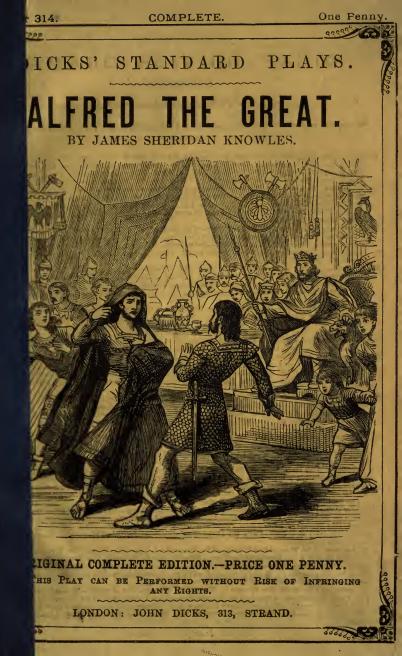
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## Bramatis Persona

As performed at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, 1831.

			E	NGLI	SH.		1			
ALFRED,	(Ki	ng (	f E	gla	nd)	Mr. Macready.	1.	ELSWITH, (		
						Mr. J. Vining.		MAUDE		
OSWITH						Mr. H. Wallack.				DANES.
EDRIC						Mr. Younge.		GUTHRUM .		
EGBERT						Mr. Thompson.				
					• • • •	Mr. Cooke.				.,
EDWY						Mr. Sinclair.	1	HALDANE .		
						Mr. Cathie.		Отно		
ARTHUR						Mr. Eaton.	1	SOLDIER .		
EDGAR	•••					Mr. Honner.				
						Mr. Fenton.				
CONRAD						Mr. Hammerton.			ram's	Daughte
ETHELRE	ED					Miss Marshall.	1	EDITH		

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## COSTUME.

#### SAXONS.

ALFRED.—Ist. Dress: Plain brown swineherd's shirt, flesh leggings and arms—sandals—bonnet. 2nd Dress: Disgnise large brown mantle, similar to a minstrel's habit of the period, with hood attached. 3rd Dress. Long yellow cloth shirt, richly trimmed with gold-blue robe or mantle-plain gold coronet.

OSWITH,-Heavy suit of chain mail, flesh arms and legs-helmet, shield, axe, and sword-low russet boots with spangled tops.

EDRIC.-The same style.

ODDUNE.-White shirt, fleshings, sandals-bonnets with steel embroidered bands.

THE OTHER CHIEFS .- Similar in colour and of equal quality.

ELSWITH.-Faded double dress, ragged drapery, long hair, sandals.

MAUDE.-Blue stuff dress with hanging sleeves trimmed with red-long hair-blue fillet.

#### DANES.

GUTHRUM.-Long purple cloth shirt, bullion trimming-square yellow robe fastened with brooch ir front of the neck-plain gold crown-gold staff.

OSCAR .- Armour legs and arms, richly embroidered surcoat-helmet and shield.

HALDANE.-Shirt richly trimmed with gold-breastplate and red mantle.

DANISH CHIEFS .- Red shirts, brass or steel breastplates, and helmets silver, with a raven-axesshort cloaks, buskins, shields, and light spears.

INA.—Green Danish robe and amber long embroidered train trimmed with white, short hanging sleeves, and white under dress, trimmed with blue—long hair—sandals.

EDITH.-Plain classic dress drapery-long hair-fillet-sandals.

THE DANES .- All armour.

) R.

2 km L.

THE SAXONS .- White shirts and fleshings.

### STAGE DIRECTIONS.

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.-R. means Right; L. Left; D. F. Door in Flat; R. D. Right Door; L. D. A.eft Door; S. E. Second Entrance; U. E. Upper Entrance; M. D. Middle Door; L. U. E. Left Upper Entrance; R. U. E. Right Upper Entrance; L. S. E. Left Second Entrance P. S. Prompt Side; O. P. Opposite Prompt.

RELATIVE POSITIONS .- R. means Right; L. Left; C. Centre; R. C. Right of Centre; L. C. Left of Centre. C.

LC.

L.

\*\*\* The Reader is supposed to be on the Stage, facing the Audience.

RC.

\*\*\* The lines marked with inverted commas omitted in the representation.

## ALFRED THE GREAT.

## ACT I.

## SCENE I .- The Danish Camp.

Enter EDITH with a bow and quiver, followed by INA, I. E. R. H., attended by a boy, who carries a bow and quiver.

Edith: Come, let us see who'll hit the target first P

Ina. My bow hath got a cast, and will not shoot.

Edith. In sooth, your bow hath got no cast at all.

'Tis true as mine. Take mine-I'll shoot with it. Ina. Yonr's fits me not-'tis harder far to draw.

Edith. Try it.

Ina. No, no; I will not shoot to-day.

Besides, my arrows all have lost the nock. Edith. Here's store enough of mine. Ina. Good Edith, no;

Entreat me not—I will not shoot to-day Edith. Why, so 'twas yesterday; fie, Ina, fie! To tax thy bow with fault it never had.

Thy bow that hath a cast is thy chang'd will, "

The nockless shafts are marr'd alone by that.

You wont to love this sport; from morn till night

Your pastime 'twas, and now you love it not!

What love you, sweet, instead? Ina. What should I love?

Edith. Nay, Ina-you alone can auswer that. Has Otho's suit prevail'd?

Ina. When did a flower

Spring from a weed, that ove should grow from hate !

Edith. What! call you love a flower? A flower looks gay-

So looks not love! A flower is sweet—who says That love is sweet? Does sweetness garner pain For those that own it? Rather love's a weed

Oft taken for a flower-found out at last

With a sigh! O, Ina, you have pluck'd this weed!

Come, own it, Ina! Ina. Wherefore do you look Thus at me?

(Crossing to P. S.)

Edith. Why do you, my Ina, look At anything but me? Why do your eyes Of late their lustre lavish on the ground, That cares not for it? And your honey d breath,

That should be given to your silver tongue

To make rich music of, why do you waste

Oftener on thankless and contentless sighs?

Come, tell me, Ina, what has happen'd to you ? Ina. Alas! I know not.

Edith. Do you say alas !

O, then 'tis over with you! Why, you're in tears;

Only the drop's but half-way out, that soon

Would make way for the rest, held not your eye Its crystal door upon it! Lean your head Upon the bosom of your friend, and give Your secret vent-for sure you have one, Ina! Ina. Not I !- Come, take your bow !- I'll shoot

with you !

My quiver 'gainst a shaft, I'll be the first To hit the mark. Set up the target, boy ! [Lait Boy, 1. E. L. H. Now for the eye of the eye. In sooth I've miss'd

Wide by a mile-but thou hast shot full home! I've pluck'd it, Edith, flower or weed. If weed, Oh! weed most like a flower.—Oh precions weed! There's not a flower so fair, I'd deem thee graced To call thee by its name!

#### BOY. (Running in. 1. E. L. H.)

The battle's won! The battle's won! I see our troops come winding up the glen, Their spears and banners wreath'd,—a token sure Of victory.

[Exit, L. H.

Edith. Let's meet them, Ina :--Come! Why sweet, what's this? How pale you turn! How damp's Your little hand! Nay, 'tis snow indeed. Cold as 'tis white! Did you not rightly hear?

He says the battle's won!

Ina. I know he does.

Edith. Is't with such cheeks you listen to such news?

This would become a daughter of the foe. Ina. The foe! The foe!

Bdith. What I find'st thon something sweet In that harsh word, that thou repeat st it thus? Ina. Harsh word ! now, harsh art thou to call it SO :

Jars it thine ear ? there's music in't to mine.

Stands it for what thoud'st shun? that's what I'd seek ;

Yea ! 'fore the things that brother, sister, friend-Soft titles-stand for : Ina loves a foe;

That foe has lost the battle we have won.

Edith. Why sweet, where sawest thon this gentle foe?

Ina. Even here. When last the Saxon ask'd a truce

Curions to see their herald, I remain'd Bchind you in my father's tent. He came! Oh, with what grace of richest manhood ! Prond His gait, yet bearing onwards looks so bland As made all hearts give willing way to him. He spake, and I took root to where I stood And so did all. Not Guthrum moved; Oh Edith ! How should it be with Ina? Where were her eyes? What were her ears about? Dost feel it throbbing now? 'Tis quiet now To what 'twas then !. How often have you tried To fix your naked eye upon the sun : And when you've ta'en it off, how has the day,

From gazing his bright face, been turn'd to night "Besides, your arm just then had turn'd the fight From gazing his bright tace, been tirn d to hight Flowers, verdure, darken'd; yea, the orb himself From burning gold, grown ink. 'Twas so with me; When sight or him was gone! Night turn'd to day Again with you—but light's gone ont with Ina E'er since the day she look'd upon her foe! "That seem'd at first against us." "Guth. Was it so? "I don't remember it. Good Oscar, ask "What portion of the spoil thou wilt-'tis thine!" (Crosses R. H.) Edith. Hence, Ina hence awhile; your father comes He must find looks of welcome. Ina. Have with you. You've won my secret, Edith! Guard it for me. Excunt, R. H. Enter GUTHRUM, AMUND, OSCAR, HALDANE, and Danes. U. E. L. H. Guth. Halt, comrades, halt! and change your toil for rest, And then from rest to feasting! We'll carouse A moon for this last victory, that leaves No future foe to front us. England's won; (Shout.) So thinned her sons by this last overthrow, And atterly discomfited, enow Remain her not to make another stand Durst Alfred rally them-their throneless king! "We shall not need to cross the main again "To prop us with fresh succours. Here we'll build "Another Danish kingdom, fairer far "Than what we've left. What ho, there! bring me wine : I'm thirsty from our march. Ho ! wine, I say ! A seat! Here, in the open air, we'll drink, Or ere we part, to our new Denmark. Chief And followers shall pledge me. Wine I say ! Enter OTHO, U. E. L. H. Otho. Guthrum, your priests prepare a sacrifice, The God expects his victims, shall he have them ? Guth. Take them ! You know the God must have his due! Exit Otho U. E. L. H. Give him the wine! my thirst's gone off-yet, no ; 'Tis fit that I drink first (drinks.) To our new Denmark! By Odin ! 'twas a glorions victory ! The God deserves his victims—he shall have them ! Odin's the God of war ! If he drinks blood, He has a right. Who dares deny the God His victims? Amund, take the cup! We fought Like Odin's sons. I saw you, Amund, cleave In twain a Saxon at a single blow. Am. My Lord, 'twas slight to what your falchion did. "That thro' the casqued head and mailed chine "Made way at one dire wheel! "Guth. Ay, did it so? "I do believe it did!" No more of that. Give me your hand, good Amund-for that blow Lord of a gallant castle shalt thon be Pass on the cup to Oscar. (Crosses to Oscar,) Oscar! ha Show me thy falchion's edge-Look, Amund, here I saw him him keep at once five Saxon swords At bay! Well done !-- (Crosses back to seat)-Oscar, be sure you sit On my right hand at banquet. "Osc. Mighty chief. "I mark'd your eye was on me ; 'twas a sword "That more than balanced all the odds against me! Thine own to purchase it ?

OTHO re-enters, U. E. L. H. Otho. The victims, chief, are ready. Guth. So! enough! Otho. Eight of them did we take by lot,-the ninth Is self-devoted to preserve the life Of one, to whom we were about to hold The fatal urn. Guth. Indeed ! a chief ? Otho. The port Of both bespeaks them men of prond degree. Guth. Have 'em before us; we would see them. Exit Otho., U. E. L. H Gathram Loves war! He'd leave the banquet any time To mingle in the fight. He loves a friend : But more than friend's embrace, he loves the hug Foe gives to foe. Yet is not Guthrum crue His foe disarm'd he never yet could smite. He loves a noble deed, altho' the sword Yet is not Guthrum cruel; Achieves it not. How say you friends, wer't right To save the man, who loves his friend so well, He lays down life for him-altho' a gift To Odin ? Osc. Ere the priest his sacred hand Lays on the victim, it has still been lawful To snatch him from his doom ! Hal. Behoves him tho To swear eternal league with Odin's sons. Guth. He'll do it, Haldane! Ha! I saw thee matched In fight, for once. That Saxon found thee, Haldane, With two that back'd thee, livelier work than suits A sluggard's hand. Thy seconds both were down. Was't not so, Haldane ? And thyself, methinks, Mad'st rather backward way, when I despatched Fresh aid to thee, with charge, at any risk, To take thy gallant foe alive. 'Twas you, To take thy gallant foe alive. Oscar, that I so charged. Osc. My liege, he lives; O'ercome by force that could not make him yield, But bore him down to earth, where, as he lay, The strife his fettered limbs caused him to drop; His eye continued still, that shot around Deadly defiance in the face of death. Guth. "Foe worthy Guthrum's sword." Was't not the herald, Last sent us from the English King ? Osc. The same. Guth I'd like to see that man again. Osc. He's here! Enter OTHO, with OSWITH and EDRIC chained. U. E. L. H. Guth. This he !- Men's looks reflect their deeds as well As natures. One of these is he, whose thought Of lofty friendship overlooks himself, When fix'd on his friend's need-This is the man! Otho. It is, my Lord. Guth. Is he thy friend, whose life Thou count'st a thing so precious, that would'st give

Ina. No, no, my father! Guth. Would'st thou have me set Os. He is. Guth. What rich A foam again ?—Nay, Ina, if I rage, 'Tis not at thee !—Why start away from me? And heavy debt hast thou incurr'd to him, To pay so large return as takes thy all? Come back, and cling to me again ! close, close !-My child, belov'd and only, tell me, if Os. And think'st thou friendship barters kindnesses ? 'Tis not because that such or such a time Thou can'st, how much I love thee! He help'd my parse, or stood me thus or thus Instead, that I go bound for him, or take His quarrel up! With friends, all services Otho. Saxon, come. Ina. No, no! Guth. How, Ina? Ina. Thou did'st not repeat Are ever gifts, that glad the donor most. Who rates them otherwise, he only takes Thy order. The face of friend to mask a usurer. Guth. But I will. I give my life for him, not for the service Ina. Oh, speak to me !-I'm glad the fight is o'er. You won it soon! He did me yesterday, or any day, You won it safely, else it were not won ! But for the love I bear him every day, Nor ask if he returns! How stood the plume I fasten'd on your crest? Well, well! How many eyes were on that plame, Guth. Be Guthrum's friend. Thou livest, and thy friend for sake of thee. Tossing, as proud it rode the stormy wave Edr. O, generous proffer ! Os. Would'st accept it ? Of battle, still the more majestical The fiercer wax'd the swell Edr. Yes. Os. Then do: Guth. My child, my child ! Aye, every inch my own When thou wast born, I wish'd a son. I would not give thee now Guth. Remove their chains. For troops of them !-What, Otho !-"Ina. Your scarf! It's whole? Os. First take off his. Guth. Now thine ! Os. Long as my country wears your chains, Guthrum beware how you unrivet mine! "No, no, a rent is here. Come, take it off. " False as it is, you shall not wear't again ! For once you set my arm at liberty, The thing which first 'twill seek will be a sword, "I'll knit you another, every loop of which "I'll fasten with a spell, that it shall prove 66 To right my master, royal Alfred's cause-An amulet against the thrust of spear, And strike my injured country's fetters off ! Guth. Saxon, beware! The smooth and gentle "Or stroke of falchion ! "Guth. So you shall. You make "A child of your father! Otho!" You make tide Of mercy thwarted, turns a torrent, oft Ina. Not a wound ! O'erwhelming as the raging flood itself For ever in the thickest of the fight, And not a wound! Thank Odin! Yet I would Of vengeance. There were a slight one-for the tending on't! Os. Here I stand-let it come down ! No, no! and yet in sooth I would there were! I care not when or where its fary rushes! I know not what I say! I prate! I prate! Enter INA and EDITH, (as yet unperceived by Thank Odin, You are safe! Guth. My girl! my girl! My idle girl! my foolish, foving child! My Ina! What! and have I won the fight, GUTHRUM, &c.) 2. E. R. H. Ina. (Aside to Edith.) 'Tis he! Guth. Is Guthrum braved !-- Is he the son And shalt not thou become the richer for't? Of Odin !- Marches in his van the God By Odin, but thou shalt! Come, ask me some-Of War !--Lies o'er the humbled necks of hosts thing. Of prostrate foes his path ; and brooks he thus Defiance, and from one earth sprung—the spawn Of the vile clod he treads on? Stood thy King Name me some gift. Come, measure, if thou canst. Thy father's love for thee! What wilt thon ask? Alfred, of whom thou vaunting spok'st, stood he Ask me a kingdom! Come? Where now thou stand'st, his regal eye had fallen Ina. No kingdom, father Beneath the frown of Guthrum. I'd ask of thee-only one little boon, Guth. What is't? Speak out! Inc. Is't granted? Os. Not beneath The frown of Gnthrum's god, were Odin real As he is fabled! Guth. By the God ! Guth. Give him to the God! Ina. Father! Guth. My Ina! Out with't-What is't? What little boon is this Which only wants the naming, to be thine, And yet thou seems't to lack the breath to name. Os. Ha! could I believe "Ina. Is that a rivet of your armour broke? He was not born of earth-there were, indeed. "No, no ! An argument could make me. "Guth. And if it were, no blame to it. Guth. I have given thee "It turn'd an English javelin. At my feet "The weapon fell: I snatch'd it np again, "And sent it hissing at its master's head:" Thy choice of life or death-thou choosest death, And take it. Ina. Father. Guth Ah, thou ever art My sweet and welcome calm, that glads me, sun-Enter SOLDIER, U. E. L. H. like, When summer days are breathless with the joy Soldier. This packet, found we, Guthram, in the Of his enriching beam. I'm smooth again ! tent Not a ruffle ! not a ruffle ! Is he not gone ? Hence Of Alfred. with him ! Guth. Bring'st no tidings of himself?

'Tis certain that he left the field unhart! Have they return'd whom in pursuit of him— Soldier. They have. Three days they track'd him; on the fourth All trace of him was lost ; but, by report, Alone-without a single follower, The royal fugitive pursues his way, Broken in hopes, as fortunes. Guth. We may chance To overtake, or light upon him yet. ·live me the paper. (Takes the packet, and reads. Crosses to R. H. Corner.) Os. Such things I have heard of-angel forms Enchantment raises-mocking fairest things Of earth, but fairer-to entrance earth's sons-"Things they would deem of heaven, tho' found on earth!' Which, once beheld, their helpless functions seize With ravishment, that leaves them but the power To gaze or listen, till no warning effort Of reason, or stronger will avails, to tear The charmed sense away Edr. Would I were chained Again! Her pity makes rich freedom poor, That can't awaken it. Guth. (Throws away packet). It matters not A string of Saxon rhymes. Can Alfred fight? Who flourishes the pen so much can scarce Be master of the sword! He plays the harp, So they report. The harp! Give me the strain Of the resounding shield! (Crosses to her). Come, Ina, name The boon thoud'st ask. Ina. When thou art happy, what Most wishest thon ? Guth. That happiness may last. Ina. No, no! not that. Thou wishest others happy. Guth. I do! I do! Ina. And so do I. When I Am happy, I'd have all things like me-not That live and move alone, but even such As lack their faculties. Then could I weep, That flowers should smile without perception of The sweetness they discourse. Yea, into rocks Would I infuse soft sense to fill them with The spirit of sweet joy, that everything Should thrill as I do. "Then, were I a queen, "I'd portion ont my realms among my friends "Unstud my crown for strangers, and my coffers "Empty in purchasing from foes their frowns, "Till I had bought them ont; that all should be "One reign of smiles around me." I am happy To-day-to-day, that brings thee back to me, The hundredth time, in triumph and in safety ! This day, that smiles so bounteous upon Ina, She'd wish to smile e'en upon Ina's foe-Let not the Saxon die! Guth. He lives!-My child! What makes thee gasp? Ina. How near-how near to you

Was death that day. 'Twas well for Ina that Your armour proved so true. She had not else A father now to ask a boon of, and To get it soon as ask'd! Guth. He lives thy slave!

Had he been wise, he now were Guthrum's friend. Ina. His chains

Guth. 'Tis thine to take them off or not.

What Guthrum gives, he gives! He is thy slave. Come, Saxon, thon art free ! [Exeunt Guthrum and Chiefs, 1st E.R.H.

"Edr. Would I were chain'd " Again.

" [Exit."

Os. I gaze, and with my tranced eyes Drink magic in. I know it, still I gaze. And yet can bane reside in aught so sweet? Can poison lodge in that consummate flower Which blends the virtues of all blooming things. And with the wealth of its fair neighbourhood, Enriches very barrenness, that near it Grows sightly, e'en, and sweet? Ina. How's this, my Edith? "'My wish obtain'd, I tremble to enjoy;" I need but speak the word, and he is free : Yet, there I let him stand in shackles still, Whose chains to doff, were there no other way, I'd go in bonds myself.—" Sweet, he my tongue; "Bid them" remove his chains. "Edith. Unbind him, there! "Soldier. My hand is useless, from the fight today. "Ina. Try yon." Edith. (Crossing to centre, trying to take off his chains.) It baffles me! It hath a knack I am not mistress of.—Will you not try ? (Ina approaches and takes off his chains.) You've done't.—Why, what's the matter with you, Ina? Hast put his fetters on, that here you stand As the bereft of motion? Rouse thee, Ina ! Ina. O, for a minute, Edith, in thy bosom, To weep there! Ay, to weep !-- to shed such tears As shower down smiling checks, when sudden joy Pours in to the o'erfilling of the heart, That look'd not for't, and knows not what to do With all its treasure Os. I do feel it still! Still do I feel the touch of her fair hand! How passing fair ! The driven snow itself Might make as white a one; but then, again, As cold as that is glowing! Who will loose The fetters it puts on ? Or, who that wears them. Would sigh for the embrace of liberty! Trath! honour ! all is laps'd. O, for a foe To taunt me now !---O, for a fionrish of The Danish trump--or would their banners come And flout me! Ina. Saxon, will you follow us? Os. I come, sweet maid! What am I but your slave, To follow, tho' I leave all else that's bright? Excunt 1.E.R.H. END OF ACT I. ACT II. SCENE I.-A wild tract of country on the border of a wood.

Enter ELSWITH, in wretched attire, presently followed by CONRAD.

Con. No farther! Els. Yes!

Con. Alas! I can no more.

My lapsed strength constrains my limbs to play The traitor to you ! Els. What! an thou fall off ?

.

Well! I am left at last alone! Old man, Think not that I'd upbraid thee. Thanks to thee	Con. (Appearing, and struggling to advance.) Stay, countrymen! It is indeed your
For what thou'st done, for what thou can'st not do No blame to thee, but pity for thee! More	Queen Alas! they hear me not! my tongue hath wax'd As feeble as my limbs.
I know my desolation is thy loss	(Leans against a tree.)
Than mine! back prithee to the hut we've left. Thon hast strength enough to crawl there.	Els. Why let them go! They are not half the band that I have here
Con. What I have	1. loyalty to my liege, wedded lord!
I'll turn to worthier profit. (Makes a violent effort, and snatches hold of her robe.) Oh! my	With that I'll seek him, under Heaven's high
lov'd,	guard ! Yea, tho' I search the quarters of the foc !
My honour'd mistress ! do not tempt these wilds, Where hunger turns its aching eyes around	In that find strength-find courage! That my food,
In vain! where prowls perchance the savage wolf !	My rest! Farewell old man! Heaven shelter
Els. Peace! talk terror to the dead! Not less	And be thy mistress's gnide !
Would'st thou be heeded. I've a heart as dull,	Exit.
Except one fear—one hope—to find my Alfred, Or search for him in vain. There, I'm alive!	Con. Stay!—Hear me!—Stay! I'll drag my limbs along to follow thee.
There only! Counsel should not come from thee,	[Lait.
Whose tongue persuaded what thy arm enforced, Desertion of my child! whose fate to avert,	
A mother's duty 'twas! or, else, to share!	SCENE IIA hut. Alfred discovered trimming some arrows, with an unfinished bow beside him.
And now thou'dst arge desertion of his sire ! "I wonder not thy limbs are weak—thy heart	Maude kneading flour for cakes.
"Not in the canse! and yet it is a King's!	Maude. (Aside.) Ay ! there he's at his work; if
"But thou'rt his subject only; I'm his wife- "So doubly-trebly true." Back to the hut!	work that
They'll take compassion on thee! Fare thee well !	Which spareth toil. He'll trim a shaft, or shape A bow with any archer in the land,
Con. Nay, pause in mercy; See who comes- alas!	But neither can he plough, nor sow !- I doubt
Should they be Danes !- Yon thicket will conceal	If he can dig—I am sure he cannot reap— He has hands and arms, but not the use of them!
For thy own safety !-come !-Alas, the help	Corin!
I'd give, I stand myself in need of most !	Alf. Your will? Maude, Would thou couldst do my will
[They retire.	As readily as ask it! Go to the door; And look if Edwin comes. Dost see him?
Enter KENRIC, ARTHUR, and other Saxons.	Alf. No.
Edwy. We've rounded now the forest on the	Maude. Bad omen that! He'll bring an empty creel;
East, And by the sun our friends should meet us soon	Else were he home ere now. Put on more wood :
Who gird the other side. A halt awhile.	And lay the logs an end; you'll learn in time To make a fire. Why, what a litter's there,
Arth. But should we meet the King-if still he lives	with trimming of your shafts that never hit!
Nor yet is captured, as 'tis rumoured—he May pass our band unknown ; by none of as	Ten days ago you kill'd a sorry buck; Since when your quiver have you emptied thrice,
Ever beheld except at distance, when	Nor ruffled hair nor feather.
He marshalled us, to lead us 'gainst the foe. (Elswith rushes forward.)	Alf. If the game Are scarce and shy, I cannot help it.
Els. Seek ye yonr King?	Maude. Ont! Your aim I wot is shy; your labour scarce;
Edwy. Who art thou? Els. I'll be your leader	There's game enow, would'st thou but hunt for
Until you find him !	them;
Arth. She's distracted. Edwy. Yes.	expect'st
That can't be reason's light which shines so	To-day for dinner? Alf. What heaven sends!
In her unquiet eye—that misses nought.	Maude. Suppose
Yet rests on nothing !	It sends us nonght? Alf. Its will be done!
Els. I command you Sirs, On your allegiance follow me. Obey	Maude. Yon'd starve;
Your Queen!	So would not I, knew I to bend a bow, Or cast a line. See if thon hast the skill
Arth. Our Queen? Edwy. You mark! A Queen indeed,	To watch these cakes, the while they toast.
If frenzy ever made one! Arthur, come,	Alf. I'll do My best.
Our friends will mock us, should they chance to reach	Maude. Nor much to brag of, when all's done!
The point a greed upon before us.	[Exit.
Els. Stay! [Excunt Edwy and party.	Alf. (Solus.) This is the lesson of dependence. Will

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Thankless, that brings not profit !- labour spurn'd, That sweats in vain ; and patience tax'd the more That sweats in vain ; and patience tax'd the more The more it bears. And taught unto a king— Tanght by a peasant's wife, whom fate hath made Her sovereign's monitress. She little knows At whom she rails; yet is the roof her own; Nor does she play the house-wife grudgingly, Give her her humon! So! How stands the account 'Twixt me and fortune ?—We are wholly quits !— She dress'd me—She has stripp'd me!—On a throne

She placed me-She has struck me from my seat! Nor in the respect where sovereigns share alike With those they rule, was she less kind to me-Less cruel! High she filled for me the cup Of bliss connubial-she has emptied it! Parental love she set before me too, And bade me banquet; scarce I tasted, ere She snatch'd the feast away! My queen !-My child!-

Where are they ? 'Neath the ashes of my castle ; I sat upon their tomb one day-one night! Then first I felt the thraldom of despair. The despot he! He would not let me weep! There were the fountains of my tears as dry As they had never flow'd! My heart did swell To bursting; yet no sigh would he let forth With vent to give it ease. There had I sat And died—But Heaven a stronger tyrant sent— Hunger-that wrench'd me from the other's grasp, And dragged me hither I-This is not the lesson I set myself to con!

#### Re-enter MAUDE.

Maude. 'Tis noon, and yet No sign of Edwin! Dost thou mind thy task Look to't! and when the cakes are fit to turn Call, and I'll come!

Alf. I'll turn them, dame.

Maude. You will?

You'll break them !-Know I not your handy ways ?

I would not suffer thee put finger to them! Call, when 'tis time! You'll turn the cakes forsooth !

As likely thou could'st make the cakes as turn them !

FExit.

Alf. So much for poverty! Adversity's The nurse for kings ;--but then the palace gates Are shut against her !--They would else have hearts Of mercy oft'ner-gems not always dropp'd In fortune's golden cup. What thought hath he How hunger warpeth honesty, whose meal Still waited on the honr? Can he perceive How nakedness converts the kindly milk Of nature into ice, to whom each change Of season-yea, each shifting of the wind Presents his fitting suit ? Knows he the storm That makes the valiant quail, who hears it only Thro' the safe wall-its voice alone can pierce; And there talks comfort to him with the tongue, That bids without the shelterless despair? Perhaps he marks the monntain wave, and smiles So high it rolls !- while on its fellow hangs The fainting seaman glaring down at death In the deep trough below! I will extract Riches from penury; from sufferings Coin blessings; that if I assume again The sceptre, I may be the more a king By being more a man!

MAUDE re-enters, goes towards the fire, lifts the cakes, goes to Alfred, and holds them to him.

Maude. Is this your care? Ne'er did you dream that meal was made of corn, Which is not grown until the earth be plough'd; Which is not garner'd up until 'tis cut : Which is not fit for use until 'tis ground ; Nor used then till kneaded into bread? No'er knew you this ? It seems you never did, Else had you known the value of the bread; Thought of the ploughman's toil; the reaper's sweat; The miller's labour : and the honsewife's thrift : And not have left my barley cakes to burn To very cinders ! Alf. I forgot, good dame. Maude. Forgot, good dame, forsooth ! You ne'er

forgot To eat my barley cakes! (Knock.) Open the door

(Maude sets the cakes on the table where she had been kneading them; Alfred opens the door.)

Alf. An aged man !

Maude. Ome in !

#### Enter an OLD MAN.

What want you ?

Old Man. Food!

- Maude. Want calls on want when you look here. for food !
- Old Man. Good dame, to say I have not tasted food

Since morning yesterday, is not to speak

My need more urgent than it is

Maude. Whate'er Thy need, we cannot administer to it-Seek richer quarters.

Alf. Stay! He's in the gripe

Of straitest want. There's food, and give it him! Maude. Ay, when we've scanty stock for three days more.

Alf. We breakfasted this morning; yester night We supped, and noon ere then had seen us dine. Since yester morn he has not touched a meal ! Whoe'er lacks food 'tis now his turn to eat.

This portion would be mine-I'll go without!

Here!-Here!-Good dame, the hand which gave us that

Will not more sparing of its bounty be For using thus its gift! The hand that fed

So many thousands with what only seem'd

Provision for a few, could also make

The remnant answer us for many a meal! Old Man. Oh, strong in faith !- In mercy rich ! Whoe'er

Thou art, that hand is with thee! Was't thou great.

And art thou now brought low? 'Twill make thy fall

Thy rise-thy want abundance-thy endurings

Enjoyings-and thy desolation, troops

Of friends, and lovers countless! Does the storm Hold on ? Ne'er heed it! There's the sun

behind, That with effulgence double shall break through,

And make thee cloudless day.

FExit.

Maude. A poor man's wish, They say, is better than a rich man's gift.

If house and lands thou'st lost, I would not say

But thou may'st get them back again, with roof Inlarged and acres grown. Yet lands and house Fo come, are not so good as bread in hand. And that thou'st given away, if Edwin speeds No better than he did yesterday! Alf. Ne'er fear-These arrows when I've trimm'd, and strung this bow. 'll find thee out a garner in these wilds Co dress the table still! Maude. I'd rather trust a peek of barley meal to furnish it!
Edwin. (Without.) What, hoa! within!
Maude. 'Tis Edwin's voice!
Edwin. (Without.) Within! Duen the door ! Maude. Thank Providence, his hands Tave something else to do! [Opens the door. Edwin. (Entering with a sack.) Provision, wife! month's subsistence! Take it in, and ply hy honsewifery; for friends must eat of ithey ask their hosts to spread. A gallant troop of countrymen, for common safely link'd, and wand'ring thro' the land, with hopes, they sav. to learn some tidings of their king; and if They find him, list themselves beneath his banner, and face the Dane again ! [Exit Maude. Alf. (Aside.) The land's not lost! "hat's left a son to struggle for't. The king. las yet his throne, that's firmly seated in His people's hearts. Edwin. (Going to the door.) In 1 in 1 Inter EGBERT, KENRICK, ARTHUR, EDWY, OSWY, and others, variously armed. Eg. Thanks, friend ! Edwin. No thanks. lou're guests, the fragal'st host might entertain, Vho cater for yourselves. Sit down. The board hall soon be covered. Eg. And we have a cup o cheer it with, with richer beverage "han what the fountain yields, replenish'd. Bring flagon, worthy host-Ken. (Aside to Arth.) Commend him to cover'd board and brimming cup! He's fit 'o play the leader there ;-but he's no head 'or men like ns, that rise betimes for meat, and wish for busy hands. I'm weary on't!. Arth. (Aside to Ken.) And so am II and trust me, of our minds re many more. Ken. To lead a life of shifts hat we may dine in safety | I'll no more on't! tive me a skirmish l Arth. Tell him so. Ken. I will, lre I touch food again. (Returns with Arth.) Eg. (To Alf.) Is it a bow ou shape? Alf. It is. Eq. I pray you show it me. Alf. (Rising and coming forward.) Here. Eg. (Struck with the appearance of Alf.) Forgive me that I call'd yon from your seat. Alf. No wron Eg. Yon make No wrong is done where none is meant. 'he wrong the greater, so excusing it. odge you beneath this roof ?

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Alf. I do. Eg. (Aside.) I've met With men whose faces atter histories, That seeing them I could tell their course of life-Whether on ocean or on land-nueven Or smooth-almost what perils they had run, Or incidents of happy fortune seen. Now his is one of them. Alf. You'd see the bow ? Eg. (Mechanically taking, and almost at the same time returning it). Your pardon. (Alf. returns to his scat.) Enter MAUDE with cakes, which she lays on the table, while one of EGBERT'S party enters with a flagon, and sets it down. Maude. This bread will serve till more is ready, friends. Exit. Eg. Sit down. Ken. Sit down who will, I'll not sit down! Arth. Nor I. Osw. Nor I. Eg. Why? what's amiss? Ken. We loathe. To lead this wary life. 'The very deer Confess the covert irksome, and at times Betake them to the plain. Eg. Not when they hear The hunters are abroad! Sit down! Sit down! Ken. We'll not sit down, till 'tis determined who Shall head the table. Eg. I shall head it. Ken. Ay? Edwy. And wherefore should he not? Ken. Go to! Go to! You question far too bold for one so young. Edwy. I question in the right, and so am bola Far less than thou, that question'st in the wrong. Ken. The wrong? Thou'rt but a boy! Edwy. The boy that proves Himself a man, does all a man can do. Ken. Beware thou dost not prove thyself on me, My metal's temper'd-thine at best but raw. Before thy chin exchanged its coat of down For one of manlier fashion, I had shown A beard in twenty fields. Eg. No more of this! The post by lot is mine. I got it not Of mine own choice; nor yet by partial leave. It fell to me. It might have fallen to you, To him, or him—to anyone—and then— No matter! If, by fearing to be rash, And overshoot the mark, my shaft hath lit O'ershort on't, I am content a better bow Should lead the game. Edwy. It shall not be! We'll have No other leader ? Sides, sirs, sides! Ken. Come on ! When they've such stomach for't, 'twere strange if we Lack'd appetite. Come on! Alf. (Rushing in between them as they are on the point of encountering). Hold !! Stop! Which side's The Dane? I stand for England! Can it be Yon're Saxons all! What? Are your foes so few You make ones of each other ? Fie; sirs! Fie!

Arth. (To Ken). Who's he? Ken. I know not.

Alf. (To Ken). You're a soldier ?

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Ken. Yes. Alf. Whose sword is that you draw? Ken. My own. Alf. Your country's!

You took it, with an oath to use it 'gainst Her foes, and do you turn it on her sons? For shame !

Arth, Why bear you his rebuke? Alf. (To Arth.) And you? Arth. A soldier too. Alf. (To Osw.) And you?

Osw. The same.

Alf. Beneath whose banner shot you arrow last ?

Arth. and Osw. The king's: Alf. And take you aim at the king's liege? As well the king himself 1. What ! do you stand With grasped weapons still? Or do you look For signal here ?-Old soldier, why is this? Is't thus you use your battle-temper'd sword? Is that the rust of Danish blood upon't? These hacks-are they the thrusts of Danish blades a

Ne'er hath it met the foe that master'd it? Ne'er hath it fail'd the friend that call'd upon it? Still did it guard thy country while it could? Yet would it back thy king, did he command? And would'st thou tarnish it f

(Ken. hangs his head.)

The field, the field, You drew it last in ?-ha! You start at that! Remember you who won that field? You do! His shout is in thine ear again! Thine eye Beholds him scattering carnage thro' the ranks Of those that fled !- The Saxon then was down !-What ! tighten you your grasp, till with the strain Your weapon trembles? Keep it for the Dane, And put it stainless up !

(Ken. sheathes his sword. Arth. and Osw. unbend their bows. The rest follow the example.)

Eq. (Aside). What man is this,

That lacks all sign and title of command, Yet all obey ? Edwy. We're friends again. Ken. Content.

Eg. A cup, then, to our making up .- Sit down .-

A pledge for concord, friends-The king! All. The King!

Eq. I pray you, Edwy, sing those rhymes for us, You've strung so well, and we so love to hear.

Right willingly; tho' homely be the Edwy. verse,

I dare be sworn was ne'er more rich in heart

#### (Sings.)

When circling round the festive board The cup is fill'd the highest, And one and all their love record For him their thoughts the nighest-Who owns the name their lips pronounce, While vouching tear-drops spring, Sirs, In eyes he does not see? At once I'll tell you-Here's "The King," Sirs! When proud in arms the nation stood, To front the foul invader, And England did what England could, And fate alone betray'd her-Who was the foremost to advance, The first a spear to fling, Sirs, The last to quit the field? At once

I'll tell you-Here's " The King," Sirs!

And now, when o'er the prostrate land The spoiler roams resistless. And Vengeance fears to lift her brand, And Hope almost is listless-Alta hope at hose as of solace glance, The song of heart'ning ring, Sirs, And promise freedom yet? At once I'll bell you-Here's "The King," Sirs! Eq. Well sung. Edwy. What's well intended, scarce comes short. Howe'er performance halts-I did my best. Alf. My heart o'erflows !- I shall betray myself ! What could my palace boast to vie with this? Not for its carved roof would I exchange These rafters, 'neath whose shelter, vanquish'd, stripp'd Of crown and sceptre, I am still a king-My people's hearts my throne! Eg. What trampet's that? Arth. (Going to the door.) I'll see. Ken. I know. Eg. Whose is it? Ken. 'Tis the Dane's. know his flourish well. Let's ont and meet him! Is't not the Dane? (To Arth., who returns.) Arth. It is. They're close upon us !-A quick retreat !- Their numbers double ours. (All start up except Alf.) Alf. No more ? Arth. No more !-- What can we, one to two? (Alf. rises, looks sternly at him, for a moment, and exit, hastily, in an opposite direction.) Eg. Why goes he? Arth. For his safety to provide. Let us provide for ours by instant flight. Ken. He's not the man to fly! My life upon it, He'll never turn his back upon the foe !-I told you so! Alf. returns, armed with a sword and target.) Alf. What distance off's the Dane ? Arth. Scarce half a mile by this: Alf. (To himself.) The wood's to pass. Unseen we can approach, and set upon them. All unprepared for us. Divide your band ! (They mechanically obey him, aller-nately looking at each other and at Alfred, with an expression of wonder and inquiry.) Half with your leader go; and half with me! (Eg. mechanically heads one of the divisions.) Ours be it to charge! They're sure to waver. Then Our shout your signal be to second us ! My bounding heart presages victory ! And so I see does your's, old soldier Come, There be our first trust; and our second here ! Say, would you back your king. Then follow him 1 Exit Alfred, Eq., and the rest enthusiastically following. SCENE III.-The Country. Interspersed with Wood. Enter ODDUNE, EDGAR, Chiefs, and Soldiers. EDGAR bearing the standard of the Rafen.

Od. Halt, comrades Here we'll take our noon's repast.

This velvet sward will be our pleasant couch, To rest us from our toil. And lose not heart! We'll find our Alfred yet! What though our search,

Has hitherto proved vain ? When look'd for least Perchance we'll light upon him. Fortune smiles, Like fortune's frowns, when once they come, come thick.

Our expedition fairly has begnn, Fairly proceeded, and will fairly end.

Edg. Know you these parts? Od. Right well. You stand in Mercia:

Where, as that aged louely man surmised, A monarch's head beneath a peasant's roof Contented shelters. (Shout.) Hark 1 the Hark! the cry of onset !

From thence it comes! Guard you the spoil! The rest, That choose it, follow me!

[Excunt Oddune and Saxons. Manent Edgar and Saxons.

Edg. Hie after them.

And bring me word what's passing. If the Dane, [Exit Soldier.

My life upon't again he bites the dust ! (Shouts.)

Another shout! The contest's close at hand! I hear the clashing of their weapons,-Well?

SOLDIER re-enters.

Soldier. The Dane is overthrown! Our countrymen

Alone achieved the victory! He fled, Ere full we came in sight. Some man of note Is added to our band, for soon as met Our mighty chief embraced him!

## Enter ODDUNE, ALFRED, EGBERT, and Party, with ODDUNE'S following.

Od. Countrymen,

Behold your king! Alf. Bise! rise! my gallant friends. We're brothers struggling in one common cause, And by heaven's high appointment haply met! Od. Haply indeed! Thus at your feet I lay

The standard of the Dane!

(Takes the Danish standard from Edg. and lays it at Alfred's feet.)

Alt. What! more success!

My faithful Earl! what chance has brought thee hither?

Whence com'st thou?

Od. From my castle, which the Danes Beset, commanded by the brother chiefs Hinguar and Hubba, by whose sister's skill was wrought that standard, call'd their fatal Rafen, Whose ominous device, they idly feign'd

Upon the eve of victory would flap Its magic-woven wings. It seem'd, indeed, As if death rode upon them, marking us His prey : for famine plied us worse within, Than e'en the foe without. But 'twas a friend Severe to us for our good; despairing succour, And all munition gone, at night we made A sally, all resolved to cut our way Thro' the enemy, or perish sword in hand ! The Dane was unprepared-before our march Startled his ear, our swords were at his breast! My liege, you may believe, the weapons which

Despair first drew were wielded now by hope;

Escape was certain; but would be escape Whom danger woo'd with chance of victory? We fought for it; and won it! AU. Fair exploit! Od. Of fairer yet, the news of our success, My liege, gives hope. Such numbers throng'd to ns Upon our march, the handful, that I thought To greet you with, has swell'd into a host-Brave volunteers, whose pay's the leave to serve. My liege, your queen and son ? Alf. Oddune, forbear! The Dane has buried them-They sleep beneath The ruins of thy master's castle, in The flames of which they perished. Oddune! From A dying follower I learn'd it! Learn'd, That treason led the accurst assailants on ! If lips that speak for the last time speak truth, Edric has proved a traitor 1 Queen and child, Except my country, Oddune, I have none-That, now, is Alfred's all !-His all for which Alone he cares to live : Now, could we learn The state and numbers of the enemy, A blow might soon be struck-Oddune!-Od. My liege. Alf. (To himself.) No, that were doubtful-Oddune | Od. Well, my liege? Alf (To himself). And so were that! Od. My liege, you spoke just now. Alf. Anon, my Oddune! Make the attempt myself ? Life and empire on this cast I'll stake! Yes! But how provide myself? There is a place In the glen where, of its shaggy vesture scant, Its sides stand bare, and their huge ribs expose Of solid rock; so giddy steep withal, That down direct from the precipitous verge You many fathoms look.—There have I mark'd A lonely wight at the bottom couched, with harp Playing to the idle echoes by the hour Admiring how they mock'd him-I will use That harp !--will use it to expel the foe, That thrust its master from the shining hall To the dim cavern-cell; spill'd his heap'd dish-O'erturn'd his cup, from all sides running o'er, And cast him, with that golden song of his, To roots and water,-Edwy, speak with me! Wilt be awhile companion to thy king, Tho' to share danger with him ? Edwy. To share death. Alf. Your hand! My friends, our country must be free! My trusty Oddune, wonder not, altho' You've found your king to lose him for a time. This list of trusty chiefs, with whom, through means I need not name to thee, I have kept up

Intelligence, will show thee whom to warn Of thy success. Summon them to repair To Selwood Forest, there to meet their king. There shall we meet again, my gallant friends! Your hands, my chiefs! Soldiers, our hearts embrace! Farewell! Be strong in hope! The land's not lost

That's left a son resolved to do her right ; And here are troops of sons, and loyal ones! Confirm the stirring spirit of the time 'Till it o'erspread the realm; the which through-

With swiftest expedition bear the call That to her rescue rouses those that love her! Strong in her children should her mother be ! Shall ours be helpless that has sons like us ? God save our native land, whoever pays The ransom that redeems her !—tho' the king ! There king and subject side by side shall stand !

Stand by your king, your king will stand by you! [Excunt Alfred and Edwy, Oddune, and the others severally."

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

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#### ACT III.

SCENE I .- The inside of Guthrum's tent.

## Enter GUTHRUM and EDRIC. 2. E. R. H.

Guth. I swear a royal booty ! Thou hast done Great service to the Dane. With these supplies No need to forage. Here we'll sit at ease. And rest us from the war.

Edr. No rest for me!

Far richer holds than those which I surprised And plunder'd, at my master's feet shall lay Their treasure and munition

Guth. At thy friend's!

Call me not master! Call me father! Think To thy first expedition what we owe !--The capture of the royal Saxon's son, The heir of Alfred.

Edr. Would his queen, as well, Were now within thy power-But she escap'd, Or perish'd in the flames.

Guth. Come, Edric !-- speak ;

What shall I give thee to reward the love, That so hath labour'd to enrich me? Come,

Ask what thon wilt, by Odin it is thine. Edr. Thou bad'st me call thee father. With the leave

Give me the right to hail thee by that title: I ask thy daughter's hand.

Guth. I give it thee.

Seek her, and bring her hither.

Edr. For that boon

Command my blood! Ay, every drop of it. [Exit.

#### Enter OSCAB, L. R. H.

Oscar. My lord, a Saxon minstrel is without : The string he touches with a master's hand ; And as he plays, a youth, that waits upon him, Sings to his harp rare tales of love and war

Guth. Bring him in.

(Exit Oscar, and returns with Alfred, followed by Edwy. Guthrum, who had sat down, struck by the deportment of Alfred, rises.)

Guth. Ha! who art thou? What art thou? Alf. I'm the bard!

The son of fantasy !

Whose world's o' the air-to mortal vision else . Impalpable-a paragon to this-

Where he communes with forms, whose radiancy Outshines the lustre of earth's fairest things ; Whose title, from above, earth can't confer Or take away! Whose smile is coveted.

By beauty-valour-their bright mirror, where

They see themselves more bright! Whose tributaries

Are kings themselves! Their gorgeous state but serves

To swell his strain, that doth emblazon them Beyond their deeds or titles. Guth. Well replied :

I like thy answer better that 'tis bold.

Sit down, sit down.—A sample of your skill.— Thou spok'st of beauty now,—what caust thou say In praise of it?

Alf. (To himself.) Thanks to the tender hand That guided me to con the minstrel's lore. And treasure't in my heart! Guth. Let's taste thy skill,

#### ALFRED.

Would'st thou know what beauty is? Beauty is the queen of sighs! Not a heart but owneth this. Proud or humble, light or wise. Crowned goblets some desire :

Some to see the banquet spread : Some prize shining gold; and higher Value some the shining deed :

Safety's deem'd a gem by some : Danger some a jewel call ;

Some to power desire to come ;

But Beauty is the prized of all ! Well the Bard her praise may sing-Of his soul-entrancing lyre,

She commands the master string, That which lends it all its fire!

Wanting which he could not sing-Rhymeless, numberless might be, Nor e'er had won a name for deathless minstrclsy.

Guth. Right well thou prov'st thy title to thy name.

What does the youth that waits upon thee? Alf. Sing

The while I play. Guth. We'll hear him at the banquet.

(Rises.)

To me, thrice precious is the ruby drop When the enchanting strain has breath'd upon it. Thou art not old-and yet thou look'st not young ; Thy brow with wisdom graver than with years-I'd talk with you; for great, unless I err, Your skill in lore, we little care to search Whose school's the battle field. Att Attend mel

Come.

Excunt, 1.E.L.H.

SCENE II .- A sequestered rural spot near the camp.

Enter INA, B.H (leading ETHELRED), EDITH, and Boy.

Edith. Your little charge is a fair healthful

plant, Whose thriving looks bespeak your careful tending. How strong is infancy in its helplessness !

Now stong is human within the hold where he Was found, no soul, they say, was spar'd but him, Howe'er they pray'd for mercy !

Ina. Little praise To him that sav'd him! Edric's treacherons heart

Can own no touch of mercy! Know you not The boy is Alfred's son? His hold it was,

Which Edric with my father's host beset, When found the chief this boy. Go on before, We'll follow you; and mind you spare no pains To humour him [To Boy, who exits with Eth., 1.E.L.H. I should not love thee, boy : Thy race is Ina's bane! Edith. Why say'st thou so ? The Saxon loves thee, Ina. Ina. Loves me ? Edith. Yes! What though his passion is not on his tongne? His heart is full of it. It speaks in sighs-Love's proper words. "Ne'er plainer spoke to Ina. Nay, tell me not. His heart is stone to me ! He sight! but 'tis for freedom! Edith. 'Tis for you ! How love is blind to what it pines to see! "You think him stone; belike so thinks he you. "Look at thyself, at once thon see'st him! "Your eyes at parting, that strain after him, "At meeting, feast on any other thing; "Your tongue that, when he hears not, rings with him "In his hearing's noteless, as it ne'er knew sound. "For too strong love, his love's accounted none." Ina. I tell thee no! His thoughts abide not here. They're with his countrymen, some daughter fair Of whom he loves-not Ina. Be it so. The cheek I love shall smile, tho' not on me ; The bird I'd keep with me I will let go, "'Plaining the bondage that would kill with doating."

He's free-my father gave him liberty. Edith. And what for thee ?

Ina. To die, like a poor flower

That lives with only gazing on the sun ; But from her radiant lord too long shut out By the cold cloud, in silence hangs her head, And dies a smiling death ! Edith. He comes.

FEait, R. H.

Ina. Alas ! For the last time.

OSWITH enters, perceiving Ina. 2. E. R. H., walks down L. H.

Os. Still, still my treacherous steps Betray me, leading me to what I'd shun ; Yet what is ever present to my thought Why fear my eye to see? "My thraidom's full "If 'tis enchantment, better to enjoy "The fatal sweetness of the powerful spell

"I strive in vain to break!" Ina. Saxon, thou'rt free. Os. Recall thy words !

Ina. I speak my father's will. Os. Why does he give me liberty?

Ina. Because

His Ina begg'd the boon. "Os. Why did she so? "Would she had begg'd my death! I did not ask

- " For freedom ;-thraldom was more kind to me,
- "Which chain'd me unto that I ought to fly,
- "But fain would cling to. Honour did not swerve "That was constrain'd to look upon its bane;

"Aud if it look'd till it forgot itself,

- "'Twas its mischance-not crime.-Now, if it falls.
- "It falls of its own will! O maid, too fair!

- 'Help me to 'scape the rain thou hast wrought !
- Think-think-'tis an apostate kneels to thee!
- " Instruct thy melting eye to flash with scorn
- "Teach thy sweet tongue harsh indignation's note-
- " Erect thy form with dread severity-
- " Till, like a seraph, sterner in thy frown " For what thon look'st and breath'st of beantcous heaven

"Thou aw'st me into virtue.

Ina. Would'st thou be free,

Thou art so. Os. Am I?

Lady, there are bonds,

The wearing which endears them to the slave, So that he hugs them-would not be set free!

Free me from these !

Ina. What bonds ? Os. E'en such, as not Our limbs imprison, but the things that rule them-

Our thoughts and wills-as coil about our hearts.

- And keep their hold, when links of steel were wax. Ina. Methinks I have a gness what bonds you
- mean:
- Are they not heavy ones when worn alone, But light when others share them? Is it so?
- Had'st thou such partnership would'st thou be free ?
- I would not, so had I!
- Os. It cannot be!

Half she reveals her heart, and veils her eyes. Do her veil'd eyes unveil the other half? Am I so bless'd, so curs'd, as to be lov'd? "Nay, then, 'tis fate I'd cope with, and most yield !" Oh, to have fallen in battle !-- to have fallen When honour was my mistress !- to have fallen When in her radiant eye I drew my sword, And deem'd my life a stake not worth a thought To venture for her smile! When wooing her,

I strode more blithely through the battlefield,

Than e'er I bounded down the festive hall!

Ina. What makes thee wish for death? Os. The dread to lose What was my more than life; but now seems

poor

Like to be cast away, since I have found

A good I covet more than life and it! Ina. What do'st thou covet so ? Os. Thee lady, thee!

Thon art that good of value paramount! Oh, to have met thee with a heart at large! No solemn debt-no knotted tie upon it! Free to be all thy own—to render thee Its whole of love, hope, honour, loyalty— One large, unbroken, everlasting gift-The hand which now, in doubtful joy, I take-

Enter EDRIC, 2 E. R. H., walks down L. H.

How had I caught, in tranced eestacy,

And kneeling, laid the offering at thy feet!

Edr. Let go that hand! 'Tis mine ! Os. What fire is this,

That with the light'ning's speed darts thro' me, and feels

As all consuming !- Thine ! Ina. Believe him not.

Oswith, believe him not-believe the maid

With thought of thee, that all forgets herself-Casts off the bashful 'tire of virginhood,

And, unenforced, stands confest thine own !

14 ALFRED T	HE GREAT
"The eyes turn on thee, she would still avert, "And lets thee see them, tho' they stream with	Os. Put u
"Calls on thee with the tongne that ne'er till now	Ina. Say Thy breath
"Betray'd her secret, to receive't for thine! "Believe him not, he sports with thee—thy heart	Thy Ina's li "To play th
"Is not more surely seated in thy breast,	Speak ont I
"Than is thy image lodg'd within my heart—	" Friend cr
"Not more the spring of life to thee, than that "Is life itself to Ina !" 'Fore the world	"Whilst I
Do I proclaim me thine, and cleave to thee! But plight me faith for faith.	Edr. 'Tis
Os. I do, sweet maid!	Ina. 'Tis
Edr. (Drawing his sword). My right's a bar, which thou must first remove !	Not half so
"Os. 'Twixt me and life! Strong love hath made	Could threa Os. Ina, t
"As a poor straw upon a torrent's breast,	Back to the
"And bear as swift away!" Thy right! What	Shall bring To prospere
right? (Half drawing his sword). Ina. Give me thy hand! Give me thy hand, I	"Ina. I'l
say!	"And thon "When set
Take it from thy sword! Thou'rt mine! Thy hand-thy arm-	"Os. My
Thy all! Have I not given my all for thee?	"Bride !
"Paid down for thee a virgin's heart, that ne'er "Before in love was barter'd. Give me thy hand!	"I'd be alou
"Or thon'rt the falsest, most forsworn of men.	Ina. I wil We'll go to
"Breaking the vow that scarce hath left thy lips, "And I'm the poorest, most abused of maids!	Os. Sweet
(live me thy hand! Nay, an thou wilt not, thus	Lies this wa
Upon thy arm I'll hang, and be thy shield, Taking the blows upon my fearless breast,	Os. Nay,
That threaten wound to thine.	Ina. You d
Us. (Taking his hand from his sword.) Thy right! What right?	Disjoins us
Edr. Dost wish to learn? Such as the bride-	Let go my h So lost for h
groom claims— "As makes the lover bless his stars, and gives	Pleaded her
"Fulfilment of his long-enduring hopes-	" Large as h
" As turns his blissful dreams to substances, "So rich, past credence, still he thinks he dreams—	To an unhee And scarce
" Asks if he wakes—believes it—doubts it—sickens " Lest day prove night, and langhing morning come,	
"And in his very arms his treasure fade!"	77.3
Os. (Half drawing his sword.) A bridegroom's right	Edr. Was Thon sent's
Ina. That right is thine alone !	di Traitor !
Oh, how thy frame with fearful passion shakes! While thy full orbs strain on thy countryman,	Os. Ha!
With deadly purpose fixed ! Turn them on me!	Edr. Cowa
Read who is Ina's bridegroom in her face l See whom her eyes with fondness strain upon,	0 2 0
As thine on him with hate! "Oh what a fee	Enter GI
"Thou mak'st me pay for that which costs thee nought!"	Guth. Ho. There's but
I call thee lord—If that contents thee not, Why then the dearer name of husband take,	And he ha
why then the dearer hame of husband take,	q

And give me in exchange, an only look !

Os. (To Edr.) Explain thy words. Edr. The service I have done

The Dane, he bids me name requital for; And by his God he binds himself, whate'er The boon, to grant it. Ina was the boon! (Oswith draws his sword.)

Ina. List to me Oswith—Oswith—by thy love!-My father's oath has made me his! Hear mine! By Odin, I'll be bride to none but thee !

Edr. Force will exact what frowardness denies! Os. And thon could'st wed the bride that loath'd thee?

Edr. Yes.

p thy sword. I'd whisper thee.

(They whisper.)

it out.

is mine! More than her own it feeds fe! "Oh, 'tis a treacherous breath, ne traitor to its mistress thus !"

say! "Thon heed'st me not! False tiend !

nel and unfair, that gives me nought, give all to him !" well.

Exit. L. H.

plain thy gleaming brandish'd sword then death, as does thy flashing eye ! by fears are causeless. Prithee hence, camp; whilst I revolve the means

the course of our now thwarted loves us issue.

revolve them with thee;

shalt find how thrifty woman's wit. to work by love.

Ina !-Love !

-Wife!-for wedded they whom love has -------

ne."

I not leave thee! Come!

the camp together.

, my way

vy.

es mine, then. farewell

leave me not! I'll cling to thee till eath

Drag me if thou wilt, I'll ne'er

old! Oh was there ever maid

ove! that knelt-that bent the kneecause with her bold tongue-" paid ibute,

er eves could furnish, of her tears "

ding lover, deaf to her,

confest an hour!

#### Re-enter EDRIC, 1. E. L. H.

it for this

st me hence? to give thee pause for alliancel

rdl

#### (Both draw.)

ITHRUM and ALFRED, U. E. L. H.

d! forbear! Who stirs

a single step 'twixt him and death, s trod it. What's your cause of arrel?

what share hast thou child! in't? Ina, my What!

Ina. My father !

(Crossing to him.)

(Angrily.)

Guth. There! there! there!

(Pressing her to him.)

Did I speak roughly to thee! Silly fawn, To start at but a sound ! Art thou in tears ? It does concern thee, then ? How, Ina, speak ! Dost hear me ? Answer, girl! Well; never heed.

Dost turn from me?

You would if you could! No matter! Noble	
Edric , Declars the serve of smarrel to the friend	Ina. So has he mine!
Declare thy cause of quarrel to thy friend. Ina. Thou'rt not his friend! Call not thysel	Guth. What hast thou sworn? Ina. Eternal truth to love!
his friend !	Guth. Thou dost not know the passion? But
Guth. My Ina, but I must! and so must	thou dost!
thou	'Tis clear! I see too sure thon art love's thrall '
Ina. Never!	Upon thy check his crimson pennon waves !
Guth. What's that! My child, beware! You know	Thy down-cast eyes pay homage to his sway! Thy heaving breast by its commotion shows The conqueror is within! I see his power
I brook not thwarting ! mnst not be gainsaid !	The conqueror is within! I see his power
Call him thy friend! Come! Show me thou'rt my	Contessed in every hore of thy frame!
child!	Whom dost thou love? Who has lit up this
My flesh! my blood! that owe themselves to me,	flame? Ina. (Kneeling.) Thou, father, thou; whose
And should be subject to me! Will't thou speak?	fondness for thy child
Take counsel! Something's rising in my heart	Would sketch for her the man thou'dst have her
That bodes not good to thee! Once more I say, Resist me not! Submit! Call him thy friend.	Wed.
Resist me not ! Submit ! Call him thy friend. Art silent still ? Now minstrel, prove thou'rt	How he should be among his peers in rank. And that the first—without a peer in worth.
wise!	Most brave-most true-most generous-most
found thee so when we discours'd of peace!	good.
Of war !- the duties subjects owe to kings,	"Fit to be challenger of all the field,
And kings to subjects. Now propound the means Behoves a father take, who would untie	"In all achievements of supreme renown, "And bear the palm from all!" Nor yet to lack
A wilful daughter's tongue!	Those qualities of visage, and of form,
Alf Force but subdues	Which to these other richer graces join'd
The weak; still, with the strong, 'tis met by	Make the consummate man. But that I saw
IOFCE.	My father such a man, I should have deem'd
Was never found the noble nature yet That crouch'd before a frown! 'Tis sway'd with	A phantom 'twas he drew for me; for ne'er Except in him, saw I embodied wealth
smiles.	Of so rare worth—until I saw it there!
Dhiding her nature thon chid'st thy own !	Guth. What's this to me?
she's thy soul's bright and fair reflecting glass!	Ina. The being of thy child-
But look at her! "Sits not thy upper lip, 'All manly as it is, aud bold, to her's,	Thy Ina—thy dear Ina—who forgets Her father 'tis she's kneeling to, as tho'
'More proudly firm upon thy nether one.	He were a stranger to her; but now leaps
'More proadly firm upon thy nether one, 'Than her's upon its fellow!'' Vauntest thou,	Into his bosom! Oh, I'd like to see
is only more thou didst, repute with blee,	The harm could reach me here !
Fiven as rebuke, ne'er mended failing yet? Then is thy boast her pardon! Give me favour	Guth. The Saxon dics! Ina. No, no!
For speaking thus my thought.	Guth. He spurn'd the proffer of his life.
Guth. Thou dost my wish.	When forfeit to the God!
like thy frankness! Yes; I see! You're	Ina. Nay, hear me!
right!	Guth. Spurn'd My friendship! Guthrum's friendship!
the's all her father's child! Come to me Ina!	Ina. No!
(She rushes into his arms.) Vhat would'st thou do for me?	Guth. He did!
Ina. Aught that I could.	I lov'd his the introduction of the interval o
Guth. Ah, there my Ina speaks! I like thee	"The God himself had turn'd against his sons
thus, Ina, when thou hang'st upon my neck,	"And, angry, sided with their enemies !"
nd gazest in my face! My Ina. list:	"And, angry, sided with their enemies!" He was my captive! He had bled to Odin!
'll tell thee wherefore I'd entreat thee call	r proner a nim my friendship, would ne make
'he Saxon friend. I've sworn to give thee to	Alliance with the Dane, to snatch him from The altar; and he spurned me! Ay, refused
"Ina. Without my heart! What, father, give	The hand of a victorious king, thro' faith
my hand	10 an uncrowned ingitive! He did!
Without my heart? Not so would'st thou give	I spared him at my child's beseeching! He
thine,	That spurn'd the parent now would win the child!
And make a league of friendship with thy hand.	He dies!
Thy heart protested 'gainst! And what were	Alf. (Aside to Guthrum.) Thy Ina dies! See how
that,	she hangs,
Compar'd to one of love? A league of friend-	Half-dead, already on thy shoulder! Much
ship. That bar'd a friend ont, and enclosed a foe!	Thou lov'st her! If none other calls thee father, Beware thou art not childless!
Would'st thou do that? Thou would'st not give	Guth. Am I in the wrong?
a smile	Demand I more than is a father's due?
Without thy soul's consent. And would'st thou	what is her life but portion of my breath P
have Thy Ina give her hand without her heart ?"	Alf. A portion thou would'st give thy breath to save?
Baro were manue minimun mer menter	LO SAVE F

.

TAIT

Guth. Thon savest right. Alf. A portion, too, which she Would render up, not only to save thine, But let thee breathe with ease. Guth. Thon sayest right; Yet bows she not her fancy to my will. Alf. She cannot. Guth. How? Alf. You ask; and you have lov'd! Guth. How know you that ? Alf. Who has not felt the flame? Your passion was repaid. Guth. How know you that? Alf. How know I that? From naught but mntual love A flower, consummate rich like that, could grow ! Where fairest things that harmonise unite ! E'en such a skin should such a mould ensheath. To such a heart, be casket such a mould; Such lineaments compose the teanteons face. Of such a neck that makes its graceful seat And skin, and mould, and heart, and face be served By such a minstrel as that tuneful tongne. This speaks the mingling of accordant hearts. Throbbing in fervent unity; that one No thought, no wish, no hope, no joy can lodge, But finds its fellow at the other's core! Gath. Minstrel thou'rt right! Deep does thy wisdom search ; Her mother, Eva, was my only love, As I was her's! Tho' daughter of my foc. She left her father, friends, land, faith, and all To follow me. She did !- She did ! Alf. And that's Her child, in whom the passion that bless'd thee, Thon'dst turn into a curse. Guth. I like not that ! Thon mak'st too bold to say I'd curse my child! Alf. Look at her l Guth. Thon art right! (Raises her up and em-braces her.) Say on! Say on! Yet where's the profit? Win me Odin's car, And move the God to give me back my oath ! Thon but perplexest me! Since thon'rt so wise, Show me the way not to forswear myself ; And yet not keep my oath. Alf. Two oaths the God Has register'd; one only can be kept. Which he accepts, the God himself decide. You say he rules the sword; then to the sword Entrust the cause, and these the terms of strife. Who masters first his adversary's sword And yet not sheds his blood, be his the maid ! Os. Content 1 Edr. Content! Ina. Oswith, this chain's of gold, (Still leaning on her father.) That never knew alloy-cunningly wrought-An amulet, that ever faithful guards The wearer's wishes; proves it false to thine, Drop it into the grave where I shall lie, Ere by its treachery thy rival thrives. Guth. And Edric, thou receive this ring from me The hand that wears it, holds its weapon true, If faithful to the Dane, as thou to me. (Goes up with Ina, C.) Alf. I have a ring, a charmed bauble too. Power to the hand it graces, does it give O'er falschood to prevail. 'Tis his who'll take it-

But who would wear it, and its virtue prove,

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Must first affirm he owns a loyal heart-True to the king that first his homage claim'd, The land that gave him birth-Wilt take it, thou ? Edr The ring I'll trust is this I now put on, The guard of my good sword! Goes up L. H.) Alf. Wilt take it, thon ? Os. Tho' to the king I'm true That first my homese claim'd-true to the land That gave me birth; yet more, than true to these, The thrall of love, I dare not take the ring. Alf. Show me thy hand -my countryman-'tis on I 'Tis a true hand-for ne'er would fit the ring Disloyal finger yet. Look at it well! Lo! speak I not the truth ? Os. (Recognising Alf.) My liege! Alf. Beware! In whose but a true subject's hands would place Thy king, are with thee! Heaven be with thre too! (Crosses R.H.) Guth. Away! I'll follow yon ; and see, myself, This bloodless trial made. Excunt Oswith and Edric. L.H. Here, minstrel, take My child ! Support her! Cheer her to abide The issue of their strife. Exit L. H. Alf. (Supporting Ina.) Fair maiden, take The minstrel's word, thy lover wins the game! Thy fears are wrongs, where wrong thou least would'st do l Doubt on thy champion did another cast How would disdain arouse thy languid lip : Colour thy frozen cheek from snow to flame ; And the expired lustre of thine eye Re-kindle with its lightning ! Maiden, list! The hand's best since ever is the heart! Thy lover's is the sound one! Think of that! That's right! Look up! Take courage! Oswith throws His brand away, and grapples Edric's! Ha! Keep thy hold, Edric, if thon cut's! A child's – An infant's-is it to thy rival's grasp! Look on thy lover, maiden! His chief's eye Upon him, donble is a vassal's strength ; What then the lover's, in his mistress' eye, That strives for victory, and she the prize? He sees thee! Mark yon, how his frame distends, As though with superhuman vigour franget, At his good angel's sight! Wave, maiden fair, Wave your white arm to him! Twere ten times worth A royal pennon in a monarch's hand. Cheering the champion of his challeng'd crown ! You, see ! You see! Now puts he forth his might! Edric gives way! He faints! His limbs are way, Wrestling with limbs of steel! He falls! His sword Waves o'er his head, in noble Oswith's hand. Hold up! Nay, gasp not! . It were wrong to die, Slain by thy gallant lover's victory !

Enter GUTHRUM, leading OSWITH, L. H.

Guth. There, Saxon, take my child; but thon'rt my thrall.

Thon must not bear her hence. Alf. He should not! Guthrum! Where'er I speak of thee I'll give thee out Indeed a royal chief! Farewell!

(Going R. H.) Guth. Not yet.

By Odin thou shalt join our feast! I say Thou shalt not go! I like thy company! I'd hear thy harp again! Come! Follow all. Exeunt U.E.L.H.

#### " Re-enter EDRIC.

"Edr. Foil'd, but not yet o'ercome. The baffled foe

- "That will not turn a friend, is like to prove

- "A deadly one! Oswith has won the maid, "Bat not possess'd her yet! I'll mar his love! "That minstrel is not what he seems! Me Me he shung
- "Communes with Oswith freely-Oswith knows him !
- "Someone of note-a prize to Guthrum-which
- "If Oswith lets escape, he wrongs the Dane;
- "And thence I'll work his ruin! To the banquet!
- "I'll watch their every movement; and unmask him.

"Tho' I should tear the visor from his face." [Exit.

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

#### ACT IV.

SCENE I.—The inside of Guthrum's Tent.—Dis-covered seated Guthrum, Oswith, Ina, Chiefs, Alfred, Edwy, &c., &c.

#### Enter EDRIC, through centre.

- Guth. Come Edric, tho' not Fortune's friend, thou'rt mine.
- Why didst thou stay behind ? Sit by me, Edric. Look to the minstrel-see that his goblet's full-

Let it o'erflow-see to't !

Os. You feast not, love.

Ina. No more do you.

Os. I do not care to feast.

- When the heart banquets, viands are pass'd by ! Edith (Entering, c.) Your little Saxon favourite
- wants you, Ina, He clamours for you, nought can quiet him.
- Ina. Nay, try and soothe him. If he baffles thee,

Why bring him hither, then !

[Exit Edith, C.

Guth. Come, strike your harp!

- We'd hear a strain; and prithee let it be A warlike one. "The triumph of the Dane-

"Can'st thou play that? "Alf. Accursed be the bard

- "That sings his country's shame! Her glory, chief,
- "I'll sing! My harp hath often rung with it!
- " Shall ring again ! Or if the theme be done,
- "The strings, which many a year my hands have kiss'd.
- "I'll tear from their lov'd frame, tho' as they snap
- "My heart-strings break, and I partake the ruin. "Guth. By Odin, but thou'rt bold. I like thee for't.

Alf. The downfall of Cadwallon. Guth. What was he? Alf. The Saxons' foe.

ALFRED plays while EDWY sings.

Cry, cry to the eagle, her feast is prepar'd; Cadwallon the Lion, his falchion has bar'd! Ten thousand spears dance to his trumpet's song, As his march in thunder rolls along ! Does she hear? Will she come? Is she hurrying down? All's ready, and waiting for her alone! But the might's with the right. From the cloud breaks the light; And the head high at morning-may lie low ere the night ! "But why does the Saxon, Oswald, kneel? " Is't for his prayers he is dress'd in steel? "And wherefore kneels his Saxon bands? " Do they pray with their weapons in their hands? " Or are they contented to banquet the guest " Cadwallon the Lion has call'd to his feast? " But the might's with the right, " From the cloud breaks the light; "And the head high at morning-may lie low ere the night ! "Not long did the Saxon kneel.-he arose "With a shout that made leap the bold hearts of his foes "And on he rush'd, and down he bore

- "The spears that hunted him before. "And the trumpet that sounded the first for the field-
- " Cadwallon the Lion's was the first that was still'd! " For the might's with the right,
  - " From the cloud breaks the light;
- "And the head high at morning-may lie low ere the night !"

But where is the eagle was called to the feast?

She is come ! but Cadwallon salutes not his guest, She has fallen to her meal without beckon or word;

She screams with her glee, but her mirth is unheard; She has perch'd on the head of the warrior's son,

And the blood-drop that falls from her beak is his own.

For the might's with the right,

From the cloud breaks the light :

And the head high at morning may lie low ere the night

- Guth. Well done! a strain that for a warrior's ear !
- " For me, thrice precious is the ruby drop
- "Since the enchanting strain has breath'd upon it !"

Taste, friends. (Officer presents goblet to Guthrum). Come, lips to brims; there's magic in The cup! The health of him that pours it in—

- "The bard," the king of song, whose praise to sound
- Becomes and not disparages the lips Of kings themselves I

Alf. (Aside). A regal nature his! There's something in thee, Guthrum, I could claim Close kindred with; but there's no grasping hands For thee and me, save in the deadly strike That ends the hope of one of us! I've gain'd All needful knowledge. Ward of caution none

They keep-in our complete discomfiture

#### ALFRED THE GREAT.

Secure. An easy prey they're sure to fall -To sudden onset from a band like ours Strong in their course and resolute of heart. Enter ELSWITH, pale, emaciated, and in wretched attire, through centre. Guth. Ha! who art thou? Els. Who play'd that strain ? Guth. Thou ask'st As if reply were not a boon, but debt! Whence gottest thou that air of high command ? Els. From misery ! "Guth. She strangely teaches thee, "Making thee stately that makes others bow! "What seek'st thou here ?" Els. I heard a strain without ; I'd learn who play'd that strain. Guth. That harper. Els. He! Hope, thou did'st right to mock me. I have found thee Still a dissembler, and I'd trust thee still! But now farewell, thou thing of precious tongue But hollow heart! "Smooth face, that's but a mask "To cover what we loathe. Great promiser, "Little performer ! Coiner of false smiles, "That turn out tears at last." I've done with thee! (She sits in the centre, R. H.) Otho. Thou sitt'st in Guthram's presence. Els. What of that? I have sat down with Despair—a greater chief Than Guthrum—one could make him gnash his teeth ! Ay, could he, mighty as your master is! I've sat down with Despair! Now show me Death ! I'll take my seat by him! I fear him not! "Alf. Contain thyself, my heart!-It is my queen ! "Guth. Her mind's distracted ! "Alf. No!-It is her heart. "Ina. Perhaps she hungers. Give her food ! (They present food to her.) "Els. Too rich! " Famine partakes not such! She feeds on haws. "Acorns, and roots, and berries! Give me these! "For these we thank the Dane! "Guth. You thank the Daue! "Ha! "Alf. 'Tis a woman in affliction speaks! "Guth. And let her speak! Yet does she mar the cheer, "Remove her "Fls. Touch me not! Stand off! My name "Is Woe! I am the mark of Wrath! Behold "How he has smitten me, and smitten me "That mine own eyes don't know me! One hot day, "Parch'd up with thirst and hunger, of a brook "I stop'd to drink and saw myself, and scream'd "At presence of a stranger. Time makes things "Unlike the things they were, but Wrath's the changer!" Guth. Persnade her to go hence. Els. I hear you! Ill You entertain the guests you force to greet you ! Guth. We force! Els. Ay! burn them out of house and home! Murder their husbands, and their children ! Scatter

Their friends, that where a thousand troop to-day Not one is found to-morrow !-Bid them search For viands in the larders of the wolf And vulture! which, deriding them, perforce They come to you. Guth. Hence with her! force her hence! Alf. (Starting up.) Who hand of force lays on her, let him die! And save thy manly name from the reproach. That in thy presence, misery like this Was offer'd insult with impunity, And in the sacred person of a woman ! Els. The voice, too !--No ! it is not, cannot be! Guth. Heard'st what she said? Alf. I did. Guth. Was't true? Alf. Free speech Accord'st thou me ? Guth. 'Tis thine. Alf. The truth she speaks. But one she seems 'mongst thousands, whom thy sword, Ravenous of conquest, hath made widows of. And childless mothers! Who, this hour thon feast'st, Are famishing !-- in their own land, without Abode or food-and curse the hour when first Thou trodd'st upon their shores! Guth. In their own land? (He quits his seat, and approaches Alfred, c.) Surely I heard thee not! In their own land? 'Tis mine! all mine! their land! air! water! They Themselves! All mine! Mine! Mine! They! Thou, ay thou! That mocks't me! brav'st me! Thou, I say, art mine! My thrall! my slave! a worm! thing for my foot To tread upon! Confess it ! Alf. No! Guth. Thou wilt not? Know'st thou the man thon tempt'st? Do'st hear "me? Think'st thou "I speak to thee by my page, to whom thou'rt free "To lend but half an ear? May'st pass excus'd "To bear no duty in thine air, thine eye? "May'st answer by a nod, or not at all?" I'm Guthrum! He whose breath's thy life! A look-An only look of whose incensed wrath Might strike thee dead! Do'st thou not tremble ? Alf. No! Guth. Up, slave, and beg thy life! Alf. Why beg for that I deem not worth the only asking for? Moreover, that thou hast not power to take? Guth. Not power to take? Was never Guthram brav'd By mortal man before! Not power to take! "Guthrum is but a child! Strong as my wrath, "My stronger wonder overpowers it quite, "And from a tempest quells me to a calm! "The reason? Come! I'll let thee have thy way, "Giv'st thou me but the reason. Come, the reason ? "Be it but half-sufficient, it shall weigh "Acquittance of thee, Come, the reason-come !"

Alf. Your royal word is warrant for my safety." What by your leave I speak, yourself forbids you To turn to evil 'gainst me.

Guth. Right, by Odin ! While lent the Dane a torch to light her path. You're always right! and you may speak again, Her flaming towers that blaz'd about her boy! (Resumes his seat, L. H.) And freely as before. And she went mad! yet still they bore her on : No other heed to her distraction gave, Except to cry, "The Dane! The Dane! The Dane!" Ina. I prithee, Oswith, Except to cry, "The Dane I The Dane The Dane I The Dane I The Dane I The Dane Persuade thy conntryman to leave the tent. What now is safety may anon prove danger, Fierce as 'tis sudden is my father's wrath; And ever in the hour of social cheer Most to be fear'd and look'd for-speak to him! Conjure him to go hence. (Oswith crosses to L. H.) Os. Had he a steed-Ina. A steed ?-An easy thing, my Oswith! Two-The fleetest in the camp-shall be at hand, Ready caparison'd-behind the tent-That way conduct him hence. [Whispers an Attendant, who crosses and exits, R. H., while Oswith crosses to Alfred, R. H. I am a father, and a husband still! Os. My liege, your car. Edr. (To Guth.) You mark, my lord, he whispers "Oh, happiness, thon comest out of time! "Thou choosest ill the place to greet me in ! him. Guth. I do; and what of that? Edr. They understand each other. "With all the wealth thou say'st is mine again! "I date not touch it! Better were it far, "I had not now been told on't." Guth. Think'st thou so? Edr. Yes; I'll have an eye upon them. Guth. I heed them not. Guth. Take the boy ! Enter EDITH and ETHELRED, C. L. H. Els. Whose child is that? not thine! Edith He is not mine. Els. He's not a Danish child. Edith. He's not. Art thon so? Els. Is he a Saxon, then ? Is he a Saxon, then ? Edith. He is a Saxon child. Els. A Saxon! Pray you, let me see his face ! He's mine! Edith. He shrinks from thee. He knows thee not. Els. Me can he know, that do not know myself? He'll know my voice! My child! My Ethelred! He knows it not! and is my voice changed too? Or does my face false witness bear so strong Guth. Ay, by Odin. He gives not credence to his mother's voice! He is my child! Believe it for my tears, My choking utterance, my bended knees, Guth. Yes! And my imploring arms that sue to you, And ask you for my child ! Alf. (Aside.) Does Providence Alf. He should not! Youchsafe such mercy ! Guth. If the child is thine, Thon'lt know where it was found. Guth. Why? The day he put it on he yow'd himself Of them the father! To their parent land It wedded him! His proper consort she! Els. Too well I know ! Both when and where! A castle did ye sack, Whose tenant was the mother of that child. At night the cry arose, "The Dane !" "The Dane !" child, He dares allow to stand! And then the bursting gate—the clash of arms! "The shout—the yell—the shriek—the groan which rage, "And cruelty, and fear, and pain supply, "To make the concert fell of savage war!" That mother's care too safe had lodg'd her child Alf. He may have more! Guth. What? In the remotest chamber of the whole. She ask'd for it, "The Dane!" was the reply. She would have sought it; but they held her back, And cried, "The Dane!" he shrieked to be set free! "Now threaten'd ! now implor'd ! but all in vain ! "" The Dane !' was all the answer she could get !" They forc'd her thence in cruel duty! Ayl In duty forc'd the mother from her child :

Els. Alas; they give not credence to my words! Will no one plead for me? My countryman,

(Crossing to Alf.) Essay your art! Hast not some melting strain-Such as draw tears whether they will or not? As moves. (Recognising Alf.) I've found him! Ed. (Coming forward.) Whom? Whom thou found?

Whom hast

Els. (Recollecting herself.) My boy!

Edr. (Aside.) I thought she meant the minstrel. Alf. Yes!

She knows me, and I am a husband still !

"Thou mockest me to hold thine arms to me!

"I dare not rush to their embrace! I'm poor,

But first true answer to our question give. The castle where we found him was the king's ! Clad as no vassal's offspring was the child. If thon his mother art, thou art the queen! (Crossing centre.)

Alf. (Rising.) Guthrum, to the test I put Thy nature! If 'tis worthy of thy state, Thy prosperous fortune, and thy high renown, Approve it now. Lo, Guthrum, do I play The traitor for thy honour! In thy power Thou hold'st the son and consort of thy foe! Of Alfred! Use thy fortune as beseems thee! Swear by thy God, they shall receive from thee Safeguard of life and honour.

Els. Would'st thou not take a ransom for us?

Els. What ransom wilt thon take?

Guth. Thy husband's crown ! Els. Alas! he will not ransom us with that!

Alf. He wears it for his people.

'Twixt him and them, he knows not wife or

Guth. Minstrel, thon rav'st!

He has not nature, who 'gainst nature's law Could so deny his heart!

Alf. The command of her. The attribute Of kings who feel the import of their titles. Which stops their ears against her piercing cries! Which shuts their eyes against her thrilling looks! Which lifts them so 'hove earth, they seem as tho' They sat in some attendant, brighter sphere, Wherefrom they look'd and rul'd her!

Guth. Well thon said'st

Thy world was of the air ! . Thon do'st not speak

#### ALFRED THE GREAT.

Of things of earth! Thy sayings are not sooth ! Alf. Farewell! I would thy king were here to prove thee but A dreamer I With those jewels in his eye, He would not see his crown! Yea, tho it shone Bright as it did before I thinn'd its studs! Could'st find thy king? Alf. I could. Guth. Go seek him, then. And when thou find'st him, greet him from me thus " Thy queen and son are now in Guthrum's power, Pay thou but homage to the Dane, they're free. Alf. I take my leave. Els. Gathrun. A boon ! Guth. What is't ? Els. I'd send a message to my lord ! Guth. Thou shalt. Stand you apart, that freely they confer. (All retire up.) Els. And do'st thou go; and wilt thou leave us here? Alf. I must. Alas ! thou know'st not what thou sav'st! Els. Thou'lt leave us here! Do'st thou not love our child ? Alf. Beyond my life! Els. And me? Alf. Beyond our child! Els. And must thon leave me? "Oh! I have searched for thee "Many, and many a day! Now fear'd thee dead! "Now hop'd thee living! Search'd for thee alone! "One falling now; and now another off; "With my strong love unequal to keep pace. "Sleeping in woods and caves! On foot by dawn, "Sleeping in woods and caves: On loos by and "Ne'er giving o'er tl' night again! Now food, "Now nothing! Scautily I far'd to-day; "Yet 'twas not hunger brought me here, but thon, "In desperate hope to find thee! Art thou found, "But to be lost again ?" Alf. "So were I found, "Went I not instant hence" Look in my eyes, And read the husband and the father there In nature's undissembling language vouch'd! But, hear the king! But, new one ang. Els. Well ! Alf. Paramount of all, My public function ! Husband—father—friend— All titles, and all ties are merged in that ! Approve thyself the consort of a king! I leave thee to return to thee. Return, With freedom for thy chi'd—for thee—myself— For all-for all must perish, or be free! And soon I come! So cheer thy heart with hope! Farewell Els. (Aloud.) You'll bear my duty to my lord. Alf. I will. Els. Your hand that you will keep your word. Alf. There, lady. Els. "Be thy hand my missive! Thus-"Thus with my tears I write my errand on't-"And with my lips-a faithful signet, seal it !" O, countryman! perhaps nor he nor thon Shalt ever see more! I feel as one Amerc'd of life-that shakes a hand with all-And asks a blessing from the meanest tongue! Thy blessing, minstrel, ere thy mistress dies. Alf. What love would ask to light on head belov'd-What faith and virtue Heaven's own warrant have To ask of Heaven-light on thy honoured head ! Edr. I'll see him eye to eye, ere he departs.

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Edr. Stay, minstrel. Let me see thy face! (Edric stops Alfred forcibly.) (Half drawing his sword.) Os. All's lost! Alf. (Turning fully and sternly upon Edric.) There, traitor ! (Edric, utterly confounded, staggers back.) Os. Fly my liege! Away. [Excunt Alfred, Edwy, and Oswith, 1. E. R. H. Guth. (c.) What moves thee, Edric ? What's the matter? Speak ! Why is thine eye-ball fixed, thy month agape ? What ails thy blood, that it forsakes thy check ? Why shakes thy frame? Edr. My liege! Guth. Out with it! Edr. The minstrel! Guth. What of the minstrel? Edr. Oswith plays thee false! No minstrel leaves the camp ; but Oswith thence, Treacherous to thee, conducts thine enemy, Alfred, the Saxon King ; Guth. Ha! Follow them. Stop his retreat! Away! Alive or dead, Have them before us! [Excunt Edric, Otho, and others. Els. Mercy ! Guthrum ! Mercy ! (Clashing of swords.) Guth. Remove her ! Els. "Where's the lightning! What! no bolt "To blast the impions haud that threatens death, "To his anointed head." O mercy mercy ! [She is forced off, Edith following with the child. Edr. (Without, R.) Traitor, give way. Os. (Without, R.) Make way-for none I'll give. (The fighting continues.) Guth. Who aids him? Is there treason in the camp ? That thus the contests lasts. Give me my sword. Ina. (Kneeling to Guthmum). My father ! Guth. (Not heeding her.) Ho! my buckler and my spear! "With mine own hand will I transfix him!" Ina. Father! Enter EDRIC, wounded, 1. E. R. H. Edr. At last, my lord, we've o'erpowered him. Guth. Whom? Edr. Oswith. Guth. And Alfred? Edr. He has escaped, I fear! Guth. Lay Oswith in chains. Ina. My father ! Guth. To the god I give him! Odin, take him! He is thine! By thy victorious spear he bleeds to thee Exit Edr., R. H. Give him my child, the traitor! blood ! Give him my I'd pour it out upon the altar first ! I would with mine own hand! I'd look on her! And do it! Look on her! Up girl and hence! Ha! do I see a statue, or my child? "That check is marble by its hne! Those eyes "The chisel makes as good, for any touch "Of sense that's in them!" What is it I've done? "Oh! they have lov'd and pin'd, and lov'd again "As fresh as ever." Take her to her conch!

"As fresh as ever." Take her to her conch! She'llsleep--will she sleep ? There, gently ! I am grown From fire to ice with looking on her. Ha! For what have I done this? Stand you all here? What! have I paid so dearly for the prize, And do you let it go? Pursue! Pursue! [Excunt, R. H.

END OF ACT IV.

### ACT V.

SCENE I .- Ina's Tent. A recess in the centre, with a curtain drawn before it.

#### Enter GUTHRUM, OSCAR, and EDITH, 1. E. L. H.

Guth. What say the priests ? Osc. Yon may not spare his life! Your oath to Odin must be kept, unless His country he forswears, and serves the god-Conditions which he spnrns. "Would else the tide "Of your great nation's prosperous fortune ebb "To an eternal drought !" Among the ranks They run, thy oath reiterating, and, with words Ambiguous, starting fears, you may retract, And curse your people ! Guth. Let their altar reek ! Blood rain upon them till it drown them! Leave The tent! Osc. Shall they prepare to sacrifice? Guth. Tell them, if for command of mine they wait, I will not give it !- No! not for their god! Exit Osc., L. H. She speaks not? Edith. Nay, my lord, at times a word ; But none that leads to certain inference-Guth. Has she not slept? Edith. Nought but unnatural sleep-"Rest that might pass for wakefulness-that scarce " Doth shut the lid-which weariness itself "Beholding, ere 'twould taste, would watch; it seems "So far from sweet." All listlessness without. While all within is stirring! Guth. I'll not see her. Edith. My lord? Guth. I did not speak; or, if I did, 'Twas not to thee! I thought myself a father ! Twas not to theer I thought his child I thought as never father lov'd his child I lov'd my Ina! "Twas my pride to show it ; "Yea, even when she ruled me like a child! I us'd to think that of my fiercest mood She was the mistress that from my wildest flight She was the mistress that from hy whitest high Could call me, if my eye but lit on her. As the lov'd lure, the falcon! —and I've kill'd her! I'm not a father!—I did never love her But as a child—a toy! Come, show her to me! Undraw the cartain! He that makes a corse Of what he loves, may sure be flint enough To look upon't. (Edith undraws the curtain, and Ina is

discovered sitting in a state of fixed abstraction. Edith raises her, and leads her forward to a couch, Ina moving as if it were mechanically.)

Leave as to ourselves.

"May boast the making of ! (Approaches, and sits down beside her on L. H.) My Ina! Ina !-My child ! you'll speak to me ?-What are you ill ? How feel you ?-You look well !- There, my own girl. Lie in your father's bosom !-Speak to him ! What say'st thou, sweet?-Was't not about to speak ! Thon wast. Go on -go on !- Speak to me Ina ! Thou was to be a so that to be a so to be a tears! You've seen my knees upon the ground !-- You know It is your father-your old father, and You'll not speak to him !-Think you he can't see ? Why, any one could do't! "To fix the eye "And keep the visage motionless, and sit "As you were riveted to your seat!" A child Were scant of wit that lack'd such obvious power-Of 'simulation! I renounce you, Ina! (Going.) Will you not speak to me, my child ? Speak to me ! (Returns.) A word-a whisper-anything !- a sign-To show me that you are not worse than dead-Alive and just the same ! I can be rash ! I can give way to fury !-- I will try If life be in thy heart !

"Why, 'tis enough to make the sickly heart "Break ont in langhter, when the very work "Our eves could weep them tearless at, our hands

(Draws his dagger, and rushes up to her.)

I'd scare a stone!

(Wild discordant music is heard without, Ina starts up and clasps her hands.)

Guth. Ha ! Ina. There 'tis

Guth. She speaks !- She is alive!

"Ina. I've listened for't "So long, I fear'd 'twould never come ! "Guth. What, Ina ? (Mu (Music again.) "Ina. Again ! "Guth. They do prepare to lead him forth;

"The sacrifice will presently begin !

"They make a pretext of their god to mock "My power !"

Ina. He's ready !-Let me go to him! Guth. To whom? Thy lover?

Ina. I should like to get

- Wy father's blessing first! "Guth. Thou hast it, Ina! "Ina. I know I have. Who says he does not love me?

"I'd not believe it, tho' he were to kill me!

"He'd do't in madness, and he'd kill himself When he had found he had done it! Ble Ina? Bless his

"He always blesses me-at morning when

"He sees me first, and then, again, at night; "Yea, oft'times thro' the day! He'd bless me tho

"I broke his heart; and I'll bless him, altho"

"He has broken mine!"

Guth. She knows me not ! Ina. We'll wed

FExit Edith R. H. As never lovers did, We'll have our nuptials

Of a new fashion. Who'd be bid to them Let him bring tears with him, he's welcome-such As oush with sobs! We'll have no smiles at As gush with sobs! them! "The meanest churl gets handfuls when he weds! "Nor songs! such minstrelsy a beggar buys " For thanks !" No, give us shrieks and laughter ! but Such langhter as it withers joy to hear! As breaketh from the heart of madness! as Resounds from lips that wish their owners dead ! "Guth. What mean those words, my child ? " Ina. I'll wed him as "Ne'er wedded maid, to let him never from "My side; but dwell in such entrancement with him, "The day for us may go without his sun. "And night without her cloud! All converse cease, "Of tongue or eye; that not ourselves shall break "The silence sweet of our deep ecstacy." Guth. Perception's all within ; without is none. Passion hath drunk up sense! I feel a touch Of her condition while I look upon her— Go mad! You had a daughter yesterday— Brag of her now. "Point to her cheek, and ask "If ever grew such smiles as blossom there ! "And bid the ear that listens to her, note "The sweetness that it feasts on !" (Music.) Hark! thou'rt call'd! What! not thro' the task thou hast begun So bravely? Slay thy child, and finish it! Rushes out, L. H. Ina. (Alone.) They'd thwart a maid in her first love. they would! They think it easy, but they'll find it hard ! When first they said I should become a bride, Wondering how I would deck me, I ran thro' The ranks of fairest flowers to pick me one To set it in my bosom, and I remember It was a rose I pitched on-there's the rose! (Draws a dagger, and returns it to her bosom. Music.) The rites begin, I'll steal after them, And watch the time! I'm coming to thee, Oswith ! I'll show thee how a Danish maid can love! Exit. L. H. SCENE II.—Schwood Forest. Enter Oddune, R. H. and Arnold, L. H., meeting. Od. No sign of Alfred? Arn. None! Our scouts have all Return'd dishearten'd with their fruitless search. Od. Where can he linger-with so fair a welcome Impatient waiting him, as he would meet From yonder gallant bands? The spirits now That bear their creats so high, from his delay To lead them on to action, will anon Begin to droop-perchance may quite subside! Arn. How many do we muster ? Od. By the last Retarn, six thousand men. Arn. The field shows fair! Od. Fair canse-fair field! Who'd e'er expect so soon To see the armour burnish'd up again

They cast aside for good ! A pity 'twere

What shows such thrift should not be turn'd to use; But, bootless, thrown away! They will not fight

Unless the king commands them !

Arn. See, my lord,

What movement's that?

Od. Here's one will tell ns.

- Edg. (Entering.) Be Prepared, my lord. The soldiers clamour for
- The king, and doubts are spreading thro' the ranks :
- You humour them-he will not come to lead them.
- Their chiefs are hastening hither, from your own lins

Assurance to receive, and fair encouragement.

Enter EGBERT, KENRICK, ARTHUR, Chiefs and Soldiers.

Eq. Now, Kenrick, speak! Say what the soldiers want

Od. Well, gallant friends! is England to be free ?

Shall we change places with our conquerors, Or still endure the yoke?

Ken. We want the king !

Let him appear, we cannot meet the foc Too soon !

Od. As surely shall you see him, as

Yon long to see the fee!

Ken. But when, my lord ?

'Tis that we'd know! When was the king the last

Upon the field ? Has he not ever, on

The eve of battle, earlier than his chiefs, Been out; with looks of ardour heartening us?

Our morning sun, that never clouded rose-

Endning ns with life and vigour new!

At most we muster bare six thousand men To meet the Danish host! The king among us Would make our numbers treble! Show us the king.

The only waving of his plume in battle Were worth a hundred spears in hands as bold As ever brandish'd weapon! Od. What, and if

Indeed he should not come ? Ought you to feel Your tyrant's feet upon your necks the less? Your king is present in his cause! Be that Your king!

#### ALFRED enters, still disguised.

Whoever leads you, meet the Dane ! I speak not friends, because I'm next in place ! I care not for myself ! Point out my post; The van, the rear; I'll be content to take My stand beside the man of meanest note Among you! Make yon minstrel without helm Or sword yon! leader, I will follow him! So that I fight, I care not in what rank! Let him who makes the absence of his king Plea to desert his country and his king, Fall off! So heaven sustain me in the cause, Altho' our Alfred's presence now would add Ten other richer lives to mine; yet say He should not come, this faithful sword I draw I will not sheath it till it has struck a blow For liberty!

Eg. I second you, brave Oddune. Arn. And so do I! Od. And so will every man,

Unless there be among the people one That does not love his king Ken. No. Oddune, no! The people live but for their king ! Alf. (Discovering himself.) The king Lives only for his people! Oh! my people! You are the drops of blood that make your king ! And do I see you once again in arms! (Bursts into tears. The chiefs and general soldiers seem affected.) Why draw your hands across your Oh friends! eves If mine should be asham'd of what they do? We've met again, my friends! Who is the foe Shall sunder us again? Oh, Eugland! England! Too fair-too richly gifted not to tempt The spoiler-well that thon hast sons too true To leave thee to his ravine! Thou'lt be free Till thou art childless ! Think not, gallant friends, An hour I've squandered that was due to you, And to our common country ! I have seen The Danish camp! Od. Their camp, my liege! Alf. Have stood In Guthrum's very presence ! That disguise Will tell thee how. They'd fall an easy proy To half our numbers! Friends! a royal stake I've laid upon your heads that you will win Od. What stake, my liege? Alf. Your prince and queen! They're in the spoiler's power. I might, indeed, Have ransom'd them, but what he ask'd your king could not afford to pay. Od. What was't my liege? Alf. My people, Oddune. Eg. In the spoiler's power Our prince and queen ! What wait we for ? Od. For nothing But the king's word to move upon the foe! Alf. Upon him, then! Now think you on the things You most do love! Husbands and fathers on Their wives and children-lovers upon their mistresses-And all upon their country! When you use Your weapons, think on the beseeching eves To whet them could have lent you tears for water. Oh, now be men or never! From your hearths Thrust the unbidden feet, that from their nooks Your aged fathers drove-your wives and babes! The couches your fair-handed daughters us'd To spread, let not the vaunting stranger press, Weary from spoiling you! Your roofs that hear The wanton riot of the intruding guest That mocks their masters-clear them for the sake Of the manhood, to which all that's precions clings Else perishes. The land that bore you-oh ! Do honour to her! Let her glory in Your breeding ;-rescue her-revenge her, or Ne'er call her mother more! Come on my friends! And where you take your stand upon the field. Thence, howsoever you advance, resolve A foot you'll ne'er recede, while from the tongues Of womanhood and childhood, helplessness Invokes you to be strong! Come? Come on! I'll bring you to the foe! And when you meet him Strike hard ! Strike home! Strike while a blow Is in an arm! Strike till you're free, or fall!

[Excunt Alf. and the rest.

SCENE III .- A wood. The statue of Odin in the Centre; before it an alter prepared for sacrifice. Enter procession of sacrifice, in the following order: —Danish Chief with a body of Danish Soldiers; a body of Danish Chiefs, and AMUND, EDRIC, and GUTHRUM; a body of Danish Priests; Assistants with torches; Boys carrying censers; one Boy with a cushion, on which the knife of sacrifice is laid; Chief Priest of Odin; OSWITH; a body of Danish Soldiers. The procession marches to the following chorus :-

Prepare the faggot-light the brand-The victim's ready for the God ! The knife is bare in the sacred hand, That on the altar pours the blood !

Prepare-prepare-prepare-

Great Odin's rites

The mortal who slights,

His roof shall blaze in peace-his spear shall break in war !

Guth. (L. H.) Saxon! Thou hast of life a moment yet

At thy command-use it for life-for love-

For liberty! But say the word, at once

The, weapon, ready for thy blood, is sheath'd, Unstain'd and harmless !

Os. I'm prepar'd to dic!

Priest. Saxon !

Os. I come!

Priest. Come! Bare his breast! Odin, receive thy victim!

Ina. (Rushing in, 3 E. L. H.) Oswith I wed thee thns

(She is on the point of plunging the dagger into her heart; Oswith bursts from the Priest and arrests her arm.)

Os. Hold, Ina, hold! Thou shalt not die with Oswith!

Guth. Oswith, live !

Altho' the God himself demanded him.

He shall not die who saves my Ina's life!

- Priest. The servants of the God protect his rights!
- Oscar. (U. E. L. H. Rushing in.) The Saxon's in the camp, and down upon us !

Alf. (Without, U. E. L. H.) Press on-press onthe first that comes to blows Is the King's 'squire! Press on !

(The Danes front the stage on which the Saxons are coming, who enter, headed by Alfred. Danes are driven off; Alfred and Guthrum engage; Guthrum is disarmed.)

Alf. Guthrum, live

The friend of Alfred! Serve the God he serves! To wear a crown thou need'st not fight for one,

Except to keep it. Fair Northumbria Receives thee for her King-my queen and son ! (Oddune leads on Elswith and Edith, 2. E. R. H.)

Enter EGBERT, and EDRIC guarded.

Alf. Who's he?

Eq. A traitor to our cause, my lord-

Whose sword has made more havoc 'mongst our people,

Than any ten of your foes! His hand, accurst! It was that fir'd the hold where slept your queen And son.

Ken and others. Dispatch him ! Alf. Hold ! The victory I will perpetuate by such an act As shall from future king remove the power. To make their public functions pander to To make their public functions pander to Their private gust. Select twelve men, his poers, And swearing them upon the book of God, As they shall answer at His judgment day, To try their prisoner fairly. Let the charge Be brought before them; and as they decide, Be finally his innocence or guilt Establish'd! Hence! "Hereby shall private right. "Which, guarded, fortifieth, more than arms, "The conservator of the public weal, "Be sacred even from the sceptre's touch! "Thus to a people faithful to their king, "A faithful king an institution gives

"That makes the lowly cottage lofty as

"The regal dome-holds justice paramount

"Of all—before her throne the peasant and "The king himself on equal footing brings! " $\Delta$  gift which you'll preserve for ever whole!

"From which, as from your blood, pollution keep! "Which, if you're asked to render back, by all

1.1.1.1

"You owe yourselves, your country, and the throne.

"You'll answer no ! Which, when you'd nam you'll call

"Trial by Jury!" Guth. Great the victory

That kings gain o'er themselves. Blest are th heads

That bow to sway like thine !

Alf. My countrymen! Sons of the sea-henceforth her restless plain Shall be your battlefield! There shall you meet The threat'ning storm of war! There shall burst

Its rage unfelt at home—its din unheard ! You've fought like England's true-born sons, te dav!

You've tanght a lesson to her sons to come ! By your example fir'd, should e'er a foe In after times invade her envied shores, Her sons, of all descriptions and degrees. To succour her shall grapple soul and hand, Rampart her throne with living walls of hearts, And teach the fell invader that the deep Embrac'd her, never to betray her glory !

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