy brains, and clear up all these points."

"These things prove nothing," replied the far-reaching statesman ; "a sorry chance had the drawer of escaping, when a whole posse of halbert-bearers were at his heels, in the open

face of day, and never lost sight of him, until he entered the tavern. This man would sell his soul to Sathanus, my lord, for gold. I have heard of him before now; he had but a narrow escape from the gallows in Somerset's time, he hath ever been a meddler. Still I hold it necessary that this affair should be looked narrowly into, and with your Grace's leave, I will set about it myself. His sudden absence, and being sent for (by some trick) to appear in your presence, does savour somewhat of a deeper scheme; but trust me, I shall speedily fathom the mystery."

"I leave it all in thine hands," said the Duke, "not doubting but that thou wilt be enabled to bring something to light by the morrow; and as thou succeedest in this affair so look to be rewarded. I owe thee some amends for the suspicions I have so unjustly entertained against thee; but now I believe that no master hath a more honest servant." He held out his hand, which Cecil kissed, before he departed, and when this long-headed hypocrite left the room,

he beckoned to the sentry, (whom the Duke had also dismissed from his duty,) and bade him, in a whisper, seek out the young Queen instantly, and communicate to her all that he had heard.

So was this great political game played. But we will step before the soldier, (who was also in Cecil's pay,) and look at our beautiful victim.

CHAPTER VII.

Princes have but their titles for their glories,
An outward honour for an inward toil ;
And, for unfelt imaginations,
They often feel a world of restless cares ;
So that, between their titles and low name,
There is nothing differs but the outward fame.

SHAKSPEARE.

HERE then we again withdraw the curtain to look at the lovely Queen in the full possession of royalty, and survey, for a few moments, the splendid miseries of state. It was near midnight, and the beautiful sovereign was stretched upon a rich ottoman, heavy with crimson velvet, and borders of gold. Her jewelled breast beat high, but not with pleasure, for care had already crept into and taken possession of her crown ; many a lowly cottage-maiden who slept on a

straw-pallet, was happier than Queen Jane. She had lain down with her lovely head resting on her chiselled arm — her beautiful eyes fixed on the fire — her mind wandering with melancholy pleasure to the scenes of her childhood. Her fancy had traced in the fire an old familiar scene, a resemblance to a favourite avenue in the park of Leicestershire, a spot where she first read Plato,—where she had walked with the venerable Ascham, and father Elmer, her favourite schoolmaster. A small portion of white ash had fallen just in the spot where she was wont to meet her pet-lamb; the fire also formed a kind of embankment, and looked as if the sun shone upon it,—in such a place had she sat alone reading for hours. As her imagination went on kindling the scene, every object became more distinct—many a forgotten incident rose before her, fresh as if they had but just occurred—many an object sprang up clear and minute as if they had but been committed to the treasury of memory the day before. Her mind steeped itself in the hues of the past so deeply

that she forgot all about the queen; she was again a happy girl, gathering flowers, and listening to the music of the woodlands; the same sunny glades, and shady glens, in which she had passed so many happy hours, rose fresh before her, their very paths bright and dark, all mirrored in the gloom and glow of the fire. Then poets and philosophers passed in long array, —Homer, the deep-browed; and Virgil, his every footstep moving to measured music; Socrates the god-countenanced; Plato with bland features; and a host of others all bringing their riches before her in beautiful confusion; thoughts teeming with wisdom, and sounds grand and terrible as the dying thunder, rolling far away over a stormy sea. By and bye, her memory wandered back to the remembrance of what she was, and she heaved a deep sigh — one of those long unconscious sighs under which the heart swells slowly, and would burst did not Pity, who keeps watch over the gates of past pleasures, permit them to escape, and wander forth and die amid the sobbing wind.

Amy, who was busied at an adjoining table with some article of female finery, raised her head, and letting fall her work unconsciously, sat gazing in silence upon her beautiful mistress.

“Amy,” said the young Queen, slowly rising from her recumbent position, “come and sit beside me, and let us talk of old familiar themes. I am sick of this starched grandeur, I must empty my heart, or it will break.”

Amy sprang up, and was instantly folded in the arms of the Queen, while, with the tears streaming down her fair cheeks, she exclaimed, “Oh, my dear mistress! it is a comfort to hear you speak in this way: had you kept me from your heart any longer I should have died.” And she wept under these feelings of melancholy pleasure.

“My dear Amy,” said the Queen, “I am weary of the set forms of state. I cannot carry my head erect, and queen it on every occasion. I am tired of speaking in measured phrases; I have not been schooled amid empty sounds. I cannot make promises every hour, that I never

intend to perform ; or say that I feel grateful to every one that presents me with an address, when I feel in pain until he comes to the end of it. I cannot always smile when I feel sad, or fix my eyes on every vacant countenance that seeks for a nod of recognition. It is in vain my trying to look calm, and listen to all the fulsome flattery which is hourly poured into mine ears, when I feel that I am but a poor worm like themselves, and that my prayers have no more power to pierce the ears of God. I cannot do this in the full opposition to all my senses. I am already weary of this load of royalty. They should have some wooden figure to move to these forms, something that hath neither sense nor feeling, and could stand the whole battery of their folly without a blush."

"Oh! it gladdeneth my heart to find that you are so little changed," answered the faithful and affectionate attendant; "I could love you more than ever, were my heart strong enough. But it grieved me to-day, when you sat on that fine throne, and never cast your eye

upon your poor Amy. And when I took up your hand to kiss it, and you did throw your arm for a moment round my neck, I saw those proud ladies that kissed you as if you had been made of wax, look and laugh at one another, and had it not been for the noblemen, and all the crowd, I would have told them what I felt. Nasty sneering stuck-up madams that they are ; I heard one of them say, that your tunic was quite a fright,—the envious good-for-nothing ! Her own habit was white enough at front, but she had put it over an under-bodice, that I would not have dusted a dog-kennel with ; she little thought it stuck up behind. Such simpering sugar-sticks!—they are what Latimer called, in one of his sermons, dish-clouts tied up in lawn handkerchiefs. And yet they could speak so soft, and smile so sweetly when you was looking at them. Ah ! I abominate such double-dealers. Your tunic a fright, forsooth ! when I put every stitch in the bodice with my own fingers. If I had to do their sewing, I would forget to take my needles out of the stitches, and make their skins a fright.”

“Nay, my dear Amy, thou must learn to look with more compassion on human failings,” replied the Queen: “when we raise ourselves above the level of others, we stand like marks at which all aim. Our every motion becomes a subject to comment upon; every careless word is weighed; every action closely investigated. We must either cease to be natural, or arm ourselves in proof against all attacks, and rest secure on that internal rectitude which the opinions of the world can never reach. We must be like travellers ascending a summit, who keep their footing firm and their eyes steadily fixed, and disregard the storm and sleet that beat around them. It is not of these things that I complain, for were an angel to walk the earth, he would not escape censure. Look at the character of Christ; he did but gather a few ears of corn on the Sabbath day, and the multitude murmured. Why should we hope to escape, when He who was in every way perfect, even to the perfection of God who dwelt within him, was not suffered to pass

scathless. No, my dear girl, let us live up to the pattern of every virtue, and we shall still be faulty; the very errors of our nature, which we study to subdue, proclaim our fallen state. They call me a Queen, and what am I more than others who draw their blood from the fountain of Adam? The worm that will one day feed upon me, will know no distinction between me and the beggar. Death will need no stronger dart to destroy me: I shall weigh no heavier on the bosom of the grave than another. God regardeth all alike; he causeth the rain to fall upon the just and the unjust; and when the curtain of eternity is withdrawn, and the whole world stands ranged before His all-seeing eye, we shall then be numbered among the good or the evil, the only distinction worth struggling for. Let us then deal charitably with one another."

"What you say, my dear lady, is all good and true enough," answered the simple-minded girl: "but I cannot love those who speak against you, when they are out of your hear-

ing, yet, when before your face, try to make you appear better than it is possible for any one to be. For I sometimes think you are over good, and wish you had a little spice of my temper, just to tell them now and then what they are. There's that Lady Pembroke, now, that made such fuss about attending your bed-chamber, and scarcely looked at you when she was on a visit in Leicestershire, but now you have become a Queen—Ah! I cannot abide such deception. Then there's that old Duchess of Northumberland, always hounding you about making your husband a king; a deal she would care, if he was not her son! And when five or six of these stuck-up things bore your train to-day, I saw them nudge each other with their elbows, and mimick your walk. Poor fools! they could never walk like you; for if you only have to cross the room in your undress, you do it more becomingly than they do; when they have got all their fine plumes and jewels on, they walk like peacocks that have got the gout. There's Lady Cecil sets up her shoulders

like a country fiddler, and turns her toes out like a duck with spurs on." And so Amy ran on, criticising and mimicking many of those high-born beauties who figured in the court of Queen Jane, and whose names and charms are now alike forgotten.

But the merry spirit of the lively girl failed in communicating itself to the Queen; she watched her for a moment with a faint smile upon her matchless countenance, then waved her hand as a sign that she should cease, while Amy prattled away, and imitated the gait of one after another, in a style that would not have disgraced a professor of mimicry.

"How canst thou seem so careless," said the Queen, in a tone of the kindest reproach, "when I have such a weight upon my heart? Bethink thee how many things I have already to attend to, all of which I must discharge as I can answer to my own conscience;—that if I grant the request of one, I may by doing so, injure another. I know not how many poor families the signing of a deed may bring to

want. One craveth lands here, and another there, the giving of which might break up many happy homes. To-day a poor woman sent in a petition, — a great lord lays claim to her inheritance. Northumberland has cautioned me against granting her boon, although he believes it to be just, lest I should raise up an enemy. But I will be honest, although compelled to resign my sway to-morrow. I am beset on every hand to make my husband King; I dare not entrust him with so much power: if he is elected to that high and important eminence by the voice of the council, I will not oppose it. But I fear to tempt him with the weight of the kingdom; he knows not how solemn and sacred is such a charge:—he looketh more for help from man than God. The Princess Mary already aimeth at my overthrow; if she will but promise to leave my friends unmolested, and not to infringe upon the sacred liberties of our religious worship, I will gladly give up the sceptre into her hand, for I feel my arm is too weak to wield it. Even

she herself will find how feeble is the strength of a woman to rule over a mighty nation, when so many designing heads are leagued against her simplicity and weakness. I feel, Amy, that my reign will be but brief; but by the aid of Heaven, it shall be honest; my hope and trust are in God alone."

So conversed the beautiful and high-souled Queen, her every wish and every aim only tending to make her people happy; for never did less selfishness reign in a human breast than in her own. All her actions sprang from the holiest motives; and even her errors were such as would have put the recording angel to the blush when he recalled them, so mingled were they with all that is good.

Her conversation was at last interrupted by the entrance of a page, who came to announce that one of Northumberland's attendants was in waiting without, and wished to speak with her on some matter of importance, that it would be dangerous to delay until the morrow; and

in a few moments the man was ushered into the room, and communicated what our readers are already acquainted with, respecting Lord Wardour.

CHAPTER VIII.

Oh! then, my Lord, we only play the part,
And have mistook ourselves until this time;
What! pass our word and then not be obeyed?
Here, take away this crown and sceptre, boy,
We'll in the night-air walk ourselves awake:—
Throw wide the doors and let us feel our power.

Queen and no Queen.

AMY took up the lamp, and, followed by the young Queen, led the way to the apartment in which Lord Wardour was imprisoned. The light fell dull and cold on the massy walls as they passed along, and as the wind blew through the iron gratings which overlooked the moat, it drove the flame aside, and gave a gloomier look to the vaulted passage. They halted before the door by which the guards were

stationed, and the Queen demanded admission. —“ I may not refuse your majesty,” said the chief officer of the guard, drawing back respectfully; “ but if the prisoners escape, all our lives will be in peril. For it was his Grace’s orders that we should look to their safety, or lose our heads, and his threats are not without meaning.”

“ On me rest the danger,” answered the Queen. “ I will be answerable to the Duke. Withdraw the bolts.”

“ But may I not first apprise his Grace ?” said the man, hesitating a moment before he undid the fastenings.

“ What ! that the Queen had a wish to converse with her prisoners,” said the Lady, “ and requested his permission ? No ! we accepted the crown on no such conditions. Do as I bid thee, and await our return ; it may be that we shall have further commands.” The man obeyed without replying, and when they had

entered, again closed the door, but without drawing the bolts.

Gilbert was sound asleep with his head upon the table, and their entry awoke him not. Lord Wardour was pacing the apartment with hurried steps, and folded arms; but when the Queen stood before him, he paused, looked confused, and could scarcely believe his eyes. Amy placed the lamp on the table, and gazed upon the scene in silence.

“I come, my Lord,” said the Queen, in a voice which thrilled through the young nobleman’s heart, “at this untimely hour, to visit you as a friend. I am not ignorant of the circumstances which have caused you to be made prisoner. You have but done as I should myself, had I been present on the occasion. But there are other matters which have transpired since you came within these walls, touching the absence of one Ninion Saunders, who vanished in some mysterious manner to-night, while on

his way to the Tower, to communicate to Northumberland, tidings which concerned yourself, and which, whether true or false, might endanger your life."

"I know the person of whom you speak," replied Wardour; "but am unconscious of having done anything that should place my life in danger. May I crave to know the crime with which I am charged?"

"That I am ignorant of," said the Queen, "some plot, I believe, against Northumberland; but what it is cannot now be known."

"I will not deceive you, Lady," said the young Lord, the colour mounting to his forehead. "The proud Duke hath too long rode over the heads of the nobles, and they are in league against him. I have no wish to offend; but though I lose my head for it, I now tell you that he but raised you to the throne to strengthen his own power; that there is a strong feeling in the people against him, and that ere long he

will assuredly fall. Respecting aught that may have befallen this man Saunders, on mine honour, I am innocent of the matter."

"I do believe you, my Lord," replied the Queen, "and am sorry to hear that any disaffection reigns amongst the nobles. The Duke is high and haughty, and I know not why he should lay a greater claim to power than another. As for myself I have nothing to say; it was by no choice of my own that I became what I am. This power was thrust upon me. Heaven knows that I sought it not: if the nobles raised me to the throne for any other motive than to protect the rights and the religion of the people, may God forgive them. I brought a honest heart, and a pure conscience to their cause, and whatever they may do, I will, if it be the pleasure of Heaven, retire as I came."

"I am a plain-spoken man, Lady," said Wardour, "and will not conceal the truth. Northumberland has but raised you to the

throne to serve his own ends. Many of the nobles who appeared so anxious that you should assume the crown, did it through a fear of the Duke ; they but wait until Mary has gathered her forces together, to shake off their new allegiance. And so sure as the sun will in a few more hours again light up the world, so certain is the power of Northumberland to be overthrown ere many days are over. Be advised then, by one who is your friend, and throw off this overwhelming dignity, which was but thrust upon you to serve others. Let the Princess Mary have that power which is her's by birth-right, and all shall yet go well. I know the goodness of your heart, am aware of those virtuous and holy motives, which have caused you to yield to their wishes. I have no wish, but for your peace and safety, and have vowed to serve you next to Heaven."

"I do not doubt thee," said the Queen, deeply moved ; "but I cannot of my own consent

throw aside the power which I have assumed ; God knows how unwillingly. I will not play the coward, at the first alarm of danger. What I have done, has arisen from no selfish motive ; but from a firm belief that I am serving Heaven. If I have erred, my heart has misled me ; the urgent necessity made the matter at last a duty. The will of Edward, — the pleadings of my parents, — the safety of my husband, — the wishes of the nobles, whether or not sincere, — and above all, the firmer establishing of our holy faith, overcame my firmest resolves : — and if I have done wrong, I can look only to God for forgiveness, for in His holy Presence did I vow to remain firm to the cause of the church, and the nation.”

“ These are motives for which an angel might be pardoned, Lady,” answered the young nobleman ; “ for no one stood by that dare to dissuade you. No one was honest enough to tell you that you were about to do wrong, not even

your husband ; no marvel that your own feelings at last yielded to affection, when there was no human help at hand to strengthen you. But had I been Dudley, I would have bid farewell to my relatives for ever, thrown aside all rank and station, and with my own hands earned you bread like the lowliest peasant, ere I would have sacrificed your happiness to their ambition. Pardon me, my Lady, if I have said too much. I can but love you now as my sister—I will die in defending you, and those who are dearer to you can do no more. I only wish to serve you, not as a Queen, for my own conscience has sworn its allegiance to Mary ; but as a brother. You are standing upon a perilous precipice ; oh ! retire before it is too late. The breach may yet be healed. I will fly to the Princess and —— alas !” added he, suddenly pausing. “I am a prisoner, and in the power of mine enemy.”

“Not so,” said the Queen, “although you

have vowed allegiance to another, and draw your sword against me, yet do I respect the honesty of your purpose too much to wish you a prisoner. You are free ! would to God that all my enemies dealt with me as openly as yourself. As for the past," added she, with a sigh, "it is beyond recall, the future is in the hands of Heaven, and I must abide its will."

"Nay ! call me not your enemy," replied the nobleman, "though I may not pay you that homage which is offered up by others, still my service shall not be the less sincere. I feel deeply the interest you have taken in me to-night, and though I value not my liberty, since it hath long been valueless ; yet will I accept of it, in the hopes of employing it for your safety. I would that matters stood otherwise than they are ; but regrets are useless."

"Farewell then," said the Queen, extending her hand, and turning her beautiful eyes to the floor, "I will but give the word to the

guards, to pass thee and thy companion out in safety, and trust that we shall meet again in happier times."

She turned her graceful form round, and was about to proceed to the door, when it was suddenly opened, and Northumberland entered the apartment.

For a moment the colour mounted the cheeks of the young Queen, as she confronted the Duke, as if ashamed of having been found in the presence of her former lover ; but conscious that she had done no wrong, she suddenly regained her composure, and turning to the intruder, said, "Your Grace hath been somewhat too severe with our loyal servant, considering the slight error he hath committed, and we have thought well to restore him to liberty."

Although the Queen assumed a firmness of manner while she spoke, as if to impress Northumberland with the resolution she had adopted, and which might not be gainsayed, still there

was a want of decision in the tones of her voice, a something too soft, that sounded like apology for what she had done ; it was not the bold intonation necessary for such an act.

“ Your Majesty will pardon me for opposing your wishes,” said the Duke, with an apparent coolness ! “ but other matters have been brought to light since my last interview, in which he is deeply implicated, and which I regret must, for the present, keep him prisoner.”

“ Must keep him prisoner !” exclaimed the lady, her fine eyes sparkling, for a moment, with more than their natural fire, while she laid a strong emphasis on the first word. “ Nay, my Lord Duke, we have heard all that you would urge against him, and will pledge our own honour for his innocence. And since our word has passed for his release, he *must* be free.”

“ Let him but clear himself of the crime laid to his charge,” said the Duke, with difficulty

smothering his rising anger, “ and I will be the first to lower the drawbridge, and cry God speed ; but until then, I must, for your own safety, though even in opposition to your wishes, keep him where he is. It is touching his interview with that drawer, some days ago, on which I would interrogate him ; and also respecting the absence of one Ninion Saunders, of whom I have all but proofs, that he has been purposely drowned, to prevent certain discoveries which he was about to make, reaching our ears.”

Lord Wardour cast on Northumberland a look of contempt and hatred, and stood in silence, with his arms folded, as if he disdained to reply.

“ Touching that matter,” said the Queen, “ we have already interrogated him, and are satisfied of his innocence ; since he hath pledged his honour that he knows nothing concerning the host you have named. Have you aught

further to urge, my Lord?—the night is growing late, and we would be gone.”

“The conversation with the drawer,” said Northumberland, impatiently; “what answereth he to that?”

“Nay, my Lord,” said the young Queen, now assuming a more determined tone, “this may not be. You are seeking for more than fair evidence; he shall not be called upon to answer every idle word he may have spoken in anger. Even the severest of our laws demands not that the vilest criminal should be made to accuse himself. If you have no more proof to urge, he is free. Nor will we retract our pledge.”

“If he passes from hence,” said the Duke, his passion now kindled, and laying his hand on his sword as he spoke; “it shall be over my lifeless body. Your Majesty is but young in office, or you would not deal thus with traitors.”

“Whom callest thou traitor, proud upstart?”

exclaimed Wardour, his blood rising as he unsheathed his sword, and stood face to face with the Duke. "But I will steel my sword on thy false heart," and he made a pass which Northumberland instantly parried. Both were excellent swordsmen, and although Wardour had the advantage in youth and strength, still the Duke's coolness and long practice, rendered him an equal match for his opponent; and had not the Queen thrown herself between them, before many blows had been interchanged on either side, it is doubtful which would have prevailed. As it was, however, they dropped their weapons mutually at her bidding, and both stood abashed before her, as she exclaimed—

"Is this your allegiance, my lord Duke? put up your weapon I charge you, ere we are compelled to try whose command will be the most readily obeyed in this place. Wardour, I thought you had set more store by your valour, than thus to display it in a brawl before a

lady. A guard here?" continued she, raising her voice, which was sweet even in anger. Northumberland's followers entered. "Let the Duke be conducted to his own apartment, and there remain until we demand his presence in the morning." The men hesitated. "Do my bidding instantly," said she, "or with my own hand I will awaken the bell, and ring such an alarm as shall startle every sleeper in the Tower. I will, before I sleep this night, know who is to be obeyed."

"Are you deaf, knaves?" said the Duke, resigning his sword to the chief of his own followers, for he thought that all might be lost if he proceeded further. "Let her Majesty's commands be obeyed."

The men thus rebuked, gathered around him with fear and trembling, then fell back again to allow him to pass, and with a ridiculous solemnity they all left the apartment. Before entering his own room, Northumberland again

took his sword, and charged his chief officer on peril of his life, to dog the steps of Lord Wardour and Gilbert, to a safe distance when they left the Tower, and again secure them until further orders, and on no account to allow them to escape beyond his reach, but sooner shoot them dead. Then closing the door, he summoned Lord Guilford, and gave vent to his wrath, determined to make his son king, and at every risk, centre the real power of royalty on himself.

“The course is now free,” said the Queen, “go where it best pleaseth thee. But in future be more guarded: these are troublous times, and there are those abroad who construe otherwise, when we mean rightly:—Gilbert is also free.”

“I came to offer my services to thee, lady,” said Lord Wardour, “not as my sovereign, for that title is another’s, but as to one whose virtues cannot be enhanced by titles, and whom adverse stars are now threatening with danger.

I cannot leave thee in the hands of those who have now power over thee. They but wait the hour to desert thee, and thou wilt then need a true friend ; I will remain thy prisoner until that hour comes."

"That must not be," replied the young Queen, "here thou art not safe, I dare not trust thee so near Northumberland. I have already been with thee too long. Begone, I entreat thee. We may yet meet again in happier times."

Wardour kissed the offered hand, and they parted, for the portcullis was instantly raised at the command of the Queen. His steps were, however, dogged by four of the Duke's followers, and when they had entered the house on London bridge, the men stationed themselves outside, but the keen eye of Gilbert Pots detected their movement.

The lady again regained her chamber, and throwing herself upon the couch, sighed deeply, for she felt herself unfit to grapple with the dif-

ficulties that surrounded her. "Amy," said she, in a sweet melancholy voice, "I have queened it for a day, and am weary. What I have done to-night, will be attributed to other motives by mine enemies. My husband hath but looked coldly upon me since I refused to make him king. Well, my girl! all will some day have an ending. God, in his own good time, will disperse the clouds of doubt that hang over us, and while He beareth so patiently with our follies, we must thencefrom learn to bear with one another."

Amy assisted in disrobing her, and before retiring to rest, she knelt down and offered up a fervent prayer to Heaven. Her heart was still unaffected by all the empty pomp of royalty.

CHAPTER IX.

The caterpillars of the commonwealth,
Which I have sworn to weed and pluck away.

We are at the stake
And bayed about with many enemies ;
And some that smile, have in their hearts I fear,
Millions of mischief.

SHAKSPEARE.

NORTHUMBERLAND, believing that Wardour was still within his reach, met the Queen next morning with a smile upon his countenance, as if nothing had occurred ; and matters went on as usual until the noon of another sweet summer's day had passed, and the golden sun was verging towards the westward steep of heaven, when Jane was seated after dinner, in royal state within the Tower. She seemed happier than she had before been since her accession to the throne ; her eye beamed again in all its

richest lustre, and her matchless mouth wore once more its native and winning smile. All, to her sight, seemed to be going on well; the government appeared secure, the army at her disposal, the fortresses in her power, and the revenue at her service; while the Princess Mary, shunned by the nobles of the realm, was buried in the solitudes of Norfolk. She was ignorant of all the treachery that surrounded her, she never once dreamed that amid those who were then smiling upon her, there lurked many a double-faced villain, who had plotted to overthrow her, that under those doublets of rich satin, slashed with silver and gold, there beat hearts black and base as hell; serpents that to the paradise of her peace, made their way, and oft bowed

“Their turret-crests, and sleek enamelled necks,
Fawning to lick the ground whereon she trod:”

and sought to drive from the Eden of happiness, another and a fairer Eve. Alas! the light that fell upon our picture is fast darkening; the

solemn eye of Truth is settling with a frown upon the gilded pages of history, and the gold grows dark as encrusted blood—a deep shadow veils the emblazonry. A consciousness that we are clothing serious truths, and horrible facts in the masquerade of Romance, has come over us; that we are dragging to light the hideous truths of history, and disinterring the villany which the grave has hidden for three hundred years, seems to stare us in the face. And are these then the mighty dead? Lepers which the spotless ermine covered, huge worms which crawled upon the earth, and made its inhabitants afraid, bugbears that frightened mankind, until no one had courage to lift up his heel and crush them, and trample them into the dust from which they sprung. No! let us hope that history is but an imaginary tale, that there is no truth in what it records; that we are but writing about a lady who lived in a far country, and was so beloved, that the inhabitants made her their Queen. How several evil spirits, en-

vious that a being should be found so perfect, assumed the shapes of men, and descended into that far country, and having found favour in the eyes of the lovely lady, persuaded her to send out her faithful followers, to quell some insurrection which they had purposely raised. And how, when all her friends were gone, they appeared before her in their real forms, divested her of all her honours and put her to death. That this happened many hundreds of years ago, was a forgotten tale of the "Thousand and One Nights," which we discovered in a worm-eaten manuscript, that we called the Lady Jane Grey; the evil spirits, Arundel, and Cecil; and so from this fiction worked up the story into its present form. Reader, fancy this little fable to be the ground-work of our tale, and, in mercy for the memory of those titled scoundrels, that all we have gathered from history is a lie. In charity do this, and we will again proceed; let us shut our eyes on this horrible land of truth, and go dreaming

along through the flowery valleys of fiction. Come, give us thine hand, and we will again resume our tale.

The sun shone as brightly upon the old City of London, as if there was not a care within its busy walls; yet its thousands of inhabitants were sweating, and groaning, laughing, sleeping, and taking their pleasure, as they do now; and some were dying, although the sun shone so beautifully. The artisan was labouring in his close cellar, and if he did lift up his head to look at some gay cavalier, who went prancing by on his noble steed, he soon resumed his labour again, and thought that they should both be equal in the grave. Old Stow thrust out his head from a little window, in Bishopsgate street, startled from his study by the sound of a trumpet; it was some great man going to the Tower, whose name the world would never have heard of, had not the old chronicler stepped back, and with a worn-out stump of a pen, given him immortality; then taking a draught

of water from a brown jug, and a crust of coarse bread to recruit his strength, he proceeded to embalm the memories of a score more such worthies. Poor old man ! he was a beggar ; yet how many live to boast, that their ancestors were mentioned by so needy a beadsman as John Stow, a man who had a license granted him to beg from door to door. Oh memory ! where wilt thou lead us ? How contemptible looks the great hall of history, when the folding doors are thrown open,—to what sorry rags do the drooping banners dwindle ! A few of the daring dead spring up and rise like giants in the dim perspective ; one of their broad breasts burying a thousand escutcheons, those tiny tinselings of chiselled greatness ; the very shadow of the iron pen which one huge statue holds, darkens a whole dynasty.

But the world will ever contain its different grades,—wealth and intellect will long struggle for the supremacy : in the end one or the other must prevail. But when we think that the

villanies we are unmasking have, in a great measure, been concealed for three centuries; that many of the actors escaped punishment; and that their memories have been be-licked and be-slavered, until we are compelled to hesitate before we can decide whether the praised or the praisers are the most contemptible,—we cannot write calmly. Some well-meaning people have concluded by pitying them, and feeling sorrow for their faults; but this is carrying human consideration too far. When men render themselves despicable by their wickedness, we ought not feel any commiseration for them. If we cloak over and soften down their guilt, we do wrong. No wise man, in painting the devil, would attempt to copy the head of Christ; or would throw, over the horrors of Hell, the beauty and brightness of Heaven. There is more hope of recovering a daring sinner, than a deep hypocrite:—one mocks in his heart, what the other very often reverences. What remorse should we feel in crushing with our

heel a venomous reptile, that was about to bite us? Do we act rightly, then, in leaving it to escape, when it dare not attack us, and permitting it to convey its poison to the more timid? Yet, in this world, men see their fellow-beings writhing under oppressions, which touch not them, and so pass on. We scarcely draw a line of distinction between the good and evil. The villain who possesses wealth, no one cares to call to account how he got it. We jog on in cold, heartless, unfeeling comfort; we live in easy misery; we growl and grumble,—yet sleep, eat, and drink. If one dies for want, we thank God that it was not at our door; if another becomes the victim to some deeper villain, and is hung, we are sorry he was no wiser. But these are out-of-the-way remarks, matters foreign to our story, and, instead of romance, our pen is drifting on through the sour channels of truth. And so we must ever blunder, “*per fas aut nefas.*”

At the table of the young Queen were seated the chief of the nobility of England, and friend

and traitor drank with each other from the same goblet. Their conversation was such as became their station; they talked of the last Mystery which had been performed; criticised the part of the monk who played Lot, and had got drunk for the purpose; while some there were who contended that the bed-scene ought to have been left out, and such, no doubt, had they lived in our own day, would have stood up for banishing the chamber scene in "Othello." More's translation of Erasmus's "Praise or Folly" was also discussed; nor was his own inimitable "Utopia" forgotten. Even the venerable Latimer condescended to quote several stanzas from the "Ship of Fools," and when he had done, Cranmer whispered in his ear that he had not forgotten to make use of it in his sermons. It was also agreed upon that Latimer should preach at Paul's Cross on the following Sabbath, to which the venerable old man gave immediate consent, also adding, "I shall tell the proud Londoners of their faults."

It is not our intention to tell all that was said at the table on that memorable day:—how Cecil was mocked about his “pig-broth,” and Audley prescribed alike to Lord and Lady, talking of purgatives, pills, and pigs, and growing eloquent on herbs and charms, full and wane of the moon: how gracious Arundel and Northumberland grew: what good things Amy whispered in the ear of her royal mistress; nor how the mirth increased with the wine: all this would but retard the progress of our story, and only fill our pages with needless dialogue.

In the midst of their revelry, the blast of a trumpet rang through the Tower, and put an instant stop to all their mirth. Those who held the goblets to their lips set them down untasted; eye wandered to eye, as if to seek an explanation; and when a page entered the room to announce that a messenger, bearing letters from the Princess Mary, waited without, the consternation increased. Looks were, however, exchanged between Arundel, Cecil, and a few

others, which showed that they were not unprepared for such tidings:

Northumberland was the first to break the silence, and craved permission of the Queen that the herald might be permitted to enter the room, adding, "Whatever tidings he may bring alike concern us all, and our cause needeth no secrecy."

The herald, a fine, tall, athletic man, sheathed in complete armour, entered the room with a firm step, and with his vizor down; and when entreated by one of the lords to remove his helmet, and pledge the Queen, he raised the lower part of the vizor just above his upper lip, and taking up the full goblet in his gauntleted hand, said, "Long life to Queen Mary!" then drained it to the dregs.

Northumberland, who had been busied in breaking the seals of the letter, had hitherto paid but little attention to the herald; but when he heard the pledge so boldly and clearly delivered, he sprang like a tiger upon his feet,

and exclaimed in a voice of thunder, "Throw the traitor into the moat!—What! sit ye here, my lords, to see your Queen bearded at her own board?" Not a nobleman stirred from his seat.

"Cowards, that ye all are!" continued the fiery Duke, glancing from face to face, "must I then strike him to the earth myself?"

"That title belongeth not to me, my lord Duke," exclaimed the Earl of Pembroke, rising, for he was heated with wine; "nor will I brook it from the proudest peer in this assembly. Therefore, I throw it back in thy teeth, and am ready to maintain what I have said on this spot." He made an attempt to draw his sword, and upset the goblet which stood before him,—then was thrust into his seat by Arundel.

The herald stood undaunted with his vizor down, and his hand upon his sword, like one who intended to sell his life dearly.

Meantime the Queen arose, and said, "Peace, my lords, and conduct not yourselves thus unseemly before our sister's messenger. If he

hath borne himself thus boldly in our presence, it is but as ye yourselves would have done on a like occasion. Remember, that it is with our sister that we have to treat, and not with her herald. Let Cecil read her letter aloud."

The letter was then read, and in it Mary expressed her surprise that she had not been formally acquainted with the death of King Edward. She also urged her claim to the crown, in no very measured terms, which, she said, belonged to her by right of birth, by the decision of parliament, and the will of her father.

Northumberland paused a moment, as if he expected some of the lords to reply; but, as no one arose, he again stood forth, and in a long speech denounced the claim of Mary. "Was she not," he concluded by asking, "proclaimed illegitimate by her father, and an act passed which rendered the marriage of her mother null and void? Have we not the will of King Edward, in favour of our sovereign

lady, Queen Jane, besides the voice of the whole Council? But above all, do not her religious principles exclude her for ever from the throne?"

A faint murmur of approbation rang through the room, when the Duke had done speaking, but it was not that hearty burst, which shows that men's souls are enlisted in a cause. It fell coldly upon the heart of Queen Jane, and she embraced the first opportunity to retire.

The herald was about to advocate the claim of the Princess Mary, and had already placed his hand upon his sword, and drawn off his gauntlet, which he was going to hurl down in defiance, but at a sign from Arundel he desisted, for he was not ignorant that many were there assembled who but waited an opportunity to declare for Mary.

A few of the leaders then retired, and from the dictation of Northumberland, an answer was written, in which her claim to the crown was denied. The divorce between Henry and Catherine was dwelt upon, the will of Edward,

and the decision of the Council; she was also recommended to be quiet, and the epistle concluded by informing her, that they would still be her Ladyship's friends, if she showed herself an obedient subject. Nearly all the nobles present were compelled to sign the document, not even Cecil was excepted, though he made many wry faces, and complained of the pain in his arm. However, he was right glad that he had not been forced to write the letter.

Northumberland, still jealous of those around him, (for when he again entered the room, he found the herald in conversation with Darcy and Huntington,) gave secret orders to his lieutenant, to way-lay him on his return, and take from him all the documents in his possession, saving the one which was addressed to Mary, and to which was affixed his own seal. And a party of horsemen were instantly dispatched from the Tower, and sent on before the herald, and his attendants. Cecil and Arundel contrived to give him letters to Mary

before he departed, and without even deigning to bow to the Duke, he passed over the draw-bridge, and joined his party, which consisted of five men, well mounted and well armed. They rode off to a neighbouring hostel to refresh themselves, for they had refused to accept the proffered hospitality of Northumberland. Before sunset they were again on their way to Suffolk, where the forces of Mary were now assembling.

CHAPTER X.

With the ready trick and fable,
Round we wander all the day;
And at night in barn or stable,
Hug our doxies on the hay.
Here's to budgets, bags, and wallets!
Here's to all the wandering train!
Here's our ragged brats and callets!
One and all cry out, Amen.

Burns' Jolly Beggars.

WE now return to Lord Wardour and Gilbert, whom we left ensconced in the old house in London Bridge, closely watched by the followers of Northumberland, and at a loss how to make their escape. Duskena evinced no sign of either of fear or astonishment, when told that a guard was stationed without, but coolly remarked, "There is no danger, if ye do but obey my bidding: I will furnish you with a disguise,

and ye must wait my coming at the barn near Waltham Cross. I will be with you early on the morrow ; but you must depart before the day breaks."

" But how," enquired Wardour, " shall we pass those fellows without, whom Northumberland sent to dog me ?"

" Easily," answered Duskena ; and calling to the two men whom we have before mentioned, she said, " Bring out the beggars' rags, and then put on the dresses which these two wear, and depart first ; they shall to Waltham, in the disguise of maunders."

" What !" said Wardour, eyeing the bundles of rags which were produced, " thou wouldst not, surely, desire me to put on this filthy attire ? Nay, better the stench of the dungeon, than the odour of these vile rags."

" They have graced the back of a nobleman ere now," answered Duskena, " and may peradventure save thine own life. Do my bid-

ding, for I tell thee it is time that thou wert in the presence of Queen Mary, if thou thinkest to render service to her, in whose safety thou takest so deep an interest."

Wardour obeyed, without asking another question, and, by the assistance of Gilbert, was soon dressed in the rags of a beggar. The drawer also assumed the same disguise, and arranged his tattered doublet and hose in the most primitive and beggar-like manner, which showed that he had before worn such a costume. The two men put on the dresses of Wardour and Gilbert, then stood as if waiting for further orders.

"When the City-watch passes the bridge," said Duskena, addressing the men, who had assumed the garments of Gilbert and Wardour, "step boldly out; the soldiers will not then dare to molest you: what they intend doing will not be ventured upon so publicly. You will, however, be followed; enter the priest's

house by Fleet Bridge, and there throw off your disguise, and then return—you will be safe.”

The men waited until the voices of the watchmen were heard without, and then stepped forth unmolested; they were pursued, as Duskena had foretold, and they entered the house of the priest, just as the soldiers were about to capture them.

Duskena conversed with Gilbert apart, before they set out on their journey: then bidding them farewell, she promised to meet them at the appointed place on the morrow.

Day broke, when they reached Islington, and it seemed as if the daylight brought to Lord Wardour, for the first time, a full consciousness of his appearance.

“By the mass, Gilbert,” said he, casting his eyes over his ragged costume, “I half believe that the old woman is a witch, or she never could have transformed me into so horrid a figure. Not a step further will I trudge in this

plight, but enter yonder tavern, until thou returnest from London, and bringest me a more becoming dress."

"That would not be wisely done," replied the drawer, "let us e'en play out the game. Thou art at least safe in this disguise, and without it, I know not how we should have escaped."

"But what maketh the matter worse," said Wardour, "in changing my dress, I forgot to take out my purse, and have not wherewith to procure a breakfast, or hire a horse."

"Marry, I am in the same plight," rejoined Gilbert, laughing, "and we are now downright beggars, indeed. So here goes to ask an alms of the first that passes."

"Thou dost not mean to beg in earnest," said Wardour, in astonishment, "if thou dost, here we part company."

"Do I not?" replied Gilbert, "thinkest thou that I could put on these rags without catching

an itch of my old calling? Marry, you might as well throw a bird in the air, and expect it to fall down without making an attempt to fly. No! I tell thee the fit is on me strong; so good my master, for the sake of blessed charity, throw one poor penny to a beggar, who hath neither home nor food, and the good Lord will bless you, and hearken to the prayer of your poor servant." And Gilbert assumed the drawling twang of the veriest beggar of the age, and threw himself into such a supplicating attitude as made Wardour laugh outright.

"Well!" said Wardour. "It is useless despairing; let us onward. I can but ask the first honest fellow I meet, for the loan of a few gold pieces, and tell him who I am."

"He is sure to believe you," answered Gilbert, with a look of sly waggery, "nay, you will not need to mention your name in such a respectable costume, he will know you at a glance."

“What, thinkest thou then, I shall really be taken for a beggar?” inquired Wardour. “By the cross I will strike the first knave to the earth, who dareth to call me such.”

“Then thou wilt be put in the stocks, for a knave and a thief,” said Gilbert; “whipped from tything to tything, and then sent to some prison. Thou hadst much better play the ar-rant-downright beggar, and be content to ask for one poor penny for the sake of charity, or I know not how we shall break our fast.”

“Nay,” said Wardour, “I would sooner draw the pistols, I have secreted under this ragged gaberdine, and present them to the first knave, who refused me the loan I asked.”

“That is but begging on a bolder scale,” replied Gilbert, “and leads to that highest of elevations, the gallows. That is the way crowns and kingdoms are begged, when a few thousands of vagrants are in one mind. But I fear we are not strong enough to take the highroad

by force. But here is a tavern. I have known the host before to-day, and we shall not fail in procuring the best his house affordeth."

Gilbert entered accordingly, and succeeded to his heart's content: for the host was one of the old faith, and not unknown to Duskena, whose very name seemed to command attention, wherever it was breathed. After a hearty meal, the host offered to provide them with horses; but to this Gilbert wisely objected, adding, "Put a beggar on horseback, and he will ride to the devil; we must speed on as we best can."

They set off on their journey again, and passed the horsemen who were on their way to the Tower, and with whose business our readers are already acquainted. Wardour knew the herald at a glance. Towards night they were overtaken by Duskena, who in spite of her age, had contrived to mount on horseback, while a sturdy

fellow, in the costume of a beggar, walked at her side.

They reached the barn, near Waltham Cross, in safety ; but Wardour refused to enter, giving the preference to a road-side inn, which stood near at hand ; for Gilbert had contrived to possess himself of money at their last baiting place.

As evening approached the soldiers which Northumberland had sent out to waylay the herald and his followers, rode past, and drew up in a bye lane near the cross. One of them, however, who was secretly in the pay of Arundel, contrived to lag behind, and beckoning to Gilbert, whom he well knew, bade him apprise Duskena of the stratagem they were sent upon. Gilbert at once communicated the business to Wardour, and as the young nobleman had no doubt but that there might be some correspondence which would endanger the life of his father, if it met the eye of Northumberland, he at once determined to share in the struggle.

The horsemen halted, and calling for a cup of wine, waited until Duskena appeared, and they remained several moments in conversation together. The plot was soon arranged, for the old woman had beggars enow at her beck, to disarm both parties.

Gilbert then apprised Lord Wardour that it would be necessary for him to enter the barn, adding, "Now you shall see how we beggars live. But first I must give the pass-word to their king, or we shall find it difficult to enter."

So saying, he led the way through a gap in the hedge by the road-side, and approaching the barn, called to a tall ragged knave who was about to enter, and said, "I have brought an old maunder of mine, who is a stranger to your company."

"Who is he?" said the king of the beggars, eyeing Wardour suspiciously; "He hath more the look of a gentry-cuffin,¹ than a clapper-

¹ A gentleman.

dudgeon.² And by my salamon,³ I swear that if thou hast brought us a cranke⁴ instead of a true maunder,⁵ thou shalt be lambed.”⁶

“Gramercy for thy threats,” said Gilbert, “he is as ben a cove,⁷ as ever milled a ken,⁸ nipped a bung,⁹ or cloyed a lag of duds.¹⁰ A finer lad never prigged a prancer,¹¹ stripped a ruffman,¹² or bilked a queer-cuffin¹³. What the devil thinkest thou I would bring thee aught that was not skipper-born,¹⁴ and strum-mel-nursed?¹⁵ If thou wouldst know more, ask my grandame, it is her will that he should come amongst us, so let us have nought but ben whids.”¹⁶

“Why didst thou not tell me this at first?” said the beggar, “when thou knowest I dare as well face the devil, as oppose her wishes?”

² Beggar-born.

³ Beggars' oath.

⁴ An impostor.

⁵ Beggar.

⁶ Beaten.

⁷ A good fellow.

⁸ Robbed a house.

⁹ Cut a purse.

¹⁰ Stole a basket of clothes.

¹¹ Stole a horse.

¹² Hedge.

¹³ A Magistrate.

¹⁴ Born in a barn.

¹⁵ Nursed in the straw.

¹⁶ Good words.

Bring him in, and fill the gage¹ with rom-bouse,² that we may drink to him."

"What pedlar's French hast thou been bandying with yonder varlet?" said Lord Wardour, when the beggar had entered the barn; "Thou hast not assuredly told him who I am?"

"Leave me alone for that," answered Gilbert, "he takes thee for as very a beggar as ever danced in rags, tumbled a dell in a dark-man³ on the strummel, milled ruff-peck,⁴ or emptied a wine cup."

"Cease thy nonsense, and answer me in such language as I can understand," said Wardour, not at all ambitious to be numbered amongst the ragged fraternity. "What will it avail our scheme, if I am only to pass as one of these thieving varlets, and base impostors? Why didst thou not sound him at once on the business, and see if he would turn out his lazy vaga-

¹ A quart-pot.

² Wine.

³ The night.

⁴ Stole bacon.

bonds, when the horsemen meet. Surely the well-fed knaves can fight?"

"Leave that to the old woman," answered Gilbert: "I saw her beckon to him when she entered the barn: and trust me, they have ere this understood each other. Thou wilt see the lame run, and the blind open their eyes when the signal is given, and many a knave who hath his arms tied up, will use them as freely as a thrasher, in the hour of need."

"Well, we must trust to them," said Lord Wardour, "since there is no other help at hand. But be sure that thou keep thine eye fixed on the horseman who is most anxious to escape, for on him will be found the letters. Have at thine elbow five or six of the sturdiest beggars, and on no account let the documents escape us. I may yet work much with them."

Gilbert promised, and they entered the ruinous barn, which was filled with smoke, and beggars of all grades. Wardour stood for a few

moments at the entrance, and gazed with astonishment upon the scene before him. There was the cripple unbandaging his maimed limb, and shaking it hale and sound at his brother impostor, who was waving a drinking-cup with the very arm which he had lost the use of, by a damp in the mines. The blind man was ogling his doxy with a pair of clear black eyes, in a corner on the straw ; and the dumb was stunning the ears of the deaf, with a long account of the good success he had met with. Another was washing off his grievous wound ; beside him was one practising the ague ; a third was waving his head, and imitating St. Vitus's dance. A huge man with a ten years' dropsy, was unrolling the coil of hay-bands from his body ; a man and woman were practising a psalm tune as they sat together on the straw, and when she missed the long effective drawl, he corrected her by oaths and blows. An old man was teaching a young hand how to counter-

feit the loss of the tongue, and they sat foot to foot, making mouths at each other. Two out-and-out rascals had laid a wager of a pot of wine, which could best fall into a fit, and one was demurring to pay because the other had secreted a piece of soap in his mouth to make it foam. Three or four, and they of the oldest, were studying a new vocabulary for begging, and were in high dispute, whether "Of your mercy, generous Christian!" or "The good Lord bless you!" was the best beginning. One rascal held a Bible, which he had stolen, and was ransacking it for a new set of phrases.

It was indeed a picture of the world on a small scale; a committee met to count their gains, and issue out new plans to plunder the unwary; a joint-stock company, which, like a many more, live upon their wits; the dressing-room of the world's impostors; vice and robbery without their masks; the great game of life practised and played openly; a huge city

sending out its delegates from every ward, to consult each other how to live; the rending, tearing, cleaving, and devouring of every-day-life, practised civilly, and as a relaxation. In a word, all the cant and humbug of this busy world, played on a confined stage.

There were two beggars going to logger-heads about the dividing of the linen they had stolen from a hedge, both claiming an odd sheet, which they at last tore asunder, and so ended the dispute. Farther on, a couple of knaves were quarrelling, because one had not entered the hen-roost with his fellow; the other contended that keeping watch was equivalent to taking the booty, and in the end they arranged the matter. Two others were devising the best means of returning a horse they had stolen, and for which the owner had offered a goodly reward, far more than they had hopes of selling it for. An old woman was teaching her daughter how to tell fortunes, and advising her

to give a dark man to a fair woman, and *vice versa*, and never to threaten a nursery maid with too many children; while two strong villains on the adjoining sheaf of straw were arguing on the surest means of disguising the looks of horses, and explaining the whole art of making white legs, stars, &c.

Duskena sat apart from the rest, and was in close conversation with the king of this motley group, and from the glances, which from time to time they cast towards the door, Lord Wardour felt assured that their conversation had some reference to himself.

“While we are at Rome we must do as Rome does,” said Gilbert, approaching him. “Come, I have cajoled an old woman out of her seat, and bargained for all the food which another knave hath stolen out of a squire’s pantry. Let us refresh ourselves before the work commences; we know not when we may have time to eat again.”

“What a knave thou art,” said Wardour, “to think that I will partake of thy stolen food; knowest thou not that the receiver is as bad as the thief?”

“Nay,” said Gilbert, “if thou never dinest abroad, until thou art satisfied that the food is honestly come by, thou art likely to keep a long lent. How trowest thou the lord’s table would be furnished, unless he wrung it from the jaws of his serfs? Thinkest thou that the land-holder pauses before he eats, to consider whether his high rents have left his tenants the means of procuring a dinner? or that the lawyer eats the worse because he has ruined his client? or that the judge loseth his appetite, through having condemned a man to the gallows? Come along, my lord, a truly honest man must starve in this world; why should we be better than our neighbours, or have to pick the bones which another knave has licked? let us carve at this great round, the world, there is meat enough

on it for us all. It is but kicking the stool from under the greatest scoundrel at the board, and sitting like honest men, as the times go, in his seat. Come, we must feed as well as fight, and I have paid a fair sum for our provisions."

Although the drawer's arguments did not exactly tally with Lord Wardour's notions of right and wrong, still his appetite put in a strong claim, and self is a great modifier of justice; a powerful settler of qualms, and consciences, hath he been in most ages, and so he remaineth to this day—the natural child which few have the strength to disown. He followed Gilbert to the upper end of the immense barn, giving quite a grace to the rags he wore, as he moved along, and arresting the glance of many a fair beggar-girl as he passed.

Gilbert had set out the repast upon a clean table-cloth, which but the day before had been stolen from a hedge, and as the food was

flanked by a huge tombard of wine, (a leathern vessel which looked like a boot with the foot cut off) they both set to, and made a hearty meal, maugre the way in which it came. Nor did Lord Wardour find his appetite a jot weakened as he attacked the powdered beef, and venison pasty, both of which he pronounced most excellent. The wine, too, was first-rate, for it had been stolen from the cellar of a Bishop.

“Wilt thou take me for thy wife?” said a handsome young beggar-girl, approaching Wardour, while he was eating. “I have lived a dell amongst them above a week, and my mother says that I must find a husband to-morrow, or the upright-man will claim me, and I cannot abide his look, he hath so grisly a beard. There is a dead prancer in the next field, and the Patrico is now amongst us.”

“I will tell thee to-morrow,” said Wardour, keeping up the character he had assumed;

“and if I have thee not then, what sayest thou to my companion?”

“Marry, an’ he were well enough,” answered the girl, surveying Gilbert from head to foot. “But I would choose you of the twain. I get many a tib-of-the-buttery,¹ margery-prater,² quacking-cheat,³ and skew of rom-bose,⁴ with telling fortunes, and will bring them all to you untouched, an’ you will marry me. I am not a wild dell.”

“Come to me on the morrow,” said Wardour, with much ado, smothering his impatience, “then thou shalt have mine answer.”

“Will you not lay on the next strummel to us?” continued the fair beggar; “then, in dark-man, we can talk over the matter before we couch-a-hogshead. You will see the red and blue cloaks skewered up on either siden.”

“I will not forget the colours,” said Wardour.

¹ A goose. ² A hen. ³ A duck. ⁴ Cup of wine.

“Then I shall toure (look out),” said the girl, and departed to join her mother, and receive another lesson in fortune-telling.

“What did the gipsy mean by a dead prancer and a patrico?” enquired the noble beggar of his companion; “do they then marry in this outlandish form?”

“Their patrico, or pater-cove,” answered Gilbert, “is their priest; every tree and hedge is his church; every sturdy beggar his parishioner. Think not that we are without our divinity. There is the skeleton of a horse without, which is the high altar for all beggars’ marriages hereabout. One standeth on each side; and when the patrico bids them live together till death do them part, they shake hands across the dead prancer, and so the marriage ceremony is ended. You never hear of divorces and law-suits amongst beggars; they are as free the next moment as two birds. They need no notary to draw up articles of

settlement. Your beggars are your only free-men. See, yonder is a woman feeding her bantling with pig-broth : it was but born the other night ; to-morrow or next day she will be on the pad, and carrying it on her back, go maundering through the villages.”

“ And what meant the gipsy,” continued Wardour, “ by coming at darkman, and before couching-a-hogshead — talking over the matter?”

“ Marry ! her meaning was plain enough,” continued Gilbert ; “ she meant that you should come at night, and occupy the next straw, and before going to sleep, talk over the marriage. They say it was said ‘ between cloaks ;’ that is, each division or sleeping place ; and capital things are those rents in old cloaks to court through. Some of them are tender enough to poke your whole head through. Thou shalt see me court her to-night, I promise thee, an’ we have leisure, and thou wilt

hear how the old hag, her mother, will stand up for her share of whatever we may beg or steal. I have shook fists across the prancer a dozen times; the man who uncoiled himself from the dropsy hath my first wife; he who is unbinding his knee hath, I see, taken up with my second; we fell out, and parted the first day. My third stole a child, and I have never set eyes on her since. The last time I saw my fourth she was at St. Alban's, in the stocks. I had but just time to nod, and so passed on; five, six, and seven, are, I dare say, somewhere, scouring the queer cramp-ring, that is, in prison, bolted and shackled. I will marry this wench myself, an' thou sayest not nay in a few seconds: she will just make up the baker's dozen."

But their conversation was instantly cut short, by the King of the Beggars springing up, and exclaiming, in a voice of thunder, "Up from strummel and skipper, and toure on the pad, in the shaking of a staff, for we must on

our stumps, and use our fables, ere we couch-a-hogshead, though we trine for it. A golden piece to him who possesses himself of the letters ! Seek in steel-cap and corslet, but wait until I cry the onset, behind the hedge ; then ring a peel on every mailed coat, with your beggars' staffs, and if you win, we will have a merry night. Quick, there is no time to lose."

Every beggar sprang up in an instant,—halt, lame, and blind, were all on the alert, and Wardour and Gilbert were the first to take their station behind the hedge, for the horsemen had apprised them that the attack would commence at the Cross. There lurked three-score as sturdy varlets in readiness for the signal as ever cut a purse, stripped a hedge, or knocked out the brains of a solitary traveller. At length the sound of the approaching horsemen was heard, and they all waited as silent as death ; Wardour and Gilbert each with a pistol ready cocked in their hands.

CHAPTER XI.

And now we part—thou as thy fate doth force thee,
I go where duty calls. But love and war
Are strangely mixed amid these troublous times :
This leads to glory, that to hopeless love,
And both will take us to the same at last,
For all these several ways must end in death.

The Scarlet Woman.

EVENING had already thrown its deep shadow over the landscape, and given to the hedge a darker look, than that which it had naturally wore, although now in its full foliage, thus forming a safe screen for the beggars ; all of whom were ready in ambush. At length the tramping of horses was heard in the distance, and as they drew nearer, there came on the air that ringing sound, and jingle of weapons against mail, which to Wardour's experienced ear, told that they were armed horsemen that

approached. As they ascended the eminence at a brisk trot, and were within pistol-shot of the ancient cross, Northumberland's soldiers rushed from their hiding place at full gallop, with lance in rest, and that so unexpectedly, that three of the Herald's followers were borne at once to the earth. Not so, however, with their leader; for although the lance directed at him, was well aimed, and splintered fairly on his corslet, still he kept his saddle, and taking a cool aim at his assailant, who wore the open-fronted helmet, he discharged his pistol, and shot him through the head. In another instant his sword was drawn; it glittered a moment as it parried a blow, and crossed the blade of an opponent, then uplifted like lightning, bit sheer through the vent-brace of his adversary's arm, and so disabled another of Northumberland's party. But two of the six sent out by the Duke, still kept their saddles, and it was evident to Wardour they would stand but a sorry

chance, before a man so well armed, and well skilled in the use of his weapon as the herald ; so without waiting for the signal of the King of the beggars, he sprang at once over the hedge, and was instantly followed by Gilbert ; nor were the beggars long behind them. Wardour discharged his pistol at one of the dismounted soldiers, but without effect, and as the man had lost his helmet in the affray, he struck him such a blow on the head, with the butt-end, as brought him to the earth, then throwing the weapon away, he hastily snatched up a sword, and boldly confronted the herald. The man in armour rose in the stirrups, and with his sword uplifted, was about to deal Wardour such a stroke as would have cloven him in two, when Gilbert, who had snatched up a beggar's staff, struck the warrior with both hands, on the gauntlet, and made him relinquish his grasp. A nimble beggar instantly sprung up behind him, and pinioned his arms, and he soon came

rolling to the ground. Meantime the remainder of the ragged crew so well plied their staves as to take captive all who were unhorsed; and as for the four who had had the good fortune to keep their saddles, they fled in different directions, as if the foul fiend had been at their heels. They were followed to some distance by a number of beggars, for as yet it was uncertain who was the bearer of the documents, for which so great a reward was offered. The rest remained behind, unbuckling helm, and breast-piece, and busied in the search.

The herald still lay prostrate, where he fell at some distance from the rest of the party, and only Wardour and Gilbert were beside him.

“Knave! mean ye to murder me in cold-blood?” said the warrior, attempting but in vain to rise, for Wardour had his knee firmly planted on his breast, and Gilbert stood over him with his uplifted staff.

“We mean thee no harm,” said Wardour,

“deliver the letters thou wert charged with from the Tower, and thou shalt go free.”

“I will first deliver up my life,” replied the man, sternly, “take my gold an’ ye will.”

“Loose the fastening of his corslet,” said Wardour—“nay, an’ thou resistest, we will call half a dozen fellows, who will handle thee more roughly than ourselves, I want nought from thee but the packet.”

With much ado the breast-piece was unloosed, and beneath the under-dress were found the letters. “This one was given thee by Northumberland, for the Princess Mary,” said Wardour, holding up the largest at a guess.

“It was,” answered the herald, “what of it?”

“Nothing,” replied Wardour, “saving that it toucheth upon matters which concern me not, and I return it thee. Carry it to its destination, with what speed thou canst.”

“Thou art no beggar,” said the herald, now rising; “what wouldst thou with the letter

thou hast in keeping? Art thou so fond of blood, or so needy, that thou wouldst betray those who wrote them, to Northumberland?"

"Neither," replied Wardour, "I would do a good deed with them. Speed, lest thou fallest into the hands of those over whom I have no power. Thy horse is still waiting beside the cross."

"My throat has been at the mercy of thy dagger," said the herald, "and I should have taken thy life, had it not been for this knave's staff; I would fain know more of thee ere we part. Wilt thou go with me in good fellowship, and serve the Princess? On the word of a true knight, I will say no say of what hath passed between us."

"It may not be," replied Wardour, "though I know no one under whose banner I would sooner draw blade, than so renowned a knight's as Sir Edward Hastings."

"Ah! am I then discovered?" exclaimed the knight, in astonishment.

“Thy deeds made thee known, ere the fastenings of thine helmet were unloosed,” said the young nobleman.

“By the mass! and had I not been blind as a mole,” said the knight, “I might have known that no beggar possessed thews and sinews strong enough to screw me to the earth like a helpless babe, as thou hast done, and but few of noble blood, saving Henry Wardour.” He held out his hand as he spoke, and they retired to converse apart, for they had before been companions in arms.

Whatever the reasons might be that Wardour produced for his strange conduct, they were such as satisfied the knight that matters stood far better than if the documents had fallen into the hands of Northumberland’s followers: and, faithful as he was to the Princess Mary, he pledged himself hand and glove to conceal the real affair; and after Wardour had consulted a moment with the king of the beggars, his

attendants, who, with the exception of one that was slightly wounded, had been more frightened than hurt, were permitted to depart. The soldier who had been shot was speedily buried by the beggars, and, saving the dint of hoof-marks around the cross, nought remained to tell of the affray, for the marks of blood were soon obliterated.

So busy had the vagrants been in pursuing the horsemen that fled, and ransacking those who had been dismounted, that they had not observed the scene we have attempted to describe: and now that the field was cleared, a general murmur ran through the ragged assembly, all complaining that they had endangered their bones for nothing.

“And whatever did we get from these empty-fobbed knaves but hard words and blows?” said a downright beggar, binding his arm, which had received a slight sabre-cut.

“Marry, an’ thou needst not grumble,” said

another knave, "for those who labour to keep them in food and finery fare no better. Surely, we, who share all things without payment, may take a few blows when they are bestowed upon us, and be grateful for them."

"But I like not your forced charity," replied the other. "True, I banged back my alms in return, and made the knave's corslet ring, as a tinker does a pan. But this wound will be of service; I have caught many a one in the wars I was never engaged in, and this will but be the making of many an old tale come true at last."

So saying, he again entered the barn, and was followed by his ragged brethren, who began to think it high time to shift their quarters, lest the deed they had done, and their "whereabout," should be prated of.

While Wardour stood beside the cross in the dusk of the evening, deeply meditating on what he had done, and revolving in his own mind the circumstances of the last few hours, he was

suddenly touched on the arm. In an instant he uplifted the sword on which he was leaning, and which had belonged to one of the Duke's emissaries, but as suddenly lowered it again, for it was Duskena that stood beside him.

"Have they escaped safely?" enquired the old woman.

"Who?" said Wardour. "Thou seest they have all escaped but one, and his troubles are at an end."

"Who?" said Duskena, in her shrillest tone, "who but the loyal followers of Mary? Have they borne off the letters to the Queen?"

"The letter from the Council is safe," said Wardour. "How camest thou to interest thyself in the matter?"

"Not for the love of saving blood," answered the hag, "but I foresaw that this would happen. Thy father and Cecil are yet but children in their cunning: none but fools would have entrusted their secrets with such a mes-

senger. It was a trick of Harry the Eighth to waylay his own couriers, and Northumberland is an old dog at such a chase.—But what dost thou intend doing now? I have procured thee a becoming dress. Now thou art safe, hasten to join the forces which are hourly flocking to the aid of Mary. If thou wouldst save this woman, whom they call Queen, be the first to enter the Tower, under the banner of the Princess. Trust me, deeds will weigh heavier than supplication in these dangerous times. It is not to him who can speak softest, and lower his bonnet to his knee, that honours will yet be given. A strong arm, a sharp sword, and a rough speech, will be the best recommendation. Knaves and cowards climb not during danger. A few more days, at farthest, and Queen Mary will need no such aids. Begone! ere it is too late.”

“I must to the Tower once again,” said Wardour, “then I will do as thou desirest me.”

“To the Tower!” said Duskena, in surprise; “what wouldst thou do there? Remember, I have once rescued thee from the jaws of the wolf; tempt him not a second time. The house was beset in which those who wore the disguises sheltered; and, ere this, I fear, the poor priest whom they captured has shrieked and groaned on the rack. All this have I done to serve thee! If thou courtest death, the field is before thee; look out thy place. A word from my lips to Queen Mary can make thee her leader; if thou wilt fall, let it be with glory. A Princess, helpless, and defenceless,—one against whom so powerful a leader as Northumberland is leagued,—who is divested of her crown by a base conspiracy, has surely enough of chivalry in her cause to kindle thee. But why do I talk thus, who have but raised this opposition to crush it,—who have but laboured in plots, like a serf in the field, to get my revenge an appetite? Wilt thou go, ere it is too late?”

“ I cannot draw my sword against her I have loved,” said Wardour, casting a melancholy glance upon the earth : “ if I cannot save her, I will die in her defence.”

“ Thou talkest like one of the foolish,” answered the stern old hag. “ Pluck up thy heart, and forget her ! Why shouldst thou peril thyself for that which is another’s ? or again endanger thy safety by rushing headlong into the stronghold of thine enemy ?”

“ Is it not enough that she is surrounded by traitors on every hand,” replied Wardour, “and hath need of one honest heart to serve her ? Was it of her own choice that she was raised to this dangerous eminence ? didst not thou thyself work upon Northumberland’s weakness to gratify thine own revenge ? And now thou wouldst leave the innocent to perish for the guilty ! I will be guided by thee no longer ; for danger and death dog thine every footstep : thou lovest nothing but vengeance ; thou hast

stifled every feeling of pity ; and, stand or fall, I will no longer be in communion with thee."

"As I am, such hath suffering made me," said Duskena, without evincing a sign of anger. "I was once innocent ; those whom I had not power to withstand made me guilty : was once virtuous, and looked upon greatness as allied to goodness ; trusted myself without suspicion, and was made vicious. My breast was once full of pity and tenderness ; but cruelty came, and struck upon it with a cold iron hand, and so benumbed and hardened me, that I could no longer feel. I once loved as a woman and a mother can only love : they tore from me all my affections were centered upon, and left me only themselves to hate. For years my heart seemed cased in lead, until the flames of vengeance melted the cold stupor, and my hatred became hotter than a thrice-heated furnace, and burnt up all my tears. Pity could bring me no comfort now : tears would be like rain showered

upon cold steel, which wets but pierces not: no one can sympathise with me, for none can feel as I have felt. My heart was once a fair habitation; but they rested not until they had rooted out its little heaven, and made it such a dwelling of evil, that even remorse fled. If I feel aught now but revenge, it comes on me like a forgotten dream, — a something cold and indistinct, which I cannot call fully before me; an ominous brightness in a black and dreary sky, that shines but cheers not, and, when seen, but tells of future terrors. But go thy way; thou wert one of the only bright spots that my dark nature had not blackened over;—leave me, and I will shut myself up in the night of my existence; for, when thou and Gilbert art gone, there will be nought left to torture me back with the remembrance that I ever loved aught human. Leave me, and I will work out my bloody task of vengeance, mutter my last curse, and die!" The old hag ceased, and resting her

head upon her withered hands, stood leaning on her staff in silence.

“ Alas ! what can I do for thee ? ” said Wardour, deeply moved ; “ thou dost but deceive thyself ; thy heart is not yet so hardened but that it can feel, and there is ONE above, who is ever ready to hearken to the cry of the vilest sinner. But I must leave thee : I would that thou didst but know her whom I am so anxious to serve ; she would call back thy nature, and thou wouldst again love the human race.”

“ I will go with thee,” said the old woman, raising herself suddenly, “ and see this miracle thou makest so much boast of. Peradventure my presence may yet be of some service to thyself, much as thou hast cause to despise me. But I cannot journey until the morrow.”

“ I will tarry thy time,” said Wardour, “ an’ it pleaseth thee, though the business I am upon needeth speed.”

“ Nay, then begone,” exclaimed the old wo-

man, "I will be with thee when I am least expected ; if thou art hard bestead in the meantime, thou knowest the symbol ; send it to the house on the bridge. Gilbert will restore to thee thy garments."

So saying, Duskena departed to her hiding place, and Wardour retired into a shed adjoining the barn, to divest himself of his beggar's rags, and make ready for his return to London ; to which place we must again shift our scene, and for a short space swerve from the interest of our story, to portray a Sunday of the olden time.

CHAPTER XII.

One man except, the only son of light
In a dark age, against examples good,
Against allurements, custom, and a world
Offended, fearless of reproach and scorn,
Or violence, he of their wicked ways
Shall them admonish.

MILTON.

SUNDAY in London, three hundred years ago, had a very different look to the Sabbath of the present day. As early as six in the morning, and often before, the bells were heard ringing from the different steeples of the old City, to summon its inhabitants to the morning service. Those whom the old poet, Herrick, at a later period called "Sweet slug-a-beds," were then early risers, and with their quaintly-bound Prayer-books partially seen in the pouch at

their belts, went tripping along the half-paved streets of the city, to chaunt a matin, and offer up a prayer before breakfast. Many a sweet voice was ringing through the fretted aisles of the old churches ere the sun had risen an hour ; and albeit their anthems terminated with such rhymes as “ grasshopper ” and “ caterpillar,” and many another plain old word, which the venerable Sternhold and Hopkins had ventured to insert into their new version of the Psalter; still they “discoursed most eloquent music.” Pride there was then, even as there is now ; but oh ! there was more real piety, and less pretence. Religion was then a matter of conscience ; men put it not on and off as they do their garments. It consisted less in outward show, and more in the heart : they went not to the house of God as a mere matter of form in those days.

Still there was many a laughing-eyed lass that stepped lightly before her pains-taking old

father to church, whose thoughts were more engaged with the effects which the rich clocks of her hose, and her well-turned ankle would produce upon some handsome apprentice who stood eyeing her askance, than on her prayers. Nor was there any lack of youths, who, with their velvet bonnets placed jauntily aside, their cloaks hung to an hair-breadth, and their trunk-hose stuffed to within an eighth of the approved fashion, ogled the fair daughters of the citizens from every angle of the streets. The old men, too, had a religious look; there was something venerable in the appearance of their bushy beards and velvet doublets, as they stepped along to the measured tolling of the bells; their servants plodding behind, and hugging huge prayer-books, printed in the broad black letters of Copeland, Tottel, or Wyer, and such as the eyes of an antiquary would now gloat over. Nor were there wanting

a few staunch old Protestants, who had the massive folio Bible, translated by Miles Coverdale, borne before them, with as much pride as if it had been a crown. Hundreds threaded their way from many an ancient street to St. Paul's Church, like streams descending from the hills, that narrow their circuit in the valley, and all at last mingle with the broad river. Many a one paused in the ancient porch to turn over the leaves of the huge Bible which was chained to a reading-desk ; nor did they hesitate to rub their fingers on their best doublets, lest any particle of dust might have settled upon them in passing the streets, and stain the sacred volume. Fine models for the heads of Saints would the countenances of many of those early reformers have furnished, as they gazed upon the holy pages, or with eyes turned upward, seemed waiting for the light of Heaven to illumine their thoughts,

and guide their understanding aright. Here and there might one or two be seen standing apart, and discussing the meaning of some holy text, or waiting until another had left the chained volume, that they might again appeal to its pages. So was the Church of Rome undermined, until it shook to the very centre, and in an after-day, a new edifice was raised on the ashes of martyrs, which has stood the thunder of three centuries, and which a thousand unseen levers are at this hour at work to overthrow. The foundations were laid in blood and fire, and by such means only can they be razed, unless the holy dust on which they were built is cold. But there is One who in the end guideth all things aright.

Passing by the early morning service, and the prayers which were offered up for Queen Jane by Ridley, we must turn our attention to the forenoon sermon, which was preached

at St. Paul's Cross by the venerable Latimer. Nine o'clock was the appointed hour for the old man to ascend the pulpit, and long before that time, a dense mob had gathered around the ancient cross, from which Papist and Protestant had in turn launched forth their thunder, to kindle the faggot at which the martyr was consumed, and to spread the light of the gospel of Heaven.

But passing by his fervid and eloquent prayer, together with the opening of his discourse, the anathemas he launched against the Popish religion, and the reasons he urged for keeping Mary from the crown, we must come to that part of his sermon, in which, according to promise, he so boldly lashed the vices of the age. Warmed with the subject, he proceeded fearlessly, and disregarding the knit brows of the haughty gallants around him, kept his eyes fixed on some one whose dress

was the most showy, and having censured pride generally, thus proceeded with his personal and piercing remarks.—“Marry, I tell you,” said he, his venerable countenance kindling as he spoke, “that there are many who would give a broad Harry in gold for a feather to stick in their bonnets like a cock’s tail, that would not give a grey groat to one of Christ’s apostles were he starving. Pride is a plaything which the devil hath thrown in amongst you ; wist ye why he did it?—that ye might sport with it as the silly fish doth with the bait, until ye are caught. Ye are dallying with the rope that will hang ye, — ye are handy-dany with the evil one himself. Trow ye who it is that bloweth up your trunk-hose, until they are round as bullocks ? — hark ye, it is the devil : he strippeth off his skin to furnish you with minever, and converteth his yellow brimstone into chains of gold : but he will melt the links one day under

your nose. I come to speak plain to you ; he who would break a bar of iron, striketh it not with a feather. I would have my words fall on your hearts like the hammer of a swarthy smith, who spits on his buck-horn fist before he strikes. Why are your garments cut and slashed into so many divers and sundry forms ? What man buildeth himself a house to shelter in and keep him warm, and when he hath done it, picketh an hundred rents through the walls ? Why ye might be doddy-polls hody-pecks—ye hocks !—ye are brainsick !—ye spit against the wind, and it bloweth back into your eyes. There is a book written by one Geoffrey Chaucer, which, although it containeth many uncleanly sayings, hath nevertheless much in it that ye might read and be benefited thereby. Wot ye what he sayeth of superfluitie of apparel wearing ? I will tell you, that ye may know what hody-hocks walked the earth above

an hundred years ago. First he saith, superfluitie of clothing maketh it dear, to the harm of the people. And trow ye what the people would do if one man bought up all the corn and kept it locked up with bolt and bar, when they were starving?—why they would set fire to him and his heaped-up grain; so he who weareth more on his back than he needeth, doth but rob the veriest beggar. Look at the cost of your embroidery, the indenting, the disguising, barring, slashing, paling, winding, bending, the waste of cloth in vanity, the costly furring of your gowns, so much pouncing of chisel to make holes, so much dagging of shears with the length, and when it is done, ye go trailing it in the dirt, until the very tail rotteth off. A pig hath more sense than to draggle his tail in the mire; even an ass carryeth himself cleanly: marry, ye are worse than pigs or asses. I will tell you a merry

jest, how a fool became a wise man, and it chanced in this wise. A shoemaker coming to a tailor's shop, findeth some fine French tawney cloth lying there, which had been sent to be made into a gown for a gentle; and taking a fancy to the colour, he ordered the tailor to buy him as much of the aforesaid stuff, and make him a gown of it, of the self-same fashion as the knight's. The shoemaker in due time received his gown slashed to very shreds, whereat he began to grow an-angered at the tailor. 'Marry,' said the man, 'I have but done as I was bade; it is made even after the fashion of the knight's.' 'By my lap-stone,' growled the shoemaker, 'I will never wear a gentle's fashion again.' So in good time be ye advised by the shoemaker, and take to you more seemly garments.

"And how do ye get this unsightly finery? Hearken, and I will tell you. Some of ye

become extortioners, violent oppressors, engrossers of tenements and lands — through your pride and covetousness whole villages decay and fall down, and the people for lack of sustenance are famished. You landlords, — you rent-raisers, — you step-lords, — you unnatural lords ; you have for your possessions too much yearly. Dearth is made by man, notwithstanding God doth send us so plentifully the fruits of the earth. The poor men economise, and consume themselves to satisfy their rapacious task-masters ; existence is now no longer a life, but a misery. But fear not these great men, — these cruel giants of England, — these men of power ; but strike at once at the root of the evil. London was never so ill as it is now. In times past men were full of pity and compassion ; now there is no pity. For in London their brother shall die in the streets for cold ; he shall lie sick at their door, and perish there for hunger.

Yea ! if they offer him help, it is meeted out by law, and he must be carried to some distant tything, though he die in the removing. Ye keep a City-guard to feed the beggars on blows ; strong men, who go prowling from street to street, who molest not the rich, but imprison or drive before them, like dogs, the poor and helpless. But beware ! ye are sharpening the fangs of the people, and when ye least dream of it, will find their teeth in your throats. Ye are going full gallop to the devil.

“ But what care ye that are rich for the poor ? ye banquet all night, and lie a-bed in the day till noon. I cannot tell what revel ye have overnight, whether in banqueting, or dicing, or carding ; but in the morning when poor suitors come to your houses, ye cannot be spoken with. If ye owe them money it is put off from day to day ; yea, a whole month, and sometimes a year, ere they can come to your speech.

Then ye keep servants at the door to tell lies, and pay them to endanger their souls ; but it is yourselves that the devil will torture.

“ We talk against popery, and preach against it ; but what are we better than they without practice. I tell you, and tell you with grief, that we are less charitable than the papists. We have pulled down their monasteries, and deprived them of their lands ; but have we appropriated their wealth to a better purpose ? If their religious houses sheltered superstition and folly, they also sheltered the poor, and charity covereth a multitude of sins. If the monks grew sleek and fat over their vigils, the beggar was not left lean and starved without the gates. Marry, we have those in our own day as greedy of wealth as the papists ;—men who will stand up and speak, and preach against tyranny and oppression ; yet let one of their parishioners refuse to pay their tithes, and they are the first

to cry out, 'To the donjon with the knave, he hath no regard for his soul!' And so with bolts and shackles, prison-walls, a crust of bread, and a jug of water, they give him a taste of hell here, that he may the better enjoy heaven hereafter.

Now, what, trow ye, is this better than leaving a soul in purgatory until the mass-money is paid? Marry, not a jot: they but commit him to the hottest hell they have the key to; the devil can do no more. Instead of reasoning, and praying, and winning him by kindness, and forbearance, and gentle example; they kick him and cuff him, and persecute him, and all for the love of his soul, and so hurry him neck-break back again to popery. OUR SAVIOUR hath, in a book ycleped the New Testament, set them a different example; but they would be wiser than CHRIST. Patience, and forbearance, and long-suffering, forgiveness,

kindness and charity, are there recommended, in place of prisons and punishments; but they pay no regard to GOD'S Law-Book. No! they would be wiser than HIM. And know ye what these things will lead to in the end? I will tell you. To schisms and dissensions, and heart-burnings, and hatreds, in place of that love and veneration, which is the only cement that can hold the church together. True religion itself can never fall, because it is of GOD, and existeth only in the soul. But is not a castle the safer when its walls are standing, than when the citadel is alone, remaining naked and unprotected, and open to the attacks of every marauder? Is not the heart sheltered and protected by the body? Æsop hath written a wise fable on the body and its members; let our clergy read this, and take it well to heart. There is a wise old proverb, which sayeth, 'A kind word is better than hard blows.' We may drive on

a brute by force, but man hath other organs than a pig, or an ass."

So spake this undaunted and early Reformer; and those who are acquainted with his sermons will see at a glance, that a goodly portion of what we have transplanted into a work of fiction, are truths which he really and fearlessly uttered, and for the maintaining of which he was burnt to death.

And how have we progressed since those days, when the Bible was all but a sealed book? Reader, look round on the world at this very hour. Are there no Cecils,—no Arundels in the present day? Alas! too many who would sell their very souls for power and place; from the villain that would lead on and sacrifice the lives of the ignorant and blinded multitude, to the titled scoundrel that sits secreted and secure, and sets his snares with wires of gold.

Look at the living history of our own time : in what does it differ from the past? Are there no places in England where hearts are daily breaking now?—no martyrs writhing on the stake of misery, in those dark and damnable New Poor-houses? None! a thousand unblushing liars stand up, and with brass brows exclaim,—*None!* All is happiness,—all contentment, tranquillity, and peace. The number of suicides are but common events. As to murders, they have been common since the death of Abel,—and the filling of prisons, they were built for that purpose. The world was never better than it is now!—and so we shall jostle along a little longer; skate away over the ice which wise men have pointed out as dangerous; and when we sink head over ears, we shall then have no occasion to wonder how we came there, for it will then be too late.

There is a language in history which has yet

to be understood, before it can be translated. We may make ourselves familiar with changes and events, but old death steps in at some important point, when we are just beginning to see how things would have been, and "bothers us all:" we have to begin again, and then we come to the same conclusion. No one mind can grapple with the emanations of a thousand; hundreds of hidden springs, that moved the great machine, are broken and buried, and we can never recover them again. Like the ruins of a mighty city, we see portions of pillar and capital; the finger of a statue, and the leaf of an ornament; then the imagination busies itself in putting them together; but who can tell us that our conclusions are right. Every inference we draw may be full of reason; but how can we tell how much there is lost; what living eye swept over every portion of the pile, when it stood complete.

Nay ! who living now can see the thousand ramifications of a state ? Take any country, and tell us of every secret spring by which it keeps in motion. Look at our own at this hour ; every vein of it is throbbing with some great emotion ; but who can tell what it will bring forth, or, when the galloping pulsation subsides, lay bare its every cause. History is too solemn for Romance ; it causes us to think seriously, where we ought only to dream ; we become earnest without knowing why. We see that policy is but another name for villany ; that (with but few exceptions) the greatest statesmen are but the best hypocrites ; and that but to glance at such matters, and only draw from them light reading and amusement, a man must wield his pen regardless of “ the world, the flesh, and the devil.” The cant, humbug and deceit of all ages ought to be “ shown up :” there is too much of that pander-

ing to vice in the world. We talk of progressing in honesty, and manliness : let our moral wise-acres read old Latimer's sermons, and tell us where is the man to be found, in the present day, who would stand up and deliver such lectures to such a royal tiger as King Henry the Eighth and his successor, as that fearless old martyr dared to do three hundred years ago. We are too much engrossed with the affairs of the present day, to look back upon the olden times as we ought to do.

Villains there were, deep-dyed and base villains, but there were also a few honest men, money-careless, and wealth-despisers, title-scorners, and vice-haters, who stood up and made a light amid the darkness—a blaze of glory, which, although it consumed themselves, left a track of imperishable splendour behind, a brightness lasting as the glory of Heaven.

They were no democrats, who marched through the land with blade and brand, but human gods, who looked down upon the disorder of the world, with solemn eyes and commanding features, who spoke in thunder, and shook back the wandering orbs to their courses ;—mind ! mighty mind was the weapon they used ;—the blazing sword of Paradise which waved, but consumed not, and on which nought evil could look, without blenching ;—men who knew the world of nature, who saw that brutes only are conquered by force, and that the great secret of honest power rested in moral might.

Well aware that these remarks are out of place here, we crave pardon for making them ; they either belong to the story or not, just as our readers please : they are suited to both past and present ; they are what, from our very soul, we believe to be the truth, and such as, in the

hour of death, we hope to feel no wish to blot out. And so here ends this unnecessary chapter; and now we will to the business part of our tale. We have shot our shaft; and whether it pierces a grey-friar's frock, or the gizzard of a goose, will never break our rest. "*Sibi quemque cavere oportet.*"

CHAPTER XIII.

Thereto, when needed, he could weep and pray,
And when he listed he could fawn and flatter ;
Now smiling smoothly, like to summer's day,
Now glooming sadly, so to cloak the matter,
Yet were his words but wind, and all his tears but water.

SPENSER'S *Faery Queene*.

IT would add but little to the interest of our story, to portray the agonies of mind that Cecil suffered, when he discovered that Northumberland had sent out a troop of his chosen followers to waylay and plunder the herald. At first he resolved to quit the Tower instantly, and gave orders that a boat should be in readiness ; then he counteracted the command, and appointed his servant to have horses in waiting at Lambeth, so that he might fly at the first ap-

proach of danger. Arundel was a bolder man, and resolved, however the matter might terminate, to stand his ground,—nay, was determined to forswear the handwriting if there was need, and bully Northumberland into a belief that the whole was a forgery. Still he was far from feeling easy, and when Cecil was summoned the next day to appear before the Duke, he felt certain that the whole affair was discovered, and determined to wait the result. Two of the horsemen had indeed returned, but in what plight our readers are aware, and tidings were arriving hourly of the strength of Mary's forces.

No sooner did Cecil enter the room, than he discovered at a glance, that Northumberland was in an evil mood, for he was pacing the apartment with knit brows, and rapid strides, and running his fingers rapidly through his beard.

“Beset by beggars!” muttered he, without

appearing to regard Cecil, who still had his arm in the sling; "beset by beggars and beaten! There is treachery a-foot; but I will sweep the country of these ragged robbers ere the world is much older: not one of the whole tribe shall remain behind. Knowest thou aught of these knaves?" added he, addressing Cecil.

"I know not to whom your Grace alludes," answered the secretary, not yet certain whether his double-dealing had been discovered; "but tell me who they are, or what they have done, and I will not despair of finding a clue to them."

"An' I knew who they were," replied the Duke, in an angry tone, "I should not need thy assistance. But tell me, sawest thou none of the nobles give Mary's messenger letters ere he departed?"

"On mine honour, none," said Cecil.

"Nor whisper to him?" enquired Northum-

berland, keeping his piercing eye fixed on Cecil, as he spoke.

“Neither, on mine honour,” was again answered, and Cecil told the lie without once changing countenance.

“Wilt thou swear that thou didst see nothing then that might lead thee to the belief that we have traitors amongst us?” said the Duke, raising his voice.

“Nothing,” answered Cecil, “that seemed done guardedly enough to awaken a suspicion. The offering the herald the wine-cup, and the angry words passed between your Grace and Pembroke, were things that transpired too openly to make me suspect treason.”

“I believe that they are honest,” said Northumberland, after a long pause; “and yet I fear that there are traitors amongst us. I am filled with doubts and misgivings, yet can find no proofs to confirm my suspicions. How does

Arundel bear with the absence of his son? Suspects he that there has been unfair play shown to him? To be plain with thee, is our own name often in his mouth?"

"Never, but as it is in the mouth of all good men," said the Secretary, "to speak well of your Grace, and admire your wisdom. As for his son, he careth not to own him as such, since he hath fallen under your displeasure."

"Hast heard any tidings of him since he escaped us?" inquired the Duke, "or canst give a guess where he may now be found?"

"I cannot, an' it please your Grace," replied Cecil, "but I will make enquiries, if such be your pleasure."

"Do so, and fail not to acquaint us if thou discoverest his haunt," said the Duke. "I do fear that youth, Cecil; he has been a stumbling block already between me and the Queen; let him look to it. Rumours strengthen," added

he, suddenly changing the subject, "respecting the forces which are assembling around the Princess Mary. We must hold ourselves in readiness. Are there any names of note yet numbered amongst the insurgents beyond those who have deserted us?"

"I have heard of none," answered Cecil; "some few serfs and beggars, I believe; none else have joined her standard, and they number not beyond a few hundreds."

"And do the nobles hold their forces in readiness, thinkest thou?" proceeded the Duke.

"I have heard of no mustering of men amongst them," was the answer.

"And where are thy own tenants?" said Northumberland, halting for a moment; "hast thou summoned them hither as I commanded thee?"

"Not hither, my Lord," replied Cecil, "your Grace's orders were that I should hold them in

readiness, and as rumour speaks only of an expected outbreak in the Midland counties, I bade them halt, until further orders, at Northampton."

"At Northampton!" exclaimed the fiery Duke, setting his eyes upon Cecil, as if he would look him through. "What do they there, when the danger is fast approaching our very threshold? I fear me, sir, that thou art luke-warm in our cause, and wouldst play me the same trick as thou didst Somerset. But look to it,—if I can but once obtain proofs that thou art tampering with me, I will have thine head, though I lose my own the next minute. Send for them instantly, and woe be to thee, if they are not here before another day has darkened."

"It grieves me to see your Grace thus angered without a cause," said the long-headed statesman, "when I thought to have antici-

pated your wishes. Do, my Lord, regain that coolness and decision, which has made your name a terror to your enemies, and which when you are fully in possession of, hits at once upon such sure plans as overthrow in an instant all the policy of others. I beseech you not to let ungrounded suspicions mar your solid judgment, at a time when the nation stands so much in need of it. I must deal plainly with your Grace, though I may unintentionally offend, conscious that your calmer reflection will do justice to my intentions."

"Thou art right! thou art right, good Cecil," said the Duke, his dark brow gradually unclouding; for the cunning secretary knew that a dose of flattery must be mingled with censure, or it would be suspected: he was like a knowing fisherman, who keeps flies for all weathers;—"thou art right! But by the holy rood! I do at times believe thou art not honest.

Thou art colder, and more calculating than thou wert wont to be ; but thou art right, and canst make me love or hate thee, just as I am told. But if thou art not honest, thou art the devil. Forgive me, for suspecting thee wrongly, and remember that when I find those deserting me every hour in whom I had confidence, I have need to be cautious whom I trust. — How now ?” added he, turning to a soldier, splashed from heel to helmet, who at that instant entered the room ; “ croak out thy tidings, thy very visage forebodes that they are evil.”

“ I have come with reluctant haste to tell your Grace that Sir Edward Hastings hath joined the forces of Mary in Norfolk, and taken with him the four thousand men he collected in your name.”

“ May the curse of God alight upon the traitor !” exclaimed the Duke, the veins of his forehead instantly swelling as if ready to burst.

“I would rather that he had drawn all the blood from my heart. Were he here I would trample him to death beneath my feet. Four thousand men! raised by our own command too!—may hell swallow them up!—Cecil, I shall go mad—and we sent him by the advice of his brother. Huntingdon shall lose his head!—Call a guard: let him be sent instantly to the block.—I will have no trial. Fire!—madness!—furies!—four thousand men! purchased with our own gold—his brother shall die! I will have the blood of Huntingdon to slake my rage—!”

And he went foaming up and down the room, and grinding his teeth like an infuriated lioness that sees its cubs in the hands of the huntsmen, while she herself is writhing in the toils.

“I come to inform your Grace,” said another messenger, who was fiery red with speed, and had ridden hard upon the heels of the last,

“that Bath and Sussex have retired into Norfolk, and joined the Princess with all their forces.”

“Then must we be up and doing,” said the Duke, recovering from the paroxysm of his passion almost in an instant. “If victory alights upon our helmets as of old, the dogs shall have a bloody day. It is time that we looked to the edges of our swords. I will not spare a single traitor amongst them. I will have a head on every City-gate and turret of the Tower, and palisade the bridge with poles. London shall be hung with gory pictures ; the axe shall keep time with every minute of the clock ! Begone, knaves,” added he ; “I would that ye had broken your necks ere ye had brought me such tidings. But ye are not to blame.”

Cecil was about to move off with the messengers, and include himself amongst the number of knaves, a title to which he had

the greatest claim of them all ; but the Duke motioned him to stay.

“ We must call the council together, instantly,” said Northumberland, “ and appoint some one to lead the forces, and now I bethink me, it were better that any other were chosen to take the command than myself. It would not be wisdom for me to quit the Tower.”

A new light broke upon the broad mind of Cecil in an instant : for he saw at once that if they could but get rid of Northumberland, all would be safe, and he hesitated a moment before he said, “ We could, indeed, but ill spare your Grace’s wisdom for a moment. Yet amid so many traitors, whom can you trust ? Your very name would insure victory, without drawing the sword ? but if you are absent who shall guide our councils aright. Who, saving yourself, could have put down the insurrectionists headed by Ket, in a day ? But I am at a loss how to

advise with your Grace, conscious, when I have taxed my own judgment to the uttermost, how immeasurably distant it is from your own."

So spake this English Machiavel, a man whose wisdom and deep policy hundreds still venerate, without ever looking at his bad heart.

CHAPTER XIV.

Disguise, I see, thou art a wickedness,
Wherein the pregnant enemy does much.

To know our enemies' minds, we rip their hearts ;
Their papers, is more lawful.

SHAKSPEARE.

ONE of the old chroniclers, in describing the appearance which affairs now presented, says, "What stirring was there on every side,—what sending,—what riding and posting,—what letters, messages and instruments, went to and fro,—what talking among the soldiers,—what heart-burning among the people,—what fair pretences outwardly,—inwardly, what privy practices there were. What speeding of ordnance daily in and out of the Tower,—what

rumours and coming down of soldiers from all quarters there was,—a world it was to see, and a process to declare, enough to make a whole Iliad.” But amid all this tumult so admirably portrayed, and while messenger after messenger came teeming into the Tower with tidings of the increasing strength of Mary’s forces; and every hour came laden with heavier news, and a more threatening look, Northumberland was still undaunted. He knew, however, that no more time must be lost, and as all was now in readiness, there wanted but a leader appointed to head the forces, and give battle to the troops which had assembled under the Princess Mary’s banner. A council had been called together in the Tower to debate on this important matter, and to their presence we must now conduct our readers.

In the state-room, and seated on a rich throne of crimson velvet, bordered with gold, sat the

young Queen at the head of the table; the Duke of Suffolk and her husband were placed on either hand, while at the lower end was stationed Northumberland, Lord Grey, Arundel, Cecil, Cranmer, Darcey, Pembroke, and many others stood ranged on each side of the spacious table, which was covered with numberless documents. Cheke and Throckmorton were stationed as secretaries, for Cecil carried his arm in a sling, and had given it out, that he was still swallowing "pig broth."

Northumberland was the first to rise and open the business, and in a speech, bold, brief, and in every way adapted to the purpose; he pointed out the necessity of instantly making head against the opposing powers, and concluded by recommending the Duke of Suffolk to lead on the soldiers, which, he said, "were as eager to fight, as a greyhound to slip the leash, when the game was in sight."

“Nay, my lords,” said the Queen, speaking with deep emotion, “I beseech ye to permit my father to tarry with me, that I may share his counsel. I am but a novice in the affairs of state, and without some one left to advise with me, whom I can trust, I fear me that I shall but ill execute the weighty matters which must now fall upon me. But assuredly there will be no need of bloodshed; let the Princess Mary be treated with, and be bound by holy oaths, not to infringe upon the liberties of our religion, and I will be the first to welcome her to the throne of England. I beseech ye not to draw your swords in this cause. I should never be happy again if I thought that I had been instrumental in shedding blood. God hath forbidden it; let us not then be the means of making children fatherless, — let us not draw tears of blood from the hearts of fond mothers, and throw mourning and desolation over the

land. But rather let me be what I was. I will not purchase royalty at such a forbidden price.”

Cranmer next rose, and in an eloquent speech, showed that force must be repelled by force alone, and that they were but acting on the defensive. Several others also spoke, genuine disciples of a Machiavel, who endeavoured to prove that it was a work of holiness to strengthen religion by bloodshed. Many of these were arrant knaves, devoid of all pious motives; they would have done honour to the ranks of Mahomet. But we must pass over all they said, and come to the crafty Arundel, who was determined at every hazard to be rid of Northumberland; and bringing back their arguments to the chief business on hand, he arose and delivered the following speech, which Cecil had carefully drawn up for him for the occasion.

“My lords,” said he, “to come at once to

the matter in hand, since time is now of consequence, I will venture to propose our good cousin Northumberland as chief commander of the army ; a warrior whose very name is certain to insure a victory." The Duke looked upon the floor ; but there was an expression of pleasure upon his countenance, for he could not withstand flattery.

Arundel proceeded. " Find me a soldier in the realm who can so well conduct an army ; who like him can at a word silence a whole camp, when they are dissatisfied, or so well plan the order of a battle ? Where lives his equal in the knowledge and experience of war ? One word of comfort from his lips rings through the hearts of the soldiers, and fires them like the sounding of a trumpet. I have fought under him, and been eye-witness to what I now proclaim. He can animate an army by his witty persuasions, and allay the

pride of his enemies by his stout courage ; nay, hath ere now disarmed them by his eloquence. Who achieved the victory when Somerset fled dismayed, and crest-fallen ?—Northumberland. Who, when rebellion was ringing through the land, and the very throne tottered beneath it, stepped forth and made peace ? —Northumberland. Nay ! who, after the victory he achieved in Norfolk, will dare to raise weapon against him ? No one, I wis, will be fool-hardy enough. He need then but throw himself into the saddle, sound his war-cry, and the whole faction will disappear and be no more, and right happy shall I be to draw my sword under such a leader : for wherever he appears there is victory to be found. Who thinketh with me, let them speak.”

One loud burst of approbation instantly broke forth, and above all was heard the voice of Sir William Cecil.

“Well,” said Northumberland, “since ye think it good, I and mine will go, not doubting of your fidelity to the Queen’s Majesty, whom I leave in your custody ; having no fear but that Her Highness will be in as safe keeping in the hands of our good cousin Arundel, as in our own. To you, worthy Sussex, I doubt not our sovereign lady will yield the command of this fortress until we return.”

To this the Lady Jane immediately consented ; then departed from the council, with a heavy heart, marvelling to herself how men could assemble so coolly together, and deliberate on the shedding of human blood, with no more feeling of remorse than one purchasing cattle for the slaughter.

When the Queen had retired, Northumberland again enforced upon them the necessity of being loyal and firm to their sovereign ; nay, even reminded them that she had accepted the

crown, more through their persuasions than her own consent; and that it was the cause of God, and the promotion of the Gospel, for which he was about to draw his sword.

Following the young Queen into her private apartment, she threw herself into a chair, and with her beautiful face resting on her hand, remained some time in silence. She then arose, and with a trembling hand signed Northumberland's commission, for the Duke insisted upon having his orders from herself, and by her own hand he was made lieutenant of the army. She sealed the commission, and sent it to the Duke by an attendant; then again sat silent for some time, and sighing heavily, seemed to regret what she had done. But it was then too late to recal the deed. While she sat thus wrapt in deep and melancholy thought, her attendant, Amy, entered the room, to announce that Lord Wardour wished to speak with her on matters

of importance, and had already obtained admission into the Tower.

“Is he indeed so eager to see me,” said the lady, raising her head, “that he hath again ventured within these walls, and after I have twice denied his messenger? Well, then, let him have admission; he meaneth well to us. I had hoped that I had looked my last upon him. Amy, I feel that I am but a weak woman after all—but let him enter.”

“Please your Highness, the engraver waiteth without,” said a page, entering and bending his knee before her; “and craveth permission to show your Majesty the likeness on the new coins which he has brought. Sir Andrew Dudley hath also brought the jewels from the palace of Westminster, with the crimson velvet, and waiteth your Highness’s further commands.”

“Tell him we will send some one to compare

them with the catalogue, when we have leisure," replied the Queen, "and will attend to the coins another day. For the next hour we would be left alone."

The page withdrew as Lord Wardour, preceded by Amy, entered the apartment.

Forgetful of her state, the Queen rose to receive him, and with her eyes glancing upon the floor, held forth her hand which he pressed to his lips. "Thou settest small store by thy liberty," said she, with a faint smile; "seeing thou darest again to venture thus rashly amongst those who bear thee so little love. What wouldst thou have me do, that thou hast so far again perilled thyself?"

"For myself, nothing," replied Wardour: "I have come to warn you of the dangers with which you are surrounded. You are beset by traitors on every hand. Here are the proofs. Escape, ere it is too late." As he spoke he

threw the letters upon the table, which were addressed to the Princess Mary.

“And from whom didst thou obtain these proofs?” said the Queen, glancing at the superscriptions.

“From Sir Edward Hastings, the herald,” replied Wardour, “who was waylaid on his return to the Princess; and who would willingly have given them up without a struggle, had he thought they would have been of service to you.”

The Queen took them up one after another, and ran her eye over them, while her colour changed as she read their contents, and when she had done, she threw them into the fire, and in a few moments they were all consumed. Wardour had himself destroyed the one which his father had written, but still there was a passage in the one sent by Cecil, which dwelt strongly on the hatred of Arundel to Northum-

berland, and praised highly the Earl's loyalty to Mary, and this he allowed to remain.

"It would avail me but little now, to make use of this evidence," said the Queen, as she watched the last sheet of paper curl up and blacken in the flames. "To summon the Council, and lay the documents before them, when all are almost alike guilty, would stand me in but little stead. And had they but met Northumberland's eye, he would have brought every head to the block before sunset, and deluged the scaffold with blood. I can but hope that GOD will frustrate all their plans; as for myself, I can do nothing. I have already given my sanction to the Duke, to go forth and confront my enemies, and my conscience telleth me that I have in this done wrong. I will sit down calmly, and abide the fate that awaiteth me."

"I will save her," muttered Duskena, striking

her staff upon the floor, as she entered the apartment, for she had followed Wardour along the gallery unobserved, and in the shadow of the doorway, been witness to the scene we have described. "Henry Wardour," exclaimed she, raising her shrill voice; "thou hast deceived me; but I forgive thee for her sake, whom thou wouldst so faithfully serve.—Daughter, be of good comfort; all shall yet go well with thee. Had I had the means of vengeance which but now were in thy hands, my evil spirit would have counselled me to have used them. But thy gentler spirit hath prevailed, thou hast never felt a wish to hold the staff of Destiny in thy grasp, and snap asunder every thread at a stroke. Come nearer, and let me look closely on thee."

"It is Duskena of the Dark Valley," whispered Wardour, "obey her, and fear not, for she alone can save thee."

But the Queen turned pale as death, and with her eyes still fixed upon the old hag, sank down unconsciously on the rich chair of state, and sat gazing on her in speechless silence.

“Fear me not,” said the old woman, approaching her, and placing her skinny hand on her jewelled brow, while her deep piercing eyes ran narrowly over every feature: “I will not hurt thee.”

Long and fixedly did the old hag gaze upon her, until the stern and savage outline of her dark features softened down into such an expression of tenderness as a tigress might wear while licking the young cub, which, with bloody jaws, she had rescued from the hands of the hunter,—and at last a tear stole down her aged and care-worn cheeks, (the first that had coursed those dark and guilty furrows for many a day,) and she murmured to herself, “Her forehead was just as smooth, but wore a

deeper shade, and her lips, ere they opened to call me mother, slept as lovingly together. Her eyes were somewhat darker; but when they looked back their love into mine, they wore the same expression of tenderness. And her voice rang through my very heart, when I heard her speak, for it was the same gushing music that came upon me years ago: the same voice that went sounding through the deep under-wood, or sung to itself in the sunshine before the door of my hut, until my heart forgot all its cares and all its guilt, and I ran to snatch her in my arms, and on her lips kiss away all my sorrows."

Carried away by the remembrance of her daughter, and unconscious of what she was doing, the old woman threw her withered arms around the neck of the young Queen, and while she pressed her lovely head to her bosom, wept as if her very heart would break.

“And art thou then the woman that I have so long feared,” said the Queen, returning her embrace; “she whom men said had neither feeling nor pity? Alas! how little have they known of thee. I would that I were thy daughter, I could love thee for weeping over me thus. My mother never blessed me with her tears.”

Poor Amy buried her face in the skirt of her tunic, and Wardour's countenance assumed a solemn and softened expression, while with the point of his sword, he drew many a crossed and unmeaning line upon the floor.

“They have not belied thee,” said Duskenä, releasing her arms, while the tears still lingered in the dark furrows of her cheeks, as if at a loss which way to take in such untrodden channels; and she gazed upon the countenance of the Queen with such an expression of tenderness, as seemed to destroy all that was stern

and revolting in her own dark features ; as if the moon had looked out suddenly from some sombre cloud, and given a cheerfulness to the gloom :—"Thy words have fallen upon my heart, like rain upon the dry and drooping plants. Thou shalt be my daughter, and I will save thee, or we will perish together. I have done thee wrong, great and grievous wrong. But thou shalt not resign this dignity on disadvantageous terms. Let Northumberland go forth and fall, for such is his doom ; he dug the pit into which I have plunged thee. Let the base nobles quit the Tower, and leave thee like a victim on the altar to perish. I will unloose the bands that bind thee, and compel Mary to take thee to her arms as a sister, or every jewel of the crown shall sit like sharp thorns upon her head. Nay, weep not ! thou shalt see that I can either make or mar. I will be true to thee though I die."

“But will it not be better, good mother,” said Wardour, “to dissuade the Duke from going forth on the morrow? Bethink thee, much blood may be spilt, and we may lose many a friend that would stand us in better stead.”

“Thou knowest him not so well as myself,” answered the old woman: “within these walls he would oppose all power, and stand out until even gaunt famine had nothing to feed upon. Without them, he will be the first to render himself captive, and when he sees the forces which are now marching hitherward, all his opposition will end. Nay, were his heart even honest, he could do nothing while beset with traitors within, and assailed by enemies without. Mary is cold and cruel, but she is nevertheless Queen, and it would but be madness to oppose her further; the feelings of the people flow like a strong current in her favour, and she is borne

along by a tide which no mortal arm can resist."

"My reign is then over," said the Queen, heaving a deep sigh.

"It is finished," replied Duskena; "but despair not. I have contributed my part to thy troubles, nor will I leave thee now until I see thee again restored to thy former happiness."

"That can never be again," said the Queen, glancing a moment at Wardour, then burying her face in her hands: "but my trust is in HIM who will never forsake those who call upon HIS HOLY NAME in sincerity and truth."

"I would pray for thee," said Duskena, "but I dare not utter HIS name with my polluted lips. I would that my heart was as free from evil as thine own. What thou hast done, has sprung from such motives as are worthy of the angels themselves. What I have done, would put the very devils to shame."

Duskena and Wardour forsook not the Tower that night; and when the old woman retired to rest, she threw herself on her knees to pray, and then slept sounder than she had before done for many a long year.

CHAPTER XV.

———— The sun will not be seen to-day ;
The sky doth frown and lour upon our army.
I would these dewy tears were from the ground.
Not shine to-day ? Why, what is that to me,
More than to Richmond ? for the self-same Heaven,
That frowns on me, looks sadly upon him.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE morning that broke in upon the departure of Northumberland from London was gloomy and overcast. There was a solemn look about its old streets, which the presence of hundreds of armed men could scarcely enliven. The sounding of the trumpets, which called the different troops together, seemed to fall sad and solitary upon the hearts of the citizens ; every horseman sat with a serious countenance in his saddle, while the banners fell drooping and mo-

tionless upon the staves :—there was something ominous in the whole scene. If the soldiers spoke to one another, it was in low tones ; they obeyed the voice of their commanders with a seeming reluctance ; went through their evolutions as if they had been moved by a machine ; formed and fell back as if to a circumscribed inch ; and when the word was given, halted, in an instant, as if they begrudged the labour they had undergone. Sometimes a straggling horseman came at a slow pace down one or other of the narrow streets, as if he was in no hurry to join his comrades, and then fell into the ranks in silence ; for he saw at once that there was none of that hearty bustle going on which is so essential to warfare ; the very horses also appeared to have caught a portion of the dull spirits of their riders. The men knew that they were about to draw their swords against their lawful sovereign — against the

daughter of a king, under whose reign they had won such glorious laurels; and they liked it not. Had they but had a cause more to their hearts, and with such a renowned leader as the Duke of Northumberland at their head, who had led them on to so many victories, they would have been ready to encounter a whole host of enemies. As it was, they felt low and dispirited; the crowd that stood looking on gave them no encouraging shout: the sun lent them not one cheering ray: their mailed ranks looked bright, but cold; there was no warmth, no vigour about them; one blaze of sunlight, or the loud huzzas of the multitude, would have kindled a new soul in them, but they met with no encouragement.

Within the court-yard of the Tower stood the war-horse, ready caparisoned for Northumberland, armed with chamfron and breast-plate, and all that terrible paraphernalia which was so well

calculated to stand the brunt of battle. A groom held the bridle of the restive steed, which kept pawing the earth, and arching its noble neck, as if impatient to send the sounding thunder of its hoofs along the ranged and hostile ranks. Lord Grey, the faithful friend of the Duke, was already in his saddle. Arundel and Cecil, and several others, were also in waiting, to take their farewell of Northumberland.

At length the Duke appeared, sheathed in a rich suit of fluted armour, which Henry the Eighth had once worn. A plume of beautiful feathers drooped from the costly casque. On the brow of the veteran warrior, however, was seated a look of deep care; he made an attempt to smile upon those around him, but the expression was too forced and momentary to be real; and then his features again sunk into their more than usual sternness.

“ You will soon return,” said Arundel, ap-

proaching him, and holding out his hand, which the Duke shook ; “ you will but need to shake your banner in the faces of these rebels, to disperse them. I would that I were permitted to share your victory.”

“ I will do my best,” said the Duke, springing into the saddle ; “ may all I leave behind do as well.”

Arundel and Cecil exchanged glances with each other, but the latter determined not to be outdone, and also bade farewell to Northumberland ; adding, “ I regret that I may not share your Grace’s company, and for your goodness, show you that I am ready to shed my heart’s blood at your feet.”

“ Farewell, good Cecil,” replied the Duke ; “ I hope we shall soon meet again ;” and he plunged his rowels into the side of his steed, and rode across the moat.

“ Farewell, gentle Thomapp,” said Cecil

to the Duke's page; "farewell with all my heart."

The boy spurred on without replying, and followed his master.

The trumpet sounded, as Northumberland crossed the moat, to announce the approach of the leader, and all eyes were instantly turned in the direction from whence he came. He rode along the ranks of the soldiers, and as he cast his experienced eye around, the spirit of the warrior kindled for a moment within him; but just as he was about to give command to "march," his glance encountered the form of Duskena, her deep-sunken eyes rivetted upon him. In an instant a strange depression came over his spirits, a cold low foreboding that something inimical to his interests was about to happen. He reined up his steed before the old woman, and gazed on her a moment in silence, then said in a faltering tone of voice, as he beckoned her

aside; "Has thy foresight discovered what will be the result of this mission?"

"Ruin to thyself, and to thy whole house," answered the old woman. "Whether thou goest forward or lingerest behind, will matter not. The sun of thy power is fast setting."

"Thou liest, hag!" replied the Duke, setting his teeth as he spoke; "I shall yet live to tread upon the necks of mine enemies; and when I return from victory, I will dye my banner deeper in their blood."

"From victory wilt thou never return again," said the old woman, keeping her glance steadfast, and striking her staff upon the ground as she spoke. "Thy doom hath long been fixed, and the hour of its fulfilment is fast drawing near."

"Is there then no hope?" said the Duke, his colour changing as he spoke,—"quick, and let me hear the worst that can befall me."

“There is none,” replied Duskena, after a long pause: “there is one path by which thou mightest yet save thyself, but that thou wilt scorn to follow.”

“Name it,” said Northumberland.

“I will,” answered the old hag, “for I seek not thy life now, though much of the blood that rests on my own head are stains that thou hast made. But I have seen an angel, and mingled my tears with her own, and my vengeance is fast wasting away. Hear me, then. Ride back to the Tower, and proclaim Mary queen, and thou shalt save thy life.”

“Never!” said Northumberland, setting the spurs into his steed, “my course is onward, though I perish.”

“Then forward to destruction!” said Duskena; but the words were lost to his ear. “I have given thee fair warning, and thou hast disregarded it; thy blood be upon thine own head.”

And the old woman departed, muttering to herself as she went, "Well! I shall sleep the sounder for having thus warned him."

Northumberland gave the word of command, and the whole cavalcade was speedily in motion, and although an immense crowd were assembled, not a single shout was raised.

"Well, neighbour Brummet," said a burly fishmonger of Billingsgate, to his gossip, the barber of Thames-street; "Times have strangely altered in our day. Remember you, when Northumberland went out to quell the Norfolk rebels, what huzzas and shoutings accompanied him? Saw ye ever more silence at a funeral show, than at this? Marry, it forebodes him no good."

"Dumb all as mine own blocks," answered the barber. "Ay! those were his best days: who so popular as the Earl of Warwick then? and now he is Duke of Northumberland, who hath so much fallen? I tell thee, neighbour, he

has become like thy stale fish, which many look at, but no one will buy. I said it would come home to him, for being the means of cutting off the Protector Somerset : thou wilt see my words come true."

" Ay, Somerset was the friend of the people !" replied the fishmonger. " When they would have enclosed the lands, no one was bold enough to confront the Commissioners but the good Duke. Did the poor want ?—he was the foremost to relieve them. Had an old soldier served under him in the wars, and come home wounded and in rags ?—Somerset received him. I have dealt with his servants ; they but asked the price of the fish and paid it, and never enquired whether they were sweet or stale. We shall never have another duke like Somerset."

" I tell thee what, neighbour mine," said the barber, " there is something that looks suspicious about the death of the young King.

Depend upon it, there is some truth in that rumour of the poisoned flowers which he smelt of. Beside, if all had been fair, what need would there have been to have kept his death a secret? The fox prowleth in greatest silence when nearest the hen-roost; and dead men have ere now told tales. The weather-cock, although it hath no tongue, telleth from whence the wind blows. And many a man huggeth a bear, who hath no affection for the beast, but keepeth him safe, lest he should turn and rend him. Read ye my riddle, gossip?"

"I can but guess, neighbour," replied the fishmonger, "and we who look on the water, know somewhat of the way the stream runneth. But mum is good advice in these days. And thou knowest the Thames-street proverb:—'Let thy tongue keep out of the Tower, and thy feet will be safe.' But I have a cod-fish to send to

Alderman Guttle, and must make its gills a little red, for it has been stale three days."

So these worthies separated.

Meanwhile Northumberland continued his march along Shoreditch, his spirits strangely depressed, for he still felt a low foreboding, a feeling of melancholy, which he could not account for. He could not conceal it from Lord Grey, who rode by his side, but turning to him, said, "The people press to see us, but no one crieth 'God speed us!'"

"It is even so," answered the nobleman, "their hearts are not with us."

Northumberland hung down his head in silence, and sighed heavily, then said, "Their voices would not win the victory, nor shall their cold looks deter me from my purpose; my sword will not smite the less deeply, though I have not their shouts to sanction the stroke."

"The fickle herd know not their own minds

for long together," replied Lord Grey; "and he who would ever go with them, must be as ready to veer round as the weather-cock on the Tower, and move with every wind that blows. They murmured at the wealth and power of the Papists, stout Hal overthrew their church, and then he was called a sacrilegious robber. Edward was welcomed to the crown, as one who promised fair to uphold the new religion: he died, and left the sceptre in the hands of Jane, who will maintain the Reformed faith. Yet they are not satisfied, though they must know that with the return of Mary, will roll back the pent-up torrent of Rome, and wash away every foot-mark of this new faith."

"Not so," answered Northumberland; "I fear me these footmarks are too deeply engraved to be thus easily erased, and that the water might as soon wash out the deep chisellings of the hardest granite, as sweep away the

strong impressions already made. Thou well knowest, that in heart I still adhere to the old faith."

"Alas! I do," answered Lord Grey, "and that knowledge hath often discomfited me. I fear me that no good will befall us, while we are thus trying to deceive even God."

"Let us spur onward," said Northumberland, with a sigh; "my thoughts are becoming a burthen to me."

He gave the word of command, and the cavalry started off at a brisk trot; but even the bracing air of the country failed to raise the spirits of the Duke, and he remained moody and thoughtful during the rest of the day.

CHAPTER XVI.

I tell thee, friend, I do dislike her looks ;
I've rung her as a miser does his gold,
And find the sound suspicious. Time is the scale
In which she must be weighed, and should she not
To make amends then bump the balance down,
My loyalty and duty's at an end.
She talks too much of blood. I like it not !

The Coming Comet.

THE scene of our story now changes to the ancient castle of Framlingham, in Suffolk, the rallying point selected by the Princess Mary and her adherents, as offering a near escape by sea in case of danger. It is at the time when the herald returned, that our narrative again commences, and when Mary could number above twenty thousand men, who had all gathered around her banner. Even the men

who composed the fleet that was sent out to intercept her flight, had declared in her favour, and the ships lay moored in the distance, ready to carry their thunder to wherever she might command them. Within and without the castle was this immense array assembled, their arms glittering in the morning light, and their pennons rustling in the breeze that blew clear and refreshing from the open sea. Mary, attended by the Earls of Bath and Sussex, was pacing to and fro along the castle walls, and ever and anon waving her scarf or bowing her head, to the loud huzzas of the multitude.

There was, however, something cold and formal in her manner of acknowledging these greetings; her smile was alone confined to a slight alteration of the lips, while the rest of her features scarcely seemed to alter in their stern, solemn, and forbidding expression. Although she was very near-sighted, and could

not distinguish a single leader by his armorial bearings, though so near at hand, without enquiring of one or other of the earls who accompanied her, still her glance was piercing when observed closely, and by some strange power caused the beholder to avert his eyes; for if looked upon long, hers seemed to grow larger, more fiery, and forbidding. Her brow too, though she had not yet numbered thirty-seven years, had a care-worn look, and was deeply wrinkled, and the whole expression of her countenance was gloomy, dissatisfied, and cruel, the result of long suffering and persecution, for she was for a length of time uncertain whether her brutal father would confine her in a nunnery, or behead her; and she had been compelled to acknowledge that her mother was not Henry's lawful wife, and that the religion she professed was devoid of truth. She had indeed been hardly dealt with,

been persecuted and insulted by no gentle hands, and driven hither and thither like a beggar from tything to tything. Short in stature, thin and pale even to a hue of sickliness that added to the meagre and miserable look of her features, she had, notwithstanding these signs of weakness, a thick, loud, and revolting voice, hoarse and rough as a seaman's, and which could be heard a long way off. Still, with all her fanaticism and bigotry, she was passionately fond of dress, and the train of white satin and silver tissue, which was upheld by two maidens, who followed her along the battlements, formed a strange contrast to the narrow and ascetic cast of her countenance. Hers was, in short, a face that might be feared but never could be loved, and all the art of Holbein, (to whom she sat for her portrait) could not cloak over the evil expression which so strongly marked the features of the

cruel and bloody Mary. We will not, however, lay more to her charge than she is guilty of. Too many surrounded her whose natures were gloomy and vindictive, who had wrongs to revenge, and vengeance to wreak, upon the heads of their enemies, and who, working upon her weak and willing nature, made her an instrument to accomplish their hellish purposes, by persuading her that she was doing the work of Heaven. She stands up, the crowned Moloch of History, her attendants grim and hideous fiends, who offered up human sacrifices before her, gratified her sight with blood and flames, and regaled her ears with shrieks and groans, and the crackling of consuming fires.

But let us not blame her, for she was the people's choice; they rejected the lamb, and followed the cub of the wolf, that had trampled upon the rights of the people,—the descendant

of the bloated and dissolute tyrant; and she demanded the head of the church in a charger, —the blood of Herod flowed in her veins.

“Methinks our herald is somewhat longer than he promised to be,” croaked out this royal raven, as she raised her harsh and foreboding voice on the battlements: “discover ye aught of his coming, my Lord of Bath?”

“So many horsemen are flocking to your Highness’s banner,” replied the noble renegade, “that it is difficult to recognise any particular form amid the dust raised by the hoofs of their steeds.”

“Yonder he comes, if I err not,” said the Earl of Sussex; “his steed jaded, and his plume drooping, and without his followers.”

“I will hang the whole of the council,” said Mary, “if he hath met with ill-treatment at their hands. Not a head but shall be raised on a pole to look over London Bridge. I will not

break my fast when I enter the City, until it is done. But let us begone, and await his presence within the hall of the castle.”

And the whole party descended the winding stairs of the tower, which communicated with the battlements. Meanwhile the horseman approached the castle; his steed flecked with foam, and himself, what with the weight of his armour, and the distance he had ridden without dismounting, ready to drop from the saddle. The assembled troops without the walls made way for him to pass, and he rode through ranks of horse and foot soldiers sheathed in mail, and peasants armed with scythes and other formidable weapons, who, mingled with the fishermen from the neighbouring coast, were drinking and shouting, and ready to fight for either queen or king, for a day's holiday and a drunken carousal.

Drawbridge was dropped, and portcullis raised

in readiness, and the tramp of his horse rung over the moat, and echoed beneath the gloomy archway, before he entered the inner court; when, throwing up the reins of his steed to an attendant, he proceeded without delay to the hall.

Mary was seated on a temporary throne on the dais, surrounded by the few nobles who had already taken up arms in her defence; and without deigning to notice the wearied appearance of the knight, or even to enquire what mishap he had met with, she said in her harshest and most disagreeable tone of voice, "We expected you before moonrise, Sir Knight. What tidings have you brought us after this long delay? Have the rebels returned to their subjection and allegiance?"

The knight gazed on her for a moment, as he knelt down and presented the epistle from the Council, and murmured something which was scarcely audible about a delay, and attack on

the road ; then his thoughts instantly reverted to the contrast between her features and the Lady Jane Grey's, and he turned away his head in disgust.

“Read it, my Lord,” said the Princess, holding the letter to within a hand's breadth of her face, and running her near-sighted glance over a line or two, then handing it over to the Earl of Bath : “Read it aloud, that all may hear how yonder traitors stand affected toward us.”

The nobleman obeyed, and read as follows :

“Madam.”

“Marry !” exclaimed the Princess, her pale features assuming a more deathly hue. “They would be hard set to find a briefer title for a City-wife. Were the axe suspended above their necks, I should be dinned to death with longer titles. But proceed.”

“We* have received your letters declaring

* Sic in the original.

your supposed title" — the Princess unconsciously ground her teeth together,—“which you judge yourself to have to the Imperial Crown of this realm.”

“The traitors!” exclaimed she, springing up, and unable to restrain her rage. “That supposed title shall yet make them tremble, when I become their judge in very deed. I will seal that title in their blood.” She sat down, and the Earl again proceeded.

“For answer whereof, this is to advertise you, that forasmuch as our Sovereign Lady Queen Jane is, after the death of our Sovereign Lord Edward the Sixth, (a Prince of most noble memory,) invested and possessed with the just and right title in the Imperial Crown of this realm, we must, as of most bound duty and allegiance, assent unto her said Grace, and to none other — ”

“Will ye drive me mad?” said the Princess,

seizing the letter, and doubling it up in her hand, then trampling it beneath her feet. "The traitors cannot! they dare not write to me in such terms. Oh! that I had but the neck of this sovereign heretic in my grasp; I would squeeze it until—" She clenched her hand, and fell back in her chair speechless for a few moments with passion.

"I have but read that which is written," said the Earl, waiting until she had recovered. "Such words will only serve to wet the edges of our swords. We but wait your Highness's commands to carry them back a sharper answer."

"Which they shall have speedily enough," said the Princess. "I would that it kept pace with my vengeance. How stand our friends affected towards us?" said she, addressing the herald.—"Arundel, Pembroke, and the rest, have they sent us no greetings?"

“They remain true,” replied Hastings, “and but await the approach of your Highness’s forces, to draw Northumberland from the Tower, and give up the fortress. I had letters from them; but was waylaid on my return hither, by a party of the Duke’s followers. The packet from the Council was all that escaped them.”

“We will send our forces forward to-day,” said Mary. “If the letters fall into Northumberland’s hands?—Well! it is not our fault that these nobles should remain in the Tower, in place of being at our side. We cannot save their lives at such a distance. Why are they not now with their Queen? We can but revenge their deaths. Saw ye this wife of Guilford’s that is aping our royalty?”

“I saw the Lady Jane,” replied the Knight, “seated at the afternoon banquet, among the nobles. She took but little part in the busi-

ness I came upon, and seemed unconscious that she was any other than the daughter of the Duke of Suffolk. Northumberland commands alone.”

“A bitter banquet shall she sit down to, ere many more suns have set!” said Mary, in a deep awful voice. “We will see how she can queen it on the scaffold. The very letter you brought us was written from her own dictation; there are words in it which were constantly on her lips. Banquet forsooth! and I have been driven here and there, springing into my saddle at every alarm; through wet and wind, and scarcely time to swallow a morsel. I will banquet on her blood!”

“Craving your Highness’s pardon,” said the Knight, “the letter was written and delivered without her knowledge. And even those who are friendly to our cause, confess that she hath taken up the crown, more of force than choice.

I speak but the sentiments of those who are most anxious to serve your Sovereign Grace."

"Thou hast seen the love-sick Wardour, or some such wavering traitor," said Mary, "who has shaken thy loyalty. Had any other than thyself have said thus much in defence of this usurper and heretic, we would at once have put him to death. But considering that thou wert the first to raise thy banner in our defence, we for this once pardon thee."

So saying, she departed, and was followed by the chief of her leaders into another room, when the letter was again perused, and measures taken for a speedy march to London.

"How now?" said Sir Thomas Wyatt, approaching the herald, who still remained in the hall. "Thou seest there is yet a spark of old Harry left in her. It is well for thee that neither Gardiner nor Bonner were at her elbow, for they are sage physicians, and would have

prescribed somewhat severely for thy spiritual good.”

“D— her!” exclaimed Hastings, his fine forehead darkening as he spoke. “Until I came to her aid, she had not followers enow to attack the City-watch. I would that I were in London with Wardour at my side, and the four thousand men I brought with me. Many a bold knight should bite the dust ere a hair of the Lady Jane’s head should come to harm. Had Arundel declared for her in place of the upstart Northumberland, I would have been the first to have joined his banner. I tell thee she is as much superior to this mass-mumbling Princess, as a carrier-pigeon to carrion crow. I marvel not that Wardour is chained so closely to her belt. I would that I had known her earlier.”

“Mary will pipe us to a new dance,” said Wyatt, “when the papist bishops are set free :

I marked her looks when she promised to leave the religion unmolested ; and five thousand men-at-arms stood by awaiting her answer, before they would declare in her favour. And, by the Holy Cross, I believe she lied. But we will wait and see how the tide turns ; the throne is her own by right ; but she may yet live to see, that we who placed her upon it, can, if occasion calls, unqueen her again."

"She is our Queen," said Hastings. "A bitter one, I fear me, she will prove. But if she means the scaffold to cry quits for all who have been compelled to show fair to Northumberland, we shall, indeed, have a bloody reckoning, and but few of our heads will be safe. Yonder unfortunate lady is surrounded by a nest of traitors ; and foremost amongst them is the cold-blooded Cecil. Marry, I could have struck the sycophant to the earth, when he bade me kiss the Princess's hand for him, and

assure her that she would find his loyalty written upon his heart. Arundel is led on more from his hatred to Northumberland than any ill-will to the Lady Jane herself. But Cecil—the wretch would barter the blood of his own mother for office; his very eyes make you shudder to look on them: he is wise, cunning, cold, calculating,—in fact, a human fiend.”

“Yonder sounds the trumpet,” said Wyatt, “we must to saddle. These are no times to sleep.”

“I must nod as we march,” said Hastings. “It will not be the first time I have slept in the stirrups. I would that Wardour was with me, to keep me awake.”

“There will yet be work enough,” said Wyatt, “to keep us all awake, ere we have done. And, between ourselves, I will stand by this love-sick youth, if any danger threatens the lady on whom his affections are now so

foolishly fixed ; for, by the true Lord, I like not her highness. Bonny Bess is worth a million of her ; and if ever she lives to become Queen, I doubt not but that the merry times of old England will be revived.”

So saying, they separated.

CHAPTER XVII.

O pity, God, this miserable age!—
What stratagems, how fell, how butcherly,
Erroneous, mutinous, and unnatural,
This deadly quarrel daily doth beget.

SHAKSPEARE.

WE must now glance at affairs within the Tower. Like schoolboys when the master's back is turned, and they are left to themselves, who instantly give vent to those feelings which have been so painfully kept in subjection, and begin to laugh, jump, assume every grimace, and kick up as loud an hubbub as they can well raise; so did those double-faced rascals who were left in possession of the fortress rejoice at the departure of Northumberland. True, theirs was not the obstreperous mirth

which we have chosen as an illustration, but that black springing of the heart, such as a villain feels when he has attained his object;—such as Satan himself may be supposed to feel, when he gets some wavering sinner into his claws, who, but for some superior devilship, might have escaped his clutch, and slipped in amongst the saints. It was a feeling difficult to describe—a mixture of mirth and vengeance; a kind of savage happiness; an exulting hatred; a blythe species of devilry; a carnival, such as the fiends may be supposed at times to enjoy; a deep and damnable pleasure; a dying man's laugh, who, just as he gives up the ghost, has managed to plant a dagger in the heart of his enemy; a feeling, such as we hope none of our readers will ever live to feel. Arundel clapped his hands together;—Darcy snapped his fingers with a devil-may-care kind of snap;—Pembroke hummed a merry air;—Cecil gave a quiet grin,

“a ghastly smile,” his black bad blood quickened its cold and calculating pace for a few moments, and gave a merrier dash through his veins.

These noble statesmen had all but accomplished their mighty object; they had nearly completed their grand triumph!—had achieved the ruin of a beautiful and inoffensive woman, and they were joyous!

And where was their innocent victim all the time? Like a lamb bound upon the altar, nibbling the wreaths of flowers with which it had been decorated for the sacrifice; looking out and smiling from its mild eyes, unconscious that the savage butcher was whetting the knife; nay, bleating in answer to each stroke, and fancying that it heard the voice of its companions. Yet Heaven looked down upon all this wickedness; and though there was a rumbling amid the dreadful bolts, and the red lightning shot forth its arrowy tongue, a Merciful hand

waved back the destruction. He who gave His only Son to save our fallen race, looked with a stern eye upon that scene, but launched not the bolts of vengeance, for the hour for justice had not yet arrived.

“One more device,” said Cecil, “and then we have played out our game. Which of you has hit upon a scheme for getting safely out of the Tower?”

“What scheme need we,” said Arundel, “saving ordering the portcullis to be raised? Who is there left that dare gainsay us?”

“I must find brains to the last,” replied Cecil. “What, think you that Northumberland is such a fool as to go abroad without leaving his mastiffs on the watch? Look round, and see in whose hands the Tower is left:—they are nearly all tried followers of either Northumberland or Suffolk, and we can only leave the Tower by obtaining the consent of the latter.”

“Let us heave the old dotard into the moat,” said Darcy; “his very brains contain lead enough to sink him.”

“Not so,” answered Cecil; “we have won too much already by playing double, to begin in earnest while there is even a risk.—I have it!” exclaimed he, rubbing his hands with delight. “To-day the Council was to hold a consultation with the French Ambassadors, regarding the foreign auxiliaries who are to join Northumberland: the meeting to take place at Somerset House. Here is a bait that Suffolk will eagerly bite at without suspicion: nay, the blockhead will thank us for keeping the appointment. Once outside—then summon our friends together; call out the Corporation; and huzza for Queen Mary, for we will proclaim her without a moment’s delay.”

“But how regain possession of the Tower?” enquired the Earl of Pembroke.

“ We will think of that,” answered Cecil, “ when we are outside, with twenty thousand men at our backs.”

“ The air is somewhat too close here for further consultation,” said Arundel; “ let us make up our faces at once, and confront the Duke of Suffolk; he will need no persuading.”

“ Not he, by my faith !” said Cecil. “ We shall but have to look grave, glance downward, as if in deep meditation, make our lowest bow, and say ‘ your Grace:’ then we may drag him by the beard across the moat. We need but ask, and have, that which we dare not to have whispered to Northumberland.”

“ Thou art the prince of plotters !” said Darcy; “ I would be loath to trust my neck within thy noose. Methinks Northumberland looked but gloomy in his saddle when he departed; his very plumes seemed to droop,

instead of flouting out as they were wont to do. I marvel he discovered not that the short marches we had given him were but done that we might gain more time. The cunning fox will at last be caught."

"He hath borne the sway too long," said Arundel, "and sported with the treasures of the realm. But his day of reckoning is now near at hand; and it shall go hard if I am not the first to set foot upon his neck."

"Let us clear the wood before we shout," said the cautious Cecil: "a few more minutes, and we may defy either Duke or devil!" And they departed to consult the shallow-minded Duke of Suffolk.

Within a brief space of time after the scene we have just described, the Duke of Suffolk was pacing up and down the Council chamber in the White Tower alone. There was a smile upon his weak, but florid countenance, and he

strode along between the pile of plain but imposing pillars, that support the massive timber roof, like a man who is on the best possible terms with himself. Sometimes he paused a moment in the broad flood of light that shot between the wooden columns, and with the point of his scabbard drew lines upon the floor; and just as he was about to depart, he heard a slow measured footstep approach, and, in another moment, the figure of Duskena stood before him.

“ I have sought you all around the fortress,” said the old woman, “ from donjon to turret. What do you here, when so vigilant a watch is needed ? If you suffer one of the false nobles to leave the Tower, your daughter will be lost ! An hour agone I saw Arundel and Cecil, and the rest of the traitors, in deep consultation, and have come to warn you. Look to them, and see that they escape not, until we have given up

the Tower on such terms as shall secure the freedom of the Lady Jane."

"Arundel! — Cecil! — Tower! — traitors!" echoed the Duke, not clearly understanding her. "What meanest thou, old woman? I dismissed them along with Pembroke, Darcy, Paget, and others, some time ago, to meet the French Ambassadors. Remember that thou art speaking of our friends, not of traitors."

"Dismissed them!" shrieked out the old hag, in such a tone as made the Duke spring back several paces, while she followed him up, and stretching out her skinny neck, fixed her piercing eyes upon him, as if she would look him dead. "Art thou then the very fool that Rumour rumours thee to be? Weak, imbecile dotard! unworthy to possess such a daughter as thy folly has this day sacrificed! To give up every advantage, and leave nothing that the besiegers will stand to barter for within these

walls! to let loose those who would have bought their freedom on any condition, and who would not give a groat now for thy weak head, were the executioner to offer to bowl it to their hands! Thou hast let loose such a legion as will, before night, turn and rend thee!—men whom no other hand than my own could have guided, and now they are beyond my power. Hark!” continued she,—a loud shouting was heard at a distance,—“they are already laughing at thy folly; the very mob are cheering them as they pass along. Thy daughter’s blood be upon thine own head! but for this I could have saved her!”

“I will send out and recapture them,” said the Duke; “it is not yet too late. A mere handful of armed men will be sufficient for the purpose, backed by the Queen’s name.”

“Recapture them!” said Duskena, with a look of the utmost contempt. “What few men

thou hast left within the fortress would not be able to bring back the tythe of their adherents. Art thou ignorant that the army which set out with Northumberland is already thinned of half its numbers?—that the men melting from his ranks like a morning mist, have returned to the City, and but wait for a leader to declare for Queen Mary?—that the retainers of Arundel and Pembroke have, for days past, been prowling about the different hostels? Thou a commander of a fortress, in the hour of danger, and such a prize at stake as the Lady Jane!—As good fetch one of the stone Kings that grin in grey granite in yonder chapel, and rear him on the Tower for protection, as such a dolt as thyself!”

“I have done wrong,” said the Duke, sighing, and looking more foolish than he usually did,—“if indeed they are traitors. But how came Northumberland to be deceived? I have often

heard of thy deep foresight, and marvel that thou didst not acquaint him with this matter.”

“*If* they are traitors!” echoed Duskena. “Had not Northumberland’s ambition blinded his sight, he would long ago have discovered how they hated him. He would have seen that I led him on, inch by inch, over a dangerous abyss, and could at any moment kick down the only plank that he trod upon, above the deep chasm. Ye were madmen all, to offer up such a fair victim on the altar of ambition. Would to God that I had but known her earlier;—but I have also been groping in the dark, and shall only find the gates of Death at last. But why lingerest thou here, when the conquerors are making ready to thunder at thy gates? Go thy ways, and look out the softest pallet, and the lightest prison, for these are all thy folly hath left thee.”

“She is a fearful woman,” murmured the

Duke, as he departed, "and more fit to command this fortress than myself."

"I know not what hath come upon me of late," said Duskena, communing with herself; "yonder lady hath a strange power over me. All my thoughts of vengeance have vanished, and my heart seems now to have no wish but for her safety. Strange, that I should thus sit for hours, gazing upon her face, and listening to her voice. I, who have indeed been her greatest enemy, now love her beyond aught on earth; even her opposite faith is no drawback on my affection; for the creed that she believes in must belong to Heaven. Heaven! how came that name upon my lips, when, a few days ago, I should have trembled but to have thought it? I, who have no portion in the Book of Life, but am steeped up to the very lips in crime!—who, for years, have schooled myself to look upon Hell as my eternal biding-place! I will away.

I dare not trust my own thoughts. Would that I could contemplate the great hereafter, like her I am about to join. I will think no more." And the old woman retraced her steps down the ancient stone-staircase.

END OF VOL. II.

LADY JANE GREY.

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VOL. III.

LADY JANE GREY;

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE.

BY

THOMAS MILLER,

AUTHOR OF

"ROYSTON GOWER," "RURAL SKETCHES," "FAIR ROSAMOND,"
"BEAUTIES OF THE COUNTRY," "A DAY IN THE WOODS," ETC.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.



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LADY JANE GREY.

CHAPTER I.

Lie there, thou cold and senseless type of power.
I would not now put off all care with thee,
Lest the next comer shrink back at the touch,
And shun thee as he would an adder's nest.
And now lead onward, for I fain would feel
Some old familiar misery, just to teach me
That I am still the same.

The Fallen Queen.

“ALL is lost!” said Duskena, when she entered the apartment where Queen Jane, attended by Lord Wardour, and a few of her favourite domestics were seated; “Suffolk hath suffered the traitors to escape. The Tower is now left to the defence of a mere handful of raw and inexperienced soldiers, who but wait the summons to throw open the gates.”

“All is not yet lost,” said Wardour, “nor will we give up this fortress without a struggle. Better that the traitors are without the walls than within them, so that we have but a few men left good and true. We will yet make our own conditions. These strong walls have stood many a siege.”

“God’s will be done,” said the young Queen. “I foresaw that it would come to this, and am resigned to the will of Heaven. Let us not aggravate our guilt by opposing that Power which directeth all things aright. My reign is nearly ended.” A tear stole down her cheek as she spoke, and with clasped hands she raised her lovely eyes to Heaven, as if despairing of all earthly comfort.

“The traitors! the base traitors,” exclaimed Wardour, pacing the apartment in a state of deep excitement. “To lead her on to the front of the battle, to the very brink of danger, and then desert her! May God’s curse alight upon their heads! But they shall yet find that there

is one man left, bold enough to stand up in her defence—one English heart that will shed its blood drop by drop in the cause of an injured woman. Would to God that I had to meet the traitors hand to hand—Hark ! what sounds are those ?”

They hearkened a moment, and heard a loud murmuring, as of many voices, not unlike the distant roaring of the sea ; and when it ceased, a sound of bells fell upon the ear, as if rung for some great jubilee. The young Queen turned paler as she listened.

The silence was, however, suddenly broken by the entrance of Gilbert Pots, in search of Wardour, for neither page nor man-at-arms had attempted to stop the drawer’s course through the passages, as the news of the Council having suddenly deserted the Tower, was known to every menial within its walls.

“ A troop of horsemen have entered the city,” said Gilbert, “ and joined with the Corporation and the Council. They have already proclaimed

Queen Mary at Paul's Cross. The crowd increases every hour. I found it difficult to pass along the streets. They are even now on their way to the Tower."

"Into which they shall never enter but by force," said Wardour, "until the Queen hath given her promise, that no one within its walls shall be molested. Gilbert, follow me to the gates."

"Stay, my Lord," said the lady, now rising, "let no blood be shed on my account. Bid the Duke of Suffolk attend to receive my last commands."

After a brief delay, the Duke entered the room, his countenance now pale with fear, for the sounding of trumpets and the loud huzzas of the multitude were fast nearing the Tower. The young Queen ascended the temporary throne to receive her father, and when he approached, said, "My Lord Duke, I command you to lower the drawbridge, and throw open the gates, that Queen Mary's followers may

enter." The Duke departed to fulfil her commands, without speaking a word.

"And now," said the Lady Jane, taking the royal jewels from her neck and placing them, together with the sceptre, upon the vacant throne, from which she descended with a firm step and colourless cheek, "I am no longer a Queen."

"The struggle shall not be given up without a blow," said Wardour. "I will to the postern, and cut the throat of the first knave that either raiseth portcullis or lowereth bridge."

"It is too late," answered Duskena; "they are already within the Tower."

The old hag spoke truly. Suffolk had thrown open the gates. All rushed out of the apartment, saving Duskena and the Lady Jane Grey.

"Be not cast down, my daughter," said the old woman, her words scarcely audible amid the loud shouts of the multitude who had entered the Tower. "I will yet bring thine enemies to fair terms, or raise such a storm about their ears as shall shake all London."

“It grieveth me not to lay aside this load of royalty,” said the fair victim, in a sweet but sorrowful tone of voice. “God is witness that I throw off these royal robes with more pleasure than I ever put them on. But where is Amy, to disrobe me? I would not be found in any other garments than such as I wore before I was in an evil hour persuaded to do a deed at which my conscience recoiled.”

“She but looks out to give us warning when the hunters approach,” said Duskena; “they will not be long in discovering where the white doe harboureth. But stoop thy neck,” added she, raising her skinny hands to unloose the golden loop which secured the dalmatic robes. Would that I could as readily undo all that I have done against thee as I can now unqueen thee. I am but a rough tire-woman,” continued she, taking off the robe, and throwing it carelessly on the floor; while she proceeded to unloose the riband to which was appended the badge and star of the Order of the Garter,

which she likewise hurled on the ground. "And now," said she, looking at the lady, as she stood divested of all her royal trappings, "thou hast still thine innocence left thee—a mantle more costly than royal apparel. I would that I could as easily cast off my sins as thou hast done; but mine are written on my heart."

"I little dreamed," said the Lady, her foot resting upon the rich border of the dalmatic robes, "that thine would be the first hand to strip me of this brief sovereignty, that thou wouldst be the first to lighten my heart of this load of royalty. But the dream is now broken, and I am once more awake. My reign is at last ended. Would to God that it had never begun!"

"Reproach not thyself with the folly of others," said Duskena: "I am the great mover of all this mischief; but it was the ambition of Northumberland that first led me on. I have been a foolish old woman; but my sufferings drove me mad. I knew not what I did. Thou wert the

first to call me back to reason, and not a hair of thine head shall suffer for my guilt. I will reason with Gardiner, kneel to Queen Mary, nay, lose my own life, ere harm shall befall thee ; but thou art innocent, and hast nothing to fear."

"I fear no earthly power," said the Lady. "It is Heaven that my own heart tells me I have offended, by refusing to obey its holy dictates. I accepted not the crown willingly. I refused it but too weakly. I was not strong enough in resisting the temptation which was forced upon me, and I have sinned."

"Fly, my dear lady, ere it is too late!" exclaimed Amy, rushing into the apartment. "They are coming to drag thee away to prison, and break my heart. I heard the Duke of Sussex give the order to his followers. They are here ! they are here !" said the faithful attendant, clinging to her lovely mistress.

"I am ready !" said the lady, without changing countenance ; "from a throne to a dungeon is but a step that others have taken before me ;

a stride further, and we reach the grave, and then our earthly journey will be ended."

"To the prison!" exclaimed Duskena, springing forward that she might first confront the soldiers, several of whom had now entered the state-chamber,—“For what? by whose commands? Soldiers, whom seek ye here? Ye see that there are none but women in this apartment. Is it myself that ye would speak with?”

“It is the Lady Jane Dudley that my order concerneth,” said the Lieutenant, approaching as if to lay rude hands on her. “She is my prisoner.”

“Touch her not at the peril of thine eyes,” exclaimed Duskena, raising her hands, and bending her fingers, as if in the act to strike, while the soldiers fell back before her. “Where is the Princess Mary? lead me to the Queen! and I will soon convince you, that your order extendeth not to this lady. The first who offereth to pass by me I will tear open his cheeks with my nails.”

“Nay, hinder them not in their duty,” said Amy, rushing past the old woman, and thinking by this sleight to save her mistress; “lead on, and I will go with you.”

“Not so fast, my pretty mistress,” replied the Lieutenant; then adding in an undertone, “the devil take me! but I would sooner face a ranged row of charged cannon than meddle in women’s matters, and this is a right mettlesome wench. I wish they had escaped before we came.” But his meditation was suddenly broken by the entrance of the Duke of Sussex.

“How now, knaves! why delay ye in the execution of your duty?” exclaimed he, marching abreast of his followers. But the Lady Jane was already at his side, and she was the first to reply, and said, “They but tarried a moment, good Sir, and now I am ready.”

“Our orders admit but of brief space, madam,” said the Duke, “for the present; but I forget,” added he, with a brutal sneer, “that you have so long been used to command—that

you can scarcely reconcile yourself to obey on so sudden a notice."

A tear stood in the fair lady's eye; but she replied not, and Duskena was the first to speak.

"Thou art but a base-bred monster," said the fearless old woman, "in spite of thy gaudy trappings, thus to insult an inoffensive lady. And were I a man, I would throw my glove in thy face and spit upon thee, if thou didst refuse to make reparation."

"That task be mine," said Lord Wardour, dashing by the armed men, and standing full before the Duke, while his fine countenance was crimsoned over with passion; and without a moment's hesitation, he struck Sussex on the cheek with the flat side of his sword, then exclaimed in a voice of thunder, "Draw, villain! if thou hast one drop of knightly blood in thy veins, or I will strike thee to the earth like a dog." And he set his teeth as he spoke, and stood like an enraged lion ready to spring on its prey.

The cowardly Duke stood before him pale and speechless with passion ; then his hand, as if instinctively, grasped the hilt of the dagger at his belt. He turned round, and his eye fell upon Sir Thomas Wyatt, and he exclaimed, in a tremulous voice, "Seize the traitor! and bear him to prison: he shall answer for this before the Council."

"Coward!" exclaimed Wardour, and he would have rushed at once upon the Duke, had not the Lady Jane caught his arm just as the sword was uplifted.

"Henry Wardour," said the Lady, still retaining her hold, "had I not been a lover of peace, I should have disputed my title with closed gates, in place of throwing open the doors of this fortress. While I bear these taunts without murmuring, it cannot assuredly be too much for you to look on and sympathize with me in silence. If in my fallen state you have still that respect for me which I would fain believe you entertain, you will best show it

by obeying me. And now I charge you for my sake to put up your sword." The young nobleman obeyed, though his hand instantly clutched one of the pistols which was stuck in his belt.

"And now, my Lord," said she, addressing the Duke, "lead on. Your orders, if I err not, but extend to myself."

"Let not the traitor escape," said the Duke, turning round, and speaking to Sir Thomas Wyatt, as he departed. "Remember, he hath assailed me while fulfilling the commands of our sovereign lady Queen Mary, and for which he shall lose his head."

Wyatt bowed, as if in acquiescence, but replied not, and Wardour fixed his eyes on the Lady Jane Grey in silence, until the form was lost, and the sound of the armed men had died away as their footsteps receded along the vaulted passage. Amy followed her fair mistress, her loud sobs heard long after the last footstep had ceased to become audible.

Duskena stood leaning upon her staff, her eyes still flashing with anger, and her withered lips moving quickly, but whether they breathed a prayer for the safety of the lady, or muttered curses on the head of Sussex, was unknown, for not a sound fell upon the ears of those present.

“And now,” said Sir Thomas Wyatt, dropping his sword with a loud clang into its sheath, “the drawbridge is down, and strangers constantly passing in and out of the Tower, and I would advise thee to begone, for the block will drink in blood enough without needing thine; and as for Sussex, leave me to settle this account with him.”

“I thank thee,” replied Lord Wardour: “the prison or the block will to me be now alike welcome; the rough walls that will henceforth encompass *her*, shall also surround me; I have no wish to escape.”

“Well, then, I must leave thee to thy fate,” said Wyatt; “but, remember, that if the axe and thy neck become acquainted, it is no fault

of mine. The road is now free,—a few minutes hence it may be beyond my power to give thee freedom !”

“ Henry Wardour, begone, ere it is too late !” said Duskena, now raising her head. “ All that can be done within these walls, I have the power to do. Should I fail, thou wouldst then give thy heart’s blood to be at liberty. Where is thy father, the Earl of Arundel ?”

“ He has hurried off at the head of a large force, to take prisoners Northumberland and his son Guilford,” replied Sir Thomas Wyatt ; “ and small will be the share of mercy they will meet at his hands. They purposed keeping their seats in the saddle all night, so that, by to-morrow, the career of the Duke will be ended.”

“ And a bloody ending will it be !” murmured Duskena. “ But as he has sowed, so let him reap ; I stretched out mine arm in vain to save him.—Wardour, begone ! and conceal thyself ! If thou lingerest here, thou wilt but mar my

designs, and whatever the result may be, I will in good time impart it to thee. You, Sir Knight," added she, looking at Wyatt, "are, I know, in sworn league with him, and will render him good service, by remaining here a little longer. As for myself, I am safe, and it shall go hard if I succeed not in procuring the liberty of the Lady Jane Grey. Henry Wardour, depart: ere another sun sets it will be too late. Thou knowest my token; bear it to the King of the Beggars; with him thou wilt be safe. Sussex is revengeful, and hath the ear of Queen Mary; nor will he ever pardon the blow he has this day received at thy hand."

"I will obey thee," said Wardour, "in the hopes that the next blow I strike will be at his heart;" then added, with a deep sigh, "I care not what befalls me now: I shall never be happy more."

"Despair not," said Wyatt, holding out his

hand; “if blows are to be dealt, I will be the first to place myself at thy side, and we have made a gap together in battle before now. Hand and glove, I pledge myself to draw sword for the fair lady thou so madly and foolishly lovest, if we cannot procure her freedom on other terms. Go and pluck up thy spirits; Guilford may fall in to-morrow’s affray, and then——. Well! well, I will not anger thee,—farewell;” and they separated, Duskena to seek out the liberated Bishop Gardiner; and Wyatt to make up the best tale he could to Sussex, of Wardour’s escape, while the young nobleman withdrew, to await in secret the change of events.

CHAPTER II.

Farewell, a long farewell to all my greatness.
This is the state of man ; to-day he puts forth
The tender leaves of hope, to-morrow blossoms,
And bears his blushing honours thick upon him ;
The third day comes a frost, a killing frost ;
And when he thinks, good cozy man, full surely
His greatness is a ripening—nips his root,
And then he falls as I do.

SHAKSPEARE.

NORTHUMBERLAND had, by this time, advanced upon Cambridge, the place appointed by the Council, where he was to await the promised reinforcements, before offering battle to Mary. Meanwhile, his army had diminished to less than half the number with which he set out from London. Every winding of the road, hamlet, or wood that offered a brief concealment, was taken advantage of by the wandering soldiers ; and no sooner were they clear of the

main body, than they hurried off to join the standard of Queen Mary.

Behold him, then, with a remnant of his followers around him, assembled in the market-place of the old city of Cambridge. The Duke had alighted from his war-horse, and stood on the steps of the ancient cross; his eyes strained in the direction from which he expected the new forces to arrive. Around the cross stood his faithful attendant, Sir Thomas Palmer, Lord Grey, his son Guilford Dudley, Northampton, Huntingdon, and several other of the nobles; some leaning on the hilts of their swords, or resting their arms on the saddles of their war-horses,—but all buried in their own thoughts. The soldiers also were moody and silent: sometimes they glanced at their leaders suspiciously, then drew their steeds nearer together, and spoke to one another in low whispers. All eyes were, however, suddenly turned in the direction of the street, along which came a horse-

man at full gallop. The rider drew in his rein, beside the cross, and, without even bowing to the Duke, delivered a letter. Northumberland scowled darkly at the bearer for a moment, before breaking the seal ; but before his eye had run over half the contents of the document, his anger was turned into another channel.

Many an eye was riveted upon the Duke's countenance while he perused the epistle, as if they sought to gather its contents from his looks. Neither had they to wait long, before they saw the effects it produced ; for as he read on his features changed, and, at the end of every sentence, he muttered a curse.

At first his brow became dark as the grave ; his black bushy brows met together, and over them knit his forehead in deep angry furrows, as if his countenance was gathering up like a dark thunder-cloud, that blackens until it bursts. Then his teeth clenched, and ground together,

while his eyes flashed angrily over the paper, like the lightning darting through this storm of passion. At length his lips quivered, and became white: his countenance changed to almost a deathly paleness, and dropping the letter unconsciously, he struck his forehead with the palm of his hand; then leant against the grey and weather-beaten cross for support. All was lost! the letter had been sent from the Council, when they deserted the Tower, to proclaim Queen Mary; and, instead of sending him the promised reinforcement, they had commanded him to lay down his arms, disband his soldiers, and return to his allegiance to Queen Mary.

Lord Grey was the first to take up the epistle; he perused it in silence,—shook his head; then handed it to Guilford; and so it passed round among the assembled nobles. But as yet no one had spoken a word.

When the Duke descended the steps of the

cross, the nobles gathered around him, like passengers who crowd about a captain when the ship is in danger, as if he alone had still power to save them.

“ These are sorry tidings,” said Lord Grey, now breaking the painful silence; “ I ever feared that Arundel was playing false, and have many a time put you on your guard against Cecil.”

“ The fawning knaves have sold us at last,” added Northampton. “ And now, whether we perish sword in hand, by opposing superior numbers, or suffer ourselves to be led tamely to the block, will matter but little in the end.”

“ This cause had never my hearty sanction,” said Huntingdon, coming like another Eliphaz, with his cold comfort. “ But your Grace would ever proceed in your own way, and now we must all, perforce, become unwilling sufferers for your folly. Had we remained at the Tower, we might have compelled the enemy to accede

to our own terms; but now we have only our knees or necks to offer them.”

“ Say on,” replied Northumberland, waiting sullenly until they had done speaking; “ I must now bear all the blame that ye can pile upon me. The wounded soldier, who has stood up boldly in the foremost rank of battle, is the first that is trampled on by his cowardly comrades when they retreat! But it is too late to murmur now,—they have won the field without striking a blow; and I, who have reaped so many victories, am at last conquered by their cunning. I would that I had the necks of yonder traitors between the palms of my gauntlets; I would crush them like the eggs of a serpent. The cursed Cecil!—to how low a pit of hell will he be damned! And the dotard Suffolk!—Oh! I could tear out my heart, when I think the fool that I have been. But the struggle is over, and the way is now clear; ye need but return to your allegiance, to save yourselves.

As for me, my choice is fixed. I will here await the approach of my enemies, and die in the cause, in which I have enlisted,—even though I perish alone.”

He unsheathed his sword when he had done speaking, and stood up like a man, whose resolution is fixed, and, for the moment, his spirit was kindled by the daring fire which had blazed out amid his former perils, and rendered his name so formidable.

“It is not yet too late to save ourselves,” said the Marquis of Northampton: “no blood has been shed; let us then summon a herald and proclaim Queen Mary without delay. We shall not be the first who, to save their heads, have bowed their necks to circumstances. Better do this of our own seeming accord, than be in the end compelled to it.”

“Better to die with armour on our backs,” said Lord Guilford, speaking for once as became the husband of the fair victim he

had espoused ; “ let us not add derision to our defeat or be led to the scaffold with the finger of scorn pointed at us. Let us do something for the sake of her who has been so unwillingly forced into this snare, that we may at least leave the name of man upon our graves. For my part, my choice is fixed.” He drew his sword, and took his stand beside his father, the Duke of Northumberland.

“ We are but losing time in useless talk,” said the Earl of Huntingdon ; “ let those who are still wise enough to make the best of a bad cause, declare for the immediate proclamation of Queen Mary, by holding up their swords.”

All agreed, with the exception of Guilford Dudley, for, to the astonishment of every one present, Northumberland held up his sword. The proud duke had fallen ! and when, at the sound of trumpet, the herald repeated the proclamation, Northumberland was the first to take off his helmet and exclaim, “ God save

Queen Mary!" The soldiers rent the air with the sound of her name; then, without waiting the commands of their leaders, many of them hurried off to the neighbouring taverns, to drink deep healths to the new Queen, for with all his faults, the memory of Henry the Eighth was still venerated, and they had ever looked on his daughter as their rightful sovereign. Still there were not lacking a goodly number of bystanders, who were in no wise backward with their jeers.

"I foresaw how this great Duke would acquit himself," said a rakish-looking student who stood by in his long gown, addressing his companion: "trust me, he hath read the old adage, and found *Durum telum necessitas* to be a truth worth remembering."

"Hang him for a craven," replied the other: "but I would myself have struck a few blows for the love I bear to this fair disciple of Plato, whom they would now unqueen. Methinks,

for the honour of the Greek she hath mastered, we are bound to fight for her. I will yet throw up my cap, if thou wilt stand by me; there are a few brave fellows in their saddles who had courage enough to groan when they proclaimed this mass-mumbling Princess. What say you to a shout for Queen Jane, then a run for the gates of the College? We have lads amongst us who can drive a bullet to a hair's-breadth, and carve as well as any thorough-bred and paid butcher."

"Be not too rash," said the other; "look who comes yonder. *Audi alteram partem*, I hold to be good advice before a fray."

The new comers were the Earl of Arundel, and several other noblemen, at the head of an immense body of cavalry, which filled the whole Market-place. The smoke which arose from their steeds, bespoke the speed at which they had ridden; and when Northumberland beheld

them, he muttered to himself, "Vengeance is quick of flight."

"Soldiers, advance!" said Arundel, reining up his reeking steed before the cross, "and seize the traitors! Let not one of their leaders escape!"

The old Cross was instantly surrounded by a triple row of horsemen; but the prisoners made no show of resistance. Guilford alone had the courage to uplift his sword, and it was instantly wrested from his grasp. Northumberland was the first brought before the Earl, his head bare, and himself weaponless.

"How like you the aid I have brought?" said Arundel, who had long hated the Duke with a bitter hatred: "you are at last surrounded with a guard of honour. A king could not have more."

"Spare thy taunts," replied Northumberland, "and remember how few hours have elapsed

since thou didst swear to shed thine heart's blood in my defence. Or, if thou hast a wish to crown thy triumph with a deed nobler than thy baseness and deceit, bid thy minions stand back, and return to me my sword, and thou shalt either die worthy of the name of Arundel, or I will perish as becomes Northumberland. We could not fight in the presence of a more goodly assembly."

"I cannot accept the challenge of my prisoner," answered the Earl, his brow darkening as he spoke; "but had I not pledged my honour to bring thee safely to London, I would gladly give thee the meeting thou seemest so much to desire. As it is," added he, turning round to the nobles who had accompanied him, "I here pledge myself to meet thee, on the word of a knight, the instant thou art free."

"Thy honour and thy pledge, I shall never regard more," replied the Duke; "hadst thou but had the manliness to have opposed

my measures, I might not now have been thy prisoner. But thou art a serpent, and didst sting me unawares, though I shall yet meet death with as firm a glance as either thou, or thy cold-blooded slave, Cecil."

"Hark thee," answered Arundel, "it has now come to my turn to speak without fearing thee. When thou wert in power, had I but dared to have opposed thy plans, thou wouldst without hearing have condemned me to the block. Rememberest thou threatening to fight any one of thy peers in thy shirt, if we gave not our consent to the document which thou didst persuade King Edward to sign, and which wrested the crown from the rightful heir? A saint hath ere now held a candle to the devil, and thought it no disgrace. Think of Somerset, whose blood thou didst cause to be shed,—of my own son, whose life thou didst threaten,—of King Edward, whose days thou didst shorten,—and of the Lady Jane Grey, whom thine am-

bition has all but sacrificed,— of Gardiner and Bonner, who through thy means have long been confined in the Tower. And for what? — To support and strengthen this new faith, while thou thyself didst keep a priest in thine own house, attended mass and confession, and wert even hated by thy very menials, for the deceitful part thou didst play.”

Northumberland buried his face in his hands, and throwing himself upon the ground, exclaimed, “Arundel, save me! I have indeed been guilty.”

“Nay! nay!” replied the Earl, for a moment deeply moved; “guilty indeed thou art. But I would still see the man, under whose banner I have fought, die as becomes him. Come! bring forth his horse. Had it been my fate to have fallen into thy power, I would at least have carried thy respect for my valour with me to the grave, and met my doom as became a soldier. If I have hated thee, I have also feared

thee ; let me not look on thy death with scorn. I would bear a man with me in triumph, a coward I would leave to be escorted by my grooms."

Such was the comfort administered to the fallen Duke, by Arundel,—it was Pity cased in mail, and breathing patience to a naked man stung with a thousand gad-flies. It was the advice of a rich man to a poor one, who recommends starvation with cold water to the miserable applicant ; and breathes lessons of independence and perseverance to the wretch who is ready to sell his soul for a "mess of pottage." It was indeed the world all over, the cold heartless part of the world, that fancies it could feed upon flint-stones, when it would perish on what the poor call luxuries. But Northumberland deserved it all, and we will not awaken the reader's sympathies in his favour, though we could feel pity for the devil, if he was compelled to sue for a journeyman fiendship.

It would be useless to trace Northumberland's journey to London—his humiliating halts—his feelings as he rode along—the envious glances he gave at the poor bird-tenters who were guarding the rustling corn,—the sighs he heaved while he passed through the lowly hamlets, and compared the smiling green of the earth, to the dark donjons of the Tower,—the life and sunshine, and out-of-door happiness of the world, to the gloom and uncertainty of death,—the song of the happy cottage-girl, to the harsh grating of the prison doors of the Tower—the black, the melancholy, and the hopeless cast on a ground of sunshine—dark night gilded with the beams of day—a dead man dreaming in the grave—Despair singing to Death,—words of pity, wasted on a wounded and writhing adder. We will hasten to other scenes.

CHAPTER III.

I hold a cup of sack good fellowship,
And shake hands with the ale-cup as a brother ;
No man hatcheth treason in his drink,
'Tis your dry-lipped knaves alone that plot ;
We who bask in the beams of a bright eye,
Care but little how your statesmen rule.

The Case Reversed.

THROWING up feathers into the air, to see how the wind blows as we proceed ; we will again glance at the hostel, which was still kept by the widow of Ninion Saunders : for in no place could the opinions of the people, respecting government, be so well gathered as in a tavern. It is the same in the present day : for as the cup circulates, the guests throw off all reserve, and mostly express their real sentiments. The

St. John's Head had undergone no change since the death of Ninion: for Dame Deborah still contrived to bustle about in her widow's weeds, and many of her unmarried guests were more regular in their attendance than before: for rumour said that the buxom hostess had already hinted how unfit a lone woman was to manage an hostel. Even Christy the clerk had ventured into the bar to console Dame Deborah, and had been seen sitting with the hand of the fair widow pressed between his own. Peter, the printer, had also presented her with a good fair copy of Skelton's poems; and Hans Carvel had shown her several patterns of new wedding rings, the richest of which he had left on her finger. Nor had the Radical Cordwainer been behind-hand; but had refused to take pay for the handsome pair of broad-toed and richly slashed shoes which he had made her, vowing that she had the widest and most beautiful foot he had ever

measured. In fact, the fair widow had a smile for all, and her name was fast eclipsing that of the rival sister in weeds, whose charms had so long made sunshine in the bar of the Three Tuns at Greenwich.

It is on the evening of the same day, which had seen the gates of the Tower closed upon Northumberland as prisoner, that we again introduce our readers to the guests at the St. John's Head on Ludgate-hill.

“De changes be great, my masters,” said Hans Carvel, the goldsmith, addressing the company. “Dey are bringing me all de old crosses to repair, — de golden virgins, and de little silver images, vich dey did cast aside for trash, and say dey were popery.”

“Just the same at our place,” said Christy, the clerk and sexton of St. Paul's. “I have been all day dragging the images of the saints out of the vaults, and washing them. My arms

ache through scrubbing St. Peter with a brush and hot water; you would scarce credit me what trouble I have had to get him clean. The rats have eaten off St. Thomas' nose, and Tim the carver says, that we shall be forced to have a new Magdalen, unless he puts a pair of fresh arms on St. Ursula, and so make shift. As to the Twelve Apostles, I am afraid we shall have to order six new ones; for several of them have been sold for figure-a-heads to the shipwrights. I saw one the last time I was down at Greenwich, fixed on the prow of the Guy of Warwick. I must see if I cannot buy him back at a cheap rate. But these are great changes, my masters."

"Marry, are they," echoed a master tailor; "two of my fellows have left me to-day, better hands never drew thread through a tunic. They had been brought up in some monastery, and when Bluff Hal made a clearance, were forced

to take up needle and shears to gain a livelihood ; and now they have gone again to bead and book. But it is only the back-stitching we all must learn. And if a word is said, Christy, about fresh coverings to keep the dust from the new images, I doubt not but that ye will give an old neighbour a turn ; you shall find my charges reasonable. Come, empty your cup, we have not drank together for many a day ; let me for one night discharge the reckoning."

"I thank thee, neighbour Tackemtight," said Christy, emptying his cup, "and will not forget to recommend thee, when aught is needed. I foresee a change, and we have orders to hold ourselves in readiness for Queen Mary's approach. And the Lord knows, I had less to do under the old religion, and was better paid. I could afford to keep a grave-digger while the sweating-sickness raged. But somehow folk

seem to live longer than they did ; those were good times, neighbour Restall."

"They were, they were," answered the undertaker, whom Christy addressed. "Thirty coffins a week have I knocked together ; but I calculated on the disease lasting longer than it did, and I speculated too far in wood, which fell in price, as soon as the complaint subsided."

"Methinks you might find other matters to talk about," said Dame Saunders, "before a lone woman, than remind her so often of my late loss, and when my poor Ninion did not go to his grave like another body."

"He was a fine corpse though," said the undertaker ; "and when his face was washed free from the mud of the river, looked just like himself. It was a pleasure to look at him, and his coffin was a good fit."

"So was his grave," said Christy ; "I dug it

with my own hands, thinking that he would sleep the sounder, through having his last bed made by an old friend."

"And his shroud," said the tailor, "was well put together with double white-a-brown thread."

"Well, he is gone," said the printer, taking up his cup; "and may all his errors be corrected in a new edition. Saw ye the Duke enter the Tower to-day? Marry, I never thought to see so foul an impression worked off, on so fair a sheet as he seemed to present a few days ago."

"Me do very much wish to get de moneys for de plate he ordered when de Lady Jane was married to the goot Lord Guilford," said the goldsmith, "and which he gave dem for de bridal presents. Poor dear Lady, me much vish dey had let her be Queen."

"She is a good, and a fair Lady," said the

shoemaker, "and hath a right respect for the gentle craft. For when I was waiting within the Tower, to deliver the shoes she had ordered, (and for which I had to get new lasts, her feet were so small,) she chanced to come forth, and with her own white hands took them, and spoke well of the workmanship. Sent out her page with a broad Harry for payment, and took not back a grey groat in change."

"Poor Lady! I pity her," said the undertaker: "for I drank a cup with the headsman of the Tower to-day at noon, and he expects soon to have more work. He is a worthy man, and never asks what a coffin will cost until he pays down the price. What may the height of Northumberland be? We have not much work on hand, and he thought I might begin to prepare."

"I rack not my brain with the length of those who are beheaded in the Tower," said

Christy: "for you but rarely have a stray grave to dig for them. I thought to have got hold of the Protector Somerset; but such prey drop not into my pit. Well! well! better times may come, and I drink to their speedy return. Drawer, fill my cup! brown bastard, as before."

"Well! things will find their own level," said he of the gentle craft. "And I think it better that Northumberland should lose his head, than that hundreds of poor fellows should lose their lives in fighting for him. Justice sometimes strikes aright. Your kings would quarrel less, if they had to fight their own battles, and if all those who are so ready to declare for war were compelled to head a troop, you would find fewer voices for it in Parliament."

"But de honour of de nation," said the goldsmith; "de glory of England must be maintained. Let de crown have de inshult, and sit down wid it, den we be kicked in turn."

“If they would fight at home,” said the undertaker, “instead of throwing the trade into the hands of foreigners, I would not so much mind it.”

“Nor I,” said Christy; “though when I went down into Norfolk amongst the rebels, and applied for a place as under-sexton, I found but little to do. They made one pit serve for fifty, and grumbled to give a groat for a separate grave.”

“Vot! mine old friend,” said the goldsmith, springing up and embracing Gilbert, who just then entered the room. “Me did tink you had lost your head, for bushying it wid matters of de state.”

“Not so,” said Gilbert, seizing the offered cup, and emptying it at a draught: “I have but found my thirst increase, since I inhaled the high air in the pillory, and the close atmosphere of the Tower. But a few cups will bring

back my body to its former temperature, and I shall not drink them with a less relish, now that old Ninion has gone."

"I was afraid thou hadst slipped out of my hands," said Christy, "and had given up all hopes of comforting thee with the last pat of my spade, and a parting 'Amen.' But I have yet a chance left."

"I thank thee for thy kindness," replied the drawer; "but hope it will yet be long before I put it to the test. How fares my kind hostess?"

"I will tell thee," said Dame Deborah; "and thou wilt come and share my solitary supper in the back parlour, though I can scarce pardon thee for going away, when I had so much need of thy assistance. This is a large house for a lone woman to manage."

"This sack hath not been so good of late," said the printer, "when Gilbert had retired

with the hostess. I drank better to-day at the Blossoms in Cheapside."

"It is a most excellent house," answered Christy; "and since yonder saucy drawer has come back, I care not if I make one to meet there."

"I will but wait the payment of my bill," said the shoemaker; "then be of your number; these widows are but weathercocks."

"If my goot friend, Gilbert, do marry her," said the goldsmith, "he must pay for de ring. Any oder of my very goot friends here present, should be welcome to it as de wine to my lips."

"Who would marry a widow?" said the printer, drinking at double speed, and wishing he had back again his fine black-letter copy of Skelton. "To have his ears dinned daily with reproaches, and murmurs of, — 'thus did my former dear husband, God rest his soul!—thus carved he, — thus he ate, drank, woke, slept,

spoke, and was pleased with whatever I did ; while you — ' here, drawer, fill my cup.—They sell better sack at the Blossoms."

" I have drank it good at the Mermaid," said the undertaker ; " but there are so many masquers and mummers go thither, that I think in time they will make it the meeting-house to get up their mysteries in. Marry, there was a young fellow there reading some stuff he called ' Gammer Gurton's Needle ;' which they talked of playing, as if such trash was equal to ' God's Promises.' But times are changing, my masters. And if such nonsense is played in the inn-yards, in place of the good old mysteries, then people will sooner laugh than cry, and think more about living than dying."

So spake the man of mourning, and a few more years fulfilled his fears ; for the Mermaid became the favourite resort of players, and was even then known to John Heywood, and

Hoker, before the shadow of Mary darkened the land.

That night Gilbert Pots sat up to a late hour with Dame Deborah Saunders, and although many a broad hint was dropped, that he might at any time become the host of the St. John's Head; he hesitated to accept the offer. Gilbert well knew that Lord Wardour was still in danger; for the blow he had struck Sussex, was not a matter to be overlooked by Mary, and as whispers were abroad that an attempt would be made to rescue the Lady Jane Grey, should the Queen refuse her pardon; the drawer was determined to share the perils of his patron, whatever they might be.

But matters were now fast drawing to a close. Northumberland, the great mover of Jane's party, had fallen, and the axe had only to put its finish to the triumph; for Mary herself was on the eve of entering London. Cecil and

Paget, and many another traitor had already set out to meet her — and kissed her hand, and been to all appearance forgiven. Blood was all that was needed, and when that was shed, men thought the great game would end.

CHAPTER IV.

The matrons flung their gloves,
Ladies and maids their scarfs and handkerchiefs,
Upon her as she passed : the nobles bended,
As to Jove's statue : and the commons made
A shower, and thunder, with their caps, and shouts :
I never saw the like.

[SHAKSPEARE.

WHILE the Lady Jane Grey remained a close prisoner within the Tower, Queen Mary made her triumphal entry into London, with such splendour as almost baffles description ; although so many of the old Chroniclers have borne testimony to the scene. The whole procession was one mass of gaudy colouring, like those fairy palaces which so much delight the eyes of the " young folk " in our Christmas pantomimes, where gold and blue, and crimson,

blaze like a chaos of prismatic dashes, lighted from every point, which renders the eye unsteady while seeking in vain to fix itself upon some central object. Crosses and conduits were decorated in all kinds of imaginable forms, while temporary arches were thrown across the streets, on which stood painted angels with men or boys inside who flapped their wings, like cocks in a crew-yard, and lifted the huge trumpets to their lips, "to the great delight of all good and loyal citizens." All that art could devise, or wealth purchase, had been dragged to the outskirts of London to swell the procession; while scarcely a corner of either palace or Tower was left unransacked, where aught was likely to be found to enrich the pageant. Dresses of masquers and mummers, which had figured in the revels of Henry the Eighth, were dragged forth; piles of cumbrous and faded splendour which had been worn at the "Field

of the Cloth of Gold," when men carried their estates on their backs: every rag and remnant that could add to this "right royal show," was worn by either man or horse, for even the brutes were compelled to show their loyalty, which was often as sincere as that of their riders.

The procession entered Old Bishopsgate-street on its way to the Tower, preceded by a strong body of cavalry with drawn swords, and looks grim enough to make any rebel tremble.

Then came halberdiers and heralds, marching as stately, and blowing their trumpets as loudly as they had done a few days before for Queen Jane; ambassadors and arrant-thieves swelled the train; the first moving along in the order of the procession, and the latter as they best could. Corslets glittered, and culverins thundered, until the old wooden houses of London shook again beneath the sound.

Then followed several noblemen on horse-

back, who had, but a few days before, graced the pageant that proclaimed Queen Jane, and who now raised their voices just as loud for Mary. Cecil, Paget, and Cheek, were amongst the number, for they had been among the first to welcome the new queen to her throne, and had kissed her Majesty's hand ; and whether Northumberland had gone to the devil or the donjon, was all one to them.

Next came Queen Mary in a clumsy-looking chariot covered with cloth-of-gold, and drawn by six horses, each decorated with the same gaudy tissue. The riders were as fine as colours could make them ; while Mary herself wore a rich mantle of purple velvet, furred with the costliest ermine, and on her head a caul of golden net-work, adorned with pearls and precious stones "of most exceeding value." She smiled and bowed as she passed along, amid the cheers of the dense multitude. But many

who rushed forward to have a nearer view of her royal person, fell back with disappointment depicted on their countenances when they had surveyed closely her stern and cold features, which soon assumed their natural and forbidding expression as the crowd closed around the chariot.

It would fill pages to describe all that was then to be seen:—the chariot covered with cloth of silver, in which rode the Princess Elizabeth and Anne of Cleves, in French dresses of silver tissue. Ladies and gentlemen on horseback, blazing in red velvet; state-officers in all the finery of state; minstrels singing out of tune, their songs drowned by the shoutings of the mob, and the deafening clangour of the trumpets. The waving of scarfs, the delivering of speeches, which no one heard; the swearing, thrusting, jostling, pressing, huzzaing, jamming of one another into doorways and passages, windows staved in, the crash of shutters, and cry of

thieves, all made up that Babel of sounds, which a great city rings back when its inhabitants are turned loose, and become mad ; and the bells thunder out their loudest, as if to silence the clamour of the huge Bedlam which has broken out below. Poor old Stow lost his shoe and his ink-horn in the crowd, and two pages of manuscript. But the old beadsman pushed on undaunted at such trifles, and in the cold printing-office of William Tottel, sat up late at night to make up his loss, and hand down to posterity those vivid pictures which so faithfully represent the great actors of these stirring times.

The procession halted before the gates of the Tower, and Queen Mary entered the ancient fortress, in which so many hearts were aching, whose pangs one word from her lips could have quieted. The Bishops, Gardiner and Bonner, who had been released from prison by her commands, were ready to receive her. Beside

them stood Duskena, leaning upon her staff, with her eyes fixed on the ground. There was a striking resemblance between the features of the old woman and Gardiner's. The countenance of the Bishop was swarthy, gloomy, and cruel: he had the look of an assassin; his dark brow was never without a frown, and his deep-sunk eyes shot forth a bull-dog fire; his nose was hooked like a parrot's, and his wide nostrils seemed as if they were ever scenting blood; while his yellow teeth and curled lip appeared as if ever standing ready to bite; and his enormous feet and hands added to the disgust with which his presence filled the beholder. It was such a countenance as might have become the evil-one himself; not a shadow of either pity or forgiveness could be traced in it. A face that one might fancy could only smile while witnessing the writhings of some poor wretch upon the rack, or glutting its gaze

with the sufferings of a martyr in the flames, the blaze flashing redly upon his own savage and blood-shot eyes, while he stooped forward to overlook the scene. It was far more diabolical than Duskena's,—more thoroughly hideous and devilish.

“Long live your blessed Majesty, to triumph over our enemies, and redress the wrongs of our holy religion,” said the Bishop, kneeling to kiss the offered hand: “the church hath long awaited your presence, and the sword of Justice rusted in the scabbard, for want of a hand to wield it.”

“We will do all in good time,” answered the Queen, her ominous voice croaking in harsh accordance with this vulture's; “and, to make amends for what thou hast suffered in behalf of our faith, will make thee our chief minister.”

“I humbly thank your Sovereign Highness,” answered Gardiner, his fierce eye kindling, as

the means of revenge were thus thrust into his hand ; “justice shall not be long without her own, whilst I have the power to appease her.”

“Thou must not use the power I give thee rashly,” said the Queen ; “but remember that he who would raise a fabric, first hews and squares the rafters and beams to suit his purpose, before he proceeds with his task. That he who would clear a forest, first begins with the underwood, ere he can strike fairly at the root of a tree. So worked our father, and so must we again do, to rebuild that which he hath thrown down.”

“Your Majesty speaketh wisely,” replied the Bishop ; “and as becometh one who is the pattern of all meekness and virtue. But we who have God’s quarrels to avenge, and to whom is committed the means without the mercy, sheathe not the sword until we have cut away root and branch. For it is written,

that if even thine own eye offend thee, thou shalt pluck it out."

"But that if thy brother offend thee seventy times seven," muttered Duskena, "thou shalt forgive him. Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, and I will repay it; and He hath no need of earthly aid. Would that I had never thought otherwise!"

"And thou also hast had thy sufferings for my service," said Mary, now observing Duskena, though without regarding what she had said: "to thine aid we owe our escape from Northumberland, perhaps from death," added she, her colour changing as she spoke; "say what we can do for thee, and it shall be granted, for so true a servant will ask nothing that we can refuse."

"I know not that," replied the old woman, without once raising her head; "there are those present who have promised me the same afore-

time, and yet to-day refused even to hearken to my request. Past promises are slow of fulfilment, and future ones but add to the account. Better to deny at once, than hold out hopes of that which it is never intended to perform."

"Touching the matter to which she alludeth," said Gardiner, "it would but ill accord—"

"Peace!" answered Mary, waving her hand: "it is for me to decide, when I have heard her request. Speak, good mother, it shall be a hard thing thou askest for, that causes me to give a denial. I will grant thee aught that is within my power."

"It is but little I want thee to give, daughter," said Duskena, without changing her stooping position: "it is but that which God will give to all at last, an acquittal to the innocent; for the guilty I plead not. Restore the Lady Jane Grey to liberty, and see that no harm befalleth her. That is the boon I crave; the only favour I

can accept, both in justice to myself and her, whom I have so deeply injured. Thou hast the power to grant it me."

"Thou hast asked for that, which it grieveth me to grant," answered Mary, after a long pause; "nevertheless —"

"Remember!" said Gardiner, interrupting her without an apology; "that if this matter goeth against your Highness' will, the church can unloose either vow or promise, which her children may rashly make.—I wish not to withhold your mercy; but rather that it may be extended, providing it can be done without offending Heaven, or afterwards weighing too heavily upon your own conscience; in which case the church must furnish forth the remedy, given to her, through his holiness the Pope."

The Queen hesitated, for in spite of the salvo thrown in by the bishop, her conscience told her, that a solemn promise like a prayer ought

only to be made in sincerity ; and that, however much we may deceive man, we cannot deceive God. She hesitated, and stood for several moments in silence.

Duskena raised her head, and fixing her glance on Gardiner, while with difficulty she stifled her anger, said : “ Does our church then, indeed, teach us such a doctrine? if it unlooseth on the one hand, assuredly it ought to do on the other ; and those who have embraced its faith might shake it off again, providing it encumbered their consciences. Neither promise nor vow could ever be held sacred. But I will accept neither, unless it is kept.”

“ The church hath power to either loose or bind, my daughter,” replied the bishop, “ nor must her will be disputed. For whosoever opposeth the church ; yea, if it be but in thought, and repenteth not, it is written they shall be damned. No one wisheth for the well doing

of this misguided Lady more than myself, or would labour more strenuously for her happiness here and hereafter. But before she is forgiven, she must embrace the true faith of the Catholic church. The freedom of her soul, is of more price than her body."

"And on such conditions," said the Queen, "I forgive her with all my soul."

"Which meaneth that you forgive her not at all," whispered Sir Thomas Wyatt, to a soldier who stood beside him. "That Gardiner is more cunning than the devil."

"I will not carry to her such cold comfort," answered Duskena. "Her faith may be wrong; but assuredly it is too firmly fixed to be bartered for liberty. A heathen would not purchase his freedom on such terms. No! I will carry to her no such tidings. And you," added she, turning fiercely upon Gardiner, "would have better shown yourself a true father of the

church, by first pleading for her liberty. But remember ! my power has not yet wholly fled, and beware ! lest in me you raise up an enemy. I have yet no need to crave aught at your hands. Duskena never sued a second time."

And the old woman turned away without ceremony, vowing vengeance to herself, and determined that she would yet liberate the Lady Jane Grey, though blood was shed to accomplish her purpose.

"Were it not better to prevent her escaping while in this mood?" said Gardiner, addressing the Queen; "she is a dangerous woman when thwarted, and hath power to stir up many against your Highness, whom she hath befriended in ways unknown to myself. Many a poor priest hath been indebted to her gold for the means of subsistence; it would be a dangerous experiment to leave her at large."

"No ! my Lord," said Mary, "no one shall

molest her while I have power to prevent it. Had it not been for your ill-timed interference, I should have granted her boon. You dare not to have thwarted the purpose of my father, by the threats of the church. Nor will I, though only a woman, be subject to your interference."

So spake the daughter of Henry the Eighth; for the spirit of her savage sire was not wholly extinguished within her.

Gardiner fell back, but answered not a word.

"I would have granted the old woman's request, were it but to show that I had a will of my own," whispered the Princess Elizabeth to Cecil, who stood at her elbow.

"No one would have dared to oppose your pleasure," replied the statesman, with a smile, "though they make bold to cross her Highness'." Elizabeth smiled, and thought that if ever she became Queen, she should like just such a minister as Sir William Cecil.

The procession passed on to the state-apartments, where a banquet was prepared, and the very throne which had been occupied a few hours before by Queen Jane, now received Queen Mary. But we will now turn to the fair victim.

CHAPTER V.

Who sues, and kneels, and says :—God save the Queen ?
Where be the bending peers that flattered thee ?
Where be the thronging troops that followed thee ?
Decline all this, and see now what thou art.

O insupportable ! O heavy hour !
Methinks, it should be now a huge eclipse
Of sun and moon ; and that the affrighted globe
Should yawn at alterations.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE room into which the Lady Jane Grey was conducted by the guards, was vaulted, and gloomy: for the high receding window was unglazed, and strongly secured with iron bars, and threw down its light upon the cold floor; the arched and rude recesses were half hidden in the deep shadows. A stool of rough workmanship was the only seat this hideous apart-

ment afforded, while a straw pallet, over which was thrown a ragged and dirty coverlet, formed the couch, which was to receive the beautiful form of the unfortunate Queen — a savage resting-place for one so young and lovely. A rude earthen vessel half filled with stagnant water, and a crust of brown mouldy bread, which the last victim had not lived to consume, told too plainly of the fare which she must expect to receive in that dismal prison-house. The spider had woven its web in many a dark nook, on which the sunbeams never beat, and the dust of long years had settled upon the inscriptions on the walls,—mementos of hopes crushed, and spirits subdued,—sad enumerations of wearisome days, and miserable nights, and sufferings which only ended in the grave. Walls covered with such inscriptions as make strong men weep, while they read them, — telling of cares, and heart-aches, resignation and despair, horror and hope,

calm contemplation, and growing madness, and all the miseries that "flesh is heir to." Grim grave-stones which the living had engraved with their own hands, while death stood overlooking the work, and but waiting with uplifted javelin, the last scratch of the rusted nail, ere he struck.

In such a room sat the Lady Jane Grey, solitary and sad, her face buried in her hands, and the tears oozing out from between her white and taper fingers, while her deep sobs shook the silver bands that crossed her laced stomacher. Sounds there were that found their way to this abode of wretchedness; but they came laden with heart-aches, bringing to the prisoner only triumph and mockery, and adding to her overwhelming misery: for they were sounds that announced the entry of Queen Mary to the Tower. Such had once greeted her own ears, when the merry bells rung out, and

the deep-throated cannons bellowed forth their thunder, and voices rent the air with loud shouts of "Long live Queen Jane!" while England's proudest nobles bowed their knees before her.

Such thoughts as these passed through the mind of the beautiful prisoner, and she raised her streaming eyes to look around, as if uncertain whether such a change could be real. Alas! it was no dream; the barred window, through which was only seen the black and weary sky,—the low pallet,—the brown earthen vessel, with its green and noxious water, — the gloomy recesses,—the grey carved stones, with their melancholy inscriptions, were all there, and she again buried her face in her hands, and wept aloud.

Night came on, the dark and dreary night, as if eager to take possession of an abode, where daylight seemed but an intruder — and

the dethroned Queen was still alone. But as the darkness closed upon her, it dispelled those feelings of misery which had possessed her during the day, and she found that she was NOT yet left alone ; but that HE who dwelleth every where was with her in that shadowy solitude.

She knelt down and prayed, long and fervently, and when she opened her eyes, a bright star burned in the dark sky ; it shone full through the iron bars of the casement, and threw a dim pale light on the floor of her prison. She arose, and felt her heart more at ease, while she unconsciously whispered to herself, "There is yet hope in Heaven."

Her reverie was suddenly broken by the shrill clangour of bolts, and the harsh grating of the key, as it turned the rusty lock. The door opened, and as the light from the lantern flashed upon the cold grey walls, the figure of

a female rushed in, and threw herself into the arms of the prisoner, — it was her faithful Amy.

An attendant entered, while the door was guarded by the jailor, and placing a small loaf of coarse bread upon the stool, he poured a portion of the water (from the large can which he carried round to the different cells,) into the filthy vessel we have already mentioned.

“ May I be drawn out a yard longer on the rack,” muttered the jailor, as he closed the door, and again drew bolt and bar; “ If I shoot lock again this night, for either devil or dam. My little marmoset will find it harder to get out than in. Though, by the mass, she is a bonny bird: and had she pleaded for my head, I could scarcely have said her nay.”

“ She would have found but little in it,” murmured the attendant, as he proceeded to

the next cell with his water, " saving such slop as I bear to my prisoners."

A rusty lamp, which was fastened to the wall, had been lighted by the attendant; but as it had not been trimmed for many a day, the dull dead flame it emitted seemed only to heighten the gloom and misery of the prison. What little light it did shed, fell fully upon a rude device cut on the stone above, which represented a death's head and cross-bones, an axe and block, which some poor victim had doubtless wasted his midnight hours in engraving, by such a light as then fell upon the design.

In the centre of this horrible den stood the Lady Jane Grey and Amy, enfolded in each other's arms, and weeping such tears as only they who truly love each other, and meet to share the same misery, can shed.

" Oh ! I did fear this," said the lady, speaking in a voice which was broken by her deep sob-

bing; "I had hoped to have borne my misery alone; and now thou hast come to share it, and add to my grief,—to think that those who love me must also suffer!—and yet I wished thee to come, for I was weary of weeping alone."

She pressed the faithful attendant more closely to her bosom, kissed her neck and forehead, then hung down her head, and again wept bitterly.

"I would have torn down these walls with my nails, had they kept me from thee any longer," sobbed Amy, returning her embrace. "Hard-hearted that they were! to separate us thus long,—to leave thee alone with no one to weep for thee. But we will never be parted again,—they shall tear me limb from limb ere I will be forced from thee any more. Oh! I knew not, until they dragged me away, how much I did love thee,—and now we will die together."

"Then would our troubles, indeed, be ended,"

sighed the lady. "Come, sit thee down; this sorrow will stand us in no stead, my dear girl. It may hang heavy on the eye-lid, and rankle deep at the heart, but tears can never wash it from the one, nor sighs heave it from the other. Death is the only door that offers an escape from earthly suffering, and we must learn to prepare ourselves calmly for the flight. Happiness is but to be found in Heaven!"

"Well, I will be calm now," said Amy, drying her eyes. "But come thou and sit beside me; she rose as if to reach a seat; then became conscious, for the first time, of the wretchedness that surrounded her. "It is a comfort still to sit beside thee," said she, placing herself on the cold floor, and forcing her fair mistress upon the rude stool, while she rested her head on the lady's knee, and, in spite of her resolution, again burst into tears.

"Nay, weep not, my Amy," said the lady,

comprehending, at once, the cause of this fresh outburst of sorrow ; “ it is fitting that we should feel such privations as these, were it but to know what those suffer who are poor and friendless. Want is a stern task-master ; but he will teach us the truth ; and those who have once felt what the needy and the wretched have to bear, will not, unless their hearts are indeed hardened, hold back the helping hand, and the kind word, which, if they have not more to give, still bringeth consolation. Sorrow draweth us nigher to Heaven, as one, whose heart hath been long estranged, sickens in some far-off land, and pines to see his native home once more, before he dies. The bird that has been winging its way through the bright and sunny landscape, hurries to its nest, when the storm approaches. The child that has left its home, to ramble far away, and even fled its mother’s embraces, seeketh to lay its head upon

her bosom, when illness overtaketh it. And God is a kind parent, and forgiveth all our waywardness and our wanderings, though we seek Him not until the hour of our very need. He will not withhold his help from those who come to Him in sincerity and in truth."

So spoke the virtuous and innocent victim, resigned under her wrongs, and patiently bearing all that those ambitious and hollow-hearted men had heaped upon her; for God, "who tempereth the wind to the shorn lamb," poured forth the healing balm of comfort upon her wounded spirit, and threw a peace around her prison-house, such as fell not upon the pillows of her betrayers.

They arose and retired to rest; they slept in each other's arms on that coarse pallet, which was cold with the damp of the donjon-floor. They slept—although the sound of music was heard up to a late hour in the royal apartments,

where Queen Mary still sat at the banquet. The weary foot of the sentinel, as he paced to and fro on the watch, broke not their slumber. The light of the lamp expired, as if to shut out all the wretchedness that surrounded them, and they lay together cradled in the deep darkness.

Midnight fell upon the old Tower of London, and the sound of mirth and misery had ceased ; but there were those who retired to beds of down, and were curtained around with crimson velvet, who slept not the sound sleep which fell upon the Lady Jane Grey. Cecil turned many a time, conscience-stricken, upon his couch ; while Arundel had dreams of blood ; and Gardiner, fancying that flames had broken out in his apartment, awoke, — then slept, and dreamed again of new horrors.

On that very night the Duke of Suffolk, and several others, received the Queen's pardon ; but these were men who had been compelled to

act through the fear of Northumberland; the mere tools which your greater villains use to cloak or forward their purposes, and which too often become the sufferers. But we will turn to Northumberland, who now lay writhing like an enraged lion, caught in the pit-fall, which the hunters had dug for him.

CHAPTER VI.

Nay then, farewell !

I have touched the highest point of all my greatness,
And from that full meridian of my glory,
I haste now to my setting. I shall fall
Like a bright exhalation in the evening,
And no man see me more !

Treason has done his worst ; nor steel, nor poison,
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing,
Can touch him further !

SHAKSPEARE.

THE donjon into which Northumberland was thrust, was deep and dark, saving the light shed from an iron lamp, which was suspended by a chain from the roof, for not an aperture was there to let in the rays of Heaven. Weighed down with heavy fetters, the Duke sat on a huge block of wood, with his arms folded and his head bent, while his eyes were

fixed, as if attentively, on the floor. But he saw nothing there, for his mind was busily occupied in running over the events of the last few days, and recalling many incidents, which, in his excitement, he had overlooked, and that now flashed upon him with the strong conviction, that had he not been blinded by his ambition, he might have avoided many of those events which had hastened his fall. "Fool that I have been!" thus ran his thoughts, "to think of proceeding a step in this business until I had secured the Princesses, while I had the power:—that I must blab my secret to the Council before I had accomplished this end!—that I must set about erecting a new edifice on the roof of an old one, in place of first pulling it down and laying my foundation on its ruins! Even a child would have displayed more wisdom! Then to abandon the Tower; to be flattered into a belief that

no one could so well lead forth the forces as myself,—a force strong enough to have stood a siege within those walls for months, had they but been well provisioned. And all is now lost, not a single step can I now retrieve ; even my very friends despise me. I stand like a man on a slippery rock, which the tide is fast covering : death and ruin stare me in the face, whichever way I look. Well ! I can but perish ; and since all has passed away that I cared to live for, I have now nothing left to think of but death ! Death on the scaffold !” added he, while his fetters clanked as he rose ; “a traitor’s and not a soldier’s grave ! had I but have perished with armour on my back, I should have died as became a Dudley ; but to be brought out before the brutal rabble, to be hooted and scorned, led between the ranks of mine enemies, commanded by those who trembled if I but knit my brows ! — Oh ! these

thoughts are worse than death, and I am not even prepared to die !”

He sat down, folded his arms, sighed heavily, and remained silent. His thoughts weighed heavier on him than his fetters: there was nothing around him but despair.

At length he was startled by the tramp of a heavy foot on the donjon stair. The door was opened by a man in armour, who having given admittance to Duskena and again drawn the massy and rusted bolts outside, ascended the stair and left them together.

Northumberland raised his head and gazed for several moments on the old woman in silence, while she stood leaning on her staff, motionless as a statue, her piercing eyes riveted on the Duke. The dull red light fell on her bent form and ragged garments: the lamp was suspended above the Duke's head, and saving the blaze which fell upon the trail-

ing shackles, his face was thrown into deep shadow.

“ And this is the reward thy ambition has at length brought thee,” said the old woman, at last speaking ; “ fetters and a donjon, and then death !”

“ It is even as thou sayest,” answered the Duke ; “ and now they have added thee to my sufferings, that thou mayest triumph over me. But I have now no choice of my own, and must perforce bear all.”

“ Nay, I come not to triumph over thee,” replied Duskena ; “ for thy death will make me neither glad nor sorrowful now, though the thoughts of what thou hast forced me to do, will embitter mine own.”

“ Then thou hast come to pity me,” said the prisoner : “ well, I will bear even thy scorn, for I know that thy soul exulteth at my fallen state.”

“I cannot even pity thee,” answered the hag; “though I pity those that thy folly has made wretched. I have neither sorrow nor sympathy for thee, for with regard to thyself, all hath fallen out just as I told thee. I foresaw that thou wouldst come to this.”

“Reproach me then an’ thou wilt,” said Northumberland: “I am prepared for the worst.”

“I have no need,” replied the old woman; “thine own conscience will do that, or it is more hardened than mine own. Think of the deeds thou hast done, of the misery thou hast brought upon others, and thou wilt need no reproach.”

“I do think, and have confessed them all,” replied the Duke; “and the priest hath granted me absolution.”

“And hast thou so soon changed thy faith?” said Duskena, with a look of scorn; “cast

away the only cloak thou hadst left, under which thou didst shelter thy deeds. Is the blood of Somerset then to be wiped out by a confession, and the death of Edward, to which thou didst tempt me? How dost thou reconcile thy conscience to such deeds?"

"They were enemies to my religion," answered the Duke, "and I thereby rendered the Church good service."

"Call it not by such a name," replied Duskena; "thy religion hath ever been that which best suited thy ambitious purposes. The blood of Somerset raised thee a step, and thou didst climb upon it. The death of Edward opened a more speedy way for the execution of thy plans, and thou didst tempt me to hasten a deed which will weigh heavy on both our souls at the last hour. The Lady Jane Grey was a necessary victim to cloak thy designs, and thou didst sacrifice

her to it; and now she is a prisoner within these walls. Nay, even thine own son hast thou offered up on the altar of thy ambition."

"Cursed hag! didst thou not lead me along the very path which thou art now reproaching me for having trodden?" said the Duke, springing forward as if he would break the fetters by which he was bound. "Didst thou not tell me that the very planets had pointed out my course, (fool that I was to believe thee!) and lend thine hand to raise me to the top of the eminence I aspired to, that thou mightest dash me down again at pleasure," added he, lowering his head as he spoke.

"I did—I did!" replied Duskena, with deep emotion: "But I had wrongs to revenge—thou hadst none. The faith thou didst pretend to uphold, gave thee wealth and honour,—me it deprived of a son and daughter. It drove all

the friends I loved to want and beggary—thou and thine it raised to eminence. The gold I took from thee to work out thy ambitious ends, supplied those with bread whom the new religion had left destitute; it helped to work out my plans of vengeance. I had motives, black and evil though they were, to impel me onward in what I did—thou hadst none other than the love of power, the wish to trample on the necks of thy fellow-men; the ambition which has been thy ruin. Would to God! that the punishment had only fallen on thine own head, and that the innocent were not doomed to suffer for the guilty.”

“Embitter not the few hours I have yet to live with thy reproaches,” said Northumberland, “I cannot, if I would, recal what is past. Had I never known thee, my heart would sit lighter than it does now. It was an evil hour when I first came to thee.”

“ It was indeed an evil hour !” echoed the old woman ; “ I sat alone until then, brooding over my wrongs, when thou didst come and thrust the means of vengeance into my hands, which but for thee might have wasted itself in empty curses. But my conscience is yet more honest than thine own, and refuseth to become reconciled to what I have done. Day and night, it accuseth me, and will never be appeased until I have laid down my weary body in the earth, and stand naked and undisguised in the presence of Him, to whom all secrets and motives are known.”

“ And knowing this, why hast thou come to add to my misery ?” said Northumberland, again seating himself despondingly on the block ; “ assuredly thy vengeance cannot even wish me more wretched. I have sinned like thyself, deeply and grievously sinned, and must now die. Thou mayest yet live to repent. Again,

I ask thee, why thou hast sought me out in this dreary donjon, for, evil as thou art, I can scarcely think that thou hast come alone to mock me in mine agony?"

"I have not! I did not!" answered the hag; "other motives have led me hither, and though I neither pity nor despise thee, I will yet give thee the means of making reparation to the victim thy ambition hath all but ruined. For I would see the Lady Jane Grey freed from these walls before I die. Gardiner hath already set his snares, and aims at her life; and when he shelters himself behind his religion, his intent is indeed deadly. If I procure thee thy liberty, wilt thou wager thy body in her behalf? Wilt thou do battle to the death to set her free, and muster all the strength that can yet be ranged beneath thy banner?"

"I will," said the Duke, after hesitating

for several moments ; “ and if I fall in the struggle, it will but be rendering justice to her whom my ambition hath so deeply injured.”

“ Here then is the means to knock off these fetters,” said Duskena, giving him the necessary instruments to unloose the rivets ; “ Thou wilt conceal these until the hour comes, when a boat shall be in readiness. The guards set over thee are in my service ; but thou canst not escape until the sentinels along the walls are changed. Keep secret, and despair not. Thou shalt at least die as doth become a soldier.”

“ I fear me thy promise will never be fulfilled,” said the Duke, with a mournful shake of the head ; “ but I will not yet despair.”

“ Fear not,” said Duskena, “ she whom I would set free, hath guards over her that no gold can corrupt. But hundreds will before the

morrow be in arms to rescue her." She struck the donjon door with her staff; it was opened, and she departed slowly and silently up the dark and winding stairs.

CHAPTER VII.

The spinsters, corders, fullers, weavers, who,
Unfit for other life, compelled by hunger
And lack of other means, in desperate manner
Daring the event to the teeth, are all in uproar,
And Danger serves among them.

SHAKSPEARE.

NORTHUMBERLAND'S fears were but too true ; for, a day or two after the incident we have recounted, he was led to the scaffold, and died an avowed catholic. The manner of his death is recorded in history ; and as we are fast hastening to other scenes of blood, we shall pass over it in silence.

Meanwhile the enthusiasm of the people towards Mary had abated ; they found, when it was too late, that they had done wrong in raising her to the throne ; that all her promises

to leave the Protestant religion unmolested were false ; and that in place of a kind and considerate Queen, they had put the sceptre into the hand of a cruel bigot. She forgot the concessions which had been made to her by King Edward, in favour of her own faith, when she was permitted to retain her own priests, and follow her own form of worship ; and now, spurred on by the bloodthirsty bishops, Gardiner and Bonner, she began to prosecute all who were opposed to her creed, not even sparing her royal sister, the Princess Elizabeth. But the spirit of the nation was not yet subdued ; a voice of murmuring ran through the land ; men assembled together at first in small groups, vented their feelings to each other, then became bolder and met in more formidable bodies, until the cry of “ to arms ! ” was uttered in the broad face of day, and many a daring leader suddenly sprung up.

Some were loud in their demands for "Religious Liberty;" others had taken up arms to oppose the Queen's marriage with "Philip of Spain;" many to reseat the "Lady Jane Grey," on the throne: yet all agreeing in one great point, and that was the overthrow of Mary. Even the Duke of Suffolk, whom the Queen had so lately pardoned, was amongst the foremost to raise his banner; while Lord Wardour and Sir Thomas Wyatt soon found themselves at the head of many thousands. The insurrection had broken loose; the forces assembled for Mary, under the Duke of Norfolk, had been defeated, and the chief part of them had joined the insurgents, who now, flushed with victory, were encamped on Blackheath.

Such was the state of affairs in England at the time we resume our story. Winter had also set in, and the ground for miles around the camp was covered with snow, which had in many

places drifted into and filled the deep hollows of the Heath.

The numerous fires which the rebels had lighted in various parts of the wide Heath, and around which they now congregated, gave to the scene a look of wild comfort which seemed to harmonize with the appearance of the uncouth yet athletic figures that were constantly passing before the eye. Many a sturdy beggar, who had a few days before lived by the pretended loss of an arm, now shouldered a pike with the best of them, and showed such a pair of brawny arms as would have done honour to a Roman wrestler. The tinker had thrown aside his wallet, and was seen trying a thrust with foils with some broad-chested peasant, who had left his oxen and plough in the field, to strike a blow and hasten the downfall of Popery. Numbers were armed with terrific scythes, forks, and even spades, that would cleave a skull if fairly struck.

Mingled with these, were the bold Kentish yeomanry, men stout of heart and strong of limb, who had come up to fight for their religion and their liberties. Thieves and knaves of every grade were also there: cowards who boasted of their prowess beside the camp-fires, but were the first to run at the sound of a culverin. These were mixed up with women, who had neither character nor property to lose, and who, as one follower was shot dead at night, took up with his comrade next morning; and could strip a dead body with as much ease as they could toss off a cup of foaming ale, or drain to the dregs a full beaker of brown-bastard.

Many had enlisted to fight under the banners of the different leaders, because they could find no other employment, just as men do in the present day. The "world was their oyster," and they were compelled to open it, with "the sword," when nothing better offered. Added to

these, were numbers of men in armour, brave fellows who had fought under Somerset and Northumberland ; nay, even made a gap in the ranks of battle with Bluff Hal at their head, but who were determined to oppose to the death any invasion of their faith. Then came knights and men of renown, too many of them engaged for ends of their own ; some slight, or pique, or fancied neglect, which they had hopes to revenge ; and mid the scramble and ruin that they anticipated, grasp enough wherewith to build themselves a new name, and repair their shattered fortunes.

Such was the army assembled on Blackheath, and which had won a victory over Queen Mary's forces, and even captured their ordnance, though led on by such famous chieftains as Norfolk and Arundel. Gilbert Pots, as attendant on Lord Wardour (the second in command), was no mean man amongst the rebels, and he bustled

to and fro in the camp as if the whole ordering of such an immense body depended upon himself.

The snow was falling so heavily, that the eye could scarcely pierce to the extremity of the camp, when Lord Wardour stood at the entrance of his tent, his glance fixed on the fire which was burning in the cresset, and watching flake after flake descend and melt upon the hot bars. Sometimes he drew the embers together with the point of his sword, as he stood buried in deep thought, unconscious of the broad flakes which were falling on his rich suit of polished armour, and embedding themselves amid the white plumes of his helmet. The features of the young nobleman had undergone a great change during the last few days; disappointed love and wounded pride had preyed upon his spirits, and given a dimness to his eye and a heaviness to his heart. He had sought an interview with Queen Mary, and audience was

refused him, unless he would openly apologize to the Duke of Sussex—a humility his pride could not brook. There was then no chance of rescuing her who was still so dear to him, but by force of arms ; and he had already rendered his name terrible by the late overthrow of Mary's forces, for at the very moment the insurgents were about to throw down their arms, he rushed in with a mere handful of horsemen, and turned the tide of battle.

While he thus stood wrapt in melancholy meditation, and thinking of her who at that moment was watching the snow-flakes beat in through the bars of her prison-window, he felt a friendly hand grasp his shoulder, and turning round, confronted Sir Thomas Wyatt, his daring companion-in-arms.

“ We are losing time,” said Wardour ; “ this delay is throwing advantages into the hands of

our enemies. Let us push on for London, ere it is too late to save her."

"Fear not for her," replied Wyatt, "devil as Mary is, she dare not injure a hair of her head. I will but wait another hour the coming of the promised reinforcements from the city. Should they not arrive within that time, we will strike our tents, and before midnight rear our banners on the Tower of London."

"Would that we were there," said Wardour, with a sigh. "Art thou sure that the gates of the bridge will be thrown open to us? Any delay there might be ruinous to our cause; and, to tell thee a truth, I am weary of herding with such an assembly of vagabonds as are at present under our command. Every hour comes laden with complaints of the depredations they have committed. Since thou wert absent, a butcher from Greenwich came to demand compensation, for

the knaves had cleared his flesh-hooks of every joint, and I was compelled to make up the loss, at the sacrifice of every rose-noble I had in my pouch."

"These are but the common casualties of war," replied Sir Thomas Wyatt. "The knaves must be fed, no matter at whose cost; our enemies are even less scrupulous than ourselves, though they spare not the Queen's name while they plunder, and but give promises for payment. Regarding our entrance to the city, I have the promises of the wardens of the bridge; and, should they even refuse, their gates cannot long stand our battery. But happen what may, we have now gone too far to retreat."

"'Tis true," answered Wardour, "nor do I wish it. When I buckled on my armour, it was with a vow to rescue her or die. I have no desire to change my purpose."

"Why stand ye here?" said Duskena, ap-

proaching, "in place of pushing on, with the chances in your favour, while your followers are still elated with the victory they have already won. Remember, we lost the aid of Northumberland through too much delaying. Let not others be sent to traverse the same dark road before our arrival. Sound the trumpet, and let us begone."

"Well, thou shalt be our commander," said Wyatt. "I wish thou wert but able to ride beside me with lance in rest. Trumpeters, sound for the march, we will wait no longer."

The trumpeters blew a loud blast, the sound of which was deadened by the falling snow, and many a brave soldier at the signal sprung into his saddle.

"I must go stir yonder loitering knaves," said Duskena, "who are drinking so deeply with Gilbert. Despair not," added she, addressing Wardour, "all may yet be well; and should it

prove otherwise, we have done all that can be done for her. A few more hours will decide her fate." Wardour held out his hand, but replied not, and Duskena dragged her bent form across the heath, and was soon lost to the sight amid the thickly descending snow.

Meanwhile Gilbert had attached himself to his old acquaintances, the beggars, who, if they had not fought the best, contrived on that day to keep up the largest fire, and were the best provided with both food and drink; and, in despite of snow or cold, or the sight of the gibbets in the distance, they were the happiest of downright beggars.

"I'll tell thee what, Gilbert," said the king of the beggars, who was seated on a pile of withered fern and heath which his vassals had gathered, "I would not change mine estate for thy gay duds, nor the finest ken that ever man harboured in; a fig for your fine clothes and

long swords, your beggar's is the only happy life, and if I once get safe out of this scrape, devil a bit shall you find me fighting again, unless it be in mine own defence."

"Our king speaketh as becomes his Majesty," said another ragged rascal, whose clothes looked as if he had plundered some scare-crow, while he sat with a brimming wine-cup in his hand. "Ours is the only honest trade going: we take nothing but what Providence throws in our way; we sleep in the sunshine in Summer, and defy the cold of Winter by basking at the fire, and drinking the best of wine. Our wealth lies in every town and village we enter; and we only let other folk keep it until we call. The true value of money is what it will fetch; and a cup of brown bastard is your only true happiness. We pay neither rent nor taxes, are neither troubled with leases nor lands, although the whole country is our own; we have as much

choice as a bird in a wood, who, when he liketh not one tree, flies to another. Give up following lords, Gilbert, and take up thine own trade; thou wilt never be happier."

"And your gayest suit looketh but paltry," continued the beggar-king, "beside a true maunder's patches; and as for your finest palaces, what are they, compared to a seat under a hawthorn in full bloom, or a bed beneath a new haycock? Even your great courtiers are but mean beggars, and kneel lower for a star and a riband than we do for a fat margery-prater, and that is something we can eat. We but throw back our thanks for the groat we receive; your Kings are beholden to a whole nation. We buss or beat our doxies as we please; your nobles have to sue for the one, and answer at the bar for the other: we fear neither lawyer nor judge, but love and fight at our royal pleasure."

“ But your hawthorns and hay-cocks last not all the year round,” answered Gilbert, “and but for this good fire, and cup of sparkling wine, such a day as this were enough to make the boldest beggar renounce his trade. But yonder trumpet’s warning us to begone, and I would not be found longer out of my saddle than my master.”

“ Hey, hey! we of the free fraternity stir not before our king,” shouted another, on whose bare legs the huge flakes fell;—“ we shall be soon enough yet for the morrow, and it never failed to bring us something. How say you, my merry maunders,” continued he, holding up his empty wine-cup, “ shall we pay another visit to the dark-eyed Widow at Greenwich?—there is yet a good butt of canary to empty in the cellars of the Three Tuns; and, by the mass! a glance at her bonny face is worth another journey to High Street, though the

snow comes down like a shower of hawthorn blossoms, when we are filching the slates from a ruffian."

"Up, ye lazy knaves, and be doing!" said Duskena, suddenly appearing amongst them, "if ye would save yourselves from the gallows, by leaving here before the ropes are thrown round your necks. Ye shall drink your fill when you have won your way to the Tower of London. But as ye would avoid the fulfilment of my curse, I warn ye not to lift cup to lip, saving to quench your thirst, until you have taken possession of that fortress. Up, and forward! and I promise you the plunder of the palace of Westminster, if you win me this victory. Fight, knaves, as if every one was battling for his wallet!"

"And broken bones and the gallows will be our portion if we lose," muttered an old man; "but we are sworn to obey our

king, and he seemeth to be under her subjection."

Many a bare-footed and bare-headed beggar sprung up at the command of Duskena, some armed with cudgels, the weight of which had been felt on knightly helmets, while others carried pikes or partizans. Women, with children on their backs, fell into the rear of this ragged regiment, and proceeded on the march, their bantlings screeching in chorus with the sounding of trumpets, the neighing of horses, and all the thunder and uproar attendant on such a removal.

The unwieldy cannon went foremost, as if to mark the route through the snow; then followed the troop of cavalry under the command of Lord Wardour; an imposing regiment of foot came next, the train-bands of the City of London, who had deserted from Norfolk,—these were led by their celebrated Captain, Brett;—

then came a strange mixture, the yeomanry of the neighbouring counties, many of them in their work-a-day dresses; next, Suffolk, in gallant array, keeping the centre with a goodly troop of horse; behind him followed a motley assemblage of beggars and vagabonds, of all grades, whom love of plunder, drink, and the hope of a fight, had called together; then came the horsemen under the command of Sir Thomas Wyatt; and these were followed by another odd mixture, on which the remainder of the artillery closed. And thus they proceeded to Deptford, and along the road nearest the river to London, causing many an old shopkeeper to close his shutters when he heard of their approach.

CHAPTER VIII.

Old men, and beldames, in the streets
Do prophecy upon it dangerously.

Shall we go throw away our coats of steel,
And wrap our bodies in black mourning gowns,
Numbering our Ave-Marias with our beads ?
Or shall we on the helmets of our foes
Tell our devotion with revengeful arms ?

SHAKSPEARE.

THE defeat of Mary's forces under such famous leaders as Norfolk and Arundel, and the approach of the rebels, spread fear and consternation among the good citizens of London. Trade stood still, and neighbour ran hurrying to neighbour to learn the tidings, while many flocked to the taverns to cheer up their spirits with the wine-cup, and drink themselves brimful of courage. Rumour with her hundred

tongues, was babbling in every street and alley, magnifying the number of the insurgents, and the loss sustained by the Queen's forces, and painting in none of the pleasantest colours the expected scene of plunder and massacre. Every householder who possessed helmet and breast-piece, armed himself, and numbers were seen rushing along the streets without such defensive armour, trusting to defend their bare breasts with their naked swords. All the shops were closed; the lawyer threw aside his gown to buckle on armour, and on that day many a shaven crown was covered with a helmet; for even the priest was not backward in grasping a partisan in Queen Mary's cause. Many an honest dealer who, until that day, had only paced to and fro before his shop, crying, "What do you lack, worthy sir, or honoured madam?" had drawn forth his rusty weapon from its hiding-place, and joined his peaceful neighbour

(after having secured the shop-door,) in the march to defend the city. Numbers there were too with arms in their hands, who were determined upon joining the strongest side, so soon as the result could be known ; for amid all this danger and alarm, mistrust and disaffection still reigned among the people : there were many in London who were favourable to Lady Jane Grey, but waited an opportunity to declare for Sir Thomas Wyatt.

Still there was a picturesque and pleasing bustle in the scenes that were passing through the streets :—in the rumble and thunder of the heavy artillery as it was dragged on to one or other of the city-gates, and not unfrequently came in contact with the wain of some countryman, who with his team of strong oxen had not been alert enough to get out of the way.

Then might be seen five or six horsemen in armour galloping through the street, while the

clamour and shrieking of women rang upon the ears as they rushed at the peril of being run over to rescue some breechless urchin from the danger. Nor were there wanting those who stood at the corners of courts and roads, and were bandying jests with one another at the appearance of some well-known character who hurried by on horseback or a-foot, to join in the defence of the city.

“Hey, hey!” shouted one of these merry blackguards: “Here comes old Gaffer Girdle-brace on his pack-horse! saw ye ever such a figure in armour, my masters? By the mass, he hath got his sword on the wrong side, and sits on the saddle like one of his own belts doubled up. See ye he hath already got a shaking fit, and the sound of a cannon will be sure to lay him on the earth; the clap of a boy’s pop-gun would dismount him.”

“And yonder comes Hans Carvel, the gold-

smith," said another rascal, who cared for neither rebels nor royalty; "Look to your copper-gilt pate, my old Trojan," added he, raising his voice so that the goldsmith might hear him. "Rare plunder will the Kentish lads find in your shop when they enter the city, and some of them that you have sold brass rings to, and sworn 'dey were de coot cold,' will tickle your lying throat with cold steel before to-morrow night. Better throw me a gold thumb-ring with a true stone in it, to pray for your safety, old coin-clipper, for you will need it."

"And me vill pay you before de prayer," said the choleric goldsmith, "striking the fellow such a blow with the flat of his sword, as made him stagger; "dere take dat to refresh your memory, it is von credo."

The bully slunk away silent and ashamed amid the loud laughter of the by-standers.

The sound of a trumpet, and the tramp as of

many horses,—though the beating of their hoofs was drowned by the snow—was now heard in the line of Temple-bar, and all eyes were speedily turned in that direction. Foremost came a lady on horseback at full gallop, followed by several lords, who found it no easy matter to keep pace with her spirited jennet ; then came a troop of armed horsemen at the same pace, and all went thundering over the old Fleet-bridge, and through the postern of Ludgate ; nor did they halt until they reached the court-yard of Guildhall.

It was Queen Mary herself, who, undismayed by the threatening aspect which all around her presented, now came forward with the true and undaunted spirit of a Tudor, to arouse the citizens to arms. She had buckled over her cruel but courageous breast a light cuirass overlaid with gold, and with a light scymitar and dagger of exquisite workmanship appended to her girdle,

now strode into the ancient and crowded hall of the City, with the step of a true Amazon. She ascended the chair of state, which stood on the dais ; and when one of her maids of honour had unfastened her light helmet, and placed it on the costly cushion, she rose up, while her hair fell down her neck in long trails, and drawing the scymitar from its scabbard, waved it aloft in silence. All within the hall was silent as the grave ; the Mayor and the Alderman gazed at one another in astonishment ; but no one spoke a word.

Mary stood up, and in her deep hoarse voice exclaimed, " Loving citizens, I am come unto you in mine own person ; it is the daughter of Henry the Eighth that now stands before you,— of your late royal master, who led you on to so many victories."

A loud shout shook the hall at this announcement—that shout lost Wyatt a thou-

sand followers, as it was echoed without the walls.' Mary stood still, with her pale cheek now flushed, and her dull eye dilated and sparkling with unusual fire, while her bosom beat high; and for one moment in her life her heart gladdened by the welcome cheers of her subjects, and she again proceeded. "I need not tell you how traitorously a number of Kentishmen and others have assembled themselves, against both ourselves and you, against our crown, and your property and privileges. They have made a cloak of the rumour of my marriage to cover their pretended purpose, as if doubting that I should wed against the consent of you, my loving subjects, or infringe upon those religious rights which all Englishmen hold so dearly."

Another loud shout followed this announcement, and the Queen hung down her head, as if ashamed of the falsehoods she had uttered.

But the crafty Gardiner had practised her beforehand in the part she was to play, and even promised her immediate absolution when she returned, so recalling to mind "the tyrant's plea," she unblushingly proceeded.

"What I am, ye know right well. I am your Queen, wedded to you, and to the laws of your realm. I am that Queen, your loyalty and affection placed upon the throne of England when another (whose life I have spared) usurped my right. I am that Queen who, from my solitude and forlornness, subdued all my enemies by your love, without bloodshed, and was placed at once upon the throne. My father possessed the same regal dignity; ye were always true to him, ye will be the same to me, and not suffer these vile traitors to wrest the sceptre from my grasp, and with it all your rights and liberties, — your homes, and the wealth ye have so honestly and honourably

gathered under the good government of my father.”

Wyatt's cause grew weaker as she proceeded: for when she came to touch upon the pockets of the citizens, she found the readiest road to their hearts; and many a one buttoned up his pouch, and vowed within himself to be true to her. Mary proceeded, “I know not how the mother loveth her child, for I never had one; but I love my subjects as naturally and earnestly as a mother doth her child, and I thus loving you, cannot doubt but ye as heartily love me, and that we shall give these rebels a speedy overthrow. And now good subjects! pluck up your hearts, and like true men, stand fast against these rebels, and fear them not; for on the honour of a Queen, I fear them not all.”

She ceased, and was again greeted with thunders of applause, though it puzzled many of

the good citizens to discover how she loved them like a mother, yet confessed she had never been one. Some thought she might; but did not care to acknowledge it; but these were suspicious fellows, and would not even take a Queen's word. Others considered the allusion as surpassing even the eloquence of Alderman Wormwood, who had been known to speak for three hours, by the clock of St. Dunstan; and one learned rascal roundly swore that it had been taken from the "Academy of Compliments." But he knew not that Gardiner had composed the speech, or he would never have suspected a learned bishop of looking into such love-lore.

So Mary departed, and left her loving subjects to defend the city, and comment upon her speech, and there was no lack of deep-sighted critics even in those days, who looked into and examined every thought, and concluded by be-

coming more guarded and suspicious. But Mary had won back many of her subjects ; she had attained her object, and hastened to the banquet, and the absolution proffered by Gardiner.

CHAPTER IX.

England hath long been mad, and scarred herself;
The brother blindly shed the brother's blood,
The father rashly slaughtered his own son,
The son, compelled, been butcher to the sire.

This day hath made,
Much work for tears in many an English mother,
Whose sons lie scattered on the bleeding ground ;
Many a widow's husband grovelling lies,
Coldly embracing the discoloured earth.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE forces under the command of Sir Thomas Wyatt, Lord Wardour, and the Duke of Suffolk, had by this time reached London-bridge, where they found the gates closed against them, and the drawbridge which commanded the entrance, raised. The address of the Queen had produced the desired effect, and those who were well disposed towards Wyatt's party could not

now join them ; because of the strong muster in the City, under the command of the Earl of Pembroke. Several shots had also been fired upon the insurgents ; and the inhabitants of Southwark, who had received the rebels kindly, now entreated their departure, for they could but ill-withstand the crash and thunder of the balls, which came rattling through the steep roofs of their houses. It would, however, but weary the reader to trace the progress of their march,—to follow their course through a bleak winter-night until they crossed the Thames by the bridge at Kingston, and approached London on the Westminster side. A cold frosty morning in February found the remnant of this brave but wretched army drawn up on the very ground now known as St. James' and the Green Park, and there they met Queen Mary's forces, ready to give them battle.

Great numbers had, however, deserted during the night, and many, through sheer cold and weariness, had been unable to keep up with their companions ; so that Wyatt found himself at the head of but little more than half the numbers, who formed his camp at Blackheath. Still there were amongst them hundreds of brave and determined men ; many who had resolved to die, rather than bow to the idols of Rome, or embrace the religion of Queen Mary. Many who had sworn upon holy book to rescue the Lady Jane Grey from the Tower, or shed their heart's blood in the streets of London.

But never did army present a more unwarlike appearance than the troops who had followed on foot, through those long and miry ways which they had traversed, and which had been rendered worse by the artillery and cavalry first passing over them. The snow had been ground down, and mingled with the mud, which

was thrown back by the heels of the horses, splashed numbers of the ragged infantry, from head to heel. And the bitter cold morning which followed this night of travail and fatigue, had frozen the mud on their ragged garments, many of which were now stiff with wet and frost. But the work of death was about to proceed, and they had no time to think of their appearance.

On the other hand the royal army was fresh, untravelled, and ready for battle, and the Earl of Arundel stood at their head burning to redeem his lost laurels. The troop of cavalry under the command of Lord Wardour, was kindled with the same spirit as their leader; for they were not ignorant of the cause in which he had armed, and like the errant-knights of a remoter age, they were resolved to rescue a fair lady from prison. Wyatt was not to be daunted by the diminished appearance of his followers;

but ordered the cannon boldly in the front, and without betraying any unusual emotion, calmly arranged the order of battle. The Duke of Suffolk sat in his saddle, as if he but awaited the first summons to surrender his sword to the enemy.

Between the two armies lay the "frozen and untrodden snow," white, smooth, and bloodless, like a huge winding-sheet spread ready to receive the slain. The tall and naked trees that rose on every hand, their boughs laden with the "feathery flakes," stood like silent spectators of the scene, while the venerable Abbey of Westminster heaved its grey bulk against the sky, as if to tell them how many kings and warriors its high roof shrouded, who had thrown off their steel vestments and their glory, and were sleeping in their narrow sepulchres. One heavy bell was heard with its slow measured tones summoning the inhabitants to

morning prayer; but ere it ceased it had tolled the knell of many a brave soldier, whose cheek when living blanched not at the sound.

It was a painful sight even to one who had no share in the feelings of those hostile assemblages, to gaze upon them, ere the smoke of the cannon had darkened the clear space that spread between their ranks: to see the bright eyes and manly features, which were so soon to be dimmed and convulsed by the agonies of death.

Nor could the beholder compare the appearance and numbers of the opposing armies, without a painful conclusion of what must soon be the fate of one of them. The eye had but to glance from the dark and solid masses, which were headed by Lord Clinton and Arundel, to the weak force by which these were confronted, to decide upon the certain issue of the combat. There stood many of the very horsemen whom

Lord Wardour had but a few days before defeated, strengthened by treble the number to that on his own side, as if they had but to ride out and surround the whole force that opposed them. An immense body of pikemen stretched behind the cavalry, and were supported on either wing by the royal archers, and these again flanked by strong bodies of cavalry. On the side of the insurgents, with the exception of the few that remained in the train-band under Captain Brett, and the undiminished body of Kentish volunteers, there were but a troop of thieves and beggars; some armed with scythes, clubs, hay-forks, and even stakes drawn from the hedges as they passed along, or whatever came the most handy. Their mean and miserable appearance also seemed to diminish their little strength, for many of them looked more fit to become the inmates of an hospital, rather than men who were about to engage in the tug and

tear of battle. Nay, so mean was the appearance of numbers of this ill-starred army, that the war-cry of the royal army on that day was "Down with the draggel-tails," and many a poor fellow before sunset, who had taken no share in the insurrection, but was found with the dirt frozen upon his unsightly apparel, was either shot or confined in a donjon.

Before the word was given to fire, Sir Thomas Wyatt rode up to Lord Wardour, who commanded the right wing of the army, and holding out his mailed hand, said, "Though they have the advantage of us in numbers, we will this day convince them that we will not be outdone in valour, and it shall go hard if my sword keeps not stroke for stroke with your own. Well fare you, though we never meet again."

"I will do my devoir," answered Wardour, "whatever may betide me; and should we miss each other in the streets of the city, rest assured

that you will find me thundering at the gates of the Tower. If I am not there, you will know that my last blow hath been struck."

"I would give up my knight's spurs," said Wyatt, "that we might enter it abreast. But see, they are already in motion,—God and St. George for our freedom!—To the charge." But the sound was broken by the deafening thunder of the cannon, and the war-cry of "Wardour for God and Jane Grey!" was lost amid the roar and tumult that accompanied the onset.

At the very head of the cavalry rode Lord Wardour, his white plumes and naked sword gleaming through the smoke, and followed closely by Gilbert Pots, his sabre also ready drawn, and a pistol in his bridle-hand, for the drawer was determined to throw no chance away. But great was the astonishment of the young nobleman, when he saw the opposing horsemen separate, ride forward, and then close

upon his troop, thus cutting off at once the approach of the infantry. Quick as lightning did he rein round his steed, and again return to the charge he had overshot; but his enemies were now with him front to front. Then began the deadly strife, for no one attempted to fly, and steel clashed with steel; while armour rang back the blows which could not pierce. Many a saddle was soon emptied, while the rider lay groaning and unregarded upon the earth, trampled beneath the hoofs of the very steed which his own hands had that morning fed. Wardour had twice confronted a tall warrior, and exchanged a few blows, before they were driven asunder by some passing horsemen, who charged or turned, just as the waves of battle rolled, and their steeds again, by the same chance, met front to front. The young nobleman wheeled round, rose in his stirrups to give greater force to the stroke, and was about to

deal such a blow as would have cloven the shoulder pieces asunder, and severed the arm, when a horse came full speed upon his flank, and the sword missed its aim. The rider had lost his helmet, who, seeing the danger to which the warrior, whom Lord Wardour had attacked, was exposed; and taking advantage of the moment, was about to make a thrust beneath the upraised arm with his straight cross-handled blade, when Gilbert Pots, whose sharp eye saw the sudden movement, raised his pistol and shot him dead. Wardour turned his head an instant, and seeing the face of the rider, whose steed had driven aside the blow, he uttered a deep groan, and exclaimed, "There lies the bravest warrior that ever fought beside an earl;—it is my father, henchman!" He was about to dash into the thickest of the fight once more, when his rein was seized by the warrior he had thrice op-

posed, who muttered through the bars of his helmet, "I am Arundel. Halbert has this day saved thee from ——" They were instantly driven asunder by the furious charge of the cavalry, and Wardour was swept along amid them, and in the centre of his own followers, until they reached Charing Cross, and even fought their way up the Strand and to Temple Bar, the gates of which stood open, and the pursued and pursuers rushed through at the same maddening speed.

Meanwhile Sir Thomas Wyatt had also been severed from the infantry, (who had either thrown down their weapons or fled, at almost the first charge,) for Lord Clinton's horsemen had opened their front to let his cavalry pass, while a regiment of horse, under the command of the Earl of Pembroke, were drawn up ready to receive his charge. Thus hemmed in, he was compelled to fight his way on both hands,

and as Pembroke's party soonest yielded ground, he pushed on in the direction of the city, for in that course the terrible tide of battle had now turned. Wardour had, however, passed on before him, and left him such a pathway as marked his route for the road was strewn, at intervals, with weapons and armour, wounded steeds, and dead or dying men; and blood might be traced along the streets beyond Temple Bar. As for the Duke of Suffolk, he was made prisoner almost at the onset. Wyatt fought his way along Fleet Street, and up to the very postern of Ludgate, the gates of which were closed against him, although Lord Wardour, and a few of his daring followers, had but a few minutes before passed through, in pursuit of the enemy. He called to the soldiers on the walls to throw open the gates, and was answered by the firing of a culverin, which Hans Carvel helped to

work, exclaiming, as Wyatt retreated, " Mine cote ! but de powder ish too strong for de noses of his horses." A part of Pembroke's army was close upon his heels, and he had now to cut his way through their ranks, his own followers reduced to about fifty men, and many of these severely wounded ; while he himself had received a deep sabre cut on the shoulder, which caused the blood to flow over his armour. Still he clove through the dense mass, and step by step fought his road back again to Temple Bar ; but the gates of that grim portal were now shut—he had no chance of escaping—retreat was cut off at both ends. The last stroke he dealt broke his sword, and even then his few faithful followers gathered around him, and presented such a front as drove back the boldest assailants. A leader of the royal forces approached, and entreated him to spare the lives of his devoted followers ; and not till then

did he throw down his broken weapon, although he had long seen that all was lost. Resistance was indeed useless, for his enemies were now ten to one, and he was borne off, faint and bleeding, to prison.

The postern of Ludgate was again thrown open, and a troop of horse passed through, at full gallop, to rescue the party which had fled before Lord Wardour and his forces, and had by this time reached the Tower, to which place we now return.

CHAPTER X.

Was this a face
To be exposed against the warring winds?
I will despair, and be at enmity
With cozening hope; he is a flatterer,
A parasite—a keeper-back of death.

SHAKSPEARE.

It was on this same piercing day when the Lady Jane Grey, unconscious that many a brave heart had shed its blood in her cause, had left her weary prison to walk in the Queen's garden, within the Tower; for even the cold air, and the ground covered with snow, were preferable to her gloomy cell; and the fallen flakes were something new to look upon; for it concealed the pebbles of the walk, every one of which seemed to have become familiar to her weary eye. But she was not free; she moved about like a bird, that hops moodily around its cage;

and when it spreads out its wings in a moment of happy forgetfulness, feels more forcibly the power of the string by which it is still secured. She saw the sun shine, but the beams only beat on high and grey walls, to remind her where she was. She felt the wind play upon her pale cheek, and watched the fallen leaf drifting before it upon the snow ; but it blew only to the foot of the high enclosure that surrounded the garden, and then she remembered she was still a prisoner ; every thing reminded her that she must turn again and then again ; there was nothing new for her to look upon, saving the snow. She would have given much but to have gazed on the waters of the moat, to have seen the stream which emptied itself into the Thames, then rolled away free and bright along the river, but the sentinel shook his head, and, with a sigh, waved her back, for his heart ached, while his duty compelled him to deny

her. If a bird alighted for a moment in the shrubbery, and charmed her ear with its song, ere it flew away, she only felt a greater craving of the heart,—an aching wish to be free. She stood “like Ruth amid the alien’s corn—sick ! sick for home !”

She had coveted death ; but hopes, more cruel than the grave, had whispered her back again to life ; had gazed, with a firm eye, upon the deep and dark hereafter, clasped her hands, and made herself ready for the eternal plunge ; but still some unfriendly grasp dragged her back into the world. Then came days of sickening hope, leaving the soul time for weak resolves, drawing the eye away from the star on which it had fixed, back to the weary green of the earth, to dreamy landscapes, narrowed and hemmed in by monotonous hills, which the gaze could never pierce beyond,—but freedom came not. Many such weary days as these

had passed, and the Lady Jane Grey again found herself in the garden of the Tower, accompanied by her faithful Amy. It was the gloomy month of February, the cold bleak day on which the battle took place, when the hoar frost hung upon every bough, and the few sparrows sat shivering upon the naked branches,—when all out-of-door objects sought a shelter, and only a prisoner pined for the cold free air of Heaven, the melancholy comfort which all others shunned. On that day did the lady prefer the hard cold snow-walk of the garden to the gloom of her prison-house, for the iron-bars of her window were cased with white frost,—no fire was allowed to warm her desolate cell,—to illuminate those chilling and comfortless walls. The day before, the snow had beaten in at the bars of her prison window, and many a flake, during the night, had fallen upon her miserable pallet. There the cold grey stones caught the

imprisoned light, as if reluctantly, while they seemed eagerly to embrace the darkness; but the sunshine of a fire never beamed upon those walls, and the fair victim sat shivering upon her pallet, until her very blood was benumbed, before she petitioned her jailer to warm herself in the piercing air, which all others sought to avoid.

They walked together in silence,—they moved along arm in arm, and pressed closely upon each other, as if they feared to be separated. The piercing air would have made a king and a beggar creep together for warmth, had they met in the hollow of a heath on such a day. Those who fought and died felt not the bitter cold.

“Art thou not cold, Amy?” said the lady, first breaking the silence; “shall we return to our prison-house again? We can there, at least, avoid this cutting wind, which seemeth to pierce me thorough.”

“ I can spare thee this furred tippet,” replied the affectionate girl, unloosing it, although her teeth chattered as she spoke ; “ I can better bide this bleak wind than thyself. I wish her no evil,—yet should not be sorry if Queen Mary had to take a few turns with us, in such cutting cold, or to spend one night in yonder icy cell, without a fire. But she hath never known such privations.”

“ They are but trials granted us from God, my dear Amy,” answered her lovely mistress, “ and will ere long have their ending. He permitteth nothing to befall us, but what is for our good, either here or hereafter. Suffering but makes death more welcome ; it is pleasure that appals and confounds us like crime. Sorrow hath but few earthly regrets ; as the false splendours of the world recede, we seem only drawing nearer to Heaven.”

“ I wish it was our lot to hasten thitherward,

hand in hand to-night," said Amy, a tear gathering in her eye as she spoke. "We cannot suffer more than we have done; when I had to break the ice in the bowl to-day ere thou couldst drink, I could have wept tears of blood, and yet I shed not one, for fear thou shouldst weep also. Let us neither taste food, nor drink again; but lie down and die in each other's arms. I love thee so, that I wish to die with thee. I would that we were both dead!"

"Their treatment to us hath, indeed, been somewhat severe of late," replied the Lady, "since it has been rumoured that my father has joined the insurgents, now rising in Kent. But we must wait God's good time, Amy; He gave us our lives, and will take them away when it is His holy pleasure. Remember what his only Son underwent for our sakes; how He was betrayed, and reviled, spit upon, and imprisoned, an-hungered, and suffered death,

that we might be saved. Let us take pattern by such an example, and bear our burthens a little longer. And yet," added she, bursting into tears, "the acutest pangs I feel, are to see thee suffer for the love thou bearest towards me. Thou that hast done no wrong. All Gardiner's importunities to persuade me to change my religion, all his threats and anger, are nothing compared to what I feel for thee. Oh! why wilt thou share my misery, and thus make me more unhappy? Amy! Amy! I would that we could die together, or that I loved thee less."

She threw her arms around her attendant, and they wept upon each other's bosom, in the bleak and bitter air — their warm tears mingled together, for tears are never cold, like false smiles. The heaving of the heart,—the sobbing voice, and the burning tear, are never false; gold and pity, promises and oaths, may be

forged ; but these are ever true, — the sterling coinage of the heart, — the unalloyed gold of God.

“My dear mistress,” said Amy, every word broken by a deep sob, as she spoke,—“it is not for myself that I complain ; but that all our sufferings cannot fall upon me alone. Oh ! how blythely would I bear them if God would but permit me the trial. Then these lips of mine should never murmur again. I would eat the brown dry loaf with pleasure, drink the frozen water with gladness, sit in the cold dark nook without shivering, lie down upon our coarse pallet with more pleasure than I would bury myself beneath three-piled velvet. It is to see thee suffer so, that is breaking my heart : the sight of the cold frozen bars of our prison, chill me not half so much in a morning as this. It makes me press the coarse coverlet to my mouth a-nights, lest my crying should awake

thee, and when my breast is sobbing as if it would burst, tell thee, that I but shake at the cold."

"God above, bless thee!" exclaimed the Lady, drawing her yet closer to her throbbing bosom,—a bosom an angel might have coveted to spread the unsullied snow of his wings upon, though he had lost another Paradise for the wish. "I do wrong to wish thee away from me, although thou standest between me and Heaven. I do wrong to love thee thus, though God and thyself are the only comforters of my misery. Thou makest me to forget father, mother, and husband; yea, even my prayers. Oh! who, to see me weep thus fondly over thee, would think that I had ever been a queen? Amy! I shall go mad; thy love will drive me beside myself. To think that I, whose word no one did dare to disobey, cannot even command thee a fire, — cannot obtain for thee food, but

such as a famished beggar would turn from with disgust!—that when thou art cold, I give shiver for shiver with thee,—that I, who was so tenderly fashioned that I could not have slept, had I thought that the meanest hind in my dominions, lacked either food or shelter, should be brought to this! Dear Amy, let us begone, that I may find a dark nook, in which I can hide my face. Haste away, my dear girl,—if thou canst not pray, thou canst yet weep for me, and that is still a comfort. But hearken!” said she, pausing a moment to listen before they departed —“It is the clash of weapons, and the tramp of horses. Now God above be merciful to these misguided men, who are shedding each other’s blood. Let us begone, Amy, they are already within the Tower!”

“They may rush upon us as we pass,” said Amy; “let us not be too hasty, we shall be sure to find the door of our prison open, no

one, I fear, will refuse us admittance there. But this strife may bring us our liberty; let us hope that our friends have entered the Tower, and that we shall have no need to enter yonder cell again."

Leaving the ladies in the garden, we must now return to Lord Wardour, who had fought his way to the very gates of the Tower. Left with not more than a score of followers, he had chased the retreating horsemen through the streets of the City, who sometimes turned back to give him battle; and when borne down by the superior valour of this brave but diminished troop, again flew, and led him further into the streets of the city. Wardour and Gilbert were foremost in the pursuit, and right manfully did the drawer acquit himself on that day, giving many a thrust, and parrying many a blow which was aimed at his courageous leader. The gates of the Tower were thrown

open to receive the flying horsemen ; and Gilbert and the young Lord rode in close upon their heels — then the portcullis fell, and shut out the rest of their followers. After some resistance they were compelled to surrender, for they were now borne down by the superiority of numbers. Still Wardour refused to give up his sword, until he knew into whose hands he had fallen captive, and though bleeding copiously from the wounds he had received, he kept at some distance from his enemies, none of whom seemed willing to confront him too nearly.

At length a Knight approached on foot, who had been left in charge of the Tower, and said, “ If thou thinkest Sir Edward Hastings a Knight worthy enough to receive thy sword, resign it; for I would not see one of thy courage hewn to pieces before my eyes; but treat thee as becometh a brave prisoner.”

“ I am content,” replied Wardour, letting fall his sword, and sinking forward through loss of blood,—he would have fallen from his saddle, had not the Knight caught him.

Sir Edward undid the fastenings of his helmet, and uttered a faint “ Good God !” then bade the horsemen enquire how matters were going on without the gates ; and supporting Wardour on his arm, turned a corner of the building, and led him away from their gaze. A little further along the wall, a door stood open, and the Knight led the bleeding captive into the cell, then placed him gently on the coarse couch, and hurried out in search of a Leech. Lord Wardour was senseless through loss of blood, and unconscious that he then lay on the pallet of a prison.

Gilbert was soon secured in a safe cell, and while he wiped the blood from his arm, he said to the jailor, “ This fighting hath given me a

marvellous appetite, canst thou find me wherewith to appease it, friend? I should not like to rob the gallows one ounce of my full weight."

"Thou shalt have the best of our Tower fare," said the man; "the more so that I have known thee of old. But I little thought when I kept guard over thee in the pillory, thou wouldst ever be found fighting against Queen Mary."

"Nor I either," answered Gilbert; "but if I once get clear out of this scrape, I will never peril my carcase again. And hark thee, friend; be not afraid of loading the trencher; and if ever fortune smiles on me, thou shalt have a cup and a crust while there is one to be found at the St. John's Head in Ludgate. For, once free, I will marry the widow, and turn Host for life. Queen Mary will not forget the service Gilbert Pots once rendered her, though I

have made this slip for the love I bore my master.”

The man departed, and soon brought the drawer such a meal, as drove away, for the time, all thoughts of death.

Wardour's followers had been met in their retreat from the Tower, by the cavalry under the command of Pembroke, and after a sharp onset were compelled to surrender.

CHAPTER XI.

Can this be death?—then what is life or death?
“Speak!” but he spoke not; “wake!” but still he slept:
But yesterday, and who had mightier breath?
A thousand warriors by his word were kept
In awe: he said as the centurion saith,—
“Go,” and he goeth; “Come,” and forth he stept.
The trump and bugle till he spake were dumb,
And now nought left him but the muffled drum.

BYRON.

IN crossing the court-yard, Sir Edward Hastings met with Duskena, and well knowing her skill in the healing art, he at once conducted the old woman to the prison, in which he had placed Lord Wardour. Duskena had abandoned the rebel army on their arrival at London Bridge; nor had she again joined them during the affray, but betaken herself to the Tower, where she had many friends, there to await the result of the battle. While the old woman was kneel-

ing beside the young nobleman, and examining his wound, the Lady Jane Grey and her attendant Amy entered the prison, for it was the cell in which the fair victim had been confined. The jailor, who had kept watch over the ladies while they walked, now closed and bolted the door, unconscious that it contained any other than those he had admitted.

The countenance of the lady turned pale as death, when she beheld Wardour stretched out, bleeding and senseless, upon the pallet;—she staggered, and would have fallen, had not Amy rushed to her assistance; and when she recovered, she clasped her fair hands together, and gazed upon him in silent despair.

“He yet breathes,” muttered the old woman, as she attempted to staunch the blood, which flowed from a wound in the breast, that had been inflicted by the thrust of a lance; “but he cannot live beyond the hour; neither the

power of medicine, nor the skill of the wisest Leech, can save his life."

The Lady Jane sighed heavily, but spoke not, while a tear gathered in her eye, then tracked its silent course down her cheek, and fell upon the floor.

"Tell us, good mother," said Amy, in a tremulous voice, while her eyes filled with tears, "how he chanced to become thus wounded, even nigh unto death, and then be borne into this miserable prison."

"In the cause of thy mistress, maiden," answered the old woman, "and in doing battle for her freedom, — a cause for which many a brave man hath this day measured his length upon the cold earth, and made the snow scarlet with blood. Would that my old body was numbered amongst the slain!"

"And he hath sacrificed his life for my sake," said the Lady, unconsciously, to herself;

“and misery and death must be the doom of all who have ever loved me. I would that I were in my grave! I but live to make others wretched. But it was the will of Heaven that we should never know happiness on earth,—the early blight hath fallen upon us both. Had I but been born a lowly cottager, and he — but these thoughts are evil. And my husband, and my father, have I forgotten them? O God, pardon this weakness,” added she, aloud, “and if it be Thy pleasure, hasten on the end of my misery! Death is now my only comforter: in the grave alone can I find rest.”

She sank down upon the stool beside the pallet, and taking up the cold hand of the senseless warrior, pressed it between her own, and wept bitterly.

Amy sat sobbing beside her upon the floor, while Duskena placed herself on the pallet,

and sat gazing in silence upon the features of the dying man.

“ So young and brave, and to be cut off in his prime!” said the old woman, after a long silence.—“ Well, well ! ’tis better thus than to live through long years of heart-aches ; and only to grow grey in crime,—to number our years by their sorrows, and recal dates by the despair they bring,—to tell the months over by the miseries we remember, and the days by deeds that but make us sad. I would that I had died when young, before the evil days came upon me.—How faintly he breathes !—faint as when a child I held him for hours upon my knee, and he then slept the sleep of happiness, while, with my other arm, I cradled my daughter.” She closed her eyes as her thoughts thus wandered to the past, and again proceeded, unconscious of those around her. “ How distinctly their images start up before me ! even

to the sunshine that streamed in through the door of my hut, and fell upon their faces while they slept. That day the royal tiger looked in upon me : it was the last time Henry of England kissed my cheek ;—his hunting dress sat well upon him ; he awoke my daughter as he hung over me, for his cold bugle-horn chanced to touch her face. I pulled a plume from his bonnet, and kept it for years : he was then married to poor Katherine. But he is dead ! and she is dead ! and there is no one of them now living but me, and this youth. But he moveth," added she, leaning forward, and bathing his lips with the handkerchief she took from the Lady, and which she dipped in the earthen vessel that held the water, set apart for the fair prisoner to drink, and was half-filled with ice.

The jailor had before this time entered and lit the lamp, and as he had received orders from

Sir Edward Hastings not to disturb the inmates of the cell, he finished the business he came upon and departed without a word. But even he, hardened as he was, could not gaze upon the scene unmoved, for when he reached the open air, he raised the sleeve of his doublet to his cheek, and wiped away the tear, that stood as if it had lost its way amid those deep furrows, which pity so seldom trod.

The fast-glazing eyes of the dying man opened, and the first object that struck his fading vision, was the face of her he had so long loved, bathed in tears and bending over him. He returned the pressure of her fair hands, and in a voice which was scarcely audible amid the silence of the prison, faintly whispered! "Thou art saved then, and I die happy."

"Embitter not his death with the knowledge of where thou art," whispered Duskena. "The

spirit of the brave passeth away more lightly, if in the field he heareth that the victory is won."

"Thou art dying," said the Lady, her utterance choked by her deep sobs, "and I cannot save thee, though thou hast met with death in seeking to serve me, and all the return I can now make, are my tears and prayers. I cannot—I will not blame thee for thus throwing away thy life, for I am unworthy of the sacrifice thou hast made for me; I have long loved thee with the fondness of a sister—a holy love, though once mingled with a weakness that God will pardon me for; before HIM thou wilt soon appear, and HE will forgive thee, though I hang my last sin upon thy lips,—the last weakness that shall call me woman."

She knelt down and kissed his fevered lips, then fell senseless upon the couch. He raised his arms as if to draw her nearer, but they fell

stiff and motionless by his side, and he breathed his last sigh.

The soul winged its way to the golden portals of heaven, and stood upon the starry threshold abashed, but the gates opened, and the ranged ranks of winged angels fell back with down-drooping eyes, and waited with compressed lips the dread fiat, which so often sounded from the blinding splendour, before which they "veiled their faces with their wings." But no voice spake as the mute spirit stood bowed before the bursting glory, though the blazing effulgence shaped itself as if into a hand, and motioned the spirit in silence, to fall back into the ranks of the blessed. The recording angel threw down the golden pen, which his reluctant hand had uplifted to record the deed, and raised the loud "Glory," that twice ten thousand voices rang back, shaking the starry steep of heaven.

But earth with all its miseries is still before us, and we must wing back our way through the gloom.

While Lady Jane Grey lay prostrate and senseless across the dead body, and Duskena with her withered hands clasped, shaped her thoughts unawares into a prayer (undisturbed by the heart-rending sobs of Amy), the door of the prison was thrown open, and Sir John Brydges, the Lieutenant of the Tower, entered. Behind him stood his attendants, half hidden in the shadow of the door-way, the light only glancing partially on the heads of their halberts and their steel helmets. The kind-hearted officer gazed on the scene before him in silence, and the words seemed to choke him when he attempted to deliver his message, for he had come to warn the Lady Jane Grey, to prepare herself for DEATH, on the morrow.

Amy's attentive ear was the first to catch the

dreadful summons, and she threw herself on her knees before the Lieutenant. The kind old man took her uplifted hands between his own while she knelt before him, and stood immoveable on the spot. Even the hardy soldiers in the background, hung down their heads and stood leaning on their halberts in silence, while Amy exclaimed: "Has she then been saved so long, that she might but be led to death at last? Oh, say that you have but come to affright me."

"To-morrow!" said Duskena, rising, and now comprehending the errand they had come upon, and which the Lieutenant had been compelled, though with reluctance, to repeat. "God grant that she may be dead already!" added she, casting her eye towards the couch on which the fair victim had fallen. "And why must she be led to death on the morrow?"

"I cannot tell," answered the Lieutenant, "unless it be, that some of those who were

taken in arms to-day against her sovereign highness Queen Mary, have confessed that their object was to replace the Lady Jane again upon the throne. The Queen herself hath signed the warrant of her execution." And he held it forth in his hand, while the light fell full upon the written parchment and the black seal which was appended to it.

"Ye have come to lead me to the scaffold," said the Lady suddenly springing up, and staring wildly around her, while her long hair which had escaped from its braid fell in beautiful disorder down her neck and shoulders. "I heard the sound of the axe as I lay in a stupor but now, and had a dream that ye were coming for me. It ringeth in mine ears yet ; but lead on, I am ready."

The sound she heard was the hammering of the workmen outside, who were already preparing her scaffold upon the green before the

White Tower, for the Lieutenant had delayed the execution of his errand long after he received the warrant ; and when he delivered it, it was with a heavy heart.

“Death hath been before you to give me welcome,” continued the Lady, pointing to the body of Wardour as she spoke ; “and he hath promised fairly not to break his word with me this time.” But the features of the dead man made her in an instant serious ; and hiding her face in her hands, she stood several moments buried in deep and fervent prayer. When she raised her head again, there was a look of resignation on her countenance, a firmness in her eye and voice, as she said, “My thoughts were wandering but now from God ; they are fixed again, and I am ready to meet my fate. At what hour on the morrow must I die ?”

“When the day hath fairly broken,” answered the Lieutenant, “then will all thine

earthly troubles draw to a close. And may God grant thee firmness to the end !”

A low earnest “ Amen !” was breathed by all present, saving Duskena ; she alone raised her voice against the sentence, which the Queen had pronounced.

“ And this then is the fulfilment of her mercy,” said the old woman aloud. “ For this she hath held out hopes to her victim, that she might at last make death more terrible—she hath lowered a rope from the brow of a steep precipice, to the wretch that midway clung by the bending branch which shot from the fissures, that she might raise her nearer the brink, and make the fall more awful. For this, she hath granted her permission to walk in the garden, nay even sent her messenger to bid her think no more of death, and promised that ere long this miserable cell should be exchanged for a place of comfort. May the curse of God alight upon

her!" continued the old woman, as her bitterness increased. "She is beginning the work of bloodshed, and her name shall be handed down to future ages, written in blood. The page of the Calendar that records her reign shall hereafter be printed red, and unborn generations shall only know her by the name of Bloody Mary. The beginning of her reign hath been marked with angry streaks, like a morning of tempest breaking upon the dark sea; her night will close in, crimsoned with the same vengeance, and men shall long remember how ominously the sun rose, and how fearfully it set on that day of desolation. When my own deeds are remembered, some friendly finger will point out on the dark chart, the revenge which forced me into that fearful sea, while in low whispers they track her wanton course along the ocean of blood, which she but shed to sail upon. May her heart be gnawed with the vipers of remorse,

her sleep peopled with horrible visions, her eyes revel in images of terror ; may she never know rest day nor night, but die accursed by all!"

"Cease, old woman," said Bishop Gardiner, entering, "and rail not on the Lord's anointed. Remember thine own evil deeds, and repent :"
and he strode forth into the centre of the prison.

CHAPTER XII.

Come then ; come soon ; come sweetest death to me,
And take away this long lent loathed light ;
Sharpe be thy wounds ; but sweet the medicines be,
That long captived soules from weary thraldome free.

SPENSER'S *Faery Queene*.

DUSKENA raised herself upon her staff, and met the glance of the cruel churchman without blenching, and they stood for a few seconds confronting each other with feelings of mutual disgust ; for Gardiner hated her for the service she had beforetime rendered Mary, and the old woman had ever loathed his presence since his interference prevented the Queen from pardoning the Lady Jane Grey. At length the eye of the Bishop alighted upon the dead body

of Wardour, and he said, in a tone which made the blood curdle, "Death hath been beforehand here, and robbed the headsman of his fees."

"And sent one more cruel than the Evil-one himself to glut his savage gaze on the ruin he hath made," answered the fearless old woman, "thou shouldst have been born a vulture, so fond as thou art of blood."

"I come not to waste words with thee, old woman," replied the Bishop, his sallow brow darkening, "but to bring such comfort as the church offereth to her erring children at the hour of death—to this misguided lady, whom I trust will now lend me a patient hearing."

"Then it is the wolf's last visit to the lamb it hath long set apart for slaughter," said Duskena, "the pity that precedeth the meal—the tiger's growl of grace before he dyes his jaws in blood. Shame on thee, to mock her thus,

when thy savage heart is already leaping light at the thoughts of her death. When thou knowest that she would not have been here, but for thy fiendish interference."

"Hold thy peace, impious wretch," said Gardiner, his countenance now convulsed with rage, "lest I launch forth the thunders of the holy church against thee, and leave thee cursed and excommunicate."

"Peace, good mother, and anger him not," said the Lady Jane, now speaking; "his intent in coming hither meaneth kindly to myself, though I cannot embrace what he would offer."

"Cursed and excommunicate!" echoed Duskena, disregarding the appeal. "No, though thy will is evil enough, thou hast not that power. See what store I set by either thy blessing or thy curse; here is the pardon which my gold purchased at thine hand; I have long ceased to wear it." She drew a small piece of

folded parchment, to which was appended a riband, from beneath her ragged garments, and approaching the lamp, held it over the blaze until it was consumed; then added, "There perishes the last link that fettered me to the faith of Rome. Duskena doth now put her trust in God alone, and not in such mortals as thyself. Go tell the Queen that I have joined those whom her religion teacheth her to call heretics."

The Bishop gazed, mute and astonished, at the bold bearing of Duskena, for he was unprepared to witness such a scene; and the soldiers, who stood behind the Lieutenant, looked on amazed and pale, as if they expected to see the roof of the prison fall in, and close upon such an impious act.

"Thou shalt be called upon, in good time, to answer for this rash and unholy action," said Gardiner; "but for the present I will hold

no further communion with thee, for thou art even worse than the vilest of heretics." Then turning to the Lady Jane Grey, he said, "Although the warrant is signed, and the hour appointed for thy death, yet if thou wilt embrace the faith of Rome thou shalt be saved ; both here and hereafter. For I have yet power to procure thy pardon on these conditions, which, for the good of thy soul, I have held out to thee beforetime."

"You well know mine answer," replied the lady, without betraying a sign of anger ; "My faith is of more value than my life, nor will I barter it for such a trifle. I have waited for death too long to change now ; and if, in my weakness, I have before wavered a moment, I have since then grown stronger, and my resolves are now firm and fixed, nor would I have the few hours which are allotted me on earth, wasted in fruitless efforts to shake them.

I am but a woman, my Lord, and possessed of a woman's weakness, but I can die for my religion."

"Daughter, think well of what thou art about to do," said the Bishop; "life is not a trifle to be thrown away as if worthless. You are young, and the future may yet have many years of happiness in store for you, and by embracing the mercy now offered, you may save others who are dear to you, and who, by your perversity, may also perish. It is for your soul's good that I speak. The religion of our holy church is that ordained by God; a faith in which thousands of good men who are now saints in Heaven, have lived and died. It is no make-belief got up for the mere day, but a faith by which only the soul can be saved."

"It is nevertheless a faith which my own conscience telleth me is wrong," answered the

Lady; "though I believe that those who embrace it sincerely will be saved. But such must not be driven to it by a fear of death: that religion which can be sacrificed to save life, hath but little hold of the heart. Mine I shall never change!"

"Farewell then!" said Gardiner; "we shall never meet again, neither in this world nor the world to come, if thou diest in this belief!"

"That is a secret which only resteth with God!" answered the Lady: "yet in a better world I would fain that we might again meet, nor will I forget thee in my prayers."

Gardiner departed without deigning to make further reply; nor did he even stop to salute her as he passed.

"And now," said she, turning to the Lieutenant, "since that my time on earth is so brief, I would be free from all further interruption. For

those who have to appear before God, must carry with them a clear account, nor would I be found wanting."

"I will intrude upon your presence no longer," answered the Lieutenant; "but before departing, I would crave some slight token to keep in remembrance that I once knew so honoured a lady."

"Your request shall be granted," answered she, "when I am on the scaffold." She took up a small volume of prayers from the window-ledge, and holding it up said, "I will, before I depart hence, write some short passage in this manual, which you may preserve as a remembrance of one so unworthy as myself. And in return, beg that you will furnish me with materials for the purpose, as there are others whom I would wish to bid farewell to, ere I leave this world."

"Your request shall be granted," said the

Lieutenant; "and the body of Lord Wardour shall also be removed."

"Nay!" said Duskena raising her head from her staff; "it shall be my care to look after the dead, and there will be others to remove on the morrow."

"It grieveth me that my good intents are limited," said the Lieutenant, when writing materials were brought into the apartment; "but you will soon need none of those comforts which I would fain procure you, were it in my power. May God enable you to undergo this last trial with true fortitude!"

"Amen!" echoed the Lady, and holding forth her hand to the Lieutenant, they separated.

The prison-doors were then closed for the night, and Lady Jane Grey began to prepare herself for death. Amy sat upon the cold floor, the very image of despair, her face

buried in her hands, and her hair falling loose over her shoulders, giving vent to those long deep sobs, which tear up the heart when the fountain of tears is dry, until nature became exhausted beneath the load of agony, and she fell asleep.

“And now!” said the lady, drawing the rude stool nearer to the lamp, and placing a Greek Testament upon her knee, at the end of which were several blank leaves; “I will leave to my sister Katherine a treasure of more value than gold, the treasure which Christ left to us poor sinners when on earth, and with it I will bequeath my dying exhortation. Do thou, good mother, hold me this ink-horn while I write.”

Duskenæ knelt down beside her, watching her countenance while she wrote, and holding the ink-horn in her withered fingers, which shook through cold and the infirmities of age.

The light fell upon the dusky features of the old woman, now sorrowful and collected, and on the hand of the fair writer, as it moved rapidly across the pages, but saving the quick scratching of the pen, and an occasional sob from Amy, no sound broke the stillness of the night, unless it was the distant ringing of the hammer, or the harsh grating of a saw heard at intervals, as the workmen were erecting the scaffold on the green. The features of the dead man were thrown into shadow, and saving a gleam of light which played upon the armour that had been thrown on the floor, his whole figure was shrouded in the gloom.

When Lady Jane Grey had finished writing in the Greek Testament, she then took up the prayer-book and penned a few lines for the Lieutenant, and afterwards read a prayer, to which Duskena listened with bowed knees and

folded hands, while the tears streamed down her aged cheeks.

Amy also had by this time awoke, and she now knelt by the side of Duskena, her hands resting on the knees of her fair mistress.

The dull light of the lamp seemed to make the contrast more striking between the lovely hand-maiden and the old woman. Duskena knelt with bowed head, the upper part of her face resting in deep shadow, while the tears stole still and fast down the deep furrows of her cheeks, and her withered lips moved; but made no sound. Her ragged drapery also mingled with the comely attire of the Lady. Amy knelt with head erect, the full light streaming upon her fair features, and the big tears coursing down her pale cheeks, while the white hand of her lovely mistress rested on her, and the long white fingers were half buried in

her flowing hair, and her compressed lips told with how much difficulty she held back the sorrow, which was ready to burst those rosy portals.

And the Lady read prayer after prayer, in a sweet low melancholy voice, which made such murmuring music, that even the ear of the sentinel without was arrested, and his measured footstep was silent while he listened, and then he heaved a deep sigh, which sounded through the iron-grated window, and the march he had before whistled was heard no more throughout the night. She read on, forgetful that she was within a prison, and although a tear sometimes stole down her cheek, and fell upon the pages of the book, still it interrupted her not.

When she had ceased, Duskena still remained kneeling, her hands clasped, and her eyes turned heaven-wards, while her lips moved

under the influence of prayer. Long and fervently did the old woman pray, until the remembrance of her sins broke forth into loud cries of mercy, and she fell with her face upon the floor imploring pardon of Heaven. Amy knelt with clasped hand and bowed head before the lamp, like a beautiful statue of grief, pensive and silent, that needed no sound to give utterance to the chiselled marble of its sorrows.

Lady Jane Grey retired to the darkest corner to pray alone, and she knelt unconsciously beside the dead body of Lord War-dour.

Daylight at length broke through the bars of the prison-window, — the dull cold daylight of a winter's morning fell upon the living and the dead—upon her who was so soon to die. Pale she was, even to an unusual paleness; but she was still the most collected of that melancholy

group: her hand shook not, neither was her eye dim, and if she spoke low, it was but as one speaks who is standing beside a grave. She arrayed herself in a sable suit — a meet dress for the occasion; they sat down, and for the last time Amy arranged her hair. The poor girl wept as if her heart would break when told to gather the long tresses underneath the caul of net-work.

“My neck is but a little one, my dear girl,” said the Lady, “and I would not that my hair should impede the work of the headsman.”

Amy stooped down and kindly kissed that beautiful neck, through which the cold axe was so soon to cut.

Duskena sat in silence on the pallet beside the corpse of the ill-starred lover.

At length the bell of the Tower sounded, slow, solemn, and deep, and made many a

heart ache within its hearing, for those ominous tones were well known in that gloomy neighbourhood; many an old citizen who had not yet arisen from his pillow, closed his eyes and folded his hands to pray. Others, half awake, hurried on their clothes, and hastened out to witness the execution.

Duskena rose up at the sound, and stood leaning upon her staff; she held a Bible under her arm, the gift of Lady Jane Grey. Amy stood up with her arms thrown around the neck of her mistress, her head resting on her bosom, and her hair unbound; she wept more bitterly than she had before done during the night. The Lady herself stood with one arm clasping the wrist of her attendant, in her other hand she held the book of prayers, and on this her eyes were attentively fixed. At length the bars of the prison were withdrawn with a cold grating sound, which made even the

heart of the jailor ache while he undid them. Then the solemn claim was made which demanded the body of the beautiful victim for death, before the procession to the scaffold commenced.

CHAPTER XIII.

Fear no more the lightning-flash,
Nor the all-dreaded thunder-stone;
Fear not slander, censure rash,—
Thou hast finished joy and moan.
All lovers young, all lovers must
Consign to thee, and come to dust.

Cymbeline.

ALL night long had the men been engaged in erecting the scaffold on which the fair victim was to suffer death, and when the cold light of the winter's morning broke upon it, the dark drapery covered their rude workmanship, and, saving the strewn saw-dust which was so soon to drink her blood, the temporary erection was covered with deep and melancholy black. The awful block stood ready,—the very bend in which her lovely neck was to be placed was

there ; there were the marks of blood upon it, lines that had crossed, mingled, and dried, for both Somerset and Northumberland had been beheaded on it. There wanted but a fiend to represent Ambition, standing by, and pointing to the gory monument, and history would have needed no other chronicler of their fates.

The bell continued to sound, and the spectators slowly to assemble, some of them scarcely awake, and with their dresses put on in the most slovenly manner. They gathered around the platform, yawning and shrugging up their shoulders ; and some even ventured to descant upon their own folly, for leaving their warm beds at so early an hour, and only to see a woman beheaded. At length a troop of halbert-bearers appeared, and surrounded the scaffold ; and a man wearing a coarse leathern doublet, and masked, bearing an axe in his hand,

ascended the steps of the platform, and took his station beside the block. The headsman ran his finger along the edge of the weapon, cast his eye down it, to see that it was free from snip or strain; raised it in his arms, and swung it round, as if to ascertain with what weight it would fall; shifted the block an inch or two, until he found that it stood firm; then took his stand beside it, with his elbow resting on the head of the axe, while with his foot he made a thick and solid bed of the saw-dust, under the groove of the block.

Meanwhile the Lady Jane Grey was conducted from prison to the place of execution by Sir John Brydges, attended by a guard of soldiers. She moved along with a slow but firm step, resting one hand on the shoulder of her faithful Amy, while with the other she held the Prayer-book, on which her eyes were atten-

tively fixed; she was followed by Duskena. As the procession was about to cross to the open space where the scaffold stood, a cart came rumbling along, and they were compelled for a few moments to halt. The Lady raised her eyes, for the first time since she had left the prison, as if unconscious whether or not she had reached the fatal spot, where all her sorrow was to have an ending, when, uttering a faint shriek, she closed her eyes, and would have fallen, had not Amy and Duskena supported her.

The object that had thus suddenly appalled her was the headless body of her husband, Lord Guilford, returning from execution. He had, but an hour before his death, sent to request an interview with her; but she, fearing that such a meeting might shake that firmness which was so necessary to meet death, had refused. A

scene so unexpected as this shook her more than the thoughts of death: it might be that her gentle heart reproached her with unkindness towards him, or that, by some strange shock of the feelings, her former affection had revived; for, from the hour that he wished to be made King, his conduct towards her had been cold, and at last he had all but forsaken her. She clasped the arm of Amy with a quick convulsive grasp, but spoke not a word; and when they again moved, the ground over which they passed was, for several paces, marked with blood, in the direction over which the car had passed.

At the foot of the scaffold stood Feckenam, Mary's chaplain: he had been sent by the Queen to perform the last religious rites,—he led the way up the platform. The Lieutenant, with tears in his eyes, assisted the Lady to ascend; Duskena held up the train of her tunic

to clear it from the saw-dust with which the steps were strewn, and Lady Jane Grey now stood upon the fatal scaffold.

The morning was grey and gloomy, and bitterly cold, and the high walls of the white Tower seemed to look more than usually grim, as they frowned upon the scene. The whole arena had a melancholy appearance, even the snow which had become dingy and uneven, through the trampling of the spectators, seemed to give a grey and more forbidding aspect to the scene, and to partake strangely of the hues of the surrounding walls, and the dull overhanging sky, while the black drapery of the scaffolding, deepened the feeling of misery. Nor were the countenances of the spectators less in keeping with the picture ; for the most brutal-looking among the group, assumed a strange and serious expression, when they

beheld that Lady about to suffer death; and many there were who gazed upon her in silence, while the tears coursed down their cheeks, and their lips quivered and breathed an unconscious prayer. They had never before seen one so young and lovely, meet her fate with such calmness, although there were a few present, who had witnessed many a similar death, and seen the end of those ill-starred beauties which the brutal Henry the Eighth, had loved, married, and beheaded.

The Lady had by this time again regained her self-possession, and she stood up without a sign of fear upon her beautiful countenance, gazed calmly round on the assembled audience, and as one who was an eye-witness, says, "They might behold in her countenance, so gravely settled, with all modest and comely resolution, that not the least hair or mote, either

of fear or grief could be perceived, either out of her speech or motions ; but like a demure body going to be united to her heart's best and longest beloved, so showed she forth all the beams of a well-mixt and temporal alacrity, rather instructing patience how it should suffer, than being by patience any way able to endure the travail of so grievous a journey ; with this blessed and modest boldness of spirit, undaunted and unaltered, she went to the scaffold."

Feckenham, a bigoted catholic, could not, however, let her rest, even at almost the last moment ; but the Lady calmly replied, that it was then too late to think of changing that faith, which had already carried her safely to the very threshold of heaven. She then addressed a few words to the spectators, in which she protested her innocence of wishing to usurp the royal dignity, adding, " I am condemned to

die, not for anything I have offended the Queen's Majesty, for I will wash my hands guiltless thereof, and deliver to my God a soul as pure from such trespass, as innocence from injustice; but only for that I consented to the thing I was enforced unto, constraint making the law believe I did that which I never understood." After a few words exchanged with Feckenham, she knelt [down and devoutly repeated in English the psalm of "*Miserere mei Deus*," while every head around the scaffold was bowed in devotion, and her own were the only tearless eyes in the assembly.

She then arose and presented the prayer-book to Sir John Brydges. The Lieutenant knelt down to receive it, and pressed the volume to his lips.

"And now, my dear Amy," said she, kissing her lips and forehead, "farewell, until we meet

again in heaven." But Amy heard her not, the scaffold had long seemed to reel before her eyes, and when her mistress had knelt down beside the block, she thought that the last moment was arrived, and, overpowered with the feelings which came over her, she fell dead into the arms of the Halbert-bearer, who had rushed to her support. The spirit of the faithful attendant had preceded her, on its way to heaven. The Lady clasped her hands together for a moment, while a faint smile lightened over the sadness of her features, then raising her eyes, she muttered a brief prayer, as if imploring the departed spirit to wait her coming, that they might enter the realms of bliss together. She then took her farewell of Duskena, pressing the old woman fervently to her bosom, who, with tearful eyes and heart-rending sobs, returned the embrace.

The old woman leant for a moment to recover herself against the railings of the scaffold, then arose and assisted the Lady to unrobe herself. With trembling fingers Duskena undid the fastenings of her gown, while with her own hands the beautiful victim took off the collar and neckerchief, and laid bare the loveliest neck in Christendom. While drawing off her light silk gloves, her eye chanced to alight upon a familiar face beside the scaffold; it was the countenance of Gilbert Pots, bathed in tears. She folded them one within the other, and throwing them forward they were caught by the poor drawer; he prest them for a moment to his lips, then thrust them beneath his doublet, and to the day of his death they were worn nearest his heart.

With her own hand did Lady Jane Grey bind the handkerchief around her eyes—those eyes which no one could ever look upon without

feeling a strange sensation playing about the heart. Before, however, binding up her eyes, the headsman knelt before her, and begged her forgiveness. She breathed a few low sweet words, the purport of which was, that she forgave him with all her heart. She then drew the folds of her tunic gracefully around, and knelt down beside the block. Saving a low stifled sob, or a deep prolonged sigh which broke forth in spite of the attempt made to check it, not a sound was uttered among the spectators ; but all was silent as the grave. The Lady put forth her fair white hand (in which she held her handkerchief) to feel for the block ; the Lieutenant guided her to it, when she laid down her head, and let fall the handkerchief as the signal that she was ready. * * *

A sound was heard—one deep muffled blow—that sent the blood back into every heart

there present ; then burst forth those simultaneous groans which come unawares from the breast, and all was over. * * *

Duskena had fallen senseless upon the scaffold.

CHAPTER XIV.

The red-breast oft at evening hours
Shall kindly lend his little aid,
With hoary moss, and gathered flowers,
To deck the ground where they are laid.

COLLINS.

ON the following day, a barge covered with a black awning was seen floating down the Thames to Greenwich; an old woman and a young man sat in the stern of the vessel; they spoke not to each other, but with bowed heads and sorrowful countenances sat gazing on the coffins which stood beneath the sable canopy. The rowers also tugged at their work in silence, and the measured and melancholy dashing of

their oars seemed to add to the solemnity of the scene. They drew up at the ancient landing-place we have before described, beside the old Palace of Greenwich. Several attendants in deep mourning stood ready as bearers, and the coffins were borne in the direction of the Park. On one was engraven in gold letters the word "JANE," beneath it was a death's head and crown, the latter reversed, as if it had fallen. The next coffin bore the simple name of "Amy," the emblem, a lily torn up by the roots. On the third was engraven the name of "Wardour," a silver star half-buried in a black ground, and surmounting a broken lance and sword, which were thrust through a heart, were the emblazoned emblems it bore.

The procession wound along the gloomy avenues of the Park, and down the foot-paths of the Dark Valley, until it halted a little

beyond Duskena's hut. Near a hollow before pointed out, surrounded by little knolls, and broken and banky ground, were dug three graves; in these were the coffins deposited. The venerable Latimer read the funeral service over the dead, while Duskena and Gilbert knelt beside the graves. As the day was dull and cold, and the snow still lay deep upon the ground, there were but few present to witness the solemn ceremony.

The ground had been opened secretly, and in the night, according to the directions given by Duskena, by whose orders the whole ceremony had been managed; for she had succeeded in begging the bodies of Queen Mary. Before the earth was piled on the dead, she threw into Wardour's grave the skull of her son Reynold, muttering to herself, "My revenge is now buried."

Years have passed away, and the flowers of Spring and Summer bloomed and faded above those graves. The spot is still marked by a noble tree surrounded by a seat, which stands on a green mound, the little hill itself is hemmed round with trees, this is the monument Nature has preserved. It was long known as the "Lover's Hill," and tradition has still preserved a story of its formation; for up to the time of Charles, it is said to have been the custom for those who plighted their vows, to carry a basket full of earth to the mount, and mumble some rhyme or another in the moonlight, without which spell they were supposed never to love truly. The valley between One-tree-hill and the Keeper's house leads direct to this little hill, with its perfect circle of trees. It is scarcely a stone's throw beyond the square brick column we have before mentioned. All around, the ground is

uneven, and has a wild appearance; and numbers of picturesque and aged hawthorns are still standing. A beautiful oak also graces a neighbouring hillock to the right, and throws its broad branches over the deep footpath that leads to the Lovers' graves. Beyond the ascent stretches two beautiful avenues of chesnuts, their boughs overhanging a delicious green-sward, which the sun sometimes chequers and breaks upon, through the canopy of branches in all its rich variety of lights.

It is a lovely spot to sit in, in the soft twilight of a summer evening, looking as it still does down the slope of the Dark-valley, and commanding the beautiful footpath yet overhung with trees.

But the hut in which Duskena dwelt, hath long ago gone to decay, and the oak which overhung it was felled in the time of Charles

the Second, for even the raptures with which Evelyn dwelt on its "goodly proportions and massy bole," instead of saving it, only served to point it out as a more certain mark for the axe.

Duskena did not long survive the scenes we have attempted to portray, but fell amongst those whose names are now forgotten, that suffered martyrdom for their religion. Even her name did not transpire at the stake, and all that is known of her fate, is a slight mention made by one of the old Chroniclers, of "An aged and bow-bent woman with a dark and sorrowful cast of countenance, whom it was rumoured had in her time been a firm Papist, but through the cruelty of Mary and Gardiner, had changed her faith. When brought to the stake, she made some resistance as they took off her upper tunic, previous to her being burnt.

And it was with difficulty that they took from off her neck a riband, to which was hung a small pouch of silk, of most exquisite workmanship. In it was found two locks of hair, varying in colour. To one was appended the letters J. G., and to the other J. B., which one, who stood by, and had some knowledge of her, said were the locks of Lady Jane Grey, and her daughter, Joan Boacher, who was condemned to be burnt in the reign of Edward. She had also on one of her fingers a ring, on which was written, 'Ye gifte of H. W.' which some said meant Lord Wardour, son of the famous Earl of Arundel. But be this as it may, the old woman met her death with great courage, calling on the name of the Lord and Saviour, while in the flames."

Gilbert Pots betook himself to his old haunt, the St. John's Head; and having led to the

altar the buxom widow, was soon addressed as "Mine Host," though he was better known as the merry drawer who once preached from the pillory. The fate of the remainder of our characters is well known to the readers of history. But as some new facts have lately been brought to light, by the industry of one of our historians, which will account for the peculiar views we have taken of this important period, we have appended them to this volume. They will serve to show, that if we have occasionally struck hard, in a few places, it was not without just cause; and that, although only professing to write a book of fiction, the whole ground-work is based on TRUTH.

NOTES.

SIR WILLIAM CECIL.

THE following remarks by Mr. Tytler,* throw much light on the character of Cecil at this period, respecting his only signing the will as a witness, and also show that the fancy must take a wide range indeed, to outstep the bounds of probability: and that truth is "more marvellous" than even fiction.

"I have already observed that Cecil's desertion of Somerset, and his devotedness to Northumberland, brought him to the brink of a precipice. The moment of trial was now come, and it is curious to trace him under it: yet let us do it with every allowance. The times were dreadful; and in the

* "England under Edward VI. and Mary. Illustrated in a series of original Letters never before published."

vocabulary of statesmen, to lose your place, and to lose your head, were then almost convertible terms.

“ On his first suspicion of the desperate game which Northumberland was playing, Cecil appears to have adopted an expedient not uncommon in those days with councillors who wished to get rid of a dangerous question. He became very sick and absented himself from court. This at least is Strype’s conjecture,* and there is every reason to believe it correct.

“ Many of his friends, however, thought him **REALLY ILL**; and amongst these Lord Audley, who loved and studied the healing art, undertook his cure, as appears by the following humorous epistle.”

The epistle we have before quoted in the first volume of our Romance, Chap. xi. p. 169, which we wish again to enforce upon the reader’s attention, as it is the key to Cecil’s after-conduct. Mr. Tytler prints the original letter in the State Paper Office, and thus proceeds :—

“ Cecil’s disease, however, was deeper fixed than

* Strype’s Memorials, vol. ii. part ii. p. 109.

to be cured by soup formed from the distillation of a sow-pig boiled with cinnamon and raisins, or a compost of a porpise or hedgehog stewed in red wine and rose-water. It was Northumberland's plot that troubled his digestion.

“ As the month of June approached, his quick eye had detected more decided symptoms of the Duke's daring scheme, and we learn from an authentic paper that he viewed it with the utmost alarm. He probably knew, what afterwards was so strikingly shown, the hatred with which the people regarded the Duke, and their strong attachment to legitimacy. There was then in Cecil's service, and treated by him with much confidence, one Mr. Roger Alford ; and Strype has published in his *Annals** a letter from this person to Lord Burleigh, which gives us some interesting particulars of that great statesman's conduct at this trying crisis. It is strange that these should have been so little noticed by the writers of his life, although well worthy of attention. In walking in Greenwich Park, the court being then at Greenwich, Cecil, it appears, told Alford in confidence, that

* Vol. iv. p. 349.

he had secret information of a device of King Edward's regarding the succession. He had heard of it he said, not as a councillor, but covertly from a friend. The object of the device was to set aside Mary, and to make the Lady Jane Queen. When the project was ripe, he considered it likely, he said, that he would be called to give his opinion : but he emphatically declared that, whatever became of him, he *never would be a partaker in that device.*

“ The plot was then confined to a few members of the government ; and Cecil, having resolved at all hazards to resist being brought in as an accomplice, absented himself from the Council.* This was a dangerous step ; Northumberland was violent, and we have Alford's testimony to the fact, that Cecil dreaded assassination ; he went about armed, contrary to his usual practice ; he resorted to London, often under covert of night ; he had his money, plate, and evidences conveyed out of his house ; he meditated flying from the country, but,

* This absence of Cecil from the Council was from the 22nd of April, till the 2nd of June. This was the time Lord Audley prescribed his hedgehog soup.

when Gosnold and Hales refused to sign the will, he plucked up new courage and remained. The power of Northumberland, however, and the importunity of the young King, having at last prevailed over all opposition, Cecil was called upon last of all to give his consent. Here as the passage is important, I must use Alford's own words.

“‘ Afterwards the matter thus proceeding, and the judge's opinions prevailing so far, who, together with Mr. Gosnold, and all others required thereunto, had subscribed, saving yourself, you told me that, being called for before the king, upon his commandment, that you should subscribe his instrument, you answered it, that allowing it as a councillor you could not, for causes you showed him. Whereupon, as I remember also, he said, he willed you to subscribe it as a witness, that it was his pleasure to have it so to pass, which you have no reason to deny; and so as the last man you subscribed.’

“ This account of Cecil's opposition to Northumberland's iniquitous scheme, of his being the last who was induced to affix his name to the will, and of his signing *as a witness* to the king's signature, *not* as consenting to the deed, has been adopted by

all the writers of his life ; and Alford, as we see, states that he received it from Cecil's own lips. I must confess, however, I give *no credit* to the story. It is *contradicted* by evidence under his [Cecil's] own hand. If it was true that *to the last* he was utterly against the scheme, and determined at all hazards to have no hand in it, how does it happen that, at the first, that letter which Chief Justice Montague received upon the 11th of June, requesting his presence at the noted interview in which the scheme for the disinheriting of Mary was first broached, was signed by Cecil, as well as by the other secretaries, Sir William Petre and Sir John Cheek ? But there is much stronger proof against Alford's story than this. Not only is the king's will signed by Cecil, without there being the slightest symptom that his name (which occurs not last but in the middle of all the other signatures) was there placed as a witness ; but it appears that, after the framing of the will, the King, or the Duke, to make assurance doubly sure, had directed a new instrument to be drawn out, by which certain members of the council engaged ' upon their oath and honour to adhere to *and carry into effect* all the

articles contained in the King's settlement.' Now this second deed is signed by four-and-twenty councillors, and amongst them occurs the name of William Cecil. The story, therefore, of his determined opposition to Northumberland, and of his signing, not as a principal but as a witness,—a tale so often repeated without due examination,—seems to me to have been manufactured to meet the exigency.

“ Alford's letter, it must be observed, was written in 1573, twenty years after the events it describes ; it was drawn up at Cecil's own request, and was evidently composed with the most favourable feelings towards his old master, who was then Lord Treasurer and Prime Minister of Elizabeth. It states *some* part of the truth, but *not* the whole truth. The distress and alarm of Cecil, when he first heard of the scheme of Northumberland to set aside Mary, and his resolution to resist it, ‘ whatever became of him,’ are emphatically dwelt on, and are certainly true ; *but he has suppressed the fact that these honest resolutions faded away, and that the feelings of the COURTIER proved in the end too strong for the determination of the PATRIOT.*

“ Northumberland, however, had no doubt de-

tected his unwillingness; and, on the 2nd of June, Sir John Cheek was sworn in as a third Secretary of State. It is difficult not to connect this extraordinary step with Cecil's absence from the Council, and indisposition to the plot against Mary. It appears to me that Northumberland meant to show him that, unless he went all lengths with him, he must cease to be Secretary. And the argument was not lost upon him. During the interval, between the 2nd and the 11th June, there was, I have little doubt, a painful conflict in his mind. It was during these eight days that Northumberland matured his design; and on the 11th, the letter was written by Montague, which may be regarded as the first public step against Mary. This letter was signed by Cecil; and that signature demonstrates, I think, that he had determined to retain his place, whatever sacrifice it might cost him. * * *

*It did cost him dear; for he was driven by it to falsehood, to evasions, and to little subterfuges, from which every upright mind would have recoiled.**

* P. F. Tytler's *England, under Edward and Mary*, vol. ii. pp. 171 to 175.

The following is the defence which Cecil presented to Queen Mary. It is in his own hand-writing, the original of which is in the British Museum. It is entitled :

“ A Brief Note Of My Submission And Of My Doings.”—Orig. Landsdown, 102. F. 2.

“ 1. First, my submission with all lowliness that any heart can conceive.

“ 2. My misliking of the matter when I heard it secretly ; whereupon I made conveyance away of my lands, part of my goods, my leases, and my raiment.

“ 3. I also determined to suffer, for saving of my conscience ; whereof the witnesses, Sir A. Croke, N. Bacon, L. Eresby of Louth, — two of my suit, Roger Alford and W. Cayewood.

“ 4. Of my purpose to stand against the matter, be also witnesses Mr. Petre and Mr. Cheke.

“ 5. I did refuse to subscribe the book, when none of the Council did refuse : in what peril I refer it to be considered by them who know the Duke.

“ 6. I refused to make a proclamation, and turned the labour to Mr. Throckmorton, whose con-

science I saw was troubled therewith, misliking the matter.

“ 7. I eschewed the writing of the Queen’s Highness bastard, and therefore the Duke wrote the letter himself which was sent abroad in the realm.

“ 8. I eschewed to be at the drawing of the proclamation for the publishing of the usurper’s title, being specially appointed thereto.

“ 9. I avoided the answer of the Queen’s Highness’ letter.

“ 10. I avoided also the writing of all the public letters to the realm.

“ 11. I wrote no letter to the Lord Larown as I was commanded.

“ 12. I dissembled the taking of my horse, and the rising of Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire, and *avowed the pardonable lie* where it was suspected to my danger.

“ 13. I practised with the Lord Treasurer to win the Lord Privy Seal, that I might, by the Lord Russel’s means, cause Windsor Castle to serve the Queen; and they two to levy the west parts for the Queen’s service. I have the Lord Treasurer’s letter to Lord St. John for to keep me safe if I could not

prevail in the enterprize of Windsor Castle, and my name was feigned to be Hardinge.

“ 14. I did open myself to the Earl of Arundel, whom I found thereto disposed ; and likewise I did the like to Lord Darcy, who heard me with good contentation, whereof I did immediately tell Mr. Petre for both our comfort.

“ 15. I did also determine to flee from them if the consultation had not taken effect, as Mr. Petre can tell, who meant the like.

“ 16. I purposed to have stolen down to the Queen's Highness, as Mr. Gosnold can tell, who offered to lead me thither, as I knew not the way.

“ 17. I had my horses ready at Lambeth for the purpose.

“ 18. I procured a letter from the Lords that the Queen's tenants of Wymbledon should not go with Sir Thomas Caverden ; and yet I never gave one man warning so much as to be in readiness, and yet they sent to me for the purpose, and I willed them to be quiet ; I might, as steward there, make for the Queen's service an hundred men to serve.

“ 19. When I sent into Lincolnshire for my horses, I sent but for five horses and eight of my

servants; and charged that none of my tenants should be stirred.

“ 20. I caused my horses, being indeed but four, to be taken up in Northamptonshire; and the next day following I countermanded them again by my letters, remaining in the country, and notoriously there known.

“ 21. When this conspiracy was first opened to me, I did fully set me to flee the realm; and was dissuaded by Mr. Cheke, who willed me for my satisfaction to read a dialogue of Plato, where Socrates, being in prison, was offered to escape and flee, and yet he would not. I read the dialogue, whose reasons indeed did stay me.

“ Finally, I beseech her Highness that in her grace I may feel some difference from others that have more plainly offended, and yet be partakers of her Highness' bountifulness and grace: and if difference may be made, I do differ from those who I served, and also from them that had liberty after their enforcement to depart, by means whereof they did, both like noble men and true subjects, show their duties to their Sovereign Lady. The like whereof was my devotion to have done, if I might

have had the like liberty; as knoweth God, the searcher of all hearts, whose indignation I call upon me if it be not true: 'Justus adjutorius meus Dominus, qui salvos facit rectos corde.'

" God save the Queen in all felicity!

" W. CECILL." *

In commenting upon this document, which places the treachery of Cecil in its true light, Mr. Tytler says, " It is singular that so important a paper as this, should have been so little consulted by the writers of Cecil's Life, whose besetting fault it is to indulge in vague and unlimited encomium. Yet the facts which it contains, are not only interesting as illustrating his character, but are in truth all we know of the secret history of the revolution which unseated Jane and placed Mary on the throne. I request the reader to observe how completely this paper corroborates the view already given, of the absurdity of the story that Cecil only signed Edward's will as a witness; for what says he himself of this? 'I refused to subscribe the book (i. e. the will), when none of the council did refuse; in what peril, I refer it to be considered by them who

* Endorsed by Cecil himself.

know the Duke.' Is it to be believed that he would have here omitted to add, that he signed it only as a witness, and not as consenting to the deed? Yet had Cecil the disingenuity to invent for the credulous ear of Alford this excuse, which he did not dare to plead to the Queen, and to consent in future years that the story, which he deemed, perhaps, a 'pardonable departure from the truth,' should be retailed by his dependants. *Such little beings are our greatest men!*

"Equally ungenerous and selfish, was his conduct, when Northumberland commanded him as secretary to draw the proclamation in favour of Jane. What says he here?

"'I refused to make a proclamation, and turned the labour to Mr. Throckmorton, whose conscience I saw was troubled therewith, misliking the matter.'

"Thus was poor Nicholas saddled by Cecil with an act of treason from which his conscience recoiled; and the secretary, whose eye was looking forward to coming events, found the means by this cunning suggestion, to place one man at least between himself and the scaffold.

"It is worth remarking," continues Mr. Tytler,

“ that Northumberland seems to have been ruined by his own excess of caution. In order that he might do nothing upon his own warrant, he insisted on having his route and marches prescribed by the Queen and council; whilst the Lords in their turn, as craftily assigned to him short journeys, ‘ not without the politic forecast,’ says Holinshed, ‘ of some in favour of the Lady Mary; for, the longer the Duke lingered in his voyage, the Lady Mary the more increased in puissance, the hearts of the people being mightily bent unto her.’

“ Having thus artfully procured the absence of Northumberland, and presented to him such orders as they knew must ruin him if executed—having at the same time sworn to him and to the Queen inviolable fidelity, the council proceeded busily in their intrigues against both; and of these intrigues, Cecil, as he himself informs us, was the principal author.

“ ‘ I practised,’ says he, ‘ with the Lord Treasurer, to win the Lord Privy Seal, that I might by the Lord Russel’s means cause Windsor Castle to serve the Queen; and they too to levy the west parts for the Queen’s service. I have the Lord Treasurer’s

letter to the Lord St. John, for to keep me safe if I could not prevail in the enterprise of Windsor Castle, and my name was feigned to be Hardinge.'

“ ‘ I did open myself,’ he continues, ‘ to the Earl of Arundel, whom I found thereto disposed ; and likewise I did the like to the Lord Darcy, who heard me with good contentation, whereof I did immediately tell Mr. Petre for both our comfort.’

“ These practices of Cecil when in the Tower, and the success with which he secretly laboured with the Lord Treasurer and others, to assist Queen Mary, are still more distinctly described in Roger Alford’s letter. Of this, part has been already quoted, but the following concluding narrative is well worthy of attention.

“ ‘ After this,’ says this confidential servant, ‘ you showed me in the Tower that you had a conference with the last Lord Treasurer,* and withall showed me out of your bosom a letter of credit of his to my Lord Marquis of Winchester that now is, his son, to credit you, and to follow your devices and directions. And, for the better

* Alford is describing in 1573 what took place in 1553.

execution of this your determination, I kept in a store certain blank passports, before in my custody, where the Council's hand was already set, for that the despatches then were quick, to escape more surer.

“ ‘ I remember further, at that time, of a wrote postscript in a letter of the Council's to the Duke, whereby was signified to him the revolt of Bethel and others with the navy to the late Queen, that your horsemen, which should have gone to the aid, were empesched by John Villiers, because you meant not to give any aid at all to their so much misliked enterprise. At that time you remembered also to me that the late Earl of Bedford was broken withall, as a misliker of that device, and Sir Wm. Petre also. * * * * After this, the Lords not long after agreed to go to Baynard's Castle to the Lord of Pembroke, upon pretence before in Council to give audience to the French King and Emperor's ambassadors, that had been long delayed, audience; and that the Tower was not fit to him to enter into at that season. At which time my Lord of Arundel, upon some overture of frank speech to be had in Council in respect of that present state,

said secretly to his friend, (as I take it yourself or Sir Wm. Petre,) *that he liked not the air.* And thereupon it was deferred to Baynard's Castle; from which place the Lords went and proclaimed Queen Mary. And yourself was despatched after my Lord Arundel and my Lord Paget to her Grace, being at Ipswich; where, being sent by you a little before, my Lady Bacon told me that the Queen thought very well of her brother Cecil, and said you were a very honest man.

“ ‘ Marry, there was a letter of late written from the Council to the Duke, intercepted, whereby appeared you had armed horsemen against her, but that they were impesched by Northamptonshire men, which had done you much hurt. Whereupon, being privy to the matter before, *I laughed,* and told her the matter.

“ ‘ At your coming to Newhall, you exhibited your submission to her Majesty, wherein you repeated your whole actions in that case, which I wrote. Upon the delivery whereof, you kissed her hand at Sir Wm. Petre's house at Ingerstone, before any other of the Council men. And I am to remember you further, that Mr. Cheeke answered Queen

Mary's letter, sent by Hungate to the Council; for that you shifted as you could all dealing in those matters, and said, if Hungate had taken a good time to deliver his letter, you thought the Council would have taken her offer. This all for this present.

‘ From Hitchin, the 4th of Oct. Anno 1573.

‘ Your Lordship's ever to command,

‘ ROGER ALFORD.’

“ ‘ You have the copy of your submission, wherein your whole dealing therein is remembered. If not, I think if Mr. Fothergill, who had the keeping of the council chest at that time, were spoken to, he would find it among the council matters at that time.’

“ This paper of Cecil's, entitled ‘ his submission,’ which is an original in his own hand-writing, and the letter of Alford's, his old servant, who we see was with him in the Tower at the time, enable us to fill up a portion of English history hitherto left a blank by all our best writers, and to add some important facts to the life of Lord Burleigh. We see that when shut up with the Council in the Tower,

he was prime agent in the re-action in favour of Mary. We can trace the doublings by which he deceived Northumberland, seduced the Council from the allegiance which he and they had sworn to Queen Jane, and, whilst he appeared to fulfil his oaths to this amiable person, really broke them, and acted against her. Thus, if an order must be given in favour of Jane, it was followed by a counter intrigue which rendered it abortive; and care appears to have been taken to preserve evidence of the fact. If obliged to send for his horsemen to assist the army against Mary, he managed that they should be attacked and 'empesched' on their journey, meaning not to give any aid to their misliked enterprise. This circumstance of the detention of Cecil's horsemen had been mentioned by the Council in a letter written from the Tower to Northumberland. The letter was intercepted by Mary; and she accused the Secretary to Alford of having armed soldiers against her. But Alford, we see, laughed, and explained the stratagem to the Queen. We have already seen the caution with which he shifted the writing of Jane's proclamation upon Throckmorton: we find from Alford, that when

Queen Mary's letter from Kenninghall was to be answered, a similar devolution of the dangerous duty took place upon his unfortunate brother-in-law Sir John Cheeke; and we know from himself, that he not only had the address to decline drawing the paper which branded Mary with illegitimacy, but that his refusal had the effect of making Northumberland write the letter himself. This very letter, in Northumberland's hand-writing, with many interlineations and erasures, is now in the British Museum. Upon the whole, there is presented in these papers of Cecil and his servant, a picture of successful craft, disingenuity, and, I must add, falsehood,* which has, perhaps, never been equalled in the history of statesmen."—Tytler.

Was there ever an act of greater political villany than this discovered? Was there ever a greater hypocrite than Cecil? Well would it have been for many who lived in that age, if he had suffered according to his deserts; he was indeed the chief cause of Lady Jane Grey being brought to the scaffold. He was even a greater hypocrite than we

* "I avowed the pardonable lie!" Cecil's own words.

have dared to paint him in the pages of our Romance.

Now for another proof of his hypocrisy. He became a Catholic during the reign of Mary; but even this shift failed procuring him office; a proof that Mary was not wholly blind as to his deceit.

We however find him numbered amongst those who went out to conduct Cardinal Pole to England, the principal object of which mission was to restore the country to its former Catholic Religion; — a strange mission for a Protestant to be employed in. Yet such was the faith (some writers have asserted) that he still adhered to. We here find proofs to the contrary, and from Cecil's own documents, so well prefaced by Mr. Tytler's remarks.

“ I found, on consulting the work of Dr. Nares, (Life of Lord Burleigh,) that this author, although he does not admit that Cecil ever became a Roman Catholic, gives a brief extract from a paper communicated to him by the late Mr. Lemon, and said to be preserved in the State Paper Office, from which he concludes, that to a certain extent he complied with the times. It appeared to me, that if the original of this paper could be found, it would set the

question at rest, and, to my great delight, I discovered it, after a search of nearly three days, amongst a loose collection of notes and memoranda which had been put up by themselves as illustrating the life of Lord Burleigh.

“The first of these is called ‘Easter Book,’ and contains ‘The names of them that dwelleth in the pariche of Vembletown, that was confessed, and received the sacrament of the altar,’ and first are ‘My master Sir William Cecil, and my lady Myldred his wife.’ Then follow ‘the names of the remaining persons who attended mass, one hundred and twenty-six in number, or their offerings, which are also stated; the sum total being calculated in Cecil’s own hand, and amounting to twenty-four shillings and twopence halfpenny.’

“Now I have found amongst the series of Sir William Cecil’s papers and letters already described, a small book, in his own hand, in which this same account is engrossed. (The account is the expenses of the altar, probably drawn up by the priest.) The book is endorsed by him.”

The account consists of items for the “Holy loaf,” “rewards given to the priest,” “wax tapers,

wine, oil, cream, etc.," " matters necessary for the mass," and " Easter oblations : " and Mr. Tytler thus sums up the evidence.

" These papers could never have been consulted by Dr. Nares ; for they contradict his conclusions, establishing beyond a doubt that, during Mary's reign, Sir William Cecil became a Roman Catholic, and that the commonly received opinions regarding his consistent and conscientious adherence to the Protestant faith are erroneous. They prove that he retained his benefices, of the profits of which he kept a very strict account : he confessed he attended mass with his wife, Lady Cecil, and he brought up his son, Thomas Cecil, afterwards Earl of Exeter, in the profession of the Roman Catholic faith. *These truths are now established upon evidence which cannot be controverted.*"

We have before alluded to Audley's letter, and the " Pig-broth," the original of which is quoted in page 169 of the First Volume of this work ; and doubt not but that the *facts* extracted in these notes will, in a great measure, convince the readers of our Romance that, black as we have painted the character of Cecil, we have not exceeded the bounds of justice.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

The following account of the trial and death of Northumberland from Mr. Tytler's valuable work, is full of interest.

“ On the 18th of August, the Duke of Northumberland was brought to trial in Westminster Hall. The Duke of Norfolk sat as High Steward ; and some of those pliant nobles, who had been the assistants and advisers of Dudley in his late practices, were now seen among his judges. His guilt was so clear, that he attempted no denial of the facts, but making great reverence to the judges, requested the opinion of the court upon two points. First : ‘ Whether a man doing any act by authority of the Prince and Council, and by warrant of the Great Seal of England, and doing nothing without the same, may be charged with treason, for anything he might do by warrant thereof?’ Secondly : ‘ Whether any such persons as were equally cul-

pable in that crime, and those by whose letters and commandment he was directed in all his doings, might be his judges, or pass upon his trial as his peers ?'

“ In this pertinent question, Northumberland evidently, I think, alluded to the commands of Edward the Sixth, and the warrant under the Great Seal of England, affixed to his will. Yet it is strange that all our historians* misunderstand the question, and suppose with the judges (who seem purposely to have evaded Northumberland's meaning,) that his allusion was to the great seal of Queen Jane.

“ A reference to the copy of the will itself, taken out of the original under the Great Seal, will show that the Duke rested his defence on his having carried into effect King Edward's ‘ *true mind* and intent,’ declared by his will, evidenced by his sign-manual, and corroborated by *his* Great Seal.†

* See Carte, vol. iii. p. 287. Hume, p. 374. Edition in one vol. London, 1832. Lingard, vol. vii. p. 127. Mackintosh, vol. ii. p. 290.

† Copy of the will entitled, “ Edward's counterfeit will,” Harleian, 35. fo. 364. Thus attested, “ This is a true copy of

Taking it in this light, the query was somewhat difficult to be answered. The only reply to it was, that the King himself could not alter the law as fixed by parliament; that Edward's own act was illegal. But the judges, as I have said, purposely mistook and evaded Northumberland's meaning. They answered that the Great Seal which he had for his warrant, was not the seal of the lawful Queen of the realm, but of an usurper, and therefore could be no warrant to him; and, as to his second question, it was replied, that if any were so deeply to be touched in that case as himself, yet so long as no attainder were of record against them, they were, nevertheless, persons able in law to pass on any trial, and not to be challenged therefore, but at the Prince's pleasure. The Duke, upon this, continues Holinshed, saw that to stand upon uttering any *reasonable* matter, as might seem, would little prevail; he therefore confessed the indictment, (as did his companions, Gates and Palmer,) and moved the Duke of Norfolk to be a mean unto the Queen for mercy."

Edward the Sixth's will, taken out of the original under the Great Seal, which Robert Cotton delivered to the King's Majesty, 17th April 1611, to be cancelled.

“ When sentence was passed, he stood up and said : ‘ I beseech you my Lords, to be humble suitors unto the Queen’s Majesty, and to grant me four requests ; first, that I may have that death which noblemen have had in times past, and not the other ; secondly, that Her Majesty may be gracious to my children, which may hereafter do good service, considering they went by my commandment, who am their father, and not of their own free wills ; thirdly, that I may have appointed to me some learned man for the instruction and quieting of my conscience ; and fourthly, that she will send two of the Council to commune with me, to whom I will declare such matters as be expedient for her and the commonwealth ; and thus I beseech you all to pray for me.’ ” *

“ There is a manuscript in the Harleian,” says Mr. Tytler, “ which gives us some interesting particulars of this miserable man and his companions. It informs us, that on the 21st day of August, 1553, before forty of the citizens of London, the Duke of Northumberland, My Lord Marquis of Northampton, Sir Andrew Dudley, Sir Henry Gates,

* Holinshed.

and Sir Thomas Palmer, came into the chapel, where they first knelt down, each upon his knees, and heard mass, every one of them saying the *Confiteor*. 'Mass being finished,' it continues, 'the Duke rose up and looked back upon the Lord Marquis, and came unto him, asking them all forgiveness, one after the other upon their knee, one to another; and the one did heartily forgive the other. And then they came all together before the altar, every one of them kneeling, and confessing to the Bishop that they were the same men in the faith according as they had confessed to him before, and that they all would die in the Catholic faith. When they had all received the sacrament, and all was done, they turned to the people every one of them, the Duke saying, "Truly good people, I profess here before you all, that I have received the sacrament according to the true Catholic faith; and the plague that is upon this realm, and upon us now is, that we have erred from the faith these sixteen years, and this I protest unto you all from the bottom of my heart." And the Lord Marquis, likewise did affirm the same with weeping tears; and also Sir Andrew Dudley, Sir Henry Gates, and Sir Thomas Palmer.'

“ It must have been on the evening of this day that Dudley wrote that piteous letter to the Earl of Arundel, which has been so frequently printed.* He addresses this nobleman as his especial refuge, declaring how woeful was the news which he had received that evening from the Lieutenant of the Tower ; that he must prepare to-morrow for his deadly stroke. ‘ Alas ! my good Lord,’ he exclaims, ‘ is my crime so heinous as no redemption but my blood can wash away the spots thereof ? An old proverb there is, and that most true, ‘ That a living dog is better than a dead lion.’ Oh ! that it would please her good Grace to give me life ! yea, the life of a dog, if I might but live and kiss her feet, and spend both life and all in her honourable service.’ ”

How demeaning is all this, contrasted with the bold bearing of the Lady Jane Grey ! How unbecoming the great leader of such a daring design, as the usurping of the throne from the legitimate heiress. Again.

* By Howard in his life of Lady Jane Grey, Tierney in his History of Arundel, and Lodge in his Life of Dudley, Duke of Northumberland.

“There are so many versions of the last words of the Duke of Northumberland, that it is not easy to discover the exact truth regarding his deportment upon the scaffold. The number of these copies seems to indicate an uncommon importance attached by both parties to his behaviour at the last. Fox says that he had promise of pardon, even if his head was upon the block, if he would recant and hear mass; and Burnet in his History of the Reformation affirms, that ‘certain it is that he said he had been always a true Catholic in his heart.’ The reader will observe from the following confession, which is in the latter portion of it, a different production from the speech, as reported by Stow, that Dudley says nothing in the least degree similar to the words imputed to him by Burnet, but rather the contrary.”

“On the 22nd of August,” says Stow, “Sir John Gage, Constable of the Tower, delivered to the Sheriffs of London, by indenture, these prisoners following: first, Sir John Gates was brought forth, and set at the garden-gate; then the Duke of Northumberland was likewise brought forth, and Sir Thomas Palmer after him. When the Duke and Sir

John Gates met, 'Sir John,' saith the Duke, 'God have mercy upon us! for this day shall end both our lives; and I pray you forgive me whatsoever I have offended, and I forgive you with all my heart, although you and your counsel was a great occasion hereof.' 'Well! my Lord,' quoth Sir John Gates, 'I forgive you as I would be forgiven; and yet you and your authority was the original cause of all together; but the Lord pardon you, and I pray you forgive me.' So either making obeisance to the other, the Duke proceeded; and when he came upon the scaffold, he, putting off his gown of grain-coloured damask, leant upon the rail, and spoke to the people."

We here give the Duke's confession, from what is supposed to be the most authentic document; the original of which is in the Harleian library, 284, folio 127. It is entitled

"The open Confession of John, Duke of Northumberland, who suffered at Tower-hill, 22nd of August, 1553.'

"Good people, hither I am come this day to die, as ye know; indeed, I confess to you all that I have been an evil liver, and have done wickedly all

the days of my life; and, of all, most against the Queen's Highness, (of) whom I here openly ask forgiveness (and he bowed his knees); but not I alone the original doer thereof, I assure you: for there were some other which procured the same; but I will not name them, for I will hurt now no man. And the chiefest occasion hath been through false and seditious preachers, that I have erred from the Catholic faith and true doctrine of Christ. The doctrine, I mean, which hath continued through all Christendom since Christ. For, good people, there is, and hath been ever since Christ, one Catholic church, which church hath continued from him to his disciples in one unity and concord, and so hath always continued from time to time until this day, and yet doth throughout all Christendom, only us excepted; for we are quite gone out of that church. For, whereas all holy fathers, and all other saints throughout all Christendom, since Christ and his disciples have ever agreed in one unity, faith, and doctrine; we alone dissent from their opinions, and follow our own private interpretation of Scriptures. Do you think, good people, that we, being one parcel in comparison,

be wiser than all the world besides, ever since Christ? No! I assure you, you are far deceived. I do not say so for any great learning that I have; for God knoweth, I have very little, or none; but for the experience which I have had.

“ For I pray you, see, since the death of King Henry the Eighth, into what misery we have been brought; what open rebellion, — what sedition, — what great division hath been throughout the whole realm; for God had delivered [us] up to [our] own sensualities, and every day [we] wax worse and worse. Look also in Germany since they severed from the faith, unto what miserable state they have been brought, and how their realm is decayed. And herewith I have [braved] these preachers for their doctrine, and they were not able to answer any part thereof, no more than a little boy. They opened the books, and could not [reply to] them again. More than that, good people, you have in your creed, *Credo Ecclesiam Catholicam*, which church is the same church which continued ever from Christ, throughout all the apostles, ‘saints,’ and doctors’ times, and yet doth, as I have said before. Of which church I do openly profess myself

to be one, and do steadfastly believe therein ; I speak unfeignedly from the bottom of my heart. This good man, the Bishop of Worcester, shall be my witness (and the Bishop said ‘ yea.’) And I beseech you all bear me witness that I die therein. And I do think, if I had had this belief sooner, I never had come to this pass ; wherefore I exhort you all, good people, take you all example of me, and forsake this new doctrine betimes. Defer it not long, lest God plague you as He hath me, which now suffer this vile death most worthily.

“ I have no more to say, good people ; but all those which I have offended I ask forgiveness, and they which have offended me I forgive them, as I would [have] God forgive me. And I trust the Queen’s Highness hath forgiven me ; where as I was with force and arms against her in the field, I might have been rent in pieces without law, her Grace hath given me time and respect to have judgment.”

“ And after he had desired all the people to pray for him, he humbled himself to God, and covered his own eyes with a cloth, and he suffered execution meekly.”

This was, indeed, a change; from the man whose "witty speeches" were wont to enliven the soldiers; who had laboured the most strenuously in persuading Edward to will the crown to the Lady Jane Grey, and had lent his most powerful aid to strengthen the Reformation. Yet great as was the change, no one can doubt his sincerity for a moment at the hour of death; whatever part he might have played before, he was no dissembler at that awful period. Lady Jane Grey alone was firm and unaltered from beginning to end; her faith was never shaken for a moment.

The following extract from a letter of Northumberland's to Cecil, assuring him that he had firmly adhered to the Protestant creed for twenty years, and which was written but little more than a year before his execution, forms a strange contrast to his confession on the scaffold. It also alludes to the great Reformer Knox.

NORTHUMBERLAND TO CECIL, 7th Dec., 1552.

(Original in the State Paper Office.)

"Master Knox being here to speak with me,

saying that he was so willed by you, I do return him again, because I love not to have to do with men which be neither grateful nor pleasurable. I assure you I mind to have no more to do with him, but to wish him well, neither also with the Dean of Durham ; because, under the colour of a false conscience, he can prettily malign and judge of others against good charity upon a froward judgment. And this manner you might see in his letter, that he cannot tell whether I be a dissembler in religion or not. But I have for twenty years stood to one kind of religion, in the same which I do now profess ; and have, I thank the Lord, past no small dangers for it.”*

* P. F. Tytler's *Edward and Mary*.

LADY JANE GREY.

THE PROCLAMATION OF QUEEN JANE.

“JANE, by the grace of God, Queen of England, France, and Ireland, defender of the Faith, and of the Church of England, and also of Ireland, under Christ on earth the supreme head. To all our loving, faithful, and obedients, and to every one of them, greeting. Whereas our most dear cousin Edward the Sixth, late King of England, France, and Ireland, defender of the Faith, and on earth the supreme head under Christ, of the Church of England and Ireland, by his letters patent, signed with his own hand, and sealed with his great seal of England, bearing date the 21st day of June, in the viith year of his reign, in the presence of the most part of his nobles, his counsellors, judges, and divers other grave and sage personages, for the profit and surety of the whole realm thereto assenting, and subscribing their names to the same, hath by the same his letters patents recited that, foras-

much as the imperial crown of this realm, by an act made in the thirty-fifth year of the reign of the late king of worthy memory, King Henry the VIII. our progenitor and great uncle, for lack of issue of his body lawfully begot, and for lack of issue of the body of our said late cousin King Edward the VI. by the same act limited and appointed to remain to the Lady Mary, by the name of the Lady Mary, his eldest daughter, and to the heirs of her body lawfully begot, and for the default of such issue the remainder thereof to the Lady Elizabeth, by the name of the Lady Elizabeth, his second daughter, and to the heirs of her body lawfully begotten, with such conditions as should be limited and appointed by the said late king of worthy memory, King Henry the Eighth, our progenitor and great uncle, by his letters patents under the great seal, or by his last will in writing, signed with his hand. And, forasmuch as the said limitation of the imperial crown of this realm, being limited as is aforesaid to the said Lady Mary and Lady Elizabeth being illegitimate, and not lawfully begotten, for that the marriage had between the said late king, King Henry the VIII., our progenitor and great uncle,

and the Lady Katherine, mother to the said Lady Mary; and also the marriage had between the said late king, King Henry VIII., our progenitor and great uncle, and the Lady Anna, mother to the said Lady Elizabeth, were clearly and lawfully undone by sentences of divorces, according to the word of God, and the ecclesiastical laws, and which said several divorcements have been severally ratified and confirmed by authority of parliament, and especially in the twenty-eighth year of the reign of King Henry VIII., our progenitor and great uncle, remaining in force, strength, and effect, whereby as well the said Lady Mary, as also the said Lady Elizabeth, to all intents and purposes, are, and been thereby disabled to ask, claim, or challenge the said imperial crown, or any other of the honours, castles, manors, lordships, lands, tenements, or other hereditaments, as heir or heiress to our said late cousin, King Edward the VI., or as heir or heiress to any other person or persons whosoever, as well for the cause before rehearsed, as also for that the said Lady Mary and Elizabeth were unto our said late cousin but of the half blood, and therefore by the ancient laws, statutes, and customs of this realm be

not inheritable unto our said late cousin, although they had been born in lawful matrimony,* as indeed they were not, as by the said sentences of divorce, and the said statute of the twenty-eighth year of the reign of our King Henry VIII., our said progenitor and great uncle, plainly appeareth; and forasmuch also as it is to be thought, or at the least much to be doubted, that if the said Lady Mary or Lady Elizabeth should hereafter have and enjoy the said imperial crown of this realm, and should happen to marry with any stranger born out of this realm, that the said stranger having the government and the

* The fallacy of this assertion, though sufficiently obvious at the present day, was not entirely destitute of force at the period in question; for perhaps it was not then so settled a point of law, that the rule of *possessio fratris*, does not apply to the Crown, or to any other dignity: Blackstone, *Commentaries*, Book I. Chap. iii. p. 193, in proof of the fact in relation to the descent of the Crown, cites Mary's having succeeded Edward VI., but as there was no such precedent when that succession was in dispute, it is not extraordinary that to suit the case in point, an attempt should have been made to assimilate the descent of the royal dignity with that of common inheritances.

imperial crown in his hands would adhere and practise, not only to bring this noble free realm into the tyranny and servitude of the Bishop of Rome, but also to have the laws and customs of his or their own native country or countries to be practised and put in use within this realm, rather than the laws, statutes, and customs here of long time used, whereupon the title of inheritance of all and singular the subjects of this realm do depend, to the peril of conscience, and the utter subversion of the common weal of this realm. Whereupon our said late dear cousin, weighing and considering with himself what ways and means were most convenient to be had for the stay of the said succession in the said imperial crown, if it should please God to call our said late cousin out of this transitory life, having no issue of his body, and calling to his remembrance that we and the Lady Katherine and the Lady Mary, our sisters, being the daughters of the Lady Frances, our natural mother, and then and yet wife to our natural and most loving father, Henry, Duke of Suffolk, and the Lady Margaret, daughter of the Lady Eleanor then deceased sister to the said Lady Frances, and the

late wife of our cousin Henry, Earl of Cumberland, were very nigh of his grace's blood, of the part of his father's side, our said progenitor and great uncle, and being naturally born here within the realm, and for the very good opinion our said late cousin had of our, and our said sister's and cousin Margaret's good education, did therefore upon good deliberation and advice herein had and taken, by his said letters patents declare, order, assign, limit, and appoint, that if it should fortune himself, our said late cousin King Edward the Sixth to decease, having no issue of his body lawfully begotten, that then the said imperial crown of England and Ireland, and the confines of the same, and his title to the crown of the realm of France, and all and singular honours, castles, prerogatives, privileges, preliminaries, authorities, jurisdictions, dominions, possessions, and hereditaments, to our said late cousin, King Edward the Sixth, or to the said imperial crown belonging, or in anywise appertaining, should, for lack of such issue of his body remain, come, and be unto the eldest son of the body of the said Lady Frances lawfully begotten, and so from son to son, as he should be of

ancienty in birth, of the body of the said Lady Frances lawfully begotten, being born into the world in our said cousin's life-time, and to the heirs-male of the body of every such son lawfully begotten : and for default of such son born into the world in his life-time, of the body of the said Lady Frances, lawfully begotten, and for lack of heirs-male of every such son lawfully begotten, that then the said imperial crown and all and singular other the premises should remain, come, and be to us, by the name of the Lady Jane, eldest daughter of the said Lady Frances, and to the heirs-male of our body lawfully begotten, that then the said imperial crown, and all other the premises, should remain, come, and be to the said Lady Katharine our said second sister, and to the heirs-male of the body of the said Lady Katharine lawfully begotten, with divers other remainders, as by the same letters patents, more plainly at large it may and doth appear. Sithens the making of which letters patents, that is to say, on Thursday, which was the sixth day of this instant month of July, it hath pleased God to call to his infinite mercy our said most dear and entirely beloved cousin Edward the Sixth,

whose soul God pardon, and forasmuch as he is now deceased having no heirs of his body begotten, and that also there remaineth at this present time no heirs lawfully begotten of the body of our said progenitor and great uncle, King Henry VIII. and forasmuch also as the said Lady Frances, our said mother, had no issue male begotten of her body, and born into the world in the life-time of our said cousin, King Edward the Sixth, so as the said imperial crown, and other the premises to the same belonging, or in anywise appertaining, now be, and remain to us in actual and royal possession, by authority of the said letters patents : We do therefore, by these presents, signify unto all our most loving, faithful, and obedient subjects, that like as we for our part shall, by God's grace, shew ourselves a most gracious and benign sovereign Queen and Lady to all our good subjects, in all their just and lawful suits and causes, and to the uttermost of our power shall preserve and maintain God's most holy word, Christian Polity, and the good Lawes, Customs, and Liberties of these our realms and dominions ; so we mistrust not, but they and every of them, will again, for their parts, at all

times and in all cases, shew themselves unto us their natural liege Queen and Lady, most faithful, loving, and obedient subjects, according to their bounden duties and allegiances, whereby they shall please God, and do the thing that shall tend to their own preservations and sureties: willing and commanding all men of all estates, degrees, and conditions to see our peace and accord kept, and to be obedient to our laws, as they tender our favour, and will answer for the contrary at their extreme perils. In witness whereof we have caused these our letters to be made patents. Witness, ourself at our Tower of London, this tenth day of Julie, in the first year of our reign.

“ God save the Queen.”*

The following anecdote from the “ Biographia Brittanica” shows how sudden a change was ef-

* Lansdowne MSS. 198, f. 9-14, into which it is transcribed from the copy printed by Grafton in 1553. There is also an imperfect copy of part of this Proclamation in the Cottonian MSS., JULIUS F. vi. f. 194.

fect in the Tower, when it was deserted by the Council.

“ A Mr. Edward Underhill, who had been admitted into the Band of Gentlemen Pensioners by Edward VI., was at that time about the person of Jane : in his youth he had been a man of pleasure, but being converted to the Reformed Religion, he became so zealous a protestant, that his comrades designated him the “ Hot-Gospeller ;” from these circumstances he became a favourite at the new Court, and was on duty at the Tower, when his wife was confined with a son. The baptism of the infant was fixed for the 19th of July, and the Duke of Suffolk and the Earl Pembroke had consented to stand as sponsors by proxy, and the Lady Jane not only signified her intention of being god-mother, but as a still higher mark of favour, desired that the child should be called Guilford, after her husband. The baptism, as appointed, took place ; and Lady Throckmorton, wife to Sir Nicholas, was deputed to act as the royal proxy. On leaving the Tower that evening, Lady Throckmorton received the usual commands from Lady Jane herself, according to established etiquette, and conveyed them

to the assembly she had just quitted ; after the ceremony she returned to the Tower ; but her surprise may be imagined, on entering the royal apartment, to find the canopy of state removed, together with all the other ensigns of royalty : she was, however, soon informed by one of the new officers of the change which had taken place since her departure in the afternoon : and also that her Lady was a prisoner for high treason, and that she must attend her, but under the weight of a similar charge."

The following anecdote is also on record, and the incident is said to have taken place when Lady Jane Grey went to pay a visit to the Princess Mary, at her mansion of Newhall, in Essex. It is mentioned by Foxe, the Martyrologist. "The Lady Jane was asked by Lady Anne Wharton to take a ramble one afternoon ; and their walk leading them past Mary's Popish Chapel, Lady Anne made a low curtsy to the host, which was then lying on the altar. The young Protestant Lady did not understand this species of homage, and naturally asked if the Lady Mary was in the chapel ; to which Lady Anne answered ' No : ' adding that she but made her curtsy

to Him that made us all! ‘Why,’ replied Jane, ‘how can He be there that made us all, and the baker made him.’

“This her answer,” says Foxe, “coming to the Princess Mary’s ear, she did never love her after, as is credibly reported, but esteemed her as the rest of that *Christian* profession.”

In the “Memoirs and Literary Remains of Lady Jane Grey,” a recent invaluable work by Sir Harris Nicolas, we find the following interesting remarks:—

“In a small manuscript on vellum, in the Harleian collection* in the British Museum, containing

* Harl. MSS. No. 2342.

“As an account of the contents of this valuable MS. must be deemed of much interest, from the circumstance of its having been used in the devotions of Lady Jane Grey, the following is extracted from the Harleian Catalogue.

A prayer for patience in Tribulation as Christ was patient f. 1
 A prayer concerning the love of my neighbour 5

a Manual of Prayers, which is considered to have originally belonged ' to some English Protestant of

A prayer for forgiveness of sins ; wherein gloteny is added to lechery	9
A prayer for our Enemyse	15
For pacyens in Tribulation	15
For true wisdom	16
A confession of sins to God, seeming to want the beginning ; here, among other sins, the penitent chargeth himself with adulterie and theft	18
A praier to our Lord Jeshu Christ, in which he desires grace pacyently to suffer	21
The praier of Quene Ester for help agaynst her enemyes	27
The præer of Sara the daughter of Raguell whan she was slaundred	28
The praier of Judath for the victorie of Olyfnernes	29
The praier of Jessus the sonne of Sirake	29 ^b
The praier of the three children that were delyuered from the hote burnyng fire	32
The praier of Manasseth, King of Juda	35 ^b
A prayer for grace to believe and trust in Jesus Christ ..	38
A prayer for assistance against many of the author's infirmities ; amongst other sins he mentions ' Pollinge of poore people, and crabbedness agaynst those that were with him in howseholde'	39

quality, who was cast into prison wrongfully, according to his own opinion;" but was afterwards used both by Lady Jane and her husband, Lord

A prayer to the blessed trenyte	42 ^b
A prayer to God for delyuerance from the power of all his enemyes, and frome all theym that consented to his destructyon and pardicione	44
A prayer against the temptations of the fleshe, the worlde and the deuylle.....	45 ^b
A peticyon or prayer for [i. e. <i>against</i>] all the evylles of paynes and punishments	48 ^b
A deuoute prayer to Criste the seconde person in trynyte, our onely redemer, God and man	49 ^b
A petition and praier to our lorde for delyuerance from his enemys	59 ^b
Ejaculations collected from the Psalms and other Scrip- tures, beseeching the divine assistance in the author's extreme misery	62
The songe of Austeyn and Ambrose	74 ^b
Saynt Jerom's deuocion oute of Dauyd's Saulter.....	77 ^b
A praier to the Father.....	106 ^b
A praier to the Holy Goste.....	107
A praier to the Trenyte	107 ^b
A praier to Jesu Christe.....	108
The Lord's prayer, followed by many holy ejaculations..	109 ^b
These are suitable to the condition of a person in tribu-	

Guilford Dudley, when in the Tower; these illustrious persons wrote the following passages, and which render this little volume perhaps the most interesting relic of misfortunes which is extant. It is about four inches long, nearly two inches in thickness, and contains thirty-five Prayers: as from its size, there is but a very small margin, not more than three lines of the passages alluded to occur on the same leaf; they are written at the bottom of the page, and are continued on the opposite and following ones. The manuscript which is bound in red morocco and ornamented, was once 'illuminated by some foreigner, but has since been abused, and is now imperfect in two places;' with this exception, however, it is in fine preservation, and callous in-

lation; yet some of them do seem to import a deliverance.

Now follow, by another hand,

A prayer in Trobil	137 ^b
A prayer for the lyghtenyng of the Holye Ghoste	138
A prayer in aduersitte and greuous distresse	
A prayer for strengthe of mynde to beare the Crosse	140
A prayer of the faythful person in aduersite.....	143

deed must be the person who can turn over its pages with indifference. The compiler of the Harleian Catalogue, conjectures that it was written for the use of Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset, the Protector, 'upon his first commitment to the Tower of London, and that the last five prayers were added after his second commitment, which ended in his execution; but if it were so, 'tis easy to apprehend how it might come into the hands of that noble, but unfortunate lady, the Lady Jane Grey.' However probable the conjecture may be, that the volume once belonged to the Protector, it does not appear to be supported by the least evidence; and though Lady Katherine Grey, the sister of Lady Jane, married Edward Seymour, the Duke's son, that alliance did not take place till some years after Lady Jane's execution; hence the book, if it once belonged to the Protector, is not likely to have fallen into her possession: but as her husband's brother John, Earl of Warwick, married Anne Seymour, the daughter of that celebrated statesman, it is highly probable that it was given to Lord Guilford by his sister-in-law, after he became a prisoner, and if this

conjecture be correct, the similarity between his situation, and that of its former owner, must have rendered it a most appropriate present.

“ The note which first occurs was written by Lord Guilford Dudley ; it was evidently addressed to his wife’s father, the Duke of Suffolk ; and, as has been before surmised, in all probability the book having been occasionally borrowed by each of the unfortunate prisoners, as no other method of communication was perhaps permitted, it was made the means of conveying those assurances of duty and affection, which have almost consecrated its pages.

“ “ Your louying and obedyent son wischethe unto your grace long lyfe in this world, with as mucche joye and comferte, as euer I wyshte to my selfe ; and in the world to come joy euerlasting. Your most humble son tel his dethe,

‘ G. DUDDELEY.’

“ Some pages further on, Lady Jane Grey addressed her father in the following manner.

“ ‘ The Lorde comforte your grace, and that in his worde whearein all creatures onlye are to be comforted. And thoughe it hath pleased God to take awaye 2 of your children : yet thincke not, I most humblye beseech youre grace, that you haue loste them ; but truste that we, by leafinge this mortall life, haue wunne an immortal life. And I, for my parte, as I haue honoured your grace in this life, wyll praye for you in another life. Youre gracys humble daughter, JANE DUDDELEY.’

“ The ensuing passage in Lady Jane Grey’s autograph, was written at the request of Sir John Brydges, the Lieutenant of the Tower, who being solicitous to obtain a memorial of his prisoners, is said to have requested her to write some lines in it, he in all probability having obtained a promise that the volume should be given to him after her decease.

“ But Mr. Howard asserts, that ‘ between the announcement of the fatal order for execution and its fulfilment, the Lieutenant of the Tower, evidently impressed with love and respect for the unhappy sufferers, was anxious to pro-

cure some memorial of his prisoners, and accordingly he presented to them the manual of devotions in question ;' he, however, afterwards suggests that they had borrowed the book. In a former part of these remarks, another conjecture on the manner in which it fell into Lady Jane's hands has been submitted, but it would be useless to pursue the enquiry ; especially as some observations connected with the subject will be found in the memoir in this volume."

“ ‘ Forasmuche as you haue desired so simple a woman to wrighte in so worthy a booke, gode mayster Lieufenante therefore I shalle as a frende, desyre you, and as a christian require you, to call vpyon God, to incline youre harte to his lawes, to quicken you in his waye, and not to take the worde of trewethe vtterlye oute of youre mouthe. Lyue styll to dye, that by deathe you may purchase eternall life ; and remember howe the ende of Mathusael, whoe as we reade in the scriptures, was the longeste liuer that was of a manne, died at the laste. For, as the Precher sayethe, there is a tyme to be borne, and a tyme to dye ; and the daye of deathe is better than the daye of oure

birthe. Youres, as the Lorde knowethe, as a frende,

JANE DUDDELEY.'

“ The following lines are said to have been written by Lady Jane Grey on the walls of her apartment in the Tower, with a pin; but it is to be observed, that though numerous devices inscribed by the unfortunate persons who have at different times been the inhabitants of that fortress, were discovered on making some alterations a few years ago, and the whole of which are inserted in the XIII Volume of the *Archæologia*, not the slightest remains of these verses were to be found. As this circumstance does not however prove that they never existed, and as they have been constantly attributed to Lady Jane Grey, they could not with propriety be omitted in a collection of her writings; whilst the question of their authenticity is of course left to the sagacity of the reader.

“ ‘ Non aliena putes homini quæ obtingere possunt,
Sors hodierna mihi, cras erit illa tibi !’

“ Which has been thus translated :

“ ‘ To mortals’ common fate thy mind resign,
My lot to-day, to-morrow may be thine.’

“ Also, thus :

“ ‘ Think not, O mortal ! vainly gay,
That thou from human woes art free ;
The bitter cup I drink to day,
To-morrow, may be drank by thee.’ ”

“ The following are also said to have been written in a similar manner.

“ ‘ Deo juvante, nil nocet livor malus ;
Et non juvante, nil juvat labor gravis :
Post tenebras, spero lucem.’ ”

“ ‘ Whilst God assists us, envy bites in vain,
If God forsake us, fruitless all our pain—
I hope for light after darkness.’ ”

“ A more elegant translation which has appeared, is,

“ ‘ Harmless all malice, if our God be nigh :
Fruitless all pains, if he his help deny.
Patient I pass these gloomy hours away,
And wait the morning of eternal day.’ ”

Mem of Lady Jane Grey, by Sir HARRIS NICOLAS.

The following historical remains, also extracted from Sir Harris Nicolas' valuable "Memoirs of Lady Jane Grey," are corroborative of her amiable disposition.

"AN EXHORTATION written by LADY JANE DUDLEY, the night before her execution, in the end of the New Testament, in Greek, which she sent to her sister, the Lady Katherine Grey.

"I HAVE here sent you, my dear sister Katherine, a book, which although it be not outwardly trimmed with gold, or the curious embroidery of the art-fullest needles, yet inwardly it is more worth than all the precious mines which the vast world can boast of: it is the book, my only best, and best loved sister, of the law of the Lord: it is the Testament and last will, which he bequeathed unto us wretches and wretched sinners, which shall lead you to the path of eternal joy: and if you with a good mind read it, and with an earnest desire fol-

low it, no doubt it shall bring you to an immortal and everlasting life : it will teach you to live, and learn you to die : it shall win you more, and endow you with greater felicity, than you should have gained possession of our woeful father's lands : for as if God had prospered him, you should have inherited his honours and manors, so if you apply diligently this book, seeking to direct your life according to the rule of the same, you shall be an inheritor of such riches, as neither the covetous shall withdraw from you, neither the thief shall steal, neither yet the moths corrupt : desire with David, my best sister, to understand the law of the Lord your God, live still to die, that you by death may purchase eternal life, and trust not that the tenderness of your age shall lengthen your life : for unto God, when he calleth, all hours, times and seasons are alike, and blessed are they whose lamps are furnished when he cometh, for as soon will the Lord be glorified in the young as in the old.

“ My good sister, once more again let me entreat thee to learn to die ; deny the world, defy the devil, and despise the flesh, and delight yourself only in the Lord : be penitent for your sins, and yet des-

pair not ; be strong in faith, yet presume not ; and desire with St. Paul to be dissolved and to be with Christ, with whom, even in death there is life.

“ Be like the good servant, and even at midnight be waking, lest when death cometh and stealeth upon you, like a thief in the night, you be with the servants of darkness found sleeping ; and lest for lack of oil you be found like the five foolish virgins, or like him that had not on the wedding garment, and then you be cast into darkness, or banished from the marriage : rejoice in Christ, as I trust you do, and seeing you have the name of a christian, as near as you can follow the steps, and be a true imitator of your master Christ Jesus, and take up your cross, lay your sins on his back, and always embrace him.

“ Now as touching my death, rejoice as I do, my dearest sister, that I shall be delivered of this corruption, and put on incorruption : for I am assured that I shall, for losing of a mortal life, win one that is immortal, joyful, and everlasting : the which I pray God grant you in his most blessed nour, and send you his all-saving grace to live in his fear, and to die in the true christian faith : from which in

God's name I exhort you that you never swerve, neither through hope of life, nor fear of death : for if you will deny his truth, to give length to a weary and corrupt breath, God himself will deny you, and by vengeance make short what you by your soul's loss would prolong : but if you will cleave to him, he will stretch forth your days to an uncircumscribed comfort, and to his own glory : to the which glory, God bring me now, and you hereafter, when it shall please him to call you. Farewell once again, my beloved sister, and put your only trust in God, who only must help you. Amen.

“ Your loving Sister.

JANE DUDLEY.”

The following extract is also full of interest :—

“ No sooner was Wyatt's rebellion crushed, than it was resolved to carry the sentence which had been passed on Lady Jane Grey into execution, on which Baker quaintly observes, ‘ Then was verified, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge; the innocent lady

must suffer for her father's fault, for if her father, the Duke of Suffolk, had not this second time made shipwreck of his loyalty, his daughter perhaps had never tasted the salt waters of the Queen's displeasure, but now as a rock of offence, she is the first that must be removed ;' and on the 8th February, Feckenham, the Queen's confessor, was sent to announce to her the awful tidings, that she must prepare herself to die on the ensuing day. She received the intimation with resignation, and told Feckenham that she had long expected it ; he then used every argument of which he was master, to persuade her to change her religion, and construing her reply that she had now no time to think of any thing, but to prepare herself to meet her God by prayer, into a request that her execution might be delayed, applied to the Queen, who granted her a reprieve of three days. The desire of making her a convert to the church of Rome, was in all probability the sole motive of this indulgence, which Feckenham instantly announced to her ; but to his surprize she mildly observed, ' you are much deceived if you think I have any desire of longer life, for I assure you, since the time you went from me,

my life hath been so tedious to me, that I long for nothing so much as death, and since it is the Queen's pleasure, I am most willing to undergo it; neither did I wish the Queen to be solicited for such a purpose.' Her sentiments having been communicated to Mary, she became inflamed in an increased degree with the wish to induce Lady Jane to renounce her religion, and under colour of the most tender concern for her eternal welfare, persecuted her with the visits of priests, who disturbed her devotions, and harassed her with constant disputations: so far indeed was the attempt carried, that the offer of a further reprieve was made in order that she might in the time thus afforded, pay what they termed a proper regard to the welfare of her soul. In this trying scene, however, she remained inflexible, and displayed a fortitude never surpassed: conscious of the stability of her faith, she is said to have consented to admit the conference proposed by Feckenham, for the discussion of the subject; but that when the time arrived, she was anxious to avoid the controversy, observing, that she had no time to spare; that disputation might be fit for the living, but not for the dying, and that therefore the surest

sign of his having that compassion for her of which he made such strong professions, would be to leave her undisturbed in making her peace with God; but, actuated by the wish to display his powers both before the clergy, by whom he was accompanied, and the individuals who had been purposely admitted, he refused to comply with her request. How far this account may be received as correct is doubtful, for in the introduction to this 'Conference,' printed in a scarce tract,* the following statement is prefixed, and which may be considered as the most probable cause of the dialogue having been preserved.

“Divers learned Romish Catholics, and even those which were of the best fame and reputation, were sent unto her to dissuade her from that true profession of the gospel, which from her cradle she had ever held; each striving by art, by flattery, by threatenings, by promise of life, or what else might move most in the bosom of a weak woman, who

* “The Life, Death, and Actions of the Most Chaste, Learned, and Religious Lady, the Lady Jane Grey,” &c. London, 1615.

should become master of so great and worthy a prize; but all their labours were bootless, for she had art to confound their art, wisdom to withstand their wisdom, resolution above their menaces, and such a true knowledge of life, that death was to her no other than a most familiar acquaintance; in the end, a deep read divine, called M. Feckenham, then chaplain to Queen Mary, was sent unto her about some four days before her death, who had with her a long and tedious disputation, but, as the rest, found himself in all holy gifts so short of her excellence, that he acknowledged himself fitter to be her disciple than teacher, and thereupon humbly besought her to deliver unto him some brief sum of her faith, which he might hereafter keep, and as a faithful witness publish to the world; to which she willingly condescended, and bad him boldly question her in what points of religion so ever it pleased him, and she would give her faithful and believing answer, such as she would ever be ready to seal with her dearest blood.'

“ This account differs very materially from that of an anonymous writer,* as well as from the state-

* “ Reprinted in ‘ The Phoenix,’ No. xviii. vol. ii. p. 27.”

ment which follows the above, in the same pamphlet, where it is said that the argument took place publicly, before an assemblage of the noble and learned, when Feckenham, by his coarseness and brutality, lost the respect of his auditors ; but this appears highly improbable, from the internal evidence afforded by the dialogue itself, and by the consideration that it is evidently what it is described to be in the preceding extract, ‘ a brief sum of her faith which he might hereafter keep ;’ and its being in a catechetical form is well explained, by her having requested him ‘ boldly to question her in what points of religion so ever it pleased him.’ Moreover, it would be difficult to reconcile its having been signed by herself on any other grounds ; for if her sentiments had been merely verbally expressed, as must be inferred from the narrative given by the writers just cited, its having ever existed as a document attested by her own signature, cannot well be explained.

“ In estimating the conduct of Feckenham, we must remember that the unfavourable descriptions of his conduct towards Lady Jane Grey are handed down to us from most prejudiced sources ; a martyrologist is never an impartial biographer of a

priest of the religion which produced the immolation of those whose virtues he records ; and judging of Mary's chaplain by perhaps the only positive evidence which exists—the interesting dialogue before us—the conclusion which it allows is, by no means what his enemies have represented.*

* “ It has been said, that ‘when he called to take his last leave of Lady Jane, he could not refrain from the cruel taunt of ‘ Madam, I am sorry for you and your obstinacy, and now I am assured that you and I shall never meet again :’ and that she replied, ‘ It is most true, sir, we shall never meet again, except God turns your heart ; for I stand undoubtedly assured that unless you repent and turn to God, you are in a sad and desperate case, and I pray to God to send you his holy Spirit, for he hath given you his great gift of utterance, if it please him to open the eyes of your heart to his truth.’ Feckenham, more enraged at this, turned rudely upon his heel, and left her without obeisance, whilst she, like a suffering saint, withdrew herself into her bed-chamber to meditation and prayer.’ Whatever bigotry is to be found in the observation imputed to Feckenham, it must be confessed that there is not a little acrimony in the retort : but every thing which flows from a spring so poisoned by prejudice as the pen of the author of a martyrology, must, as is observed in the text, be received with great hesitation.”

“ CONFERENCE, Dialogue-wise, held between the LADY JANE DUDLEY and M. FECKENHAM, four Days before her Death, touching her Faith and Religion.

“ *Feckenham.* What thing is required in a Christian?

“ *Jane.* To believe in God the Father, in God the Son, in God the Holy Ghost, three persons and one God.

“ *Feckenham.* Is there nothing else required in a Christian, but to believe in God?

“ *Jane.* Yes: we must believe in him, we must love him, with all our heart, with all our soul, and all our mind, and our neighbour as ourself.

“ *Feckenham.* Why then faith justifieth not, nor saveth not?

“ *Jane.* Yes, verily, faith (as St. Paul saith) only justifieth.

“ *Feckenham.* Why St. Paul saith, if I have all the faith of the world, without love, it is nothing.

“ *Jane.* True it is, for how can I love him I trust not, or how can I trust in him whom I love not; faith and love ever agree together, and yet love is comprehended in faith.

“ *Feckenham*. How shall we love our neighbour ?

“ *Jane*. To love our neighbour, is to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and to give drink to the thirsty, and to do to him as we would do to ourselves.

“ *Feckenham*. Why, then it is necessary to salvation to do good works, and it is not sufficient to believe ?

“ *Jane*. I deny that, I affirm that faith only saveth ; for it is meet for all Christians, in token that they follow their master Christ, to do good works ; yet may we not say, nor in any wise believe, that they profit to salvation : for although we have done all that we can, yet we are unprofitable servants, and the faith we have only in Christ’s blood and his merits, saveth.

“ *Feckenham*. How many Sacraments are there ?

“ *Jane*. Two : the one the Sacrament of Baptism, and the other the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper.

“ *Feckenham*. No, there be seven Sacraments.

“ *Jane*. By what Scripture find you that ?

“ *Feckenham*. Well, we will talk of that hereafter : but what is signified by your two sacraments ?

“ *Jane*. By the Sacrament of Baptism I am washed with water, and regenerated in the Spirit, and that washing is a token to me that I am the child of God : the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper is offered unto me as a sure seal and testimony, that I am, by the blood of Christ which he shed for me on the cross, made partaker of the everlasting kingdom.

“ *Feckenham*. Why, what do you receive in that bread : do you not receive the very body and blood of Christ ?

“ *Jane*. No surely, I do not believe so : I think at that supper I receive neither flesh nor blood, but only bread and wine ; the which bread when it is broken, and the wine when it is drunk, putteth me in mind how that for my sins the body of Christ was broken, and his blood shed on the cross, and with that bread and wine I receive the benefits which came by breaking of his body, and by the shedding of his blood on the cross for my sins.

“ *Feckenham.* Why but, madam, doth not Christ speak these words: take eat, this is my body: can you require any plainer words: doth he not say, that it is his body?

“ *Jane.* I grant he saith so; and so he saith likewise in other places, I am the vine, I am the door, it being only but a figurative speech: doth not St. Paul say that he calleth those things which are not as though they were? God forbid, that I should say that I eat the very natural body and blood of Christ: for then either I should pluck away my redemption, or confess there were two bodies, or two Christ's: two bodies, the one body was tormented on the cross, and then if they did eat another body, how absurd: again, if his body was eaten really, then it was not broken upon the cross, or if it were broken upon the cross (as it is doubtless) then it was not eaten of his disciples.

“ *Feckenham.* Why, is it not as possible that Christ by his power could make his body both to be eaten and broken, as to be born of a woman without seed of man, and as to walk on the sea having a body, and other such like miracles, which he wrought by his power only?

“ *Jane.* Yes, verily, if God would have done at his supper a miracle, he might have done so : but I say he minded nor intended no work or miracle, but only to break his body, and shed his blood on the cross for our sins ; but I beseech you answer me to this one question ; where was Christ when he said, take, eat, this is my body : was not he at the table ? when he said so he was at that time alive, and suffered not till the next day ; well, what took he but bread ? and what broke he but bread ? and what gave he but bread ? look what he took he brake, and look what he brake he gave, and look what he gave that did they eat, and yet all this while he himself was at supper before his disciples, or else they were deceived.

“ *Feckenham.* You ground your faith upon such authors as say and unsay, both with a breath, and not upon the church, to whom you ought to give credit.

“ *Jane.* No, I ground my faith upon God’s word, and not upon the church : for if the church be a good church, the faith of the church must be tried by God’s word, and not God’s word by the church : neither yet my faith : shall I believe the

church because of antiquity ? or shall I give credit to that church which taketh away from me a full half part of the Lord's Supper, and will not layman receive it in both kinds, but the priests only themselves, which thing if they deny to us part, they deny to us part of our salvation ? and I say, that it is an evil and no good church, and not the spouse of Christ, but the spouse of the devil, which altereth the Lord's Supper, and both taketh from it, and addeth to it : to that church I say God will add plagues, and from that church will he take their part out of the Book of Life : you may learn of St. Paul, how he did administer it to the Corinthians in both kinds, which since your church refuseth, shall I believe it ? God forbid !

“ *Feckenham*. That this was done by the wisdom of the church, and to a most good intent to avoid an heresy, which then sprung in it.

“ *Jane*. O, but the church must not alter God's will and ordinances, for the colour or gloss of a good intent : it was the error of King Saul, and he not only reaped a curse, but perished thereby, as it is evident in the Holy Scriptures.

“ To this M. Feckenham gave me a long, tedious,

yet eloquent reply ; using many strong and logical persuasions, to compel me to have leaned to their church : but my faith had armed my resolution to withstand any assault that words could then use against me. Of many other articles of religion we reasoned, but these formerly rehearsed were the chiefest and most effectual.

“JANE DUDLEY.”

LADY JANE DUDLEY'S SPEECH ON THE SCAFFOLD.

“ My lords, and you good christian people, which come to see me die, I am under a law, and by that law, as a never erring judge, I am condemned to die, not for any thing I have offended the Queen's Majesty, for I will wash my hands guiltless thereof, and deliver to my God a soul as pure from such trespass, as innocence from injustice ; but only for that I consented to the thing which I was enforced unto, constraint making the law believe I did that which I never understood. Notwithstanding, I have offended Almighty God in that I have followed over-much the lust of mine own flesh, and the

pleasures of this wretched world, neither have I lived according to the knowledge that God hath given me, for which cause God hath appointed unto me this kind of death, and that most worthily, according to my deserts; how be it, I thank him heartily that he hath given me time to repent my sins here in this world, and to reconcile myself to my Redeemer, whom my former vanities have in a great measure displeased. Wherefore, my lords, and all you good christian people, I must earnestly desire you all to pray with and for me whilst I am yet alive, that God of his infinite goodness and mercy will forgive me my sins, how numberless and grievous soever against him: and I beseech you all to bear me witness that I here die a true christian woman, professing and avouching from my soul that I trust to be saved by the blood, passion, and merits of Jesus Christ my Saviour only, and by none other means; casting far behind me all the works and merits of mine own actions, as things so far short of the true duty I owe, that I quake to think how much they may stand up against me. And now, I pray you all pray for me, and with me."

“ It is a singular fact that numerous as the biographers of Lady Jane Grey have been, not one of them has alluded to the interment of her body ; and it is equally extraordinary that no monument of so celebrated a character, or of her husband should exist. The presumption is, that they were both buried in the chapel of the Tower, but the historian of that fortress* has not been able to find any conclusive evidence of the place where their remains were deposited. Thus, whilst tombs have been erected, not only by the hands of private friendship, but from public esteem, and even by royal command, to perpetuate the names of individuals of much less importance, as well as of inferior moral worth, the ashes of two illustrious victims to state policy, in one of whom to royal birth, was united every virtue which renders the female sex estimable, have been allowed to moulder in obscurity ! That in the present age, when the spirit of inquiry has produced the exhumation of several of the celebrated dead, some pains should not have been taken to ascertain where the bodies of Lady Jane Grey and her husband were interred, not from mere mo-

* John Bayley, Esq. F.R.S. F.S.A.

tives of curiosity, but from the better feeling of removing their remains to the tombs of their ancestors, and of erecting a monument to their memory, cannot but be a subject of surprise."—Sir Harris Nicolas.

In Sharon Turner's "History of England," and under the reign of "Queen Jane," there is a vivid and impartial account of the chief events of her life. Her character is also beautifully and ably drawn by that celebrated historian.

THE END.







