

ANECDOTES
of
Kings

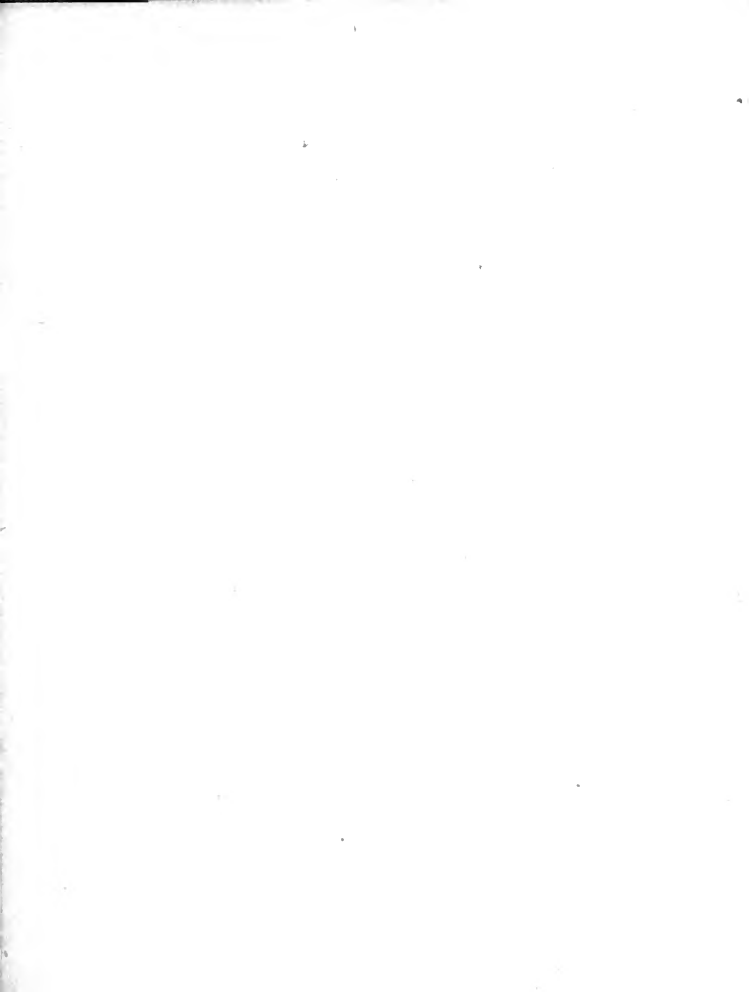


CHILDREN'S BOOK
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ANECDOTES OF KINGS.

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MEADOWS, DEL.

ORRIN SMITH, SC.

HENRY IV. OF FRANCE AND HIS CHILDREN.

Charles Scott

ANECDOTES OF KINGS

SELECTED FROM HISTORY;

OR

GERTRUDE'S STORIES FOR
CHILDREN.

WITH ENGRAVINGS.

LONDON:

JOHN HARRIS, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

1837.

INTRODUCTION.

THE writer of this little work submits it to the public in the humble hope that it may be a slight source of instruction and amusement to the rising generation. The stories are all taken from history, and no alteration is made in the facts; they are merely related in a style to suit the capacities of children, without misleading them by fiction. Children will read some-

thing, and if the following little attempt should incite any to peruse the varied and instructive page of history, it will not have been made in vain.

CONTENTS.

CHAP.	Page
I. Introduction	1
King Edward and the Poisoned Arrow	6
II. The Pretender, or the Cottage in Glengary	18
III. King Henry the Fourth and the Woodcutter	38
IV. Francis the First	52
The Mimic Battle of St. Valere	57
V. Peter the Great	74
The Widow of Lachta	83
VI. Charles the Fifth	97
Abbey of St. Justus	103
VII. Obedience to Parents	122
Contempt of Pain	127
Courage and Fortitude	129

CHAP.	Page
VIII. Employment	136
Gustavus Adolphus	139
The Castle of Ericson	148
Battle of Lutzen	161
Death of Gustavus	165
IX. Charles the Twelfth	166
X. Alexander the Great	188

ANECDOTES OF KINGS.

CHAPTER I.

“MY dear George,” said Mrs. Stanhope, as she was sitting one evening at work surrounded by her family, “I do not like to see you so idle ; have you nothing to do ?”

“No, Mamma,” said George, a fine boy about eleven years of age : “I have learned my lessons, and been at play till I am tired ; and now I am resting.”

“And amusing yourself with pulling those flowers to pieces. Come, suppose you were to read a chapter in the History of England; that would instruct and amuse you at the same time.”

“I beg your pardon, dear Mamma; it might amuse some boys, but it never would afford me amusement, it is so dry: besides, I forget it as soon as I have read it; and I am sure that cannot be the way to read books.”

“Well, that is just like me, George,” exclaimed Egbert, who had been playing at nine-pins with his little sister in a corner of the room, but who now came with his rosy face to join in the conversation: “that is just like me! I cannot bear my English History! I have

just been reading the reign of Henry the First; and the only thing I can remember is, that he died from eating too much fish, at which Gatty and I were very much surprised; for we thought a king would have known better. Mamma, what use is there in reading it at all?"

"It is quite necessary, my dear boy, that you should be acquainted with the history of your own country; and the sooner you become so, the more likely you will be to remember it. You would feel quite ashamed, should you grow up to be a man, if you did not know in whose reign the Reformation began: which of our kings was beheaded: when the great fire of London took place:

and many, many other events, which every little English boy and girl ought to know."

"Well, dear Mamma," said George, "I know you are right; but I wish it was written in a more entertaining way. Now, if there were nice little stories here and there, just to take off some of its hum-drum, I should not be so likely to fall asleep when our tutor reads to us in an evening."

"Why, my dear George," said Mrs. Stanhope smiling, "you will find that there are many nice little stories, if you read it regularly through. There is the story of King Edward in the Holy Land; of the martyrs in the reign of Queen Mary; of King Charles in the

oak ; of Guy Fawkes ; and several others, which you would find very interesting. But I see you look incredulous : come, draw your chairs round the table, and I will tell you a true story from the History of England ; something which really happened to one of our English kings.”

“Oh ! thank you, thank you, dear Mamma,” exclaimed the delighted boys ; and little Gertrude, with her laughing eyes, having seated herself on a stool at her Mamma’s feet, Mrs. Stanhope related the following account of King Edward and the poisoned arrow.

KING EDWARD AND THE POISONED
ARROW.

You must have heard, my dear boys, that there was once a king of England, named Edward the First: he was the son of Henry the Third; and whilst his father was yet alive, Edward, who was a prince of great courage and bravery, resolved to join the croisaders in the Holy Land. These croisaders were people of many different nations, all united together to accomplish one object: namely, to rescue Jerusalem from the Turks and Saracens. The holy city had long been trodden under foot by the infidels; and the Christians there had been so cruelly treated, that it had

roused the indignation of all Europe; and many croisades had been undertaken, and many a brave croisader had died on the plains of Palestine, far from his home and all its beloved ones, rejoicing in the thought, that his last breath was spent in so noble a cause. Prince Edward, ardent and enterprising, and burning to distinguish himself, sailed from England, accompanied by his wife Eleanor, and a large army of soldiers; and arriving in Syria, soon revived the glory of the English name.

You will think it strange that a young and delicate woman, such as Eleanor of Castille was, should possess courage and resolution sufficient to leave

her home, to traverse many thousand miles, to go into an enemy's country, the seat of war and bloodshed, and to brave the scorching sun and enervating climate of the East.

But Eleanor's was no ordinary character: she loved her husband with deep and fond affection; and when he was leaving his native land, perhaps never to return, she thought not of herself, but of him who was so dear to her: and the princely Edward felt and returned her affection. Each croisader wore a cross on his right shoulder: the colour of the English cross was white; of the French red; of the German black; of the Italians yellow; and of the Flemish green.

Shortly after the arrival of the English army, headed by so gallant a warrior, the contest was renewed with great vigour; but the red flag of England soon gained the ascendancy; the infidels were defeated in several battles, and the enemies of Christianity began to tremble for the result. Victory succeeded victory; the turbaned hosts could not withstand the youthful arm, which every day spread confusion and dismay in their ranks; and they fled on all sides. But their animosity was not extinguished, as you shall hear.

It was the custom of Prince Edward, after the fatigue and heat of the day were over, to sit at the door of his tent

with his beloved Eleanor, and thus enjoy the exceeding loveliness of an Eastern evening.

The moon had risen, and was shedding her pale light on the luxuriant and varied prospect before them, as they took their accustomed seat, one evening, more than usually glad of the refreshing breeze and peaceful stillness of the hour. The small but gallant band of soldiers was encamped around them : small, compared to what it had been, for disease and war had, alas ! thinned their ranks ; but gallant, undaunted, and brave, as when they first landed on the shores of Palestine. The wearied men had sought that repose, which they much needed ; and nothing

was heard save the "All's well," of the watchful guard, or the distant neighing of a war-steed.

The thoughts of Prince Edward and his Eleanor were that evening turned upon England, and upon the home so dear to both; when Eleanor, taking up her guitar, commenced singing, in her rich melodious voice, one of the melodies of her native Spain. She had scarcely finished, when a sentinel approached, saying a courier from England waited his highness's pleasure. "Admit him," said the prince. "Ah! Sir John Fitzwalter! Welcome to Palestine! How fares it with the king? Is all well in England? What tidings, good Sir John; what tidings?" "I re-

joyce in being able to inform your highness that all was well when I left," replied Sir John. "His majesty was in tolerable health: but these letters from your royal father may inform your highness of farther particulars." The prince took the letters, and was engaged in reading the earnest desires of the king to his son, urging his immediate return home, as he felt his constitution rapidly decaying; when Eleanor suddenly uttered a piercing shriek, the letters dropped from the prince's hand, and Sir John Fitzwalter, rushing from the tent, shouted to the soldiers to secure the assassin; and, having given the alarm, flew back, to save, if possible, the life of his beloved

prince. It was too true: an arrow, shot from a distance by some unknown hand, had pierced deep into his arm; and as Sir John despatched the terrified attendants for medical assistance, and Eleanor, the horror-stricken Eleanor, stood pale and breathless by, conceiving it for the moment to be some frightful dream, the prince himself drew the deadly shaft from his arm, and said with a faint smile, "'Tis of no avail, Fitzwalter, the arrow is a poisoned one. Weep not, sweet Eleanor, we shall meet again; farewell!" — "Assist me, oh! thou God of mercy!" ejaculated Eleanor; and, with a sudden resolution and a devotedness of love rarely to be equalled, she knelt down by the side

of her husband; and, before he could prevent her, sucked the poison from the wound; and thus, at the imminent hazard of her own life, preserved that of the prince.

The eyes of Edward of England were suffused with tears, as, clasping his wife affectionately to his heart, he exclaimed, "This is woman's love!"

"Oh, Mamma," exclaimed little Gertrude, "how very kind of her! But did the prince get well directly?" "No, my love, not directly; it was some weeks before he perfectly recovered; but it is certain that he owed his life to the affection and promptitude of his wife Eleanor: and when she died in England, some years afterwards, and her body

was carried a long distance to its place of interment, he ordered crosses to be erected to her memory at every place where the funeral procession rested; some of which are still to be seen, and are called Queen Eleanor's crosses."

"But, Mamma," said George, "did he quite conquer the infidels?" "He returned home, my love, shortly after the event I have related: the king his father died, and he ascended the throne. But his was not a peaceful spirit; and you will see, if you read the History of England, that he subdued Wales, and endeavoured, but unsuccessfully, to bring Scotland under the English yoke." "And did he find out who shot the arrow?" asked Egbert. "Yes: he was

a Mohammedan assassin, who had crept unperceived into the camp, and who hoped, by depriving the English of their renowned leader, to compel them to relinquish the war." "Well, I am glad he did not succeed," said George; "but, Mamma, surely that pretty story cannot be in the History of England." "The leading facts of it are in every History of England, my dear George. I have merely related those facts in my own words, with little or no embellishment.

"But it is now your bed-time. Good night! Some future evening, I will think of another story for you; and I hope it may induce you to search for these interesting truths yourselves."

CHAPTER II.

“Now, dear Mamma,” said little Egbert, one evening, soon after the conversation recorded in the last Chapter, “do tell us another story. We are all ready to hear one. And let it be true, as the last was: I like true stories best. Have you thought of one for us?”

“I dare say I can remember one for you, Egbert: but I should like you and George to fetch your drawing-books, and my little Gertrude her work, before I commence; as the stories need not interrupt our usual employments.”

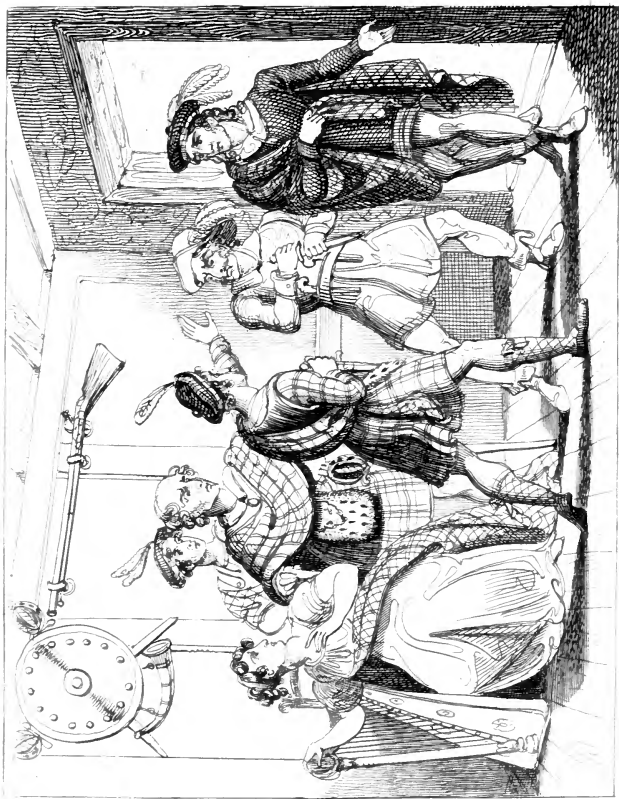
The drawing-books and the work were soon brought; and, the little party being arranged, their kind Mamma informed them that her story for this evening was intituled

THE PRETENDER; OR,
THE COTTAGE IN GLENGARY.

ONE stormy evening in March, in the year 1749, a happy family party was assembled round a cheerful fire, in a picturesque and ornamental little cottage, situated amidst the wilds of Glengary, in the Highlands of Scotland.

The group consisted of a fine man of middle age, whose countenance indi-





PRETENDER ENTERING THE COTTAGE OF GLENGARY.

cated a cultivated mind, and a character at once firm and benevolent: near him, sat his only daughter; her features, without being regularly beautiful, possessed so much intellect and sweetness, that, once seen, they were long remembered. Two young men, dressed in military costume, completed the circle. They had been conversing in an animated strain for some time, when, after a short pause, Flora gaily observed, "And so you really think yourself a person of some consequence, Arthur, because you had some slight share in the late victory: I suppose, we shall hear of nothing now, but the battle which *you* helped to win, and the terror which *your* tremendous figure caused

in the hostile army! I shall begin to be afraid of you myself."

"I am glad to see, my fair cousin, that your good spirits have not deserted you, even in these tumultuous times," replied Arthur, smiling. "I have not seen such a merry face as yours for many a long day; it is quite a pleasure to gaze upon it."

"Come, cousin Arthur," said the young lady, laughing, "do not be sentimental; but tell me, have we not reason to rejoice, when there is some prospect of peace being restored to us once more; when we shall no longer hear of the father fighting against his son, and the brother against his brother; when we can retire to rest, without the

agony of thinking that some beloved relative has perhaps, that day, been lost to us; when happiness and plenty will again revisit our dwellings: surely, surely, we have reason to rejoice."

"We have indeed," said Arthur, "reason to be grateful for many blessings; but do not be too sanguine, dear Flora, in your hopes for peace, lest you be disappointed. Charles Edward, though his prospects at present are ruinous, has still many adherents. France assists him; and if his own courage do not fail, we may, ere long, have another skirmish with the rebels, just to keep us warm this cold weather."

"It is impossible, quite impossible," said Duncan, the brother of Flora; "the

Pretender's hopes are for ever blasted ; the plains of Culloden put an end to them ; he has lost his best troops ; his French allies deserted him on the field ; and if he escape with his life, it is more than he deserves, and, I should think, more than he expects." "Say not so, my dear boy," said his father ; "he has indeed brought much trouble and distress into our land, and I sincerely rejoice that his forces have been so completely routed : but, remember, he is young ; he has been from his infancy taught, that the assertion of his right was a duty incumbent upon him ; he is enterprising, and thinks that he is ambitious in a right cause ; and, though we cannot but blame his actions,

we should pity his misfortunes: I hope he has by this time escaped to France, with the conviction that his ill-fated schemes are futile.”

“There is not much chance of that, sir,” replied Duncan; “a price of thirty thousand pounds is set on his head, which is a sum few can resist; and every fishing-boat is watched as it leaves the shore.”

“Then, where should you think he is at present?” inquired Flora.

“Oh, he is wandering about the country, most likely, in some disguise or other: but he must be taken; he cannot escape.”

“Come, Duncan,” said Arthur, “though you are so loyal now, it was only last

night, as we crossed the moors, that you were pitying the poor fellow; and I think, had you met him then, you would have brought him home for a night's shelter."

"I bring him home!" exclaimed Duncan, "never! The roof of a Macdonald shall never shelter a rebel to his king, whilst I have a sword to prevent it. But now, sister Flora, let us leave Prince Charley, as he calls himself, and sing us one of your favourite melodies: here is Arthur dying to hear your voice, after so long an absence."

Flora was soon seated at her harp, and had sung one verse of a beautiful Scottish ballad, when she was interrupted by a servant entering, and inform-

ing his master that there were two men at the door, who wished to speak to him.

“Let them send in their message,” said Macdonald. “They wanna do that,” replied the old domestic, “because I have tried them; they maun speak to yoursell.”

Macdonald arose, and went to the door; whilst the young men, surprised at a visit at so unusual an hour, and in the then disturbed state of the country, followed him.

The appearance of the strangers was certainly not very prepossessing; the taller of the two was clad in a short coat of black frieze, over which was a common Highland plaid, girt round

with a belt, from which hung a dagger and a pistol. His eyes were hollow, his visage wan, and his constitution appeared to be greatly impaired by famine and fatigue. Notwithstanding, there was in his manner a degree of dignity, which was unlooked for in such apparel; and an appearance of patient struggling with misfortunes, which could not fail to arrest the attention, and excite the pity, of those who saw him.

The dress of his companion was as mean and poor as his own; and though he also, evidently, had gone through much hardship and suffering, there was in his air that careless fortitude, and in his countenance that good-humoured expression, which seem-

ed to laugh away care and sorrow, as unwelcome visitors.

“Arrah, thin,” he said, in a strong Irish accent, as Macdonald approached, “Heaven’s blessin’ on y’er honour! an’ we’re makin’ bould to throuble yees; but, maybe, ye haven’t a place where we could lay our heads this blusterin’ night; or the bit, or the sup, to keep the cowl and the hunger out: sorra anything has entered our lips this blessed day, barrin’ a thrifle of milk that I tuk from owld Gordon’s cow, jist to aise the cratur.”

“Indeed, this is rather an unusual hour to make such a request,” replied Macdonald; but it is not often a Highlander refuses bed and board to the

wayfaring stranger ; say that you are a friend to King George, and an enemy to Charles Stuart, and you are welcome."

"Why thin, it's myself can't say that ; because it's not Christianly to be any man's enemy : but I'm sure I'll say wid all my heart, God save the King!" "That will not do, sir," said Duncan fiercely ; "we all know that the rebel Stuart is called King by some ; and you had better give us to understand on whose side you are, lest I shew you the outside of the door." "Sure, an' it's the outside of the door we've been admiring this last half-hour ; and I'm thinkin' it's not worse than the prospect inside, and I'm purty sartin—"

“Come, come, sir, no more of this trifling,” interrupted Duncan. “Are you a friend to Charles Stuart or not?” “Is it a frind? Sure I’m a frind to all the earth; and I’ll be your frind through life, my jewil o’ the world, if you’ll let me drink your health in a cup of the raal mountain dew.”

The young soldier angrily opened the door, and was about to command their departure, when the taller stranger, who had not yet spoken, said in a low but firm voice to Macdonald, “It is an unreasonable hour to trouble you, sir; but cold and famine are stern visitors: before you send us to seek a shelter elsewhere, may I request a moment’s audience with you?” Macdonald im-

mediately led the way to the apartment where Flora was still seated, followed by the strangers and the two young men ; and, closing the door, said, “ There is that in your manner, sir, which tells me you are not what you appear to be. Here are none present but my own family : say then in what way I can assist you ; and, should you not be a friend of the misguided Stuart, be assured I shall do it willingly.”

The stranger for a moment paused, and glanced around him ; then advancing a few steps, and drawing his tall form to it's height, he said, “ Macdonald ! I am the unfortunate Charles Stuart himself ; and am come to beg a little bread and a few clothes. I know

your present attachment to my adversaries; but I believe you have sufficient honour not to abuse my confidence, or to take advantage of my distressed situation. Take these rags, which have for some time been my only covering: you may probably restore them to me one day, when I shall be seated on the throne of Great Britain." As he spoke, he threw off the cap, which had hitherto partly concealed his countenance, and displayed to the eyes of the astonished party the dark flowing locks and sunburnt features of the man, whom they all considered as an outcast and a rebel.

There was a moment's silence; during which Macdonald was buried in thought: but it was only for a moment.

Approaching the Prince, he said, with an air of respect, "Your confidence, sir, shall not be abused. You have thrown yourself upon my hospitality, and you shall not have cause to repent it. I give you the word of a Macdonald, which was never yet broken, not to betray you. Come, Duncan and Arthur; come, Flora; you have never forgotten your duty to your king or your country: forget it not now to a destitute stranger." The young people, touched with pity at his distress, and reverencing the sacred laws of hospitality, willingly gave the unfortunate wanderer the assurances he wanted; and even the fiery Duncan seemed to forget his animosity, as he eagerly as-

sisted Arthur to procure refreshment and a change of clothing for their wearied and famished guests. Under the active superintendence of Flora, the table was soon covered with a profusion of substantial dishes; and, with almost voracious appetites, for they had tasted no food that day, did Charles Stuart and his faithful adherent, Sheridan, sit down to the hospitable board.

Macdonald stood silently musing on the extraordinary turns of fortune; and could not suppress a sigh as he looked at the desolate wanderer before him, and remembered that he was the grandson of a king, and the descendant of a race of monarchs, who had swayed the sceptre in that very land where he was

now a proscribed outlaw. The meal ended, the prince arose, and, with graceful ease, expressed his heartfelt gratitude to his generous opponent and his family. "I cannot repay you now," he said with deep feeling, "but the time may come that I can prove to you that when once Charles Stuart has received a kindness he never forgets it."

"Troth, neither does Ned Sheridan," said the grateful Irishman, as a tear stood in his eye; "an' for your goodness to my dare and noble masther, the name o' Macdonald shall be precious to me and mine while life lasts: sure, if he had been your born brother, ye could not have resaved him more kindly; and, take my word, ye'll niver repent it."

But I must not make my story too long. The generous Highlander would not suffer the wanderers to depart for several days; during which time he and his family united in shewing them every attention, and procuring them every comfort in their power. The military were making diligent search for the fugitives all round the neighbourhood; and the reward of thirty thousand pounds was perpetually sounding in their ears: but their fidelity remained unshaken. After the lapse of a few days, the search became less strict, and the prince and his faithful follower, recruited in health and spirits, left the cottage in Glengary with fervent prayers for the happiness of its inmates; the

noble Macdonald assisting them, as far as he was able, with the means of escape to France.

“Oh! Mamma,” said Egbert, “do not finish yet. Did they get safe to France?”

“After many difficulties and dangers, they did, my love: but they were often placed in such perilous situations, that it required all their wit and ingenuity to devise means of extricating themselves; and, frequently, were they compelled to trust to the fidelity of their friends, by acknowledging who they were.”—“But, Mamma,” said George, “did the thirty thousand pounds tempt none of them to betray him? I think it was running a great risk.”—“No, George; though he trusted his life with

more than fifty individuals, many of whom were quite poor, and who would have esteemed such a sum an endless treasure, not one amongst them proved false. On one occasion, a poor man, discovering who the fugitive was, indignantly rejected the offer of the sum promised for his capture, and furnished the prince with a disguise and means of escape; yet so poor was that man, that, a few weeks after, he was transported for stealing a cow worth thirty shillings. So much for the fidelity of Highlanders. Good night! my dear children; and, whenever you are entrusted with a secret, whenever you see your enemy in distress, remember the story of the cottage in Glengary."

CHAPTER III.

“WELL, dear Mamma,” said George one day, “I was so delighted with the stories you told us, that I have begun to read my History of England regularly through; and, really, I am more pleased with it than I thought I should be.”—“I am glad to hear you say so, George,” replied Mrs. Stanhope. “All history is interesting, and that of our own country particularly so; as you grow older, you will derive much entertainment and instruction from the histories of France, Greece, and Rome. I was reading, this morning, an anecdote of Henry the Fourth of France, which I thought

would interest you ; and, if you wish it, I will tell it to you. I am not quite sure that it is a true story ; but as Henry was a kind and condescending prince, it is most likely to be so.”—“Thank you, dear Mamma,” said George : “but let me first call Egbert and Gertrude.”—“Do, my dear boy. I am glad to find that your pleasures are not selfish.”

The party being assembled round the fire, Mrs. Stanhope related the story of

KING HENRY AND THE WOODCUTTER.

It was in the reign of Henry the Fourth of France, and towards the close of a fine autumnal day, that a wood-cutter, fatigued and wearied with his

day's labour, was slowly returning to his hut, situated on the borders of a forest in the province of Orléannois. He quickened his pace, as he perceived the light in his humble dwelling; and thought of the smiling faces which were there to welcome him: and in a few minutes honest Jacques Dussain was comfortably seated by a blazing fire, with one rosy child on his knee, another at his feet, and a third assisting her mother to prepare the evening meal. "Well, Jacques!" said his wife, when their frugal repast was ended, "what news do you think I heard to-day? But ye might guess all night and never guess right; so I'll tell you myself; and you may be sure 't is true, for it was

told me by my nephew Louis, who heard it from Pierre the carrier himself. The king is come to Fontainbleau!" — "The king come to Fontainbleau!" exclaimed Jacques; "the great, the good King Henry come to Fontainbleau! Then I will go and see him, if my name is Jacques Dussain!" — "My dear Jacques Dussain," said his wife, "how you talk! Think of the distance!" — "Yes, father," said his little Marie; "do go, and take him some of my strawberries." — "And one of my new cheeses," said her elder sister Annette: "mother says they are very good." — "I wish I had something to send him," sighed little Philip; "but, father, tell him, when I'm a great man, I'll be his soldier, and fight his

battles.”—“So you shall, my boy,” said his father, patting his head; “and I hope you thank God every night that you have such a king to reign over you; truly is he called Good and Great! So, wife, take out my Sunday clothes; for see him I must.”—“Well, but Jacques,” said his wife, who, with the curiosity of her sex, did not like the idea of her husband seeing such a sight as “le grand Monarque” without her,—“but Jacques, had not I better go with you?”—“Thee go with me, Jeanne! Couldst thee walk thirty miles? No, no, Jeanne, stay at home, and I’ll bring thee a particular account of him, and all I see.”—“Why now, I dare say,” said the persevering Jeanne, “that you won’t see him after all; he’ll

be out, or at dinner, or something: or, if you should see him, it will be at a distance; you'll catch a glimpse of the feather in his cap; or you'll hear the people shouting 'Vive le Roi!' and you'll call that seeing him. Besides, you'll never know him from all his lords; thee'd better stay at home."—"No," said the woodcutter, who, in this instance, was determined to have his own way; "I've heard much of Henri Quatre; and if I could only see him, were it but for a moment, I should go to my grave a happier man. I'll set off by peep of day."

Accordingly, early the next morning, Jacques arrayed in his best suit, and carrying in his hand Marie's little bas-

ket of strawberries, (the cheese, on second thoughts, was not considered good enough,) commenced his loyal journey to Fontainebleau, which was distant about thirty miles. That very morning, and just at the hour that Jacques left his lowly cot, King Henry with his faithful friend and prime minister, the immortal Sully, at his side, and accompanied by a numerous escort of noblemen and attendants, rode through the gates of Fontainebleau,—a gay and gallant assemblage—to enjoy his favourite diversion of hunting. It was a splendid morning: the monarch, so justly beloved by his people, was in high spirits, and his good-humoured gaiety communicated itself to all around, as, the king setting them

the example, they entered with ardour upon the pleasures of the chase. Many a turn, and many a bound, had the poor stag to take that day, in order to baffle his unwearied pursuers; but he did baffle them; and it was not till the sun had for some hours passed its meridian, that Henry found himself on his road homewards, but alone, and at some distance from his palace. He blew his bugle, to summon his attendants, and was riding slowly on, when he was accosted by a countryman, who was seated at the foot of a tree, with these words: "Do you think, sir, there is any chance of our good King Henry's passing this way? I have walked twenty miles to see him."—"Why, there is some chance,"

said Henry; "but if you could go to Fontainbleau, you would be sure of seeing him there," "Ah! sir," said the old man, who was no other than Jacques Dussain, "I am so weary!" "Well, then," said his majesty, "get on my horse, behind me; I will take you towards it." Jacques accordingly mounted, and, after riding some way, asked the king, how he should know his majesty from his courtiers. "Easily enough," replied the king; "his majesty will wear his hat; his courtiers will be bareheaded." This satisfied Jacques, and they rode on; when Henry asked him what he had in his basket. "Oh! sir," said Dussain, "they are some strawberries of my little Marie's, which she has sent as



HENRY 4TH AND THE WOOD CUTTER

a present to our good king.”—“Strawberries are they? I dare say, the king will not object to my taking a few, for I am very thirsty: let me taste them, friend?”—“Willingly, sir,” said Jacques, handing him the basket. The fruit was very refreshing, and gradually disappeared; and the king, returning the empty basket, said with a smile, “You see I have more than tasted them.”—“I am sure, sir, I do not grudge them to so kind a gentleman, and Marie can send his majesty some more.” At this moment, the attendants rode up, and, though much surprised at King Henry’s companion, awaited his commands with their hats off, in respectful silence.

“Oh! Mamma, how very funny!” exclaimed little Gertrude, unable longer to restrain her glee. “How pleased Jacques must have been! But did the king take him to the palace on the same horse?”—“No, my love; he procured him a horse, and, when arrived at the palace, Jacques was so kindly treated, that, as he afterwards told his wife, he several times thought it must be all a dream. Before his departure, the next morning, the king sent him a louis d’or, with a fine milch cow for little Marie, in return, as he said, for the refreshment her strawberries had afforded him; and the delighted Jacques returned home, and could attend to nothing, and talk of nothing, for three whole days, but

his adventure with the king; though, he said, it took that time to convince his wife that he had actually been on the same horse with his majesty.”

“I think I should have liked that king, Mamma,” said Egbert; “he must have been very good-natured.” — “He was of a most amiable disposition, Egbert; and so fond of children, that he used frequently to join in the amusements of his own little family. One day, when this great monarch, the restorer of France, and the peace-maker of Europe, was playing on all-fours, with his little son, the dauphin, on his back, an ambassador suddenly entered the apartment, and surprised him in this attitude. The monarch, without moving

from it, said to him, "Monsieur l'Ambassadeur, have you any children?" "Yes, sire," he replied. "Very well, then, I shall finish my race round the room."

"Was he a brave king, Mamma?" asked George. "I like valiant monarchs." "He was bold and intrepid, George, from his childhood; and his education did not tend to diminish his naturally brave character. He was brought up amongst the mountains of Bearne; where he was dressed in plain apparel, fed on the coarsest food, and early accustomed to many privations. He used to sit under a rock, when he was a boy like you, Egbert, and eat his barley-bread and cheese with as great a relish as if

it had been the daintiest morsel in his father's palace. The end of this good king, who was indeed the father of his people, was most melancholy. He was stabbed to the heart, by an assassin, named Ravailac, as he was in his carriage, and almost instantly expired. Few kings have been more deeply or universally lamented by their subjects. When you are older, you can read Sully's memoirs of this great prince, with which you will be much pleased : they contain many interesting anecdotes of his private character and court. But here comes John, with the tea."

CHAPTER IV.

FRANCIS THE FIRST.

“MAMMA,” said George, “can you explain this picture to me? You see here is a gentleman galloping so fast, that his attendants cannot keep up with him. Is he riding a race, or are they in pursuit of him? He has gold chains and stars upon his breast, and he is very handsome. Who is he? And why does he wave his bonnet so triumphantly in the air?”

“That, my dear George, is a picture of King Francis the First of France, re-

turning from imprisonment in Madrid, where he had been detained a captive for thirteen months. He is here represented as having just reached his own dominions, where he puts his horse to a gallop, and, without stopping or looking behind him, waves his bonnet triumphantly over his head, and exultingly exclaims, ‘I am again a king!’”

“But, Mamma, where was he taken prisoner?” “He was taken captive at the battle of Pavia, but not till with his own hands he had slain several of the enemy. Then, covered with wounds, deserted by his followers, and completely exhausted, he was compelled to surrender.

“When he arrived at his prison, he

called for a pen and ink, and wrote to his mother the result of that day's struggle, in these words: 'Madam, all is lost, except our honour.'"

"Oh! Mamma," cried Egbert, "I like King Francis. I can almost fancy I hear him shouting, 'I am again a king!' Can you tell us anything more about him?"

"I think I can, Egbert; and, as I hear you have been very attentive to your studies to-day, I shall do it with pleasure. King Francis the First of France, was brave, handsome, liberal, and eloquent; skilful in the field; and the most accomplished gentleman in Europe. He was only one-and-twenty when he ascended the throne, and, in

the first battle which he fought, he exerted himself with so much activity and courage, that he was glad, at the close of the engagement, to drink a little water mixed with blood and dirt, brought to him in a helmet by a soldier. He was, moreover, a great patron of literature and learned men ; and his court was the most famed in Europe, for talents, chivalry, beauty, and refinement.

“Soon after he ascended the throne, his celebrated interview with King Henry the Eighth of England took place, at Guisnes, in Picardy. So much splendour and magnificence were displayed on this occasion, that the place of meeting was named ‘The Field of the Cloth of Gold.’”

“Did he fight many battles, Mamma?” inquired Egbert.

“Yes: Charles the Fifth, Emperor of Germany, was his great rival. But you will be surprised to hear, that, warlike and brave as he was, King Francis once actually fought a battle with snow-balls.”

“Fought a battle with snow-balls! Oh! dear mamma, do tell us all about it.”

“Ah! I see this gallant monarch will be one of your favourites, George,” said Mrs. Stanhope, smiling, “now that he can play at your own game. Well, sit down, and I will endeavour to remember for you an account of

THE MIMIC BATTLE OF
ST. VALERE.

“My dear,” said the Count de St. Valère, entering the apartment where his lady and his children were seated, “I have just received a note from the palace, saying, that his majesty is coming with an army to attack our castle, to-morrow.”

“To attack our castle! my dear Charles; what do you mean?”

“Why, I mean what I say, my love; that is the message I have received: so, whilst I go to prepare some means of defence, you had better see that your larder is well supplied with provisions for a siege.”

“I am sure Papa is in fun,” cried little Therese, “for I see him smiling. I know the king would not hurt us ; would he, Louis ?”

“I do not know, sister ; I should think not : but if he does come, and attempt it, he shall have a warm welcome ; I will get my little cannon, that grand-papa gave me, and fire it off right in his face.”

“Well done ! my little hero,” said his papa, laughing ; “you will be a brave fellow one of these days : but Therese is right ; the king has no intention of hurting any one here.”

“Then what does he mean, my dear ?” inquired the countess.

“Why, you know, Louise, how fond

King Francis is of active exercises, and as he has now some leisure time, he is willing to amuse himself, this frosty weather, by attacking us in mimic battle. The besiegers will be his majesty and about twelve of his nobles, and the weapons snow-balls, watering-engines, and so forth; whilst the besieged, with the same kind of warfare, and similar missiles, must do the best they can, to defend themselves."

"Oh! what fun it will be!" exclaimed Hubert, a fine boy of fourteen; "may I help you, Papa? How I shall enjoy pelting them!"

"Certainly," said the count; "we must collect all our forces together; but I must caution you against being

too rash, Hubert, which, you know, is your failing: and remember, I shall expect implicit obedience to my commands.”

“You may depend upon me, dear Papa;” and away ran the delighted Hubert, to communicate the joyful news to the rest of the family.

The castle was soon in a state of bustling preparation. Servants were to be seen in every direction; some collecting large quantities of snow, others replenishing the water-engines, and conveying them to the battlements. The four sons of the count were surveying their defensive armour, and anticipating a glorious victory; and even the countess herself bent her steps to the

larder ; not, as she told her alarmed femme de chambre, with any idea of a siege longer than a day, but to see that there would be no lack of substantial refreshments for the victors and the vanquished.

“Well, Louis,” said the count, as the party assembled at dinner, “is your cannon prepared?”

“Oh ! no, Papa,” said Louis, “I have not disturbed my cannon ; but,” he said, and his merry eye became still merrier, “I have made a famous snow-ball,—so large ! I have been all the morning making it, and Philip has promised to help me to launch it at them.”

“Very well, Louis : now, as you are the youngest of the garrison, you shall

fire the first shot, and set us all a good example.”

“But what is my little Therese going to do, in defence of her books and dolls?”

“Oh! Mamma and I are to be amongst the spectators, and entertain all the ladies who are coming; and we have made a beautiful crown of laurel and myrtle for the successful warrior.”

“And who do you think that will be, Therese?” asked Ernest.

“I cannot guess, Ernest; but I hope it will be Papa; for, though King Francis is my godfather, and though I love him very much, I should not like him to conquer us in our own castle.”

“Never fear, Therese,” said Hubert;

“the crown will be Papa’s, you may be sure.”

“Why, Hubert,” said the countess, “you appear very sanguine as to the result.”

“Yes, Mamma; you know we must shew the king that we are not a set of cowards: remember, I am to be enrolled amongst his body-guards in seven months’ time.”

“Well, my boy,” said his father, “I hope you will prove a brave and faithful servant to him; for you could not serve a more gallant and generous master. But now go, boys, and finish the preparations.”

The morning of the 15th of January, 1521, was bright and promising

as the gayest heart could wish. The little garrison of Valère had just completed their mimic fortifications, when King Francis and his nobles appeared in sight, accompanied by a large party of distinguished ladies and smiling courtiers, and followed by a train of carts bearing snow-balls, &c. A salute was instantly fired from the castle, and the Count de St. Valère and his sons appeared at the gates, to welcome the noble party. The king quickened his horse's pace to meet him; and his handsome figure was seen to much advantage, by the graceful ease with which he managed his fiery steed.

“No, De Valère,” he replied, in answer to the count's entreaties that he

would enter and partake of some refreshment; “no; we intend to storm your castle, and when we have gained admittance by force, your proffered hospitality will be most welcome. In the mean time, these fair ladies place themselves under your protection. Come, gentlemen; for France and St. Denis!”

It would make my story too long, were I to enter into a minute account of the snow-ball siege; my principal reason for relating it, is to shew you the sad effects of disobedience. The assault commenced by Louis launching his famous snow-ball; and Therese clapped her hands with delight, as she saw

her royal godfather, the most accomplished cavalier of his age, covered with its fragments.

“Ah! my little pet,” said the good-humoured monarch, “do not laugh at me; I’ll take you prisoner yet.”

There certainly never was a battle carried on amidst such shouts of laughter and merriment; when the count, in passing along the battlements, saw Hubert in the act of throwing down upon the besiegers, balls of hard clay. “Stop! Hubert,” said his father; “those hard balls, thrown from this distance, will do some injury: remember, we are but at play.”

“I know, papa; but the snow is gone, and I must throw something.”

There is more snow coming; and I lay my express commands upon you, that you throw down nothing but snow. You are too rash! Do not disobey me."

"I will not, papa," said Hubert; and the count left him. However, as the day closed in, victory seemed to be certain on the side of the king; and the besieged were on the point of sending out their capitulations, and requesting their victors to partake of the banquet prepared in the castle-hall; when Hubert, determined to take one more aim, and forgetting his father's injunctions, foolishly seized a lighted torch, and flung it down upon the group below. He instantly heard a groan, and saw

a confused stir ; and, immediately after, some one was carried insensible into the castle. He feared he had done wrong, and was proceeding rapidly down the stairs, when he was met by his father, who quickly asked him if he had thrown the torch? He confessed he had.

“Rash, disobedient boy ! You have, in all probability, slain your king ! Should he die, your life must pay the penalty. Did I not warn you? Go to your apartment, and leave it not.”

Hubert, overcome with grief, dismay, and horror, retired, and burst into a flood of sorrowful tears. Alas ! poor Hubert ! By disregarding the commands of his father, he had wounded the king

so severely in the head, that for several days his life was despaired of ; and what the unhappy boy felt during that time, may be more easily conceived than described. Oh ! what a sorrowful night was that, in the Castle of Valère. The monarch, so justly dear to his subjects, and, but an hour before, in the highest health and spirits, was now, at the early age of six-and-twenty, brought to the verge of the grave, by the disobedience of a child to his father. But, by the mercy of God, his life was spared ; and at the end of some days, the physicians pronounced him out of danger. The wound had been so severe, that it was necessary to cut off all his long flowing hair, which he would never suffer to

grow again, but introduced the fashion of wearing the beard long, and the hair short.

“Oh! Mamma,” said Gertrude, “I am so glad he recovered! But how did he punish Hubert?”

“He did not punish him at all, my dear. Hubert was so truly grieved for the injury he had done, and made so many promises of amendment, that the generous Francis took him into his service; and from that time Hubert was as much noted for his obedience, and steady conduct, as for his bravery, and devotion to his king. He rose to a very high rank in the army, and died on the battle-field, in warding off a blow aimed at King Francis;

thus proving his loyalty and affection to his forgiving and generous master."

"Mamma," cried Egbert, "I think King Francis must have read Miss Edgeworth's story of 'Forget and Forgive.' Do you think he had?"

"Why, Egbert," said George, laughing, "he lived hundreds of years before Miss Edgeworth. But, Mamma, here is another picture of our favourite; will you be so kind as to explain it to me? You see he is on one knee before an officer, who is holding a sword above his head; and see, what a crowd of nobles are looking on! What can it mean, Mamma? A king kneeling to a subject, is so very strange!"

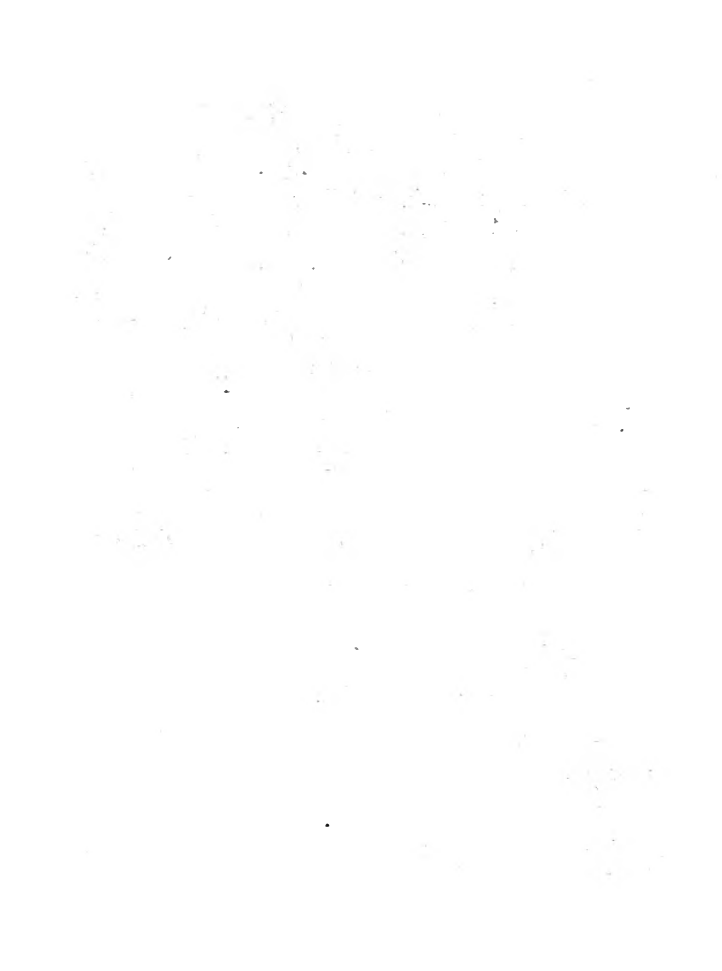
“This gallant hero, whose exploits have been the theme of universal praise, was held in such high esteem by Francis, that the king requested to be made a knight by the hands of his brave subject; and when Bayard hesitated, he commanded it should be done. He is here, you see, dubbing him a knight, in the usual form, and pronouncing the words, ‘In the name of God, St. Michael, and St. George, I dub thee knight: be worthy, brave, and loyal; and God grant you may never flee from your enemies!’”

“He must have had a very high opinion of Bayard, Mamma?”

“He had, my dear, and it was well



FRANCIS 1ST. RECEIVING KNIGHTHOOD FROM BAYARD.



merited. The Chevalier Bayard was the chevalier 'sans peur et sans reproche.' But see, the storm has cleared off; go and take a run in the park."

CHAPTER V.

“ I HAVE just been thinking,” said Egbert one day, as he was taking a walk with his mother,—“ I have just been thinking, Mamma, of something my uncle Eustace said, the other day, to Papa. They had been talking of tall men ; and my uncle spoke of some one who was six feet seven inches high. Now, you know, Papa is very tall, and he is but six feet two ; so that person must have been quite a giant.”

“ Yes,” said little Gertrude ; “ and they call him Peter the Great. I sup-

pose he was called 'the Great' because he was so tall."

"No, my little girl," said Mrs. Stanhope smiling, "he was not called the Great, on that account; but for his many great abilities, and for his extraordinary powers of mind. Peter the Great was one of the most famous of the Russian emperors."

"What rendered him so famous, Mamma?" inquired George.

"He was a man of an intelligent and inquiring mind, George; undaunted by difficulties, and of a determined and persevering character. His principal object was to raise the Russian empire from the state of semi-barbarism in which he found it when he ascended

the throne, and to place it on a rank with more civilised nations. For this purpose, he visited England, France, Germany, and Holland : examined their manufactories ; inspected their public institutions ; made himself acquainted with their laws and customs ; observed their improvements in trade and commerce ; and returned to his own country, to bring his newly acquired knowledge into action.”

“ Well,” cried Egbert ; “ I should not have thought that an emperor would have taken all that trouble. I thought they led a more easy life. I have often wished that I was one.”

“ The life of an emperor, or any ruler over a great kingdom, is far from being an

easy one, Egbert ; especially when it is spent, as Czar Peter's was, in active and unwearied efforts for the good of his subjects. Perhaps, if I were to tell you a few of the labours of this real friend to his country, you would see that his exertions, both of mind and body, were rather more numerous than those of a little boy, whose greatest trouble is preparing a few lessons for his tutor."

"Thank you, dear Mamma," said Egbert, as a blush suffused his cheek ; pray tell us. But why did you call him Czar Peter ?"

"Czar, my dear, is a title given to the emperors of Russia. I have told you of the trouble Peter the Great took

to acquire knowledge in other countries, which might be useful to his own; and when he returned home, he proved that his time had not been misemployed.

“He improved the marine, encouraged learning, promoted commerce, taught the Russians the art of ship-building, and gave his empire an influence and importance which it had never enjoyed before. Besides this, he built the magnificent city of St. Petersburg, of which you have frequently heard your uncle speak.”

“Oh! yes, Mamma,” said Gertrude; “and he brought us some beautiful toys from St. Petersburg.”

“He did, my love. But it is not much more than a hundred years ago, that, on

the spot where the capital of Russia now stands, there was little to be seen but wild boggy land, with only one fisherman's hut, in which the emperor remained a few days, whilst he formed the design of founding the city."

"He did not seem to mind difficulties, however," observed George.

"No one ever rose to eminence, my dear George, who allowed a few difficulties to discourage him. The Czar Peter used to rise at four o'clock; to live in a plain and frugal manner; and to spend so little money on his dress, that he was frequently seen with his stockings darned, and his shoes well mended.

"You look astonished; but I have more to tell you. He came in disguise

to England in 1698, and worked at Deptford for some time as a common ship-carpenter, receiving the same wages, and keeping the same hours as the other men; for the patriotic purpose of becoming acquainted with the art of ship-building, and imparting his knowledge to his subjects. You see, trouble was nothing to him, when he had an object in view.

“With his own hands he forged a bar of iron, weighing 120 lbs. which is still to be seen in the Academy at St. Petersburg: and I have no doubt, that the Emperor of all the Russias sat down, after that day’s labour, as glad of rest and refreshment as the poorest peasant in his extensive dominions.”

“Dear Mamma,” said George, “the Czar Peter makes me quite ashamed of myself! I will begin from this day to be more industrious and persevering.”

“I hope you will, my dear boy. Be assured, you will never regret it: and, by forming early habits of industry, though you may not be a second Peter the Great, you may become a valuable and useful member of society. In endeavouring to correct your faults, you will be following the example of this great emperor; who, not forgetting his own failings, amidst the numerous concerns which occupied his mind, exclaimed, “I may reform my people, but how can I reform myself!”

“Was Peter ever married, Mamma?”

“Yes: he raised to the throne the daughter of a peasant, who, by her sweet disposition and affectionate care, acquired a great ascendancy over him. It is said, that she was never seen peevish, nor out of temper, for a moment.”

“Well, dear Mamma,” said little Gertrude, “I will try to follow her example. But now cannot you think of a pretty little story for us, whilst we sit down on this mossy bank?”

“Oh! yes; I see she remembers one,” cried Egbert. “Here, dear Mamma, is a nice high seat for you, almost like a throne; and a footstool also.”

Mrs. Stanhope smiled upon her eager little audience, and told them that her story, to-day, was called,

THE WIDOW OF LACHTA.

IT was a cold and bleak day in November, in the year 1724, and the fishermen on the shores of the Lake Ladoga, predicted a coming storm. The thick clouds began to gather over head: the wind blew in louder and more frequent gusts: and the waves, dashing violently on the shore, gave indications that it had already commenced, when the door of one of the small cottages near them opened, and a fine-looking young sailor appeared, followed by his widowed mother, who was anxiously pointing out to him signs of the approaching tempest. "Only look, my

dear son, at the lake: it is madness to venture out such a day as this: let the boat go without you, and stay at home for your mother's sake, Stephen."

"Oh! mother," replied the young man, "you are over anxious. I have been in many a worse storm than this: besides my business with Matzin should be deferred no longer. Ah! here is the boat.—Why, Paul, my man, rather a squally passage for us!"

"You may say that, Stephen," replied the old mariner; "but the Lively Kitty has her full complement of passengers, and she must go across, whether she likes it or not."

"Oh! Paul," said the anxious mother, "it is tempting Providence, to go out in

such a sea ! You are running into certain danger !”

“As to that,” said the hardy Paul, “a sailor’s life is always one of danger ; and Providence takes care of those on the sea, as well as those on the land. Come, lend a hand, boys ! We must be off ! Tighten that rope, Aleck, and tell the passengers to bestir themselves.”

The widow, seeing the party determined to sail, and reassured by the boatmen, who declared that, though a rough sea, there was very little danger, took an affectionate farewell of her son, and returned to her cottage. But she watched the boat with a mother’s eye, as it left the shore ; and fear again took possession of her mind, as she saw it

crowded with passengers, consisting chiefly of soldiers and sailors, and making its way through the battling waves with evident difficulty, and apparently in no little danger. It was a trying hour for the widow's heart. He was her only child, the living image of his departed father; and he was so affectionate, so generous, and such a dutiful son, though at times a little self-willed, she wondered she had let him go. But it was too late to recal him. A projecting rock concealed the boat from her view, and she had now but one resource left, that of making known her trouble to the God of the fatherless and of the widow. Whilst she, in the solitude of her chamber, is recommend-

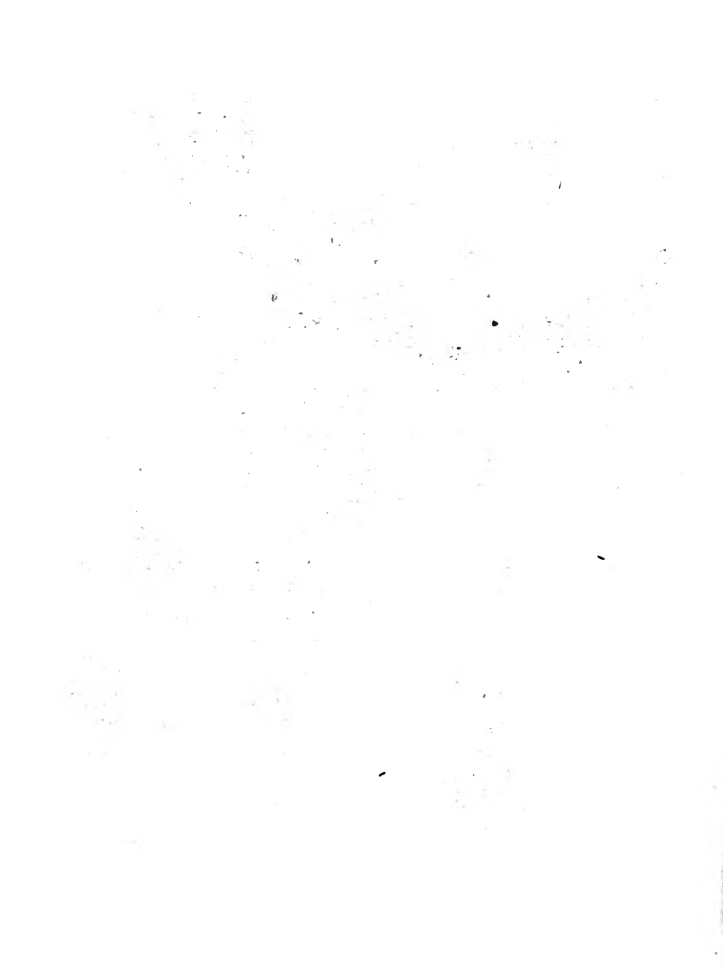
ing her beloved child to the protection of his heavenly Father, we will follow the struggling little vessel, which was now in no very enviable situation. The wind was blowing a furious gale; and the curling waves, dashing over her stern, compelled the passengers to bale out the water continually. At last, perceiving the tempest was too violent to suffer them to proceed on their voyage, Paul consented to steer towards home, but, whilst endeavouring to do so, the boat struck upon a quicksand! All hands immediately united in their efforts to get her off, but they were unavailing; and they were beginning to despair, when, to their great joy, they perceived that a vessel at some distance had ob-

served their distress, and was sending out a boat to their assistance. It was high time. The little bark was fast filling with water, in spite of their exertions; and of the passengers, so many were intoxicated, and so many bewildered, that, with the exception of Stephen and two of his own boatmen, old Paul had no assistance in his endeavours to get her off the perilous quicksand.

The wished-for boat at length arrived; but the sailors in it seemed fearful of venturing too near; and the help they rendered was so inefficient, that the exhausted mariners, beginning to give up all hopes of saving their vessel, were relaxing in their efforts; when another boat put off from the brig, and



PETER THE GREAT RESCUING THE YOUNG FISHERMAN



by vigorous rowing reached the spot just in time. The newly arrived sailors, loudly reproaching the laziness of their comrades, instantly set to work; and one of them, a fine tall seaman, crying out, "This way, my lads! Follow me!" stripped off his outer garments, plunged into the water, and waded to the sand. The rest followed his example; and, by dint of their well-directed strength, the Lively Kitty was soon afloat again. It was soon observed, however, that many of her passengers had, during that fearful hour, sunk, to rise no more; and, in a minute, the voice of Paul was heard in bitter woe.

"Can no one save him? Can none of you save Stephen? The bravest lad that

ever trod a plank ! And he is gone !—But for his help this day, where should I be now ! Oh ! Stephen ! Stephen ! Who will dare tell your poor mother the news that you are lost to her !”

“ He is not lost yet,” said the tall seaman, “ if this be the lad you are sorrowing about. He is insensible though ; and I caught a glimpse of him just in time. The next wave would have done for him. So take him in, and give him plenty of warm grog. He will soon recover.”

“ You had better come in yourself,” said one of his companions ; “ You look like a drowned man as much as he does. Here ! shove him into our boat, and we will row you both to shore in no time That’s right. Now boys, pull away !”

The efforts of six hardy rowers soon brought them to the landing-place, from which, a few hours before, Stephen had departed in such high spirits. He was now, still insensible, carried to his mother's cottage, followed by the seaman who had been so active in saving his life. At sight of her son, the poor widow burst into a flood of tears, and was giving way to an agony of grief, when the sailor told her that if she would preserve her son's life, she must immediately put him into a warm bed, and endeavour to restore animation. Then assisting her to do so, and fetching her some restoratives, it was not long before poor Stephen was able to sit up and thank his preserver.

“ Bless me !” said the grateful mother, “ you are in your wet clothes ! And whilst you have been so kindly caring for Steenie, you have taken no thought for yourself. Dear ! dear ! how wet you are ! Do put on some of these dry garments.”

“ Thank you, I will,” replied the sailor ; and, having equipped himself in some of Steenie’s apparel, he was proceeding to look for his companions, when the widow stopped him, and said, as her eyes filled with tears,—

“ You have this day saved the life of the being who is dearest to me upon earth ; and I have no means of proving my gratitude : but, noble sailor, what I can do, I will. Night and morning, will I implore the blessing of Heaven

upon you and yours ; and that you may never stand in need of that help, which you have afforded to my child this day ; and may the God who never turns a deaf ear to the widow's prayer, mercifully guide you through the sea of life, till you are safely landed on the shores of a blessed eternity !”

The hardy sailor brushed a tear from his eye, as he told the grateful woman he had but done his duty ; and saying he would return her son's clothes the next day, he was about to depart, when the door opened, and a naval officer entered, followed by a crowd of men, women, and children.

“ My noble master Peter Alexiso-weitch !” he said, falling on one knee

before the mariner, "right glad am I to see you in safety! We greatly feared some accident had befallen you."

"Oh! I am safe enough, Mazaroff," replied the Czar, "and quite ready for my supper, I assure you! And let a substantial one be prepared for all these honest sailors, that they may drink to the return of the Lively Kitty, which I see down below there."

"Long live the Emperor! Long live Peter the Great! Long life to the Czar!" were the shouts which now burst from every tongue; whilst the poor widow, overcome with surprise, faltered forth her apologies for not knowing him.

"Nay, nay, good woman," said the Czar, smiling; "how could you know

the emperor in such a disguise of mud ? Farewel ! I shall keep your son's clothes in remembrance of the satisfaction this day's work has caused me : take this in return," he said, slipping a purse into her hand ; "and when Stephen awakes from his slumbers, tell him he has always a real friend in Peter Alexisoweitch."

"Oh ! how surprised the widow must have been," cried Egbert. "And it really was Peter the Great ! Dear Mamma, can you tell us nothing more about him ?"

"Yes, my love : my story is not quite finished. The Czar went on that same day to Lachta, a village near ; but you will be sorry to hear, that he was there taken violently ill with a fever, from having remained too long in his wet

clothes. The next day, he proceeded to St. Petersburg, where his disease rapidly increased, and, notwithstanding the numerous efforts made to stop its progress, he expired in two months' time, the victim of his humanity and benevolence."

"Oh! I am so sorry," said George. "What a pity, that so great a man should be cut off in such a way!"

"He certainly was a great loss to his country; and we cannot but regret, that the noble risking of his life to save another's, was the cause of his premature end. But when the Ruler of the universe issues His mandate, who shall say Him nay?"

"Come, it is time to walk."

CHAPTER VI.

“Why, my dear Egbert, where have you been to gain such roses?” said Mrs. Stanhope, as her little boy entered the drawing-room, one fine morning, his cheeks glowing with even more than their usual colour.

“Oh! dear Mamma, we have had such a nice game at snow-ball. George was King Francis, and I was Hubert; and I gained a splendid victory over him; and Gertrude and Neptune were the spectators. Do come out, and try your skill, Mamma; you cannot think how warm it will make you. Here comes Gatty, with my crown of laurel.”

The little girl playfully placed the tiny crown on her brother's head, and then said, "Some day, you shall be a real soldier, Egbert; and then you may gain a real victory."

"Well," said George, "though I have been defeated, I have the pleasure of knowing, that even King Francis himself was not always victorious. Mamma, who did you say was his great rival?"

"Charles the Fifth, my dear, Emperor of Germany, King of Spain and the Indies. But, in contending with Charles, Francis was opposed to one of the most skilful generals of the age."

"I am glad of that; because the pain of a defeat must have been lessened to King Francis, when he knew his enemy

was a brave man. But, Mamma, was he as generous and good-humoured as the French king?"

"I should rather think not, George. But, though destitute of that bewitching affability, which gained Francis the hearts of all who approached his person, Charles was no stranger to the virtues which secure fidelity and attachment. Ambition was his ruling passion, and occasioned the restless activity of his life."

"Is it wrong to be ambitious?" asked Egbert?

"Not if you are ambitious in a good cause, my love, and are careful not to exceed the bounds of justice and moderation. But the insatiable ambi-

tion of Charles impoverished his kingdom; and, by his being perpetually engaged in wars with foreign nations, the internal improvement of his own was quite neglected. He was, in rank and dignity, the first prince of his age, and he possessed in an eminent degree talents for command. The circumstances which distinguished his reign, have rendered it one of the most remarkable periods in the history of Europe; and Charles must have felt proud, if not happy, when he saw whole nations submitting to his will; princes courting his alliance; senators asking his advice and opinion; powerful nobles kneeling at his feet; and the attention of all Europe fixed upon his movements."

“He must, indeed, have felt very proud ; and, I should think, very happy also,” observed George.

“Happiness, my dear George,” observed Mrs. Stanhope, “does not consist in being a great, but rather in being a good man. From what I have read of the life of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, I should not think he was so happy a man as poor Adams, who works at the sawmill.”

“Oh ! Mamma,” exclaimed George ; “why, Adams has scarcely clothes to wear.”

“And he had not food for his family, last winter,” cried Egbert.

“And he is always at work, from morning to night,” said Gertrude.

“True, my dears; but Adams possesses what the Emperor Charles did not possess, a pious and contented disposition; and, in spite of his poverty, which is at times great, he constantly looks on the bright side of things, and is always cheerful and happy.”

“Was not Charles the Fifth a religious man, Mamma?”

“He did not become so till the latter years of his life; and it was not till then that he knew what real happiness was. To prove to you, that riches and greatness alone, have not the power of conferring true peace of mind, I will tell you another of my true stories.”

“You are very kind, dear Mamma,”

said George ; “ but what is the name of the story ? ”

“ The title of it, my dear, is

THE ABBEY OF ST. JUSTUS.

It was a lovely evening in the month of August, in the year 1557 : the sun was sinking behind a mass of golden clouds, and the faint breeze wafted the perfume of many a fragrant shrub, as a traveller slowly descended into the valley where stood the Abbey of St. Justus, a few miles from Placentia, in Spain. As he proceeded, he often paused, to gaze upon the beauteous scene around him. The vale, which was of no great extent, was watered by a small rivulet, and surround-

ed, on all sides, by rising grounds covered with lofty trees. Its singular beauty, and appearance of tranquil retirement, could not fail to arrest the attention of a stranger; indeed, it was universally considered as one of the most healthy and delightful situations in Spain.

The venerable abbey, at the farther end of the vale, rose in silent majesty, and appeared like the guardian spirit of the peaceful scene. Thither the young traveller directed his steps, for he was fatigued with a long day's journey, and much in need of rest and refreshment. As he passed through the grounds, which surrounded the abbey, he perceived a gentleman, of middle age, and of a commanding appearance, busily employed in

training a honeysuckle round one of the pillars of an ornamented grotto. The barking of a little dog gave notice of the stranger's approach ; and, throwing down his gardening implements, the cavalier advanced, and gracefully welcomed the young traveller to the abbey. " You appear fatigued with your journey, signor ; let me hope, that in this peaceful retreat, and amidst the well-known hospitality of the monks of St. Justus, you will find the rest and refreshment you require."

The stranger returned him many thanks for his kind wishes, and then informed him that he was an Englishman, that his name was Seymour, and that he had been travelling some time

for his amusement, as well as to acquire information. "I had heard," he continued, "of the far-famed beauty of the valley of St. Justus ; and, determined to visit it alone, and on foot, I this morning left the mules and attendants at a village some miles distant, and proceeded hither ; and certainly the reports I had heard, were not exaggerated. Seldom have I witnessed a lovelier scene."

"It is indeed a lovely spot," replied his companion. "I have been here but a short time ; but never, never have I enjoyed such perfect tranquillity and happiness, as since my seclusion in this peaceful vale. But permit me to conduct you within ; the monks have par-

taken of their evening meal, but mine is yet untasted.”

The young Englishman, pleased with the friendly courtesy of the cavalier, struck by the polished dignity of his manners, and curious to learn what had caused him to retire so completely from the busy stage of life, accepted his proffered hospitality, and followed him to the abbey. He was conducted by his guide into an apartment neatly but simply furnished, and commanding a rich and beautiful prospect. Books, drawings, and numerous specimens of mechanism, scattered round the room, gave indications of the taste of the owner; whilst the flowers, which clustered in graceful profusion at the win-

dows, and ornamented the garden beyond, shed forth a delightful fragrance.

“Here,” said his host, “I have passed many pleasant, and I trust improving hours; my apartments are small, and my domestics few in number; but I find I can do without many superfluities, which, a short time since, I thought necessary to make me happy. And with my books, and my garden, I am never at a loss for amusement.”

He then proceeded to shew young Seymour many ingenious pieces of mechanism, several of which were of his own construction; and they were engaged in an animated conversation, when a servant announced that supper was ready. The repast was very simple,

during which the Englishman slightly hinted his wish of knowing the name of his hospitable entertainer. But he lightly turned his inquiries aside, saying, that he had served in the Imperial army, that he was tired of the busy scenes in which he had been engaged, and was anxious to spend the remainder of his days in retirement. He then turned the conversation on various subjects; and displayed such a knowledge of human nature, such benevolence of character, and so much modesty in speaking of himself, that the Englishman was both surprised and delighted; and the time flew swiftly by, till the tolling of the abbey bell warned them of the lateness of the hour. Mutually

pleased with each other, they parted for the night; and, in a few minutes, Seymour was dreaming of England and home.

The sun shining brightly into his apartment, the next morning, roused the young traveller from his sleep; and, hastily rising, he descended to the garden. Greatly to his surprise, he there beheld, early as the hour was, his friendly host, who, advancing to meet him, said, with a smile, "This refreshing morning breeze has tempted you like myself, signor. Now tell me, can your England boast such a valley and climate as this?"

"The climate here certainly is supe-

rior," replied Seymour; "but England has many lovely vales, equal, in my opinion, even to St. Justus. I may be partial; but it is my home. But has your garden occupied you thus early?"

"Yes; since my retreat here, I have become an early riser; and gardening is one of my favourite amusements: see, here is a specimen of my labours; the creepers round this little arbour are of my planting, and promise well. But walk in; I have ordered the morning's meal to be prepared here."

The repast being concluded, the Englishman rose to take his leave; and, after cordially thanking his kind entertainer, expressed a hope that they

should meet again, as it was his intention to revisit St. Justus, on his return from Italy: "If," he said, "you still continue here; but I suspect, that by that time, solitude, charming as it is, will have lost its charms for you: and I shall hear that you have returned to enjoy, amidst more active scenes, the pleasures and honours you have renounced."

"No, my young friend;" he replied, with a smile; "I think not. Every day convinces me, that I enjoy more satisfaction in my humble solitude, than riches and honours ever afforded me. I have time and opportunity to prepare for that eternity, which cannot be far distant from me; and I hope that they will

not be misemployed. Farewel, sir ; I shall be happy to renew our acquaintance, should you return this way ; and remember, when next you hear of St. Justus, that happiness does not consist in outward grandeur, but in that inward peace of mind, which religion alone can give.”

Seymour departed, much interested in the unknown stranger ; and, anxious to learn more respecting him, he stopped at the first village he came to, and inquired at a little inn, who it was that had retired to live at St. Justus.

“Santa Maria !” exclaimed the bustling little landlord, “do you not know the news that is in everybody’s mouth ? Why, where have you been, not to know

that the Emperor Charles the Fifth has resigned all his vast possessions in favour of his son, and has retired to the Abbey of St. Justus, to end his days in peace and devotion ?”

“The Emperor Charles ! Is it possible ?” exclaimed Seymour. “I certainly knew he had resigned his possessions, and retired from public life ; but little did I think, that, in my unassuming and friendly host, I should discover the Emperor Charles. It is strange !”

“They say, sir,” continued the landlord, “this notion was first put into his head by an old officer, who requested the emperor to discharge him from his service ; and on his asking the reason, the officer replied, ‘There ought to be a pause,

sire, between the hurry of life and the awful scenes of eternity.' The emperor was so much struck with the observation, that, a few months afterwards, he resigned his throne."

"And he appears quite happy, great as the change must be," replied the thoughtful Englishman.

"Yes, sir, they say he is quite happy. He has reserved for himself only an annual pension of one hundred thousand crowns, out of all his vast possessions. He keeps but twelve domestics, and has only six rooms appropriated to his use; and he never wishes to know any of the passing news of the day. Well! I used to wish to be an emperor! But if Charles the Fifth is happier now than

he ever was before, I am content to remain as I am."

"Well, Mamma," exclaimed George, "I am as much astonished as the English traveller was. But did he ever return to St. Justus?"

"Yes: in the month of September, in the following year, he revisited the vale: but the scene was sadly changed. The little garden shewed melancholy symptoms of neglect; the shrubs round the favourite arbour were withering away; and the creepers, no longer carefully twined, seemed, as they tossed to and fro in wild confusion, to mourn the absence of their master. Astonished, and apprehensive of the cause, Seymour hastened to the abbey, and, much to

his grief, learned, that the emperor had been for some months confined to his dwelling, by a severe attack of the gout; that he was still unwell; and that his disease had much depressed his spirits. ‘So much so, sir,’ continued the old man, with tears in his eyes, ‘that we fear his mind is quite affected. He has ordered us to prepare the chapel for his funeral; as he intends, to-morrow, to celebrate his own obsequies. His tomb is now being erected; and I much fear my dear kind master has not long to live; because, though his bodily health is better than it has been, it is a melancholy thing to see him take such awful fancies into his head. He has been so cheerful and happy, since

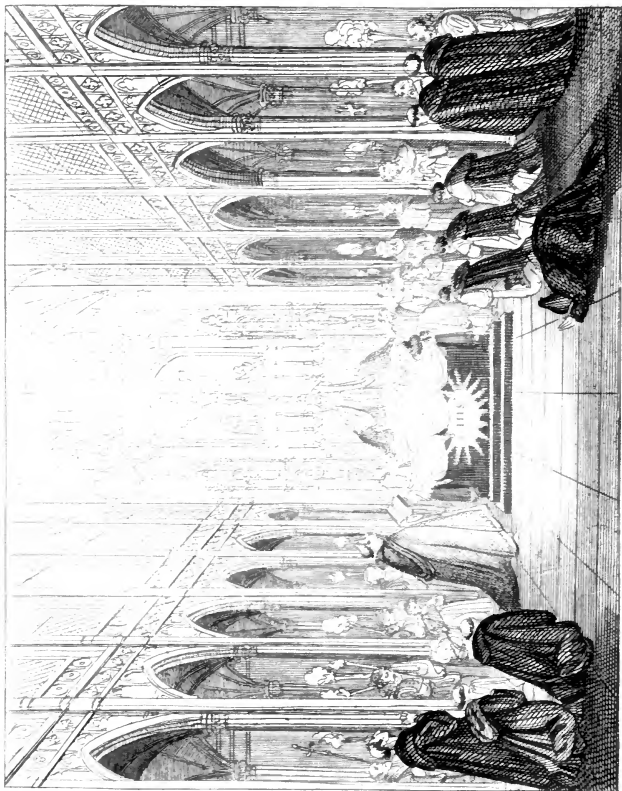
he came to the vale! It is sad to see illness produce such a change on a mind like his."

"A sad account indeed!" replied Seymour.

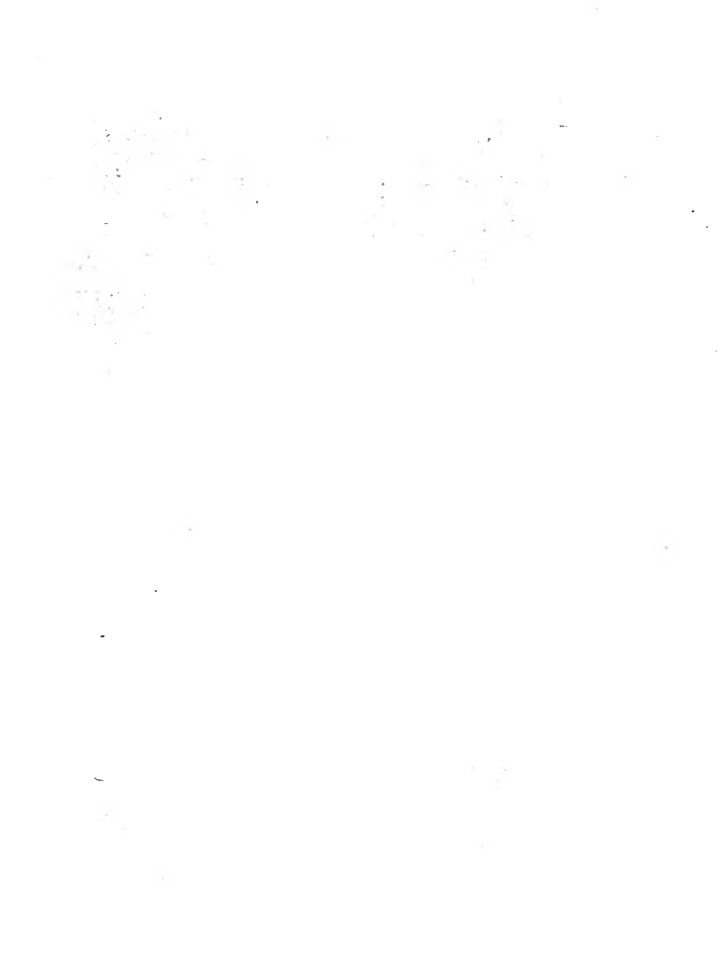
"I will not ask you to see him," continued the old man, "for now he scarcely speaks to any one: but here is a room at your service; pray walk in. Perhaps to-morrow he may be better."

The morrow came, and with it the extraordinary and solemn scene, of which the old man had spoken. Seymour, stationed in the chapel of the abbey, witnessed the strange and affecting sight of a monarch attending his own funeral.

The shadows of evening were falling, as his twelve domestics entered the cha-



CHARLES 5TH OF GERMANY CELEBRATING HIS OBSEQUIES.



pel, clothed in deep mourning, with lighted tapers in their hands. Charles himself followed, attired in his shroud, and was laid in his coffin with great solemnity. The service for the dead was chaunted by the monks; and the emperor joined in the prayers offered up for the rest of his soul. Holy water was then sprinkled on the coffin, and the ceremony being ended, the mourners and attendants retired, closing the doors of the chapel.

In a short time, Charles arose from his coffin and went to his apartment; but the old servant's fears were too well grounded. The exciting scene of the day, added to the damp air of the chapel, proved too much for his already en-

feebled constitution ; and, the next day, he was seized with a fever, which in a short time terminated his existence.

Thus died the Emperor Charles V. He exhibited the rare spectacle of a powerful monarch, rich, victorious, and successful, retiring from his high station, resigning all his vast possessions, and living a life of simplicity and seclusion, without the slightest wish of returning to the scenes of his former greatness."

"But, Mamma," cried Gertrude, "what made him do such a strange thing, as to attend his own funeral?"

"He wished his mind to be fully impressed with the solemnity of death, and the necessity of being prepared for it, my love. He was fully assured, in the

midst of his greatness, that religion was the object most worthy of his attention ; and in his retirement he spent a large portion of each day in devotional exercises.”

“But, Mamma,” said Egbert, “why did they sprinkle holy water on the coffin ; and offer up prayers for the repose of his soul ?—We do not do so.”

“No, my love ; but Charles was a member of the Romish church ; and these are some of its superstitious errors. I must now leave you ; but remember, my beloved children, that you may have power and riches at your command, and yet happiness be far from you : it is religion alone which, in the midst of either riches or poverty, can produce in your hearts real contentment and peace.”

CHAPTER VII.

“MY dear George,” said Mrs. Stanhope, “did not your Papa desire you to watch at the park gate for your uncle?”

“Yes, Mamma; and I waited there for almost an hour, and saw nothing of him; and then it began to rain, and I thought I had better come in.”

“But your Papa wished particularly to see him; and desired you to wait there, till you saw him pass by. If the rain had wetted you through, you should not have disobeyed your father’s commands.”

“I am sorry I have done wrong,

Mamma; I will go and watch for him now."

"It is too late now, George; the gardener saw him pass by; and your Papa is quite vexed, I assure you. I wish I could see you more firm and persevering in your obedience.

"This act, slight as it appears, may cause your father much inconvenience. A child's obedience to his parents should be prompt, willing, and unwearyed. Do you not remember the story of the little boy, about your own age, who, being on board a man-of-war with his father, was commanded by him to remain in one particular part of the ship, till he should call him away; and how nobly he performed his duty?"

“ No, Mamma ; pray tell me.”

“ A cannon ball put an end to his father’s life, soon after he had left his son ; but the boy knew it not : and though the ship took fire, and all the men left it, he still remained firm at his post, resolved not to desert it, till his father should summon him. But the account has been written in poetry : reach me that little book, from the *chiffonière*, Egbert, and I will read it to you. I think when George has heard it, he will not be so likely again to disobey his father, on account of a little rain.

“ The boy stood on the burning deck,
Whence all but him had fled ;
The flame that lit the battle’s wreck
Shone round him o’er the dead :

Yet beautiful and bright he stood,
 As born to rule the storm;
 A creature of heroic blood,
 A proud though childish form.

The flames rolled on—he would not go,
 Without his father's word;
 That father, faint in death below,
 This voice no longer heard.

He called aloud—‘ Say, father, say,
 If yet my task is done?’
 He knew not that the chieftain lay
 Unconscious of his son.

‘ Speak, father,’ once again he cried,
 ‘ If I may yet be gone?’
 And but the booming shots replied,
 And fast the flames rolled on.

Upon his brow he felt their breath,
 And in his waving hair;
 And look'd from that lone post of death,
 In still, yet brave despair.

And shouted but once more aloud,
 ‘ My father, must I stay ?’
 While o’er him fast, through sail and shroud,
 The wreathing fires made way.

They wrapp’d the ship in splendour wild,
 They caught the flag on high,
 And stream’d above the gallant child,
 Like banners in the sky.

There came a burst of thunder sound,—
 The boy—Oh ! where was he ?—
 Ask of the winds, that far around
 With fragments strew’d the sea—

With mast and helm, and pennon fair,
 That well had borne their part ;—
 But the noblest thing that perish’d there,
 Was that young and faithful heart.”

“ Well, George,” said Mrs. Stanhope, after a short pause, “ what do you think of that boy’s obedience ?”

“ Oh ! Mamma, I am indeed ashamed

of myself. I hope, whenever I am inclined to be disobedient again, I may think of that noble boy. But how very much he must have suffered! To be burnt alive, must be such a dreadful death!”

“He must have suffered greatly, indeed; and what a contrast does his conduct present to that of children who make a fuss about the slightest pain, and cannot bear the least inconvenience.”

“Mamma,” said Egbert, “your story reminds me of one, which Papa told me the other day, and which, he said, we should find in the Grecian history. He said, there was a little boy attending on Alexander the Great, as he was offer-

ing up sacrifices to the gods, and he was engaged to hold the censer. During the ceremony, a burning coal fell from the censer on the boy's arm, which was uncovered; yet, so anxious was he not to disturb the ceremony, that, though the smell of the scorching flesh affected all around, he calmly waited till the sacrifice was over, before he moved his arm from its painful position."

"An heroic little fellow, indeed, Egbert; and I am glad to find you remember what you hear. Come, sit down: as the rain is not yet over, and George seems really sorry for his fault, I will tell you the story of another brave boy, which is taken from the Roman history, and which I shall call—

COURAGE AND FORTITUDE.

“A SHORT time after the Romans had expelled their king, Tarquin, from their city, on account of his enormous vices, Porsenna, King of Etruria, having determined to espouse the cause of this bad man, came and besieged Rome with a powerful army. George, where is Etruria?”

“It is the country now called Tuscany, in Italy.”

“Of course, the Romans were alarmed, when they saw their city besieged by such a large army ; but they determined to fight like brave men, and to die sooner than submit. Accordingly, Porsenna did not find it such an easy matter to con-

quer them, as he had at first imagined ; and after many unsuccessful attempts, he began to despair of capturing the city. In the mean time, the Romans, exciting each other to bravery and feats of valour, gave to their sons a bright example of courage and patriotism.

“ One night, many young men were seen hastening towards a large building in the city, and in a short time the room contained three hundred. The doors were then shut, and a fine tall young man, of the name of Mutius, standing up, addressed his companions in eloquent and impressive language. He told them, that though they were all of noble birth, he knew they would esteem it an honour to die for their

country; that famine and distress would visit the city, if King Porsenna and his army were not compelled to abandon the siege; and that he had that evening requested their attendance to propose to them the only plan which he could think of in their present emergency.

“‘Are you, my friends,’ said the young patriot, glowing with enthusiasm; ‘are you ready to devote yourselves to death in the cause of your country and your homes?’

“‘We are!’ exclaimed the assembled youths, as with one voice; ‘we are ready to perish in the sacred cause!’

“Mutius then informed them, that his purpose was to obtain admittance into the enemy’s camp, and to assassinate

King Porsenna; and he proposed that they should bind themselves by a solemn vow to accomplish his death, or compel him to retire from the walls. 'I will be the first to make the attempt,' he said; 'and if I fall, another must succeed me.'

"Loudly applauding the courage and heroism of their companion, the young men each took the oath required; and, again declaring they would accomplish their purpose, or perish to a man, the assembly separated. A day or two after this meeting, King Porsenna was sitting in his tent, conversing with his secretary, when Mutius, having obtained admittance in disguise into the Tuscan camp, entered, and after attentively

regarding them both, drew a dagger from his bosom, and, exclaiming ‘Die, tyrant, die!’ plunged it into the heart of the secretary. He was immediately seized, and, on discovering his mistake, boldly confessed that his intention had been to take the life of the king, and that he only regretted his purpose had failed. On Porsenna threatening him with the torture, he said, ‘I despise alike your threats and your torture; nor am I the only one who does. Three hundred noble Roman youths have bound themselves by a solemn vow to effect the purpose in which I have failed, or to compel you to abandon the siege. But you have seen what I can do; now see what I can suffer;’ saying this, he

thrust his hand into the fire which burned on an altar, and held it there until it was consumed, to punish it for the mistake it had made.

“Porsenna struck with his courage and fortitude, not only gave him his liberty, but sent him back to Rome loaded with presents; and, dreading a succession of similar efforts, granted the Romans favourable terms of peace.

“Thus Mutius, by his bravery and heroism, preserved his native city from the horrors of a protracted siege.”

“I admire his courage and fortitude very much,” said George; “but, Mamma, was it not wrong of Mutius to attempt to assassinate the king, even though he was his enemy?”

“Yes, George; we are commanded not only to do no murder, but to love our enemies, and to do good to those that hate us; but Mutius lived in a heathen land, and had been taught very different maxims. He thought he was only doing his duty; and he knew that he should gain the approbation of his friends and fellow-citizens for the act. We, who live in a Christian country, and have been taught better, should, whilst we pity the ignorance of Mutius, ask ourselves whether we are as anxious to perform our duty as the young Roman was; and whether we are thankful for, and careful to improve, the superior advantages which we enjoy?”

CHAPTER VIII.

“Now, dear Mamma,” said Egbert, one very wet day, “pray tell me of some nice employment for this rainy morning: I have finished the sketch in my drawing book; and, unless you can think of something for me to do, I must depend on one of your entertaining stories.”

“But, I hope, my dear Egbert will soon learn to depend on himself for amusement,” replied Mrs. Stanhope: “it is a sad thing always to have recourse to others. Come, suppose you were to net me some fruit-nets; I shall want several in the summer.”

“Dear Mamma !” exclaimed the little boy, in surprise, “I am sure you would not wish me to do such woman’s work as that. I am sure you would not like to see me so effeminate.”

“I am far from wishing to see you effeminate, my dear ; nor do I think that a vacant hour occasionally passed in that way, would contribute to make you so. Is it not better than being idle ?”

“Yes, perhaps it is ; but, George, what do you think ?”

“I think, Egbert, that Mamma always knows what is best for us, and never wishes us to do what is unmanly or foolish ; besides you will be making yourself of some use.”

“Well, I will fetch the string, and Gatty will teach me the way to net. But, Mamma, I wonder what Peter the Great or King Francis would have said, if they could have seen me employed in this way.”

“They would most likely have said, Egbert, that you were an industrious little boy, who followed his mother’s advice, and was endeavouring to make himself useful to her: but do not think it unmanly. The Swedish soldiers, who, in the time of Gustavus Adolphus were considered as brave and hardy as any in Europe, were accustomed, in their leisure hours, frequently to make their own clothes, and mend their own linen.”

“And did the king allow them to do so, Mamma?”

“He not only allowed, but commanded it. None of the soldiers of the great Gustavus were ever suffered to remain inactive; and when the operations of the field were suspended, he turned his men into pioneers and military architects. If there were nothing of that kind to employ them, each soldier became his own tailor, mechanic, and sempstress; and it was by no means an uncommon sight to behold a Swedish officer knitting his own stockings, and making his point lace.”

“And was Gustavus beloved by his soldiers?”

“He was, my dear, beloved in no com-

mon degree ; and, though he enforced the strictest discipline, from the general to the meanest horse-boy in his service, they were ever ready to devote themselves to death in his cause. On one occasion, he was, during an engagement, taken prisoner by the enemy. A soldier, perceiving his danger, and anxious to conceal from them that it was the king, galloped up with three or four companions, and, crying out, ‘Have a care of yourselves, for we will rescue my brother!’ soon set him at liberty. Not long afterwards, Gustavus saw that this soldier had in his turn been captured, and immediately making a charge restored to him his freedom, saying with a smile, ‘Now, brother soldier, we

are upon equal terms; for the obligation has become reciprocal.'

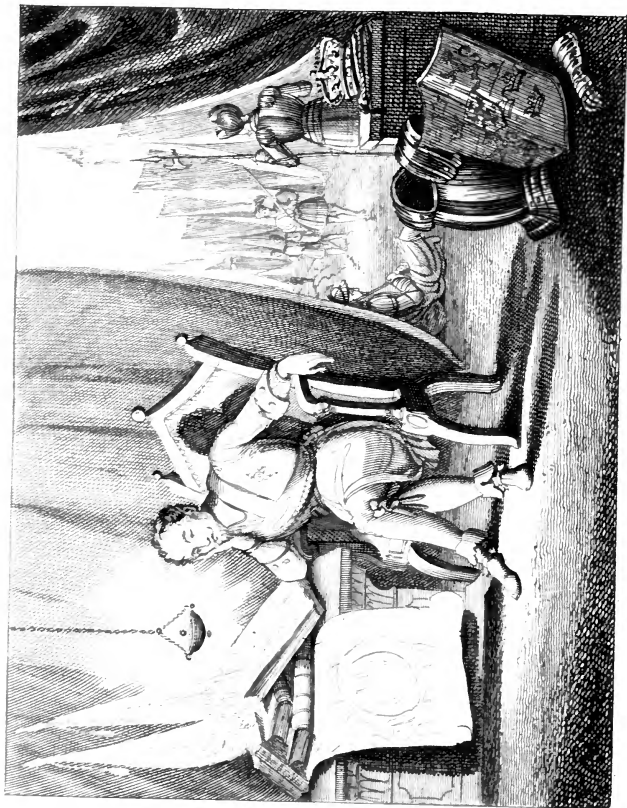
"Oh! Mamma," cried Egbert, "pray tell us more concerning this king; I think he will be a favourite of mine."

"Willingly, my dear. Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, began to reign in the year 1611. He was the greatest monarch that ever sat on the Swedish throne, and one of the most distinguished heroes of ancient or modern history. Besides uniting in an eminent degree the qualifications of a statesman and a commander, his private virtues ought to be held up as an example for mankind to imitate. He was not more great as a king and able general than as a pious Christian, a sincere friend,

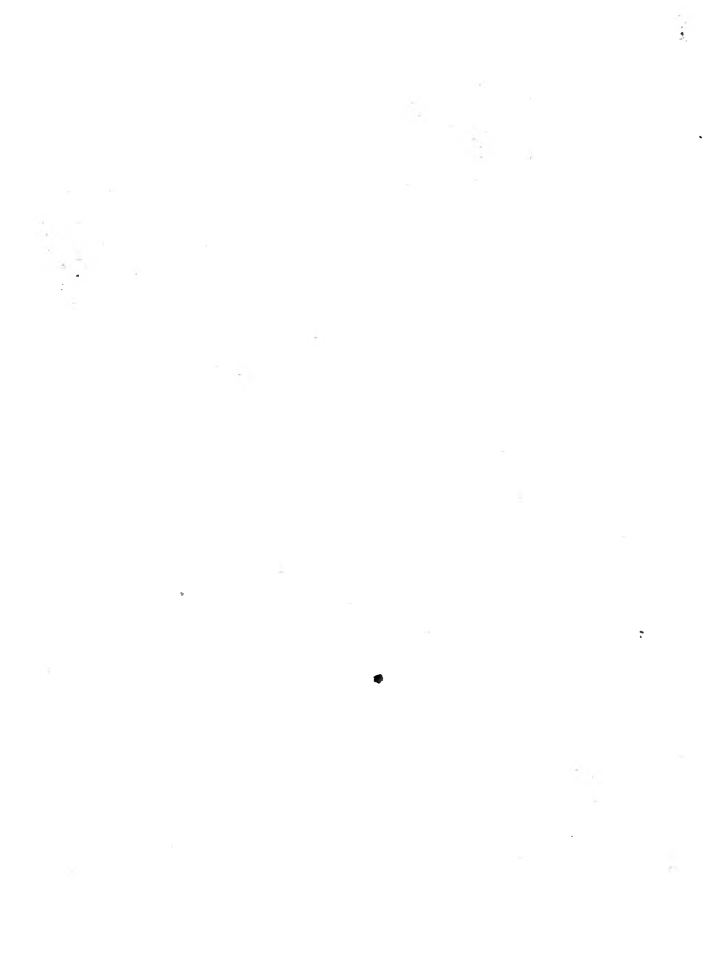
a tender husband, a dutiful son, and an affectionate parent. His public and private character displayed all the virtues that dignify humanity."

"Then he was a good as well as a great king, Mamma?"

"He was, my love. Religion was the secret spring of all his actions, and the daily guide of his conduct. He used to say, that a good Christian could not make a bad soldier; and, after an engagement, it was his constant practice to assemble all his officers in his tent, and offer up prayers and thanksgivings to the Almighty Disposer of events. 'Though war,' he would say, 'may be our amusement, yet religion is our business.'



GUSTAVUS READING THE SCRIPTURES IN HIS TENT



“Did he fight many battles?” inquired George.

“Several,” replied Mrs. Stanhope. “The principal of them were the battle of Leipsic, in which he defeated the Imperialists, commanded by the celebrated Count Tilly: the battle of the Lech, in which that famous general was killed; and the battle of Lutzen, where Gustavus himself fell, covered with glory. Besides several hard-fought engagements, he besieged and took a great number of fortified towns, and astonished Europe with the rapidity and success of his arms.”

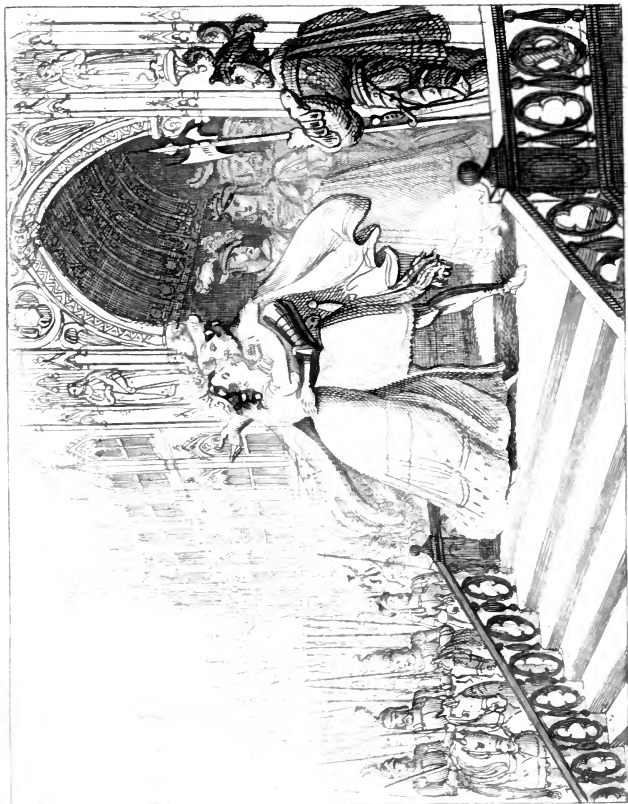
“But was this great conqueror kind to his prisoners,” said little Gertrude; “or did he treat them with cruelty?”

“His humanity and compassion were

so great, my dear, that he was beloved wherever he conquered. On taking a town, he issued strict orders to his soldiers to refrain from plunder and cruelty; and his orders were obeyed so well, that the inhabitants considered the invader and his soldiers as more acceptable than the Prince whom he invaded."

"Was Gustavus married, Mamma?"

"Yes; and his wife Eleanora was worthy of him. There is an interesting anecdote told concerning her. Whilst Gustavus was pursuing his victories in Germany, she formed the heroic resolution of leaving the pleasures of Stockholm, in order to share the fatigues of war with her husband; and went to Germany, taking with her no contempti-



MEETING OF GUSTAVUS AND ELEONORA.

ble supply of soldiers, artillery, and money. As she was embarking, one of her principal ships, through some fault in its construction, suddenly sank to the bottom, about half a league from shore; but this extraordinary accident dismayed her not. She entered Hanau, where she expected to meet the king, accompanied by her sister, and escorted by several noblemen, and twelve hundred horse. Gustavus received her at the entrance of the palace; and never was there a more tender and affectionate meeting. Eleanora flew to him, with a transport of joy, not to be described, and, throwing her arms round his waist, exclaimed, "Now, sir, the great Gustavus is at length taken prisoner!"

This expression was so much applauded by the public, and passed so frequently from mouth to mouth, that, acquiring fresh variations in travelling from Germany to England, it was at length reported in the London papers, that the King of Sweden was literally and *bonâ fide* an Imperial prisoner.”

“That was very curious, Mamma. Can you tell us another anecdote?”

“Gustavus had one little daughter, named Christina, of whom he was extremely fond. When about two years of age, she was taken by her father to Calmar, the governor of which hesitated whether to give the king the usual salute, lest the noise of the cannon might terrify the child. Gustavus, being

consulted, exclaimed, after a moment's pause: 'Fire! The girl is the daughter of a soldier, and should be accustomed to it betimes.'

"The salute being given, the princess clapped her hands, and, in her infantine language, cried, 'More! more!' Delighted with her courage, Gustavus afterwards caused her to be present at a review.

"'Very well,' he said, perceiving the pleasure she took in the military show, 'you shall go, I am resolved, where you shall have enough of this diversion.' But death prevented the fulfilment of his promise."

"See, Mamma," said Egbert, holding up his netting, "I have done a row already, with no mistakes in it."

“And very nicely done it is, my love,” said Mrs. Stanhope, kissing her little boy. “And now that you are all employed usefully and well, I think I must try to remember a story for you. I see you have no objection; so I will commence without delay. It is an account of a circumstance which happened in the reign of Gustavus; and the title is

THE CASTLE OF ERICSON.

“THE Castle of Ericson was situated on a picturesque and woody height, a short distance from Stockholm.

“It was a dark and gloomy looking edifice; but the flag which proudly waved from its summit, the smoke which issued from its numerous chimneys, and

the well-arranged order of its extensive grounds, shewed that it was far from being deserted. One fine evening, in summer, a horseman was seen slowly riding up the avenue, which led to the Castle. He was an officer, in the prime of life, and a remarkably fine intelligent-looking man : but there was an air of thoughtfulness on his countenance, which almost amounted to melancholy, as he passed on, alike heedless of the romantic scenery around him, and the mild beauty of that summer's eve. He was at length roused from his meditations by the sound of voices, and his eye lighted with a gleam of pleasure, and a smile played upon his lip, as he perceived the interesting group, from

whom the noise proceeded. It consisted of a young and beautiful woman, who was gazing with maternal fondness on a lovely boy, about seven years of age, and two sweet little girls, busily engaged in the pursuit of a squirrel, which they had just discovered in the bushes near them. As soon as the sound of the horse's feet was heard, the poor squirrel was left to its fate, and the children, running forward, were soon in the embraces of their father.

“‘What a long time you have been at the review to-day, Papa!’ said little Albert; ‘but you are come just in time to give me a nice ride: so pray help me up.’

“The general, who had dismounted,

assisted his little boy on the back of the old war-horse ; and giving his arm to his wife, whilst his little girls playfully contended for his disengaged hand, proceeded towards the castle. He endeavoured, but unsuccessfully, to conceal from his wife his discomposure of mind ; she perceived that something had vexed him ; and, when the cloth was withdrawn, and the servants had retired, after dinner, she affectionately charged him with being very thoughtful, and feared that he had some cause for uneasiness. The general laughed away her fears ; told her that he had several despatches to write, and that the thoughts of spending the evening alone in his study, was quite sufficient to make him melancholy. ‘It is

not often, you know, my love,' continued he, 'that I can enjoy a quiet evening with you; but I must not complain, the great Gustavus himself is not much better off.' Then changing the subject, he told his wife all the passing news of the day, and after an hour's pleasant conversation, he retired to his study.

"He was busily engaged in the arrangement of some papers, when he heard a gentle knock at the door, and little Albert entered, to wish his father good night, and receive his accustomed blessing. The general fondly embraced him; and having bestowed his fervent blessing, the child was departing, when he called him back, and said, as he affec-

tionately looked on his ingenuous countenance, ‘Albert, my boy, do you love your father?’—‘Oh, Papa, how can you ask such a question?’ replied the child throwing his arms round his neck; ‘you know I love you and Mamma better than any one in the whole world.’

“‘And will you do as your Papa wishes you?’

“‘I will, Papa; your own Albert will always obey you.’

“‘Then, my boy, promise me, that whilst you live, you will be an affectionate and dutiful son to your dear mother; and that should anything happen to me, in the various chances of war, you will, as far as you are able, supply my place to your infant sisters.’

“‘I promise, Papa,’ said Albert, falling on his knees: ‘but why do you talk of death?—You cannot, must not leave us;’ and the tears fell thick and fast down his rosy cheeks.

“‘Death, my dear Albert,’ said the general, ‘must come sooner or later to all of us; and happy are those who fear not its approach. But I spoke merely of the chances of war. I hope, I may be yet spared many years to see my Albert grow up all that his fond parents could wish. Good night, my child, and remember your promise!’

“Albert departed; and his father, burying his face in his hands, remained for some time in deep thought.

“General Ericson had cause for many

sad reflections. The conversation amongst the officers at the review had that day turned upon a late victory, which the Swedes had gained, and in which General Ericson had borne a conspicuous part. An officer, by name General Menke, envious of the glory which Ericson had justly acquired, made some unjust and ironical remarks on his conduct, and asked him if he did not once command a retreat. Ericson, whose temper was naturally hasty, became irritated ; and high words succeeded, which ended in general Menke giving a challenge to his brother officer, and he as instantly accepted it.

“King Gustavus had, a short time before, in order to repress the habit of

duelling, which he considered as the ruin of all discipline, and contrary to the laws of God and man, issued a law, that whoever was found engaged in a duel, should suffer the punishment of death. The two generals, therefore, repaired to the palace, and requesting an interview with Gustavus, informed him of their quarrel, and asked his permission to settle it sword in hand. The king was highly indignant; but, repressing his anger, gave them permission: 'And, gentlemen,' said he, as they were leaving the presence chamber, 'I will be an eyewitness myself of your great valour and high spirit.' And he accordingly named the time and place of meeting.

“It was this circumstance which caused the saddened brow of General Ericson. When calm reflection came, he remembered that he had disobeyed the king’s express commands ; and he knew, from the way in which permission had been given, that he had fallen in his sovereign’s favour. He was going to place his life in danger ; and, consequently, to risk the peace and happiness of his beloved wife and children. No wonder that he felt sad and melancholy.

“The morrow came ; and General Ericson departed from the castle, as if about to take his usual ride. His look was composed and cheerful ; for, ashamed of the passion into which his temper had betrayed him, he was resolved to make

some attempt at a reconciliation. Ericson was no coward ; many a wound and scar testified of his courageous spirit in the day of battle : but he disliked the habit of duelling ; and he felt, that if General Menke should fall that day, his happiness would be gone for ever.

“ But, Mamma,” said Gertrude, “ why did he fight the duel, if he disliked it ?”

“ He was afraid he should be thought a coward if he did not.”

“ Then he was afraid of being thought afraid,” said George. “ If I had been him, I should have told General Menke, he might watch my conduct in the next battle, to see if I were afraid. I

am surprised he could deliberately ride out to murder his friend.”

“It shews you, my dear children,” replied Mrs. Stanhope, “how wrong it is to give way to passion ; and to how much sin a quarrel may lead. What says your little hymn, Egbert ?

‘Hard names at first, and threat’ning words,
That are but noisy breath,
May grow to clubs or naked swords,
To murder and to death.’

“Yes ; it is a dreadful sight to see friends or brothers quarrel. I trust, my dear boys may ever continue as united and affectionate as they have hitherto been.—But to proceed. The general was much surprised, on arriving

at the place of meeting, to perceive a body of cavalry, which immediately surrounded the two officers. Gustavus himself soon appeared. ‘Now,’ said he, ‘fight till one man dies.’ Then turning to the executioner, who stood near, with his axe ready in his hand, he added; ‘the instant one falls, behead the other before my eyes.’

“The two generals gazed at each other for some moments in silence; then, acknowledging their fault, they knelt at the feet of the king, and requested pardon.

“‘It is granted,’ said the gracious monarch; ‘but I will have no more duels.’ Touched with his clemency, their proud hearts were subdued; they embraced

each other; and from that day, Ericson and Menke were cited as an example of the sincerest friendship."

"Thank you, dear Mamma," said George. "Will you now give us some account of the death of this great king?"

"On the morning of the 6th of November, 1632, he prepared to give battle to the Imperialists, under the command of General Walstein, on the plains of Lutzen. As the morning dawned, he ordered divine service to be performed, and prayers to be read at the head of each regiment. At nine o'clock, he rode along the lines, and, addressing the soldiers, said, 'My companions and friends, shew the public this day what you really are. Acquit

yourselves like men of service ; observe your orders ; and behave valiantly, for your own sakes as well as mine. My own blood shall point you the track whereby to follow me.’

“As he concluded, one universal shout of applause passed through the army, and each soldier expressed his determination to conquer or die.

“The action soon after commenced ; and both sides fought with unparalleled intrepidity. About eleven o’clock, the King of Sweden fell, fighting sword-in-hand at the head of his cavalry. He was shot by an Imperial cavalier, and the enemy, rushing forward, killed or dispersed all his immediate attendants. But even as they lay in the agonies of

death, their attachment to their beloved master remained strong as ever. One of the gentlemen of the bed-chamber, who was lying wounded on the ground, cried out aloud, in order to save his master's life, that *he* was the king of Sweden; upon which an Imperial cuirassier ran him through with his sword; and when, covered with numerous wounds, the great Gustavus at length expired, two of his faithful grooms threw themselves across his body, and breathed their last in defence of it. After the king had fallen, the battle was continued with inexpressible fury. The death of their beloved leader was no sooner made known to the Swedes, than they fought like enraged lions to

avenge it. The battle continued nine hours, and terminated in the defeat of the Imperialists: and perhaps no army ever displayed greater heroism than that of the Swedes on the memorable day of Lutzen."

"How grieved poor Eleanora must have been, Mamma, when she heard of the king's death."

"She must, indeed: his affection for her was very great; and his expiring words were, 'Alas! my poor queen! My poor queen!'"

"Well," said George, "he died like a hero. I do not wonder that his soldiers loved him. How old was he, Mamma?"

“He was only thirty-seven years of age when he died,” replied Mrs. Stanhope. “But I must not omit to mention, that he was constantly in the habit of reading the Holy Scriptures. Often, when the soldiers concluded he was delineating plans of sieges and battles, he was engaged in the perusal of the sacred writings. The character of Gustavus Adolphus indeed adorns the page of history, and, to conclude in the words of Dryden,

‘His ashes in a peaceful urn shall rest;
His name a great example stands to show,
How strangely high endeavours may be blest,
Where piety and valour jointly go.’”

CHAPTER IX.

“You said one thing, Mamma, that rather surprised me, the other day,” observed George, as he was walking in the park with his mother. “You spoke of Gustavus Adolphus as being the greatest monarch that ever sat upon the Swedish throne. Now when my cousin Emily was here last summer, she was much interested in reading the life of some great Swedish king, but I think his name was Charles.”

“Yes, my love, Charles the Twelfth,” replied Mrs. Stanhope. “He certainly was a great and extraordinary man ;

brave, undaunted, and firm, and never intimidated in the midst of the greatest dangers; but in most of those qualities which form the character of a good and great king, he must yield to Gustavus Adolphus.”

“Could you tell us anything concerning him, dear Mamma? Emily said that he has been called ‘the modern Alexander,’ and that he gained a splendid victory over our friend Peter the Great. I should like very much to hear something more of his exploits.”

“I will with pleasure gratify you, my dear boy. Charles the Twelfth ascended the Swedish throne in 1697, at the early age of fifteen.”

“That was many years after the death of Gustavus, was it not?” asked Egbert.

“Yes; Gustavus was succeeded by his daughter Christina, who, in a few years, resigned her crown to her cousin Charles the Tenth; and his grandson, was the famous Charles the Twelfth. This king has been often condemned for his obstinacy, temerity, and restless propensity to war; he possessed great intrepidity, and romantic heroism, which, under the direction of prudence, would have ranked him amongst the greatest monarchs of ancient or modern times; but wanting that, his warlike spirit proved a misfortune to his country.”

“But, Mamma,” said Gertrude, “was he obstinate when he was a little boy?”

“Yes, my dear. He had, when he was a child, a great aversion to learn Latin, and he was so obstinate that his preceptors knew not what to do. At last, one of them told him, that the King of Denmark, and the King of Poland, both understood Latin; and Charles, whom a love of glory could move, when all other attempts had failed, immediately began to learn the language, and was soon able to converse in it. On another occasion, he was asked what he thought of the character of Alexander the Great. ‘I think,’ said Charles, ‘I should like to resemble him.’—‘But,’ said his tutor, ‘he only lived to the age

of thirty-two.’—‘Ah!’ said the young prince, ‘and was not that long enough, when he had conquered kingdoms.’”

“He ascended the throne when he was very young, Mamma: did he know how to govern so large a kingdom?”

“Though he ascended the throne at the age of fifteen, his father had appointed the queen-dowager regent of the kingdom, till Charles should attain his eighteenth year. She was highly pleased with this high office, and, delighted to observe her grandson so much amused with hunting and reviewing his troops, hoped she should long enjoy the sweets of authority; but, one day, as the young prince returned from a review, Piper, the councillor of state, ob-

serving him in a profound reverie, asked him of what he was thinking so deeply. ‘I am thinking,’ said Charles, ‘that I am worthy of commanding these brave men; and I wish neither myself nor them any longer to receive orders from a woman.’

“Piper acted upon these words; and, in three days, Charles assumed the reins of government.”

“And what became of the old queen, dear Mamma?”

“She retired to a private life, more suitable to her age, though perhaps not so agreeable to her wishes. The king made his entry into Stockholm, on a bay horse, glittering with silver, the crown on his head, and the sceptre in

his hand, amidst the loud acclamations of the people.”

“Now, Mamma,” said George, “tell us something of his battles.”

“At the age of eighteen, Charles was engaged in wars with Russia, Denmark, and Poland. The war with Denmark he terminated in six weeks. With eight thousand Swedes he defeated eighty thousand Russians, at Narva; and then marched into Poland, of which country, in a short time, he made himself master. So determined was he to depose the Polish monarch, that when entreated by his generals to return to Sweden, where his presence was necessary, he replied, ‘Though I were to remain here fifty years, I will not go

till I have dethroned the King of Poland.'

“And did he accomplish his purpose, Mamma?”

“He did; but when Count Piper, his minister, proposed to him to place the Polish crown on his own head, he replied, ‘It is more pleasure to give away than to gain a kingdom,’ and sacrificing his interest to his love of glory, he caused Stanislaus, a Polish palatine, to be elected king.”

“I think that was very generous, Mamma,” said Egbert; “for I suppose he fought many battles, before he conquered that country.”

“Yes; and his life was frequently in danger. On one occasion, his horse

falling, he was so severely hurt as to be confined to his bed for six weeks. Shortly after this accident, he had, with one of his generals, approached very near the enemy's ramparts, to reconnoitre. The king was in the plain and simple dress which he always wore; and, fearing that his general's richly-ornamented uniform of blue and gold would be too plainly perceived, he, with that magnanimity which was natural to him, desired the officer to go behind him; not reflecting that he was thus placing his life in imminent danger to save that of his subject. The general hesitated; and the king taking him by the arm, placed himself before him, when at this moment a cannon ball laid the

officer dead on the spot which the king had just quitted. The intrepid but romantic monarch of Sweden was now, by a continued train of victories, raised to the zenith of his glory; whilst his bold and decisive measures, and the rapid success of his arms, had rendered him almost the arbiter of Europe, at the early age of five-and-twenty."

"I suppose," said George, "he was aiming to attain the glory which the great Gustavus had acquired."

"Most likely he was, George; for, on going to visit the grave of your favourite hero, at Lutzen, he said, 'I have endeavoured to live his life; may God grant me, one day, as glorious a death!' But though, like Charles, Gustavus was in-

spired with an enthusiastic love of glory, he was ever attentive to the rules of prudence; rules to which Charles paid so little attention, and was so regardless of consequences in what he undertook, that he has been sometimes styled 'the illustrious madman.' But Charles had many shining virtues. In not allowing his soldiers to pillage without permission, in the towns which submitted to him, and in restraining their rapacity, he followed the example of his great predecessor. One day, a peasant came to demand justice on a soldier, who had taken away the dinner provided for his family. Charles desired the soldier to come before him, and, with a severe countenance, asked him if he

had robbed the man? — ‘Sire,’ replied the soldier, ‘I have not done him so much injury as you have done his master; you took away a kingdom from him, I have taken but a turkey from this peasant.’

“The king gave ten ducats to the man, and pardoned the soldier, saying at the same time, ‘Remember, friend, though I took a kingdom from Augustus, I kept nothing for myself.’”

“How much is a ducat, Mamma?”

“A silver ducat is worth about four and sixpence; a gold ducat, about nine and sixpence. In another respect, also, we must admire this monarch; he was never known to break his word, when once given: a noble trait in his charac-

ter ; and one, I trust, which you will all imitate.”

“ Was Charles always victorious, Mamma ? ”

“ No, my love. Hitherto success and good fortune had attended him in an extraordinary manner ; and, though his total contempt of danger frequently exposed him to imminent peril, his life was still preserved by an over-ruling Providence. In a battle, which he fought with the Russians, his horse was killed under him ; a groom was presenting him with another, when both he and the horse were shot dead. Charles continued to fight on foot ; and, though his two aides-de-camp fell close to his side, and with his own hand he had killed twelve of the

enemy, he received not a single wound. But he was about to experience a sad reverse of fortune. Not long afterwards, his troops were defeated by the Russians, after a well-contested field, and his hitherto victorious soldiers found themselves, on the approach of winter, in a hostile country, without provisions, far from home, and surrounded by their enemies.”

“Then, where was he, Mamma?” said Gertrude.

“In the south of Russia, my love. The army was now reduced to such an extremity, that the soldiers were without shoes, and almost without clothes. They frequently wanted bread, and were compelled to throw away all their

cannon because they had no horses to convey them. To complete their misfortunes, two thousand of the hardy troops perished in sight of the king, from the intense cold."

"Poor Charles!" said Egbert, "I suppose now he began to despair."

"No, Egbert; his motto seemed to be, 'never despair.' A soldier, one day, came, before the king, in the presence of the whole army, and, with much grumbling, shewed him a piece of black mouldy bread, made of barley and oats, the only food they then had, and of which they had but a very scanty supply. Charles took the bread, ate it all, and then coolly said to the soldier, 'It is not very good, but it can be eaten.'

“This little circumstance contributed more than anything else to raise the drooping spirits of the army, and increase their respect and confidence in their prince. Charles now laid siege to Poltowa, and both Swedes and Russians looked forward to the event as that which would decide the fate of Russia. The memorable battle of Poltowa proved a disastrous one to Charles. In one day, he lost the fruit of nine years’ successful war. His army was totally defeated, and he fled, wounded, to Bender, in Turkey, where he remained five years.”

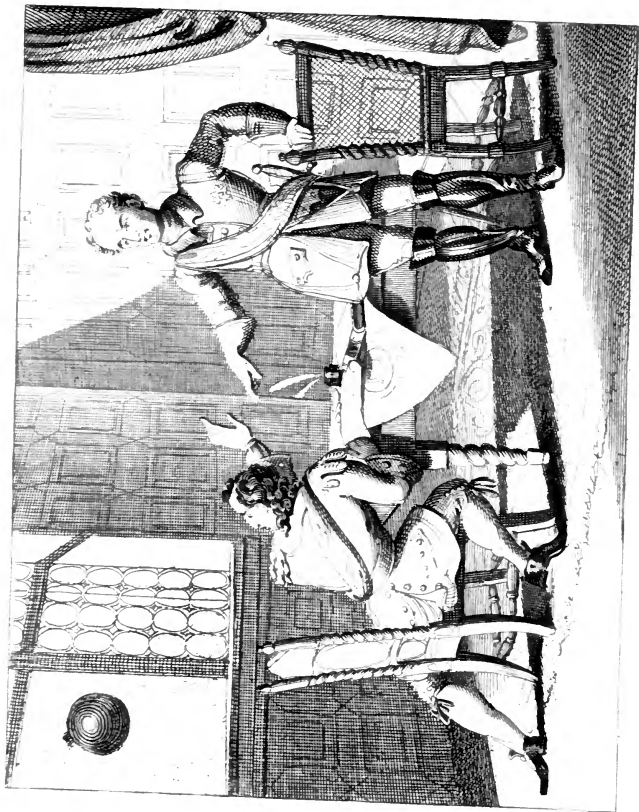
“And when he returned home, was his daring spirit subdued?” inquired George.

“No; he entered with eagerness into war with Saxony, Denmark, and Prus-

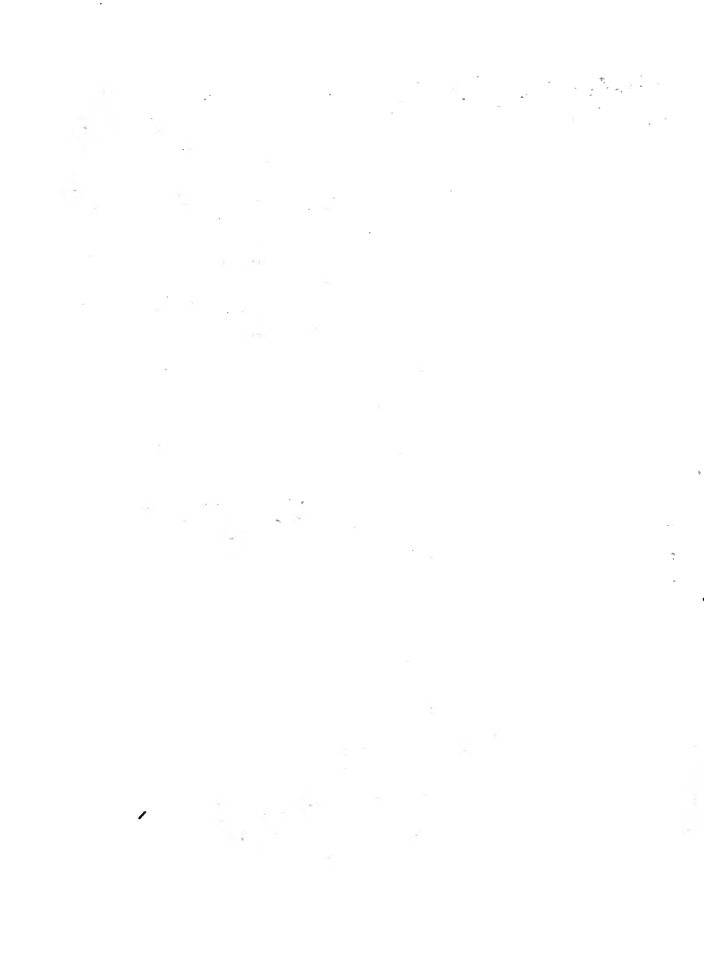
sia : and notwithstanding all the vicissitudes he had experienced, his contempt of danger was still the same. One day, a bomb from the enemy fell upon the house, and burst near the window of a room in which the king was dictating to his secretary. The terrified secretary let fall his pen. ‘What is the matter?’ said the king, rising from his chair, calmly ; ‘why do you not continue to write?’ ‘Ah, sire,’ he replied, ‘the bomb ! The bomb !’ — ‘Well !’ said Charles, ‘what has the bomb to do with the letter? Go on !’”

“Oh ! Mamma,” exclaimed George, “how I admire his bold undaunted spirit. I hope he was victorious now ?”

“No ;” replied Mrs. Stanhope. “Since



CHARLES 12TH DICTATING TO HIS SECRETARY.



his fatal defeat at Poltowa, ill success had attended him, though his warlike spirit remained unsubdued. He now made two expeditions into Norway; in the latter of which he commenced the siege of Frederickshall, in the month of December, when the cold was so severe that the men frequently fell down dead at their posts. But they could not complain, when they saw their king sleeping at night on straw in the open field, and exposing himself to the same hardships as the meanest soldier."

"Why how could he bear it, Mamma?" asked Gertrude.

"He had so inured his body to cold, hunger, and fatigue, my dear, that he could bear almost anything. Wishing

to see how long he could remain without food, he, for five days, neither ate nor drank anything; and then, taking a long ride one morning, he made a very hearty breakfast, without his health being in the slightest degree injured by this experiment. One night, during the siege, he went out to inspect the trenches; but he braved danger once too often. As he was leaning on the parapet, a ball from within entered his right temple, and he immediately expired without a groan. Thus died, at the age of thirty-six, Charles the Twelfth of Sweden; after having experienced the greatest prosperity, and the bitterest adversity, without having been enervated

by the one, or daunted for one moment by the other."

"And do you not call him a great man?" said Egbert.

"I should call him an extraordinary, rather than a great man, my love," replied Mrs. Stanhope. "In some respects, we certainly must admire his character; his dauntless intrepidity, his unwearied perseverance, his astonishing firmness of mind under misfortunes, and his heroism when oppressed by hardship and suffering, are all worthy our admiration; Charles's principal fault was, that when he had once drawn the sword, he was never willing to return it to the scabbard. His romantic obstinacy in

this respect exhausted the resources of his kingdom, which he left in a miserable state, drained of men and money. His career was dazzling; but his country derived no benefit from it. Tell me, George, which do you think most deserved the title of Great; Gustavus Adolphus, who left his kingdom tranquil and prosperous, or Charles the Twelfth, who left it in an impoverished and ruined state, caused by his enthusiastic love of glory?"

"The life of Charles has very much interested me," replied George; "but I think, on reflection, the character of Gustavus superior to that of Charles; for it is one we can both admire and love."

“True, my dear boy. Gustavus, both in his public and private life, gave an example worthy of imitation ; while Charles the Twelfth more resembled some splendid meteor, which dazzles by its brilliancy, and astonishes by the rapidity of its progress.”

CHAPTER X.

MRS. Stanhope and her little family were, one evening, seated round a cheerful fire. The curtains were drawn; the servants had retired; and the countenances of the little group bespoke happiness and contentment.

“Now, dear Mamma,” said little Gertrude, “it is just the time for one of your nice stories; you see Papa is gone to sleep, and it will employ us so pleasantly till the candles come in.”

Egbert’s sparkling eyes seconded his sister’s proposal. “Oh, that will be delightful!” said he; “and let it be of some

famous warrior, like Charles the Twelfth, I am so fond of hearing of battles.”

“I do not suppose Mamma could think of another king quite so fond of war and glory as he was,” said George.

Mrs. Stanhope smiled. “Yes, my dears, I think I can relate a few anecdotes to you of a prince, who, though he died at the early age of two-and-thirty, had reigned twelve years with a glory and renown which no prince either before or since has ever been able to equal.

“Can you guess who I mean?”

“Are you alluding to Alexander the Great?” said George.

“I am,” replied Mrs. Stanhope: “should you like to hear a short account of him?”

“Very much, Mamma. I have often wished to hear something of him; but have never yet had courage to read the Grecian history through.”

“Well, my dear boy, will you promise me one thing? Will you, if you are at all interested in what I am about to relate, promise to read a more detailed account of his life in Plutarch?”

“I promise you I will,” said George.

“I depend on you. Now Gertrude, love, fetch me the map, and point out Macedon, in Greece. Yes, there it is. Of this country Alexander the Great was king, and he ascended the throne B. C. 337, in the twentieth year of his age. From his earliest childhood, ambition was his ruling passion.

“When news was brought of some great victory, which his father’s troops had gained, Alexander, instead of sharing in the general joy, used to complain that there would be no kingdoms left for him to conquer.

“He was, when young, very attentive to the instructions of his tutors, always endeavouring to acquire knowledge, and making rapid progress in his studies. Unlike one little boy of my acquaintance, he was so fond of Homer, that a copy of the Iliad was always placed under his pillow.”

“Well,” said George laughing, “I only wonder he could sleep. But, Mamma, is there not an anecdote about his managing a fiery horse?”

“Yes; a famous horse, named Bucephalus, was brought to King Philip, his father, and the owner refused to take less for him than the sum of 2500*l*. Philip and his courtiers went into the plains, to make trial of him; but he was so wild and unmanageable, that no one would venture to mount him. The king, angry that so furious a creature should have been brought to him, ordered him to be sent away; but as Alexander appeared vexed at the thought of losing so noble an animal, his father yielded to his request, and gave him leave to try what he could do.

“The prince, overjoyed at the permission, went up to Bucephalus, and, first soothing him, sprang upon his back; then,

perceiving that his fury began to abate, gave him the rein, and, spurring him on to full speed, returned with pride and triumph at having tamed a horse which had been deemed ungovernable. The courtiers burst into shouts of applause; and Philip, embracing him, with tears in his eyes, said, "My son, seek a kingdom more worthy of thee; for Macedon is below thy merit."

"I am glad he conquered him," said Egbert.

"Had Alexander a mother living?"

"He had; and throughout his life he treated her with respect and affection. Antipater once wrote him a long letter full of complaints against her; and when he had read it, he said, "Antipa-

ter knows not that one tear of a mother, can blot out a thousand such complaints.”

“I am glad he loved his mother,” said George. “What did he do when he became king?”

“After having brought all Greece under his dominion, he turned his thoughts to Persia, and, with a brave army, invaded that kingdom. He met the Persian King, Darius, on the banks of the Granicus; and, though the Persians were more than double the number of the Greeks, the latter gained a splendid victory. He soon after restored the Queen of Caria to her kingdom; and she, in order to shew her gratitude, sent him meats dressed in the most exquisite

manner,—and excellent cooks of every kind. Alexander thanked her for her politeness, but told her, ‘that he had much better cooks of his own ; exercise, which gave him an appetite for dinner ; and temperance, which prepared him for supper.’ Advancing farther into the country, he was everywhere victorious, and arrived at Gordium, where the celebrated Gordian knot was tied.”

“ What kind of a knot was that, Mamma ? ” said Egbert. “ I have often heard a difficult knot called a Gordian knot, but I never knew what it meant.”

“ It was a cord, my dear, tied with so much intricacy that no one was able to undo it. It was believed that the man who could untie it, should possess

the empire of Asia. Alexander, ever ambitious, declared it must be meant for him; and, not being able to unfasten it, he drew his sword and cut it asunder.

“Darius, now becoming alarmed for the safety of his kingdom, advanced to meet Alexander with an immense army; and with a train, whose magnificence and splendour have been rarely equalled. The gold, silver, and jewels, which appeared in every part of his army, cannot be described. The king himself was glittering in precious stones; ten thousand of his soldiers were clothed in robes of gold tissue, with golden collars; the very pikes of his spear-men were adorned with silver, and tipped with gold; and you will think it strange when I

tell you, that his mother, wife, and children, all accompanied him, with numerous attendants."

"He was a different man to Charles, or Gustavus, Mamma."

"He was, George; and the battle of Issus made him regret his ostentatious magnificence. Both parties being eager to engage, Alexander commenced the attack by plunging into a river which divided them; and, notwithstanding the arrows showered upon him, he gained the opposite shore, and, falling upon the enemy, sword-in-hand, quickly threw them into confusion. In short, this immense army was soon and completely routed; seventy thousand of the Persians were slain, and forty thousand taken

prisoners ; whilst of the Grecians, there fell but two hundred and eighty men.”

“What a difference ! But what became of Darius ?”

“Darius fled ; but his mother, his queen, and children, fell into the conqueror’s hands. Alexander, however, treated his royal prisoners with respect and generosity, which did him more honour than all his splendid victories. He did every thing in his power to comfort them in their affliction, gave them as much accommodation, and ordered them to be attended with as much pomp, as if they were in the Persian court ; and his conduct throughout was so noble and magnanimous, that Darius, when he heard of it, exclaimed, ‘ If

the empire is to fall, may none but Alexander sit on the throne of Persia !”

“He was indeed a generous enemy ! Did Darius now submit to him ?”

“No ; he, however, sent him several offers of peace, which Alexander proudly rejected, saying, ‘That the heavens would not admit of two suns, nor the earth of two sovereigns.’ Darius, therefore, determined once more to risk an engagement ; and the hostile armies met at Arbela ; the Persians being much more numerous than at the battle of Issus. But the young conqueror’s glory remained unsullied. The event of this famous battle gave him the empire of Asia. It was on this occasion, that, being pressed by some of his generals to attack the

enemy in the night, Alexander returned that celebrated answer, ‘I will not steal a victory!’”

“Why, Mamma,” said George, “nothing seemed to withstand his arms: did he fight in person?”

“Yes; he animated his men by his example, and exposed himself to as much danger as the meanest soldier. Soon after this battle, the Persian king was slain by the treachery of his guards. He was a mild, pacific, and generous prince; and we cannot but deplore his melancholy end. As he was lying wounded in his carriage, he had just strength to call for water, which a Macedonian soldier brought him. After drinking, Darius charged

him to tell Alexander that he died in his debt ; that he was deeply grateful to him for his humanity towards his wife and children ; and that he hoped he might become sovereign of the world. So saying, he breathed his last."

"Poor Darius !" sighed little Gertrude. "Was Alexander glad when he heard of his death ?"

"No, my love ; the young warrior coming up, shed tears at the sight, and, having ordered him a magnificent funeral, put the traitors to death. Whilst marching here, he evinced his magnanimity and temperance in a striking degree. He and his soldiers suffered so much from want of water, that many of the cavalry were unable to

go on. They at length met some people with a few bottles of water, who, seeing the king greatly distressed with thirst, offered him some in a helmet. He took it, and was just about to drink, when, looking round, and seeing all the horsemen bending their heads, and fixing their eyes on the water, he returned it untasted, saying, 'If I alone drink, my men will be dispirited.' The soldiers, struck with his generosity, exclaimed, 'Let us march! we are neither weary nor thirsty, whilst under the conduct of such a king.'"

"It was noble conduct, indeed," said George; "excessive thirst must be so painful. Go on, Mamma."

"Alexander now marched his troops

to India; and, in attacking a town, gave a signal proof of his courage. Seizing a scaling ladder, he was the first to mount the walls; his soldiers following him. Suddenly the ladder broke, and he was left upon the wall with only two men; when, sword in hand, he boldly leaped down into the city, which was crowded with enemies. Here, with his back to a tree, he kept the boldest at a distance, and even killed the governor of the city, who advanced in the throng. At last, he was pierced by an arrow, discharged by an Indian; and, a great quantity of blood issuing from the wound, he fell down apparently dead. The Indian came to strip him, when Alexander, springing up, plunged a dag-

ger into his side. By this time his soldiers, having forced the gates, saved the king's life, and put the inhabitants to the sword."

"Oh! Mamma," said Egbert, "I am so glad he did not die. I began to be in fear for him."

"He now continued his course till he reached the Indian ocean, where he was much surprised at the high tides, so different from those of the Mediterranean. Here he put an end to his expedition; and casting his eyes wistfully over the broad expanse of waters before him, he is said to have wept, because there were no more worlds for him to conquer."

"Well! he was fond of glory, indeed,"

said Gertrude; “and then, Mamma, I suppose he went home, and passed the rest of his life in peace?”

“He bent his steps homewards, my love,” replied Mrs. Stanhope, “but he never reached Macedon. On his arrival at Babylon, he began to form plans for improving and beautifying the city; which he did not live to put into execution. To dissipate some gloomy reflections, which even the height of glory he had attained to, could not dispel, Alexander had recourse to intemperance. Having spent a whole day and a night in drinking to excess, he was seized with a fever, which in a short time put an end to his life. Such was the melancholy, the ignoble end of this great con-

queror ; and such were the lamentable effects of intemperance on a prince who had not attained his thirty-third year."

"Oh ! I am so disappointed !" said George. "I never expected he would have died in such a way."

"I suppose Alexander thought such a death as little likely to befall him, as you do, George ; and it may serve as an useful lesson to us all, to beware of allowing bad habits to get the mastery over us. Great as this prince was in many respects, he fell a victim to his own folly ; and we cannot but regret that with so much bravery, humanity, and generosity, Alexander should give way at last to this degrading vice.

"Now, Egbert, do you think you can

tell me the names of the three battles which he fought with Darius?"

"Yes, Mamma, I think I can. The battle of the Granicus, the battle of Issus, and the battle of Arbela."

"Very well remembered; I am pleased and gratified to have so attentive a listener. Exercise your memory, my dear boy, and you will soon acquire knowledge; knowledge which always is valuable and useful, and in the pursuit of which you will not fail to reap a rich reward."

THE END.

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