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THE
FALL OF SOMERSET.

BY
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AUTHOR OF

“PRESTON FIGHT,” “BOSCOBEL,” “MANCHESTER REBELS,” “TOWER
OF LONDON,” “OLD SAINT PAUL’S,” &c. &c. &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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CONTENTS OF VOL. III.

BOOK III.—THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBER- LAND.—(*Continued.*)

III.

	PAGE
HOW LORD LISLE WAS MARRIED TO LADY ANNE SEY- MOUR AT SHENE PALACE	3

IV.

A FRESH CONSPIRACY	12
------------------------------	----

V.

THE MEETING OF THE CONSPIRATORS IN THE PAVI- LION	21
--	----

VI.

OF THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND'S UNEXPECTED VISIT TO SOMERSET HOUSE	31
---	----

	PAGE
VII.	
IN WHICH AN EXPLANATION TAKES PLACE BETWEEN SIR AUGUSTIN AND MARGARET	42
VIII.	
HOW SIR THOMAS PALMER WAS CAPTURED	52
IX.	
HOW THE TWO MORTAL ENEMIES MET AT SION HOUSE	66
X.	
SOMERSET'S SUSPICIONS ARE AWAKENED	72
XI.	
OF THE ADVICE GIVEN BY THE DUCHESS OF SOMERSET TO HER LORD	82
XII.	
HOW SIR RALPH VANE WAS DEFEATED AT RICHMOND BY CAPTAIN DRURY	97
XIII.	
HOW THE DUKE OF SOMERSET WITH THE EARL OF ARUNDEL AND THE LORDS GREY AND PAGET RODE INTO THE CITY; AND HOW THEY WERE RECEIVED	105

XIV.

	PAGE
HOW SIR RALPH VANE AND SIR AUGUSTIN STEWART SECRETLY VISITED THE TOWER	109

XV.

HOW THE DUKE RESOLVED TO DEFEND SOMERSET HOUSE	119
---	-----

XVI.

HOW CAPTAIN DRURY WAS KILLED BY SIR RALPH VANE	126
---	-----

XVII.

HOW SIR AUGUSTIN DEFENDED THE RIVER TERRACE .	135
---	-----

XVIII.

HOW THE DUKE WAS ARRESTED AND AGAIN SENT TO THE TOWER	142
--	-----

XIX.

MARGARET ONCE MORE ATTENDS UPON THE KING .	154
--	-----

XX.

HOW AN ATTEMPT WAS MADE ON THE KING'S LIFE IN WINDSOR FOREST	163
---	-----

	PAGE
XXI.	
OF THE ERRAND ON WHICH SIR AUGUSTIN WAS SENT BY THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND . . .	171
XXII.	
COPT HALL	180
XXIII.	
THE PRINCESS MARY AND MESSIRE SIMON RENARD .	192
XXIV.	
AT WHOSE SOLICITATION SIR AUGUSTIN WAS PARDONED BY THE KING	207
XXV.	
HOW THE DUKE OF SOMERSET AND THE CONSPIRA- TORS PASSED THEIR TIME IN THE TOWER . . .	220
XXVI.	
THE TRIAL OF THE DUKE OF SOMERSET IN WEST- MINSTER HALL	228
XXVII.	
OF THE LAST INTERVIEW BETWEEN THE KING AND THE DUKE OF SOMERSET	239

XXVIII.

	PAGE
HOW MARGARET BREATHED HER LAST IN THE KING'S PRESENCE	247

XXIX.

HOW THE WARRANT FOR SOMERSET'S EXECUTION WAS SIGNED BY THE KING	255
--	-----

XXX.

HOW THE DUKE OF SOMERSET WAS BEHEADED ON TOWER HILL	262
--	-----

THE
FALL OF SOMERSET.

Book the Third.

[CONTINUED.]

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

III.

HOW LORD LISLE WAS MARRIED TO LADY ANNE SEYMOUR
AT SHENE PALACE.

THE reconciliation between the Duke of Somerset and the Earl of Warwick seemed now complete.

Since their families were to be so soon united, their interests were in common, and it was confidently believed by the whole Court, and by the king himself, that all rivalry between them was extinguished.

But this opinion was incorrect. That the proud duke could forgive his overthrow

from power was impossible. But he persuaded himself that at no distant date he should regain his post, and to this end all his efforts should in future be directed—but secretly, and with the utmost caution.

Already, he seemed re-established in his royal nephew's favour. A full and unconditional pardon had been granted him by the king, and he had been again admitted to a seat in the Council by Warwick, who no longer seemed to entertain any jealousy of him.

The approaching marriage, which was to be solemnised at Shene, in the king's presence, was now the chief topic of conversation at Court, and active preparations were made for the fête to be given by his majesty on the occasion, which was to comprise a grand banquet and ball, jousts, and sports on the river.

At length the auspicious day arrived. Fortunately, the weather was propitious. The sun shone brilliantly on the numerous towers and vanes of the palace, and on the beautiful river flowing past. At the rear of the magnificent structure, and just within Richmond Park, barriers were erected.

The river was covered with boats, the occupants of which could see all that took place on the terrace and in the front garden, though none, save guests, were allowed to land, or even approach within a certain distance of the shore.

The court and hall were full of serving-men, and the presence-chamber and great chamber were thronged with gentlemen.

Amid joyous peals of bells from the church towers of Kingston and Brentford, the company began to arrive, and assembled

in the great hall, which was hanged with arras for the occasion.

The attire of the guests was magnificent. Gowns of velvet of various hues, lined with cloth of gold and blazing with jewels—gowns of crimson and purple satin, embroidered with gold—gowns of cloth of gold, with sleeves of purple gold tissue, or of crimson satin, were everywhere to be seen, commingled with embroidered mantles of blue, white, and green velvet, and silken bonnets adorned with pearls.

All the most important persons of the Court were present—both factions being now strongly represented. Not only were Warwick's staunchest adherents there—the Marquis of Northampton, the Earls of Bedford, Wiltshire, and Huntingdon—but Somerset's partisans, the Earl of Arundel, the Lord Grey, and Sir Ralph Vane, with his

grace's late fellow-prisoners in the Tower—Sir Michael Stanhope, Sir Thomas Smith, and Sir John Thynne.

The marriage took place in the chapel of the palace, the ceremony being performed by Cranmer and his chaplains in the presence of the king and the principal personages of the court.

The bride, whose lovely tresses were unbound, and flowed over her shoulders, excited general admiration. Though the chapel was crowded with high-born damsels, all accounted beautiful, not one could compare with her. And well was she matched. Handsomer young noble than Lord Lisle did not grace Edward's Court.

All the illustrious relatives of the bride and bridegroom were bidden to the marriage, but not half of them could obtain admittance to the chapel. Owing to want

of room, many important persons were necessarily excluded. Sir Augustin Stewart, however, was present, and Margaret Flowerdew was one of the bridesmaids.

In splendour of dresses, magnificence of arrangements, and the high rank of the company, the ceremony might vie with a royal wedding.

After the marriage came a banquet, conducted on the same princely scale. All the royal servers, cup-bearers, and carvers were in attendance; and there were two magnificent cupboards, each six stages high, one filled with dishes of gold, and the other with splendid silver plate.

Nothing, in short, was neglected, the banquet being intended by the king quite as much to celebrate the reconciliation of the two great nobles, as the union of their families. Equal attention was paid to both

of them by the king, and it was quite impossible for either to declare that he had been preferred.

But the person for whom Edward displayed the greatest regard was Lady Lisle. He treated her in all respects like a sister—with far more affection, indeed, than he displayed for either of the princesses, his sisters.

After the banquet, and before going forth to the barriers to witness a tilting-match, he took her to an inner room, and presented her with several jewels—a pair of bracelets set with diamonds, rubies, and pearls; a carcanet laced with diamonds and rubies; a girdle of goldsmith's work, set with roses of rubies and pearls; a flower of five large diamonds; a gold chain, having his own miniature attached to it; and a splendid diamond ring.

Enchanted with these presents, Lady Lisle called her husband to look at them.

“See what lovely jewels his majesty has given me.”

Lord Lisle expressed his admiration, and added in jest :

“Methinks this ring would fit my finger. Will you transfer it to me ?”

“Have I your majesty’s permission ?” asked Lady Lisle.

“My sweet cousin must part with nothing I have given her, with nothing I may give her, even to her husband,” replied Edward. “But you shall not be disappointed, my lord,” he added to Lord Lisle.

And taking off a splendid diamond ring, he placed it on his lordship’s finger.

Without waiting for any acknowledgment of the princely gift, he added :

“Now let us go to the barriers, and see the tilting-match.”

Edward then gave his hand to the bride, and led her forth.

Followed by a large attendance, he proceeded to the enclosure, where those about to run awaited him. The winners were Lord Strange, Sir Ralph Vane, and Sir Augustin Stewart.

The remainder of the festive day was spent in divers pastimes, with music and dancing in the evening.

IV.

A FRESH CONSPIRACY.

EXCEPT that he no longer enjoyed the almost sovereign power he possessed when Lord Protector, the Duke of Somerset had now quite recovered his former exalted position. He had received a full pardon; the heavy fines imposed upon him had been remitted; his forfeited estates restored; he was once more a member of the Privy Council, albeit a simple member, and had been made a lord of the bedchamber.

But he was not content. He sighed for his lost power, and did not doubt that he should be able to regain it. To accomplish this object the utmost caution was required. With a rival so vigilant and crafty as Warwick, the slightest indiscretion would be fatal.

The duke had now removed from Sion to Somerset House, and kept up that magnificent mansion in princely style. He had a large retinue of servants and gentlemen, and frequently invited the king and the Court to his banquets and other entertainments, which were of the most splendid description. On all these occasions he paid the utmost attention to Warwick, for whom he professed the greatest regard.

Meantime, he was secretly strengthening his own party, and had already gained the Earl of Arundel, Lord Paget, and Lord

Grey. Besides these noblemen he had secured Sir Ralph Vane, a very brave and ambitious gentleman, Sir Thomas Arundel, and Sir Thomas Palmer; the latter, however, proved a traitor. It seems scarcely necessary to state that the duke still retained his old friends and adherents, Sir Michael Stanhope, Sir Miles Partridge, and Sir John Thynne. But his most useful assistant was his secretary, Sir Augustin Stewart, to whom he confided all his plans.

It may be incidentally mentioned that Margaret Flowerdew was still in attendance upon the duchess, who would not consent to part with her when her father wished to take her back with him to Hethersett. But though she and Sir Augustin constantly met, they rarely conversed in private, and it would almost seem from Margaret's

changed manner towards him that their engagement had terminated.

Before his departure for Norfolk, Flowerdew demanded an explanation from his daughter, but could obtain none.

Things went on thus for several months, during which many important events occurred, but, as they do not affect our story, we shall not refer to them.

Greatly to the delight of the duchess and Margaret, Lady Lisle had come to stay at Somerset House, during the absence of her lord, who had been sent with the Marquis of Northampton and several other nobles on an embassy to Paris, to invest Henri the Second with the Order of the Garter, and demand a wife for King Edward.

While on this visit, Lady Lisle thought she discovered that the duke, her father, was engaged in some scheme against the

Earl of Warwick, and, feeling extremely uneasy, spoke to the duchess and Margaret on the subject, but could learn nothing from them. She likewise mentioned her suspicions, but very cautiously, to Sir Augustin Stewart, and said to him :

“ You have great influence over the duke, and I pray you to exert it now. Warn his grace not to make any attempt against the Earl of Warwick. It will inevitably fail, and end in his own destruction. I dare not even allude to the matter to the duke, or I would tell him so.”

Sir Augustin bade her have no fear, assuring her she was entirely mistaken ; and nothing more was said. 60

When she next saw the duke, she thought he looked graver than usual, and he gave her no opportunity of talking to him in private.

“My message has been delivered to him,” she thought. “Heaven grant he may not neglect the warning!”

A few days after this, the Marquis of Northampton returned from Paris with his suite. But Lady Lisle, who had been cautioned by the duchess, maintained a discreet silence towards her husband.

Moreover, the attention of all belonging to the Court was engrossed at the time by an event of unusual interest. In return for the Garter, which he had received, and highly appreciated, the French monarch had sent Edward the Order of Saint Michael.

The decoration was brought by the Marshal Saint André, accompanied by a splendid retinue of nobles and knights; and the envoy was received by the king at Hampton Court, where his majesty was staying, and

sumptuous entertainments were then given him and his suite, at which the whole Court was present.

A grand banquet followed from the Earl of Warwick; but this was completely eclipsed by an entertainment at Somerset House, which so enchanted the marshal, that he declared he had never seen anything equal to it.

Somerset was highly gratified by the remark; but when it was reported to Warwick, he was much piqued, and said to Northampton:

“The duke has done well; he may not give such another fête!”

Before Somerset's scheme, of which we shall speak presently, was fully matured, Warwick obtained an immense increase of power by inducing the Marquis of Dorset to surrender to him the wardenship of the

Scottish Marches—an acquisition that gave him great authority in the northern counties. But this was only a preliminary step, intended by the sagacious earl to baffle the designs of his enemies.

Shortly afterwards, it was intimated to the Council that the king intended to create the Earl of Warwick Duke of Northumberland; that the Marquis of Dorset would be raised to the dignity of Duke of Suffolk; that Paulet, Earl of Wiltshire, was to be made Marquis of Winchester; and Sir William Herbert—one of Warwick's creatures—Earl of Pembroke.

This announcement, which was wholly unexpected by them, convinced Somerset and his confederates that their chance would be lost if the scheme was not speedily executed. As Duke of Northumberland, Warwick would be all-powerful,

and it would be impossible to cope with him ; and it was understood that he intended further to aggrandise himself by marrying his fourth son, Lord Guilford Dudley, to the daughter of the newly-created Duke of Suffolk—the Lady Jane Grey having, in right of her mother, some pretensions to the crown—pretensions which it was possible, nay, probable, that Northumberland might one day assert.

For these reasons, the conspirators resolved that there should be no more delay.

Accordingly, a meeting was appointed to take place on the afternoon of the following day at Somerset House.

V.

THE MEETING OF THE CONSPIRATORS IN THE PAVILION.

THE meetings of the conspirators, which were always arranged by Sir Augustin Stewart, were held in the garden, since those who attended them could come by water, and in covered boats, and there could be no listeners to their discourse, as might have been the case if they had assembled in the large hall of the palace.

A pavilion that terminated the terrace, and overlooked the river, was judged the

safest place of rendezvous, and thither all those concerned in the plot repaired. Boat after boat arrived at the stairs, and the noble or knightly occupants were received on landing by Sir Augustin, and at once proceeded to the pavilion, where they found the Duke of Somerset.

The party were nine in number, and included the Earl of Arundel, the Lords Paget and Grey, Sir Ralph Vane, Sir Michael Stanhope, Sir Miles Partridge, Sir John Thynne, Sir Thomas Arundel, and Sir Thomas Palmer. No attendants were present; and when all had assembled, the door was partly closed, and Sir Augustin kept watch outside, to give notice of the approach of any intruder.

Somerset welcomed his friends very cordially, and shook hands with all of them as they entered the little building, in which

were a small table and some half-dozen chairs.

After a little preliminary discourse, the duke proceeded to address them.

“ I thank you all for coming to me at this critical juncture,” he said. “ We have been taken by surprise. Our enemy has stolen a march upon us, and the question arises, what must be done under the circumstances? I will give you my opinion, and you can consider it. Northumberland is now at a high point, but he may fall as quickly as he has gained it, and it must be our business to hurl him down. In what manner shall this be done? I would gladly engage him in fair fight, but he will accept no challenge. We must, therefore, seize him, and put him to death. I like not the plan, but there is no other.”

“ Your grace is in the right,” remarked

the Earl of Arundel. "Our potent enemy must be removed before he has time to harm us. When the blow is struck, it must be dealt effectually!"

"I agree with you, my lord," said Paget. "No second blow must be required; but we have to deal with one of the most wary of men, who will not readily be caught in a snare, and yet success will be attained in no other way. My idea is to invite him, Northampton, Winchester, and Pembroke to a banquet, and then fall upon them suddenly and strike off their heads."

"Your plan is excellent," said Somerset, "and ought to be acted upon."

"Since your grace approves the proposition," rejoined Paget, "I am willing to give the banquet at my house in the Strand, and invite the guests. I believe

they will come, since I am certain Northumberland has no suspicion of me."

"There is not another person among us whose invitation he would accept," remarked Lord Grey.

"Rest assured he will not refuse you, my lord," said Somerset to Paget; "and I shall be ready to play the part of his executioner."

"Or his assassin!" mentally ejaculated Sir Thomas Palmer.

"If your grace is resolved to carry out this plan," said Paget, "on what day shall the banquet be fixed?"

"On this day week," replied the duke. "That will allow ample time for preparation."

"Scarcely, your grace," observed Sir Ralph Vane. "I have two thousand men,

as you know, but they are not quite ready. However, I will do my best."

"Ay, do," rejoined the duke; "there will be danger in delay."

"To-morrow I will set out to levy forces in the northern counties," said Lord Grey. "But I may fail, since Northumberland has become Lord of the Marches."

"But when we have disposed of him, you can take the office," said Somerset.

Then turning to Sir Thomas Arundel, he added:

"Are we assured of the Tower?"

"We are," replied Sir Thomas. "I have seen the lieutenant, Sir Arthur Markham, to-day, and he will deliver up the fortress on your grace's demand."

"That is well," said Somerset. "Our next business must be to seize the Great Seal, and we must then raise the City."

“All is prepared,” replied Sir Miles Partridge. “The citizens will support your grace, and rise in a mass] when the proclamation is made.”

“I am promised a troop of horse,” said Sir Michael Stanhope.

“Then you and Vane shall secure the person of the king, and convey him to the Tower,” said Somerset. “My own plan will be this. I have a troop of two hundred horse, on whom I can perfectly rely. I will have these men ready in the court of Somerset House, and when Northumberland and his friends come to banquet with Lord Paget, I will suddenly sally forth with my *gens d’armes*, and cut them to pieces.”

“But Northumberland will doubtless be numerously attended,” said Lord Paget. “Your grace’s first plan is the safest and

best, and I strongly advise you to adhere to it."

"So do we all," cried the conspirators.

"Northumberland might escape from the attack," remarked Sir Ralph Vane; "but when he has once taken his seat at the banquet, he cannot escape."

"He shall die with the wine-cup in his hand," said Somerset. "I must have you with me, my lord," he added, to the Earl of Arundel, who readily assented; "and you, and you," continued the duke, to Sir John Thynne and Sir Thomas Palmer. "Each shall receive full directions before the time."

"My part shall at once be performed," said Paget. "The invitations shall be sent for the appointed day, and unless you hear from me, you may conclude they are accepted, and prepare accordingly."

“We must meet again shortly,” said the duke. “Much has to be discussed, but I trust no change will have to be made in the plans. I dread delay.”

“None need occur,” rejoined Paget. “I cannot command Northumberland and his friends, but I do not think they will disappoint us.”

“Before we separate,” said the duke, “let us bind ourselves by oath not to reveal aught that has passed at this meeting. I am well assured there are no traitors among us, but our safety demands that every precaution should be taken.”

“Your grace is right,” said the Earl of Arundel. “We swear to reveal nothing.”

“We swear!” cried all the others, except Sir Thomas Palmer, whose silence passed unnoticed.

At this moment the door of the pavilion

was suddenly opened by Sir Augustin Stewart.

“A splendid company has just come forth into the garden,” he said; “I think it must be the Duke of Northumberland and his suite.”

“That would be unlucky,” cried Somerset; “I did not expect a visit from him. But no concealment must be attempted. We must hasten to meet him.”

With this, they all quitted the pavilion, and marched along the terrace.

VI.

OF THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND'S UNEXPECTED VISIT
TO SOMERSET HOUSE.

THE information given by Sir Augustin proved correct.

Northumberland, who was magnificently attired, was accompanied by his eldest son, now Earl of Warwick, Lord Strange, and several other young nobles.

Feigning pleasurable surprise, Somerset flew to welcome his rival, and expressed his sense of the honour conferred upon him.

“My first visit is to your grace,” said Northumberland, with seeming cordiality. “I should have come sooner if I had had a moment to spare.”

“I called at Durham House yesterday to offer my congratulations to your grace on your increase of dignity,” said Somerset, “but I did not care to disturb you.”

“I heard of the visit, and felt much gratified by it,” rejoined Northumberland. “But you have many friends with you whom it rejoices me to meet.”

On this hint, Somerset brought them all forward, and presented them in turn. Each made a profound salutation as he advanced.

Northumberland's deportment was certainly prouder than heretofore, but he shook hands in a very friendly manner with the Earl of Arundel, and the Lords

Paget and Grey; but Sir Ralph Vane was highly offended by what he deemed the duke's haughty manner towards him.

Thinking this a favourable opportunity to secure Northumberland, Paget said to him :

“I desire to give a banquet in your grace's honour, and will invite to it your friends Northampton, Winchester, and Pembroke, when I learn what day will suit your grace. Shall it be this day week?”

“No day could suit me better,” replied Northumberland. “I will mark it in my tablets with your lordship's name.”

Paget then turned to Somerset.

“I hope your grace will come and meet the duke,” he said.

“With all my heart!” replied Somerset. “I would not willingly be absent on this occasion.”

“Let it be understood that all here are invited,” said Paget, looking round.

“Your lordship may expect us,” was the general response.

“Another banquet shall speedily follow at Durham House,” said Northumberland; “at which, I trust, his majesty will be present, as well as those who may grace Lord Paget’s board.”

“Nay, we will not stop there,” said Somerset. “We will have yet another, that shall take place in this house.”

“Then it is sure to surpass all the rest,” remarked Northumberland. “Marshal Saint-André declared that none of our entertainments equalled your grace’s, and he is a good judge.”

“He praised it too highly,” said Somerset, smiling.

“You must look for no such grand enter-

tainment from me," said Paget. "Mine will be a simple banquet."

"So much the better," said Northumberland. "But I must be gone. I have to ride to Shene, to wait upon the king."

"When does your grace return to Durham House?" asked Somerset.

"I can scarcely tell," replied Northumberland. "'Tis not unlikely his majesty may go to Hampton Court, in which case I shall have to attend him."

"But your grace will not disappoint us?" cried Paget. "We shall calculate upon you."

"Fear nothing; I will infallibly be with you on the appointed day," rejoined Northumberland. "Before I depart, I have a word to say to your grace in private."

Though feeling somewhat uneasy, Somerset immediately stepped aside with him.

“I have a favour to ask of you,” pursued Northumberland. “If you have no present use for Sion House, will you lend it me for a few months?”

“I have just offered it to your son, Lord Warwick, and the countess,” replied Somerset. “But that matters little. They will be glad to have your grace with them.”

“’Twas for them I wanted the mansion,” said Northumberland. “I had not heard of your grace’s kindness.”

As he spoke, he signed to the Earl of Warwick, who immediately came to them.

“I find you are to have Sion House,” said the duke.

“His grace has been good enough to offer it to us,” replied Warwick; “and he could not have obliged us more. He has

made the countess perfectly happy. She can now see as much of her royal cousin as she desires."

"Take possession of the house as soon as you will," said Somerset.

"Ay, go there to-morrow," added Northumberland. "I will try to persuade the king to remain at Shene for awhile."

"And his majesty, I doubt not, will readily yield to your grace's persuasion," remarked Somerset. "To-morrow," continued the duke, addressing Warwick, "I will meet you at Sion, and deliver up to you the house and all within it."

The young earl could only imperfectly express his thanks; and the duke, his father, seemed astonished at Somerset's generosity.

Shortly afterwards, Northumberland took

his departure, and Somerset attended him to the great court of the palace, where he and his suite had left their horses and attendants.

“I am glad you have got Sion House,” said Northumberland to his son, as they rode along the Strand. “This will prevent any question about the place hereafter.”

“I do not understand your grace,” replied Warwick. “Was it not restored to the duke?”

“Ay; but it may again be forfeited.”

“I hope there is no chance of that,” observed Warwick.

“I hope so, too,” rejoined his father. “But I am always suspicious of Somerset; always on my guard against him. He may be plotting now. What meant that large assemblage in the garden?”

“I own I was struck by it,” remarked Warwick.

“The meeting could not be accidental,” said the duke. “To my mind they had all the look of conspirators; and excepting Paget and Sir Thomas Palmer, all the others are my secret enemies.”

“I wonder your grace accepted the invitation to that banquet,” said Warwick.

“I had a motive in doing so,” replied Northumberland.

“But some attempt may be made upon your life,” said Warwick, anxiously.

“I have no fear,” replied the duke. “I shall have you with me.”

“And some others, I trust?” rejoined his son.

“Quite enow for my defence,” said the duke. “Doubtless, before the day arrives, I shall learn something, for I have those

who will not fail to inform me of any design against me. And I feel perfectly easy, since I have all these conspirators—from Somerset downwards—in my hand, and can seize them whenever I think proper.”

“ I hope your suspicions of the duke will prove groundless,” said Warwick.

“ I may be wrong in this particular instance,” replied his father; “ but he is ever plotting. I have not yet ascertained how far he has carried his designs; nor have I deemed it necessary to check him. But I shall be compelled to do so if he proceeds further. Meantime, you must maintain the strictest silence. Breathe not a word of what has passed between us to your wife or you will defeat my plans.”

Warwick promised strict obedience to the

command, though he felt it would be no easy matter.

Shortly afterwards they quickened their pace, and made rapidly their way to Shene.

VII.

IN WHICH AN EXPLANATION TAKES PLACE BETWEEN SIR
AUGUSTIN AND MARGARET.

THE conspirators quitted the garden of Somerset House by the river, and Sir Augustin Stewart, who had tarried to see them all off, was proceeding along the terrace, when he beheld Margaret coming towards him, and hurried forward to meet her.

“Are they all gone?” she inquired.

“All,” he replied.

“I will not ask why they came here,” she said, “because I can pretty well guess.”

But I suppose the unexpected arrival of the Duke of Northumberland has caused some alarm? I hope the duke's suspicions were not excited by the large party he found here?"

"He did not even seem surprised," replied Sir Augustin. "But that proves little, for his looks never betray his thoughts."

Having said all she desired, Margaret would have hastened away, but he detained her. Her hand trembled as he took it.

"Margaret," he said, in a tone of mingled grief and tenderness, "I can bear this no longer. We must have an explanation. You must tell me the meaning of your incomprehensible conduct. Knowing you as I do, I cannot believe it is from some idle reason that you make me thus miserable. Have you ceased to love me? Do

you desire to be set free? Speak, and you shall be obeyed, whatever the effort may cost me!"

He stopped, and regarded her imploringly.

She did not answer. Almost, it seemed as if she could not answer.

At length, by a great effort, and speaking as if her heart would break, she cried, "We must part for ever!"

"No, no, no!" he cried, clasping her hand.

"Let us remain as we are."

"Your devotion deserves a better return than I can make it," she rejoined. "But listen to what I have to tell you, and judge me as leniently as you can. After my escape, with your assistance, from Mount Surrey, I remained for a few days in Norwich, and then went with Deborah to Hethersett. I could not communicate my design to you, but I thought I should soon see you again.

The house, as you are aware, had been plundered by the rebels, but two small rooms had escaped their rapacity, and these sufficed for me. I now thought I had found a safe asylum, but I was mistaken. Ket quickly discovered my retreat, and on the day after my arrival at Hethersett, made his appearance, with a small troop of horse."

Sir Augustin could not repress an exclamation of rage.

"I was now completely in his power," pursued Margaret. "He told me he was determined to make me his wife, and that all resistance would be useless. I threw myself at his feet, and tried to move him, but he was deaf to my entreaties: He said there must be no delay—that the marriage should take place in the church, as soon as a priest could be brought from the camp;

and two of his troopers were forthwith despatched on this errand to Mousehold Heath, and in less than four hours' time returned with Father Siffrid, an old Benedictine monk, whom you have seen."

"Keep me not in suspense!" cried Sir Augustin, in a voice of anguish. "Did Father Siffrid marry you to the villain?"

"Most unwillingly," she replied. "He protested against the outrage, but was compelled to act. I was taken to the church by force, and the ceremony was performed despite my resistance and appeals to those present for aid. But as Ket issued from the church he was met by a mounted messenger from the camp, who told him he must return at once, or all would be lost. Very reluctantly he complied, and I was thus fortunately freed from him. But he ordered

two of his men, whom he left behind for the purpose, to bring me to Mount Surrey on the morrow."

"Were you taken thither?" cried Sir Augustin, anxiously.

"Before the morrow I was safe at Wymondham," she replied. "Good Father Siffrid aided my escape."

"And this was the last you saw of Ket?" demanded Sir Augustin.

"The very last," she replied. "From Wymondham I went to London. But I wrote to him, after I had seen the Duke of Somerset and the king at Hampton Court."

"So he told me," said Sir Augustin; "but he did not confess that he had forced you into a marriage with him."

"I told him I forgave him the great

wrong he had done me, but that I would rather die than recognise him as a husband, and would never willingly behold him more. This letter was conveyed by a messenger sent by the Duke of Somerset to Norwich."

"It reached its destination," said Sir Augustin; "and some particulars which Ket must have obtained from the messenger enabled him to represent your letter as a friendly communication."

"It was not a letter of reproach, as I have just stated, but a declaration that I considered the enforced marriage utterly void."

"Well, you are now for ever delivered from him," said Sir Augustin. "He can trouble you no more."

"Still, I do not feel easy," she said.

“Have you any other cause of grief?” asked Sir Augustin.

“None,” she replied. “But after what has occurred, I do not feel as if I were worthy to be your wife.”

“This is mere folly!” he cried. “I do not blame you, nor have you the slightest reason to reproach yourself. The circumstance is a painful one, no doubt. But forget it.”

“Would I could forget it,” she rejoined, with a sigh.

“What means this?” he cried, regarding her anxiously. “Unburden your breast, if you have aught more to tell me.”

“I have told you all,” she rejoined.

“Then since this explanation has occurred,” he said, “I would propose that our union should take place at once, were it not

that we are on the eve of an outbreak, the result of which cannot be foreseen, though I trust it will be favourable to the Duke of Somerset."

"Yes; we must perforce wait till that danger is past, or we may be separated as soon as united," said Margaret. "I am sorry the duke has engaged in this plot. It may end in his own destruction. I do not like his rival's visit here to-day. It seemed to me as if the Duke of Northumberland had been secretly informed of the meeting, and came to ascertain who were present at it."

"The circumstance was suspicious, I must admit," replied Sir Augustin. "But who could have played the traitor? All expect to gain by the removal of Northumberland, and are conspiring on their own account. If there is one who might be

suspected of treachery, it is Sir Thomas Palmer."

"Then warn the duke of him," said Margaret; "and an opportunity offers, for here comes his grace."

VIII.

HOW SIR THOMAS PALMER WAS CAPTURED.

AND as she spoke, Somerset was seen approaching them quickly.

“The duke seems in haste,” said Sir Augustin. “I must leave you.”

And he stepped forward, while Margaret remained stationary.

“I have something for you to do,” said Somerset, as he and Sir Augustin met. “It is not a pleasant business.”

“Pleasant or unpleasant, I will do it!” replied the other.

“It is to arrest Sir Thomas Palmer,” said the duke.

“Arrest him!” exclaimed Sir Augustin, surprised.

“Yes; I suspect he informed Northumberland of the meeting here to-day, but he must not inform him of what passed on the occasion. The duke has gone to Shene; therefore Sir Thomas cannot see him till to-morrow. Meantime you will arrest him at his house in Southwark, and bring him here by water.”

“It will be a difficult and dangerous task, your grace,” rejoined Sir Augustin. “Can we not get him here by stratagem, and then detain him?”

“That would be preferable, certainly,” said the duke. “I care not how you manage it, so that you secure him. Bring him here, and I shall be satisfied.”

“I will try to content your grace,” said Sir Augustin.

“Whither go you?” asked Margaret, as he passed her.

“To bring Sir Thomas Palmer to his grace,” he replied significantly. “His house is on the Bankside in Southwark. If I find him I shall be soon back.”

“I should like to go with you,” she said.

“Come, then,” he replied.

They hastened to the landing-place, and passing through the great gate at the head of the stairs, entered a large covered boat that might almost be described as a barge.

Four rowers were in attendance, and the men being told by Sir Augustin, as he stepped on board with Margaret, to take him to Sir Thomas Palmer’s house in Southwark, they shaped their course in that

direction, and rowed vigorously down the river.

Margaret had not often viewed Somerset House from the river, and as it now rose before her she was greatly struck by its size and grandeur.

Let it not be supposed for a moment that the existing edifice bearing the same name, and unquestionably a very fine building, can for a moment compare with the magnificent palace erected by the Duke of Somerset, and which at the time of our story had only just been finished, and was consequently in its full perfection.

Nothing so splendid could then be seen on the banks of the Thames as the Somerset House of which we treat—and nothing so grand has succeeded it. What with its incomparable façade—its lovely garden, and broad terrace bounded by a low parapet

wall, the palace struck all who approached from the river with wonder and delight. To complete our description, we may state that the front, towards the Strand, was equally magnificent, for on this side was a vast quadrangular court, with great gates opening upon the street.

Assuredly the haughty noble who had reared such a stately pile for his own habitation could have deemed himself little less than a king; and there can be no doubt that this display of pride and presumption caused Somerset's downfall. Some such feeling crossed Margaret's breast as she gazed at the palatial edifice.

But the noble mansion soon disappeared, and the barque having crossed to the opposite side of the river, Sir Augustin, landing at Saint Saviour's Stairs, and committing Margaret, who seemed to have no

anxiety at being left, to the care of the watermen, proceeded to Sir Thomas Palmer's residence, which was close at hand. Not many years ago, the house had been a convent, and was still surrounded by such high walls that little could be discerned of it. But he soon obtained admittance at the gate, and was glad to learn from the porter that Sir Thomas was at home.

“You are just in time, sir,” said the man.

“In an hour he is going to Shene.”

“To the king?” inquired Sir Augustin.

“No; I think, to the Duke of Northumberland,” replied the porter.

Sir Thomas Palmer, whom he found by himself in the hall, expressed his surprise at seeing him, and inquired somewhat anxiously whether anything had happened.

“The duke wishes to consult with you,”

replied Sir Augustin. "He thinks of making some alteration in the plan; but, before deciding, he would like to have your opinion."

"I advise him to make no change," said Sir Thomas. "Nothing better can be devised. Besides, the Duke of Northumberland has promised to attend the banquet. If another day is proposed, it may not suit him."

"Such is my own opinion," said Sir Augustin; "and I told his grace so, but he will not be satisfied till he has talked the matter over with you."

"I will come to him to-morrow morning," said Palmer.

"He will not wait till then," replied Sir Augustin. "Should I not bring you back with me, Lord Paget will be sent for,

and the banquet will probably be postponed."

"That must not be," cried Sir Thomas, quickly. "I will go with you. Stay; let me reflect a moment. I have something of importance to transact this evening."

"You will not be absent long," said Sir Augustin. "I have a boat, with four stout oarsmen, waiting for me at Saint Saviour's Stairs. It shall bring you back."

"Who is in the boat?" asked Sir Thomas, suspiciously.

"Only a fair damsel, whom you have often seen with the Duchess of Somerset," replied Sir Augustin.

"Mistress Margaret Flowerdew, to whom you are betrothed; is it not so?" said Sir Thomas.

"It is," replied Augustin, smiling.

“In such company I am safe,” muttered Palmer, “I will go with you,” he added aloud.

They then went forth together. Sir Thomas paused for a minute or two at the gate to give some directions to the porter; while Sir Augustin walked on to the stairs, and waited beside the boat till the other came up.

“Have you secured him?” inquired Margaret in a low tone.

“I have,” he replied. “But I owe his capture to you. Had you not been with me I believe I should have failed.”

On seeing Margaret, the suspicious knight’s fears entirely vanished, and he laughed and jested during the whole time of his conveyance to Somerset House.

On disembarking, he was taken, in the first instance, to the pavilion, while Mar-

garet hastened to the palace to let the duke know what had been done.

Well pleased with the success of the plan, Somerset gave some necessary directions, after which he retired to his cabinet, and had not been there long when Sir Augustin appeared with Palmer, who had yet to learn that he was a prisoner.

“Pray you be seated, Sir Thomas,” said the duke, somewhat gravely. “I hope you have no engagements of importance this evening, as I fear I shall be obliged to detain you.”

“Detain me, your grace!” cried Sir Thomas, rising in alarm. “I really cannot stay!”

“You must stay, whether you like it or not, Sir Thomas!” said the duke.

And as he spoke, Sir Augustin, who had hitherto remained standing, moved towards

the door, and drew his sword, to intimate that he meant to oppose Palmer's departure.

"Am I a prisoner?" cried Sir Thomas.

"Ay, marry!" replied the duke. "Deliver up your sword."

"Is my life to be taken?" asked Palmer.

"If you offer resistance—not otherwise," said Sir Augustin.

"Then here is my sword," said the prisoner, giving it to him. "And now what means this usage?"

"You are a vile traitor!" said the duke.

"The accusation is false, and I repel it with scorn!" said Sir Thomas. "I know from whom it proceeds," he added, glancing fiercely at Sir Augustin. "'Tis I who have been betrayed. I was brought here under a promise of safety, in which I trusted, but I have been basely deceived."

“You have been treated according to your deserts,” said Somerset, sternly. “You joined our plot against Northumberland with the design of revealing it to the duke, but you have been prevented. You will remain in captivity here till all has been accomplished. Then you shall be set free.”

Utterly confounded, the traitor made no reply.

At a sign from the duke, Sir Augustin opened the door, and half a dozen halberdiers came in.

“Take him hence,” said Somerset. “You know what is to be done with him.”

The prisoner was then removed by the guard, and Sir Augustin went with the party.

In about half an hour he returned to the cabinet, where he found the duke.

“What have you done with Palmer?” asked Somerset.

“I have placed him in a chamber in the upper part of the palace, where he will be kept in safe custody,” replied Sir Augustin. “Had he not been prevented, he would undoubtedly have gone to Shene to-night. Then all would have been revealed to the Duke of Northumberland, and your grace will readily understand what would have occurred to-morrow.”

“Ay, we have had a narrow escape,” replied the duke. “The traitor deserves death, but he is harmless now, and I will spare him. Can those who have him in charge be trusted?”

“Perfectly, your grace, I will answer for them.”

“Then, since he can be safely left, you

shall go with me to Sion House to-morrow. I shall set out at an early hour."

"I shall be ready to attend your grace at any hour you may please to require me," replied Sir Augustin.

IX.

HOW THE TWO MORTAL ENEMIES MET AT SION HOUSE.

NEXT morning, at an early hour, as arranged, the Duke of Somerset, accompanied by Sir Augustin and a large number of attendants, set out for Sion House. The duchess was to follow later on, by water, with the Countess of Warwick and Margaret.

The day was fine, and the palace looked so charming, that the duke felt sorry he had promised to lend it for a few months to the Earl of Warwick.

In some respects he preferred this beautiful mansion to Somerset House, and it was always a delight to him to come to it. However, he could not now retract, and Warwick was there to remind him of his promise. The duke had, therefore, only one course to pursue, and he acted as became him, placing the palace, and all within it, at the disposal of his son-in-law.

“When you are tired of the palace, let me have it again,” he said.

“Were I to wait till then, I should never give it up,” replied Warwick; “since it is impossible to tire of so delightful a residence. But I fear I am depriving your grace of a most agreeable retreat.”

“Think not of that,” said the duke. “It will give me infinite pleasure to see you and my daughter here. She is very fond of Sion.”

“I know it,” replied Warwick; “and some of the happiest moments of my own life have been passed in this garden. Besides it is near Shene, so that all her wishes will be gratified.”

“Have you seen the duke, your father, this morning?” asked Somerset.

“Not yet,” replied Warwick. “But I expect him presently.”

“A boat is now crossing the river from the palace,” said Sir Augustin. “It may be his grace.”

“’Tis he, I am certain,” cried Warwick.

“Then let us go and meet him,” said Somerset.

Long before they reached the landing-place, Northumberland, who was quite unattended, had quitted the boat, and advanced to meet them.

A cordial greeting passed between the two deadly enemies, and they appeared rejoiced to see each other.

Somerset scrutinised his rival's countenance, but could read no suspicion in it. So well was the mask assumed, that it imposed even on him.

Both, indeed, were masters of dissimulation, and both exercised their power to the full extent on this occasion.

It was certain, however, that Northumberland was extremely well pleased that his son had got possession of Sion House, and did not attempt to conceal his satisfaction. He requested Somerset to show him parts of the palace he had not yet seen, and was still occupied with the survey, when the Duchess of Somerset arrived, accompanied by the Countess of Warwick

and Margaret. They had come by water, and had greatly enjoyed the little voyage.

While greeting the countess, Northumberland said to her :

“ You have now obtained the object of your wishes, and are mistress of Sion. The duke, your father, has bestowed the palace upon you.”

“ Is this true ?” she cried, rushing towards Somerset.

“ I have not absolutely given it away,” he replied, regarding her with the fondest parental affection, “ but I have lent it to the Earl of Warwick, and shall, probably, never reclaim it.”

“ Oh, you are too kind—too good !” she cried, kissing his hand. “ You have made me supremely happy !”

Somerset seemed amply compensated for

what he had done by this display of gratitude on his beloved daughter's part.

After this the whole party sat down to a collation in the great banqueting-hall, and had just finished when a messenger came from Shene, enjoining Somerset to repair forthwith to the king.

“What can his majesty want with me?” cried the duke, with a certain uneasiness, which he strove to conceal.

“Most likely to consult you on some matter of import,” replied Northumberland. “I will go with you.”

X.

SOMERSET'S SUSPICIONS ARE AWAKENED.

ON arriving at Shene, the rival dukes found Edward in a room which he was accustomed to use as a council-chamber.

Several young nobles were with the king at the time, but they immediately retired. Somerset bent the knee and kissed the hand of his royal nephew, who accorded him a very gracious reception.

“Your majesty has sent for me,” said the duke.

“ I desire to consult you about a trifling matter; but trifling as it is, I attach importance to it. The Duke of Northumberland tells me Lord Paget is about to give a banquet, at which your grace and several of your personal friends, whose names he mentioned, are to be present. The duke thinks I ought to do likewise, and I agree with him. He shall have a banquet from me, but mine must be first; and I shall therefore give it to-morrow. Your grace will come?”

“ Your majesty has but to command. But, in this case, obedience is pleasant.”

“ Look over that list, and tell me whether all your friends are enumerated,” said Edward.

“ The sole omission is Sir Augustin Stewart, my liege,” replied Somerset, glancing at the paper.

“He shall be invited,” said the king. “All the rest have accepted, except Sir Thomas Palmer, who has disappeared.

“Disappeared? How is that, my liege?” inquired Somerset, with well-feigned surprise.

“I cannot say,” replied Edward. “But such is the answer brought me.”

“Oh, he will soon appear again,” laughed Northumberland. “Of a surety, we shall have him at the banquet.”

“I hope so,” said the king.

“I will send a special messenger to see whether he can be discovered,” said Somerset.

“Ay, do,” rejoined Edward.

“Do not trouble yourself about him,” said Northumberland. “I am still of opinion that we shall see him to-mor-

row ; but if not, we can do very well without him."

Some further discussion took place respecting the banquet, about which the king seemed much interested.

In the midst of this discourse, the young Earl of Warwick and the countess came to the palace, and were welcomed by the king, who, being informed of their arrival by an usher, went forth to receive them.

For many reasons, Somerset desired to be gone, and he took advantage of the opportunity thus offered him to cross the river to Sion House.

Immediately on his return, the duke was closeted with Sir Augustin Stewart, and detailed to him all that had just passed with the king at Shene.

"It is evident our plot is suspected, or

has been discovered," he said. "This new scheme is planned by Northumberland, and has been carried out by the king. Should we attend the banquet at Shene to-morrow, we shall all be arrested and sent to the Tower."

"I believe your grace is right," said Augustin.

"Matters must be expedited," pursued the duke. "Paget's plan must be given up, and another substituted, which you must make known to our partisans without delay; and for this purpose you must return at once to London."

"I am quite ready to do so," observed Sir Augustin.

"I cannot help fearing Sir Thomas Palmer has contrived to escape. Your first business, on arriving at Somerset House,

must be to ascertain that he is safe. If he has fled, we are betrayed.”

“ I pray your grace not to alarm yourself thus. Sir Thomas cannot have escaped, unless his guards have proved treacherous ; and I believe them faithful.”

“ We shall see,” said the duke. “ You must be prepared. Should Palmer be gone, you must let me know as quickly as you can, that I may take measures for my own safety. And now for my new plan, which you must lay before all the confederates. The chief points are to seize Northumberland and his adherents, and send them to the Tower, where Sir Arthur Markham, who is with us, will take charge of them. Next, to convey the king, with a strong guard, to Windsor Castle, and to keep him there. Thirdly, to raise the City

in our favour. If these things can be accomplished, our cause is gained. But till Northumberland is removed, nothing can be done."

"All possible preparations shall be made beforehand;" said Sir Augustin; "but the execution of the project must be left to your grace."

"Now mark what I say," observed Somerset. "The Earl of Arundel, with the Lords Paget and Grey, must be sent here. I shall want their aid in the arrest of Northumberland and his friends, and in the seizure of the king. They will accompany me to Windsor."

"But to accomplish this, your grace will require a strong force."

"Yes; you must bring my *gens d'armes* here to-night," said the duke.

“But they are only two hundred,” rejoined Sir Augustin.

“They will suffice for what has to be done at Shene,” said Somerset. Northumberland and his friends can be sent by boat to the Tower. Sir Ralph Vane must take a thousand of his men to Windsor Castle, and start betimes in the morning, so as to be ready for me.”

“What of the other thousand?”

“Sir Thomas Arundel will take them to the Tower, so as to form a garrison,” replied the duke. “Sir Michael Stanhope has a small troop of horse, and can bring them to Shene. They may be useful there.”

“I understand your grace,” said Sir Augustin. “But what directions am I to give to Sir Miles Partridge and Sir Thomas Thynne?”

“Their business will be to raise the City,” replied the duke; “but they must take care not to precipitate matters. Bid them wait till Northumberland is safely lodged in the Tower, and the king at Windsor.”

“Is this all, your grace?” asked Sir Augustin.

The duke reflected for a moment, and then said:

“You must be governed by circumstances in what you do. This is but an outline of the scheme I propose to carry out, and may be modified. But if you explain it, my confederates will know how to act. I shall remain here till you return to-night, no matter how late the hour may be.”

“I will not fail,” replied the young man.

“Take a groom with you, and the best horse in the stable,” said Somerset; “and get to London as quickly as you can.”

Sir Augustin then quitted the cabinet, and ere long was speeding on his way, followed by a well-armed and well-mounted groom.

XI.

OF THE ADVICE GIVEN BY THE DUCHESS OF SOMERSET TO
HER LORD.

NOTHING occurred to alarm the duke during the day, but he could not shake off the notion that Northumberland intended to arrest him, and therefore held himself in readiness for flight, should it be necessary.

Before retiring to rest he had a long consultation with the duchess, in which he explained the errand on which Sir Augustin Stewart had been sent, and told

her what the morrow was likely to bring forth.

The Duchess of Somerset has already been described as a woman of very high courage, and though she fully recognised the danger of the present crisis, she was quite prepared to confront it.

“Having advanced thus far,” she said to her lord, “you must complete the work. It is a question of your personal safety. Either you must put Northumberland to death, or he will strike off your head. Of that you may be certain. Kill him, as you had resolved to do, at Paget’s banquet next week. If you send him to the Tower, he may ’scape the block through the influence of the king.”

“But to kill him thus savours of assassination,” remarked the duke, gloomily.

“’Twill be done in self-defence,” rejoined

the duchess. "The sooner he is removed, the better. Be not deceived in regard to him. He is now meditating your destruction, and would not have allowed you to remain at liberty to-day, had he not deemed your escape impossible. Depend upon it you have been secretly watched and guarded, and any attempt at flight would have been prevented."

Just at this moment a sound was heard at the door of the chamber that made the duke start to his feet and clap his hand to his sword.

His alarm was scarcely diminished when Sir Augustin came in, looking pale and fatigued.

"You bring bad news?" cried the duchess, regarding him anxiously.

"I do," he replied. "Sir Thomas Palmer has escaped."

“Then my worst fears are realised,” said the duke.

“How long has he been free?” asked the duchess.

“Since last night,” replied Sir Augustin. “He escaped by bribing the guard, and doubtless went at once to Shene.”

“’Tis as I suspected!” cried Somerset, with an exclamation of rage. “Northumberland and the king are fully aware of the plot, and have taken measures to defeat it.”

“The traitor Palmer ought never to have been spared,” said the duchess, fiercely. “Had my advice been taken, this would not have happened.”

“Regrets are useless,” said the duke. “Northumberland’s plan is now plain. He hopes to get all his enemies together to-

morrow, and to send us to the Tower. But we will try to disappoint him."

"What will you do?" inquired the duchess.

"That must be considered," replied Somerset. "But ere we decide, let us know what we have to depend upon in a conflict."

"First, then, your grace, I have brought your two hundred *gens d'armes* with me," said Sir Augustin.

"Are they here?" cried the duke, joyfully.

"They are here, your grace, fully armed and equipped, and you need fear no treachery on their part. They are all true as steel, and will stand by you to the last."

"I know it," replied the duke. "Their

presence restores my confidence. But have you seen any of my partisans?"

"I have seen them all, your grace."

"What think they of the conjuncture?"

"They are in despair, and know not how to act," replied Sir Augustin. "A consultation was held at Lord Paget's, at which various plans were discussed; but nothing could be agreed on. They all seemed thoroughly disheartened, and some even proposed flight. Your grace's presence is absolutely needed to keep them together."

"I will be with them before morning," said the duke. "But will they do nothing? Do they refuse to obey my commands? Will not Sir Ralph Vane march with a thousand foot-soldiers to Windsor?"

"Sir Ralph Vane is ready, your grace," replied Sir Augustin; "but neither he nor

the others will move during the present uncertain state of affairs."

"Your grace must show yourself among them without delay, and at any hazard, or this well-contrived plot will prove abortive," said the duchess. "Your friends fear some mischance has befallen you, and will not be convinced to the contrary unless they behold you."

"That is the plain truth," said Sir Augustin. "No movement will be made till his grace appears. I could not rouse them."

"You hear that?" cried the duchess. "I hope the last chance has not been thrown away?"

"No; it is not too late to repair the error," said the duke. "Get ready my *gens d'armes*. I will set out at once to Somerset House."

“ Shall I go with your grace, or remain here to take charge of the duchess?” said Sir Augustin.

“ Go with the duke,” said the courageous lady. “ I can take care of myself. Besides, I am in no danger.”

“ I am not so sure of that,” observed the duke; “ but I think Sir Augustin ought to remain here till to-morrow. He can then rejoin me.”

“ If such is your grace’s opinion, I shall not gainsay it,” said the duchess.

“ Stay! I have one more order to give,” said the duke to Sir Augustin. “ When you return to tell me all is ready, bring two of the men with you. They may be needed.”

“ It shall be done,” replied the other. “ Methinks it will be best to place the guard outside the gates of the palace.”

“You are right,” said the duke; “and move them quietly. I would not have my departure noticed.”

Thereupon, Sir Augustin quitted the chamber.

He was followed almost immediately by the duke, who went to put on his accoutrements, previous to the journey.

He returned in a few minutes, fully armed, and wrapped in a large mantle. He had likewise a cap in his hand, in addition to the one which he wore.

Margaret Flowerdew was then with the duchess.

“Margaret has just come to warn your grace that there are a party of armed men in the court-yard,” said the duchess.

“Yes; they endeavoured to conceal themselves, but I perceived them,” said Margaret. “I am certain their object is

to capture your grace, or prevent your departure.”

“What you say does not surprise me,” replied the duke. “I have suspected that a secret watch has been kept upon me throughout the day. I wish I could have got off unperceived.”

“Cannot you contrive to do so?” said the duchess.

At this moment Sir Augustin returned.

“All is ready, your grace,” he said. “The guard are outside the gate.”

“Did you discover any of the enemy’s soldiers in the court-yard?” asked the duke.

“I have not been in the court-yard, your grace,” he replied. “Nor did the *gens d’armes* enter it, either on their arrival or just now. They were placed in the out-buildings.”

“That was lucky,” said the duke. “Did

you bring a couple of them with you, as I directed?"

"I did, your grace; and they await your orders."

"Call them in," said the duke.

Two stalwart men-at-arms quickly made their appearance, and saluted the duke.

"I know you will both be glad to serve me," said Somerset.

"What can we do?" they cried heartily.

"March through the court-yard," rejoined the duke.

"That is easily done," they cried, laughing.

"But one of you must wear my mantle over his shoulders, and put this cap on his head," said the duke.

"I will do it," said the soldier nearest him.

"Thou art a brave fellow, Leonard, and

a faithful," said the duke. "But I ought to tell thee thou wilt run some little risk, and most probably be arrested instead of me."

"I care not, so that I can aid your grace," said Leonard.

Somerset placed a couple of gold pieces in the man's hand as he threw the mantle over his shoulder and gave him the cap.

"Thou must go with him, Stephen," said the duke to the other man, giving him a like sum. "I advise you both to yield. 'Twill save trouble."

"But it will not be like your grace," said Leonard.

"No matter," rejoined the duke. "It will serve my purpose."

"Your grace's injunctions shall be obeyed."

The *gens d'armes* then left the cabinet,

accompanied by Sir Augustin, who went with them to the entrance of the courtyard, but did not proceed further.

Wrapped in the ample velvet mantle, and with the duke's richly embroidered cap on his head, Leonard walked forth, followed by his comrade; but he had not proceeded far, when some twenty armed men, commanded by an officer, suddenly rushed forward from their hiding-places, and surrounded them.

Heedless of the duke's instructions, they refused to yield, and laid about them with their swords so manfully, that it almost seemed they would have escaped capture. But a conflict of more than ten minutes' duration took place before they could be disarmed.

“ Why, this is not the Duke of So-

meriset!" cried the officer, when he came up with a torch, and threw its light on Leonard, who had now lost both mantle and cap, and, moreover, was grievously wounded.

"Your own men said so, not I, captain," replied Leonard.

"Is the duke here?" demanded the officer.

"No, captain," replied Stephen. "He is gone. The Duke of Northumberland will hear of him to-morrow in a way he will not like."

"Ha! what means this?" cried the officer. "You must come with me to Sion House, and explain your words to the duke. Bring them along!" he added to his men.

"Better leave me here to die, captain," said the wounded soldier.

But no attention was paid to his entreaty, and he was forced to accompany them. He had not gone far when he fell to the ground, never to rise again.

XII.

HOW SIR RALPH VANE WAS DEFEATED AT RICHMOND BY
CAPTAIN DRURY.

ATTENDED by his *gens d'armes*, the duke rode at a quick pace to London, and arrived at Somerset House long before daybreak.

He was very glad to find that the palace was well prepared for defence by Sir Ralph Vane, who had brought in five hundred of his best foot-soldiers, part of them being placed in the vast court-yard, and part in the garden. Two pieces of ordnance had

likewise been planted by Vane on the summit of the great gateway, and two others on the river terrace, so that it was thought the palace could now resist an attack.

The duke was likewise rejoiced to learn that, besides the brave Sir Ralph Vane, the Earl of Arundel, Lord Paget, Lord Grey, Sir Michael Stanhope, Sir Miles Partridge, and some others, were now in the palace.

None of them, it appeared, had retired to rest, but were in the council-chamber, discussing their plans, and as soon as the duke had given some necessary orders, he joined them.

Great satisfaction was expressed on his appearance, and all sprang to their feet to welcome him.

“ We all feared your grace had been

arrested — except Sir Ralph Vane,” they cried.

“ I felt certain we should have you here, and I therefore made ready for you,” said Vane. “ Has your grace heard of my preparations?—two hundred and fifty arquebusiers in the great court, and two hundred and fifty pikemen on the river terrace. I can bring in five hundred more to-morrow, if you need them.”

“ You have done exactly what I desired,” rejoined the duke. “ You have made the palace secure. I am now quite easy. To-morrow I will ride betimes into the City, with my *gens d’armes*, and announce, by sound of trump, that Northumberland is deposed.”

“ We will go with you,” said the Earl of Arundel and the two other nobles.

“ But all the others had best remain here

till we have ascertained how the citizens will act," said the duke.

"The citizens will not disappoint you," rejoined Sir Ralph Vane. "They will help you to gain the Tower and the Great Seal."

"I hope so," cried the duke. "Hark ye, Sir Ralph, have you any more men in marching order?"

"Five hundred, your grace — arquebusiers and pikemen — fully armed and equipped, like those I have brought to Somerset House."

"Then set out with them at once to Shene," said the duke, "and lose no time on the road. Within half a mile of Richmond there is a ford, by which you can cross the river."

"I know it," replied Sir Ralph. "Your

grace's instructions shall be obeyed. In three hours' time I will be at Shene."

"Then you will take them by surprise. But I have another important order to give you. Your chief aim must be to seize the king; and if you succeed, carry him off without delay to Windsor Castle."

"Such is my design," said Vane, who shrank from no difficulty or danger.

Upon this he took leave of the duke and the other conspirators, and in less than an hour was riding at the head of five hundred arquebusiers and pikemen towards Brentford. He had promised the duke to march quickly, and was as good as his word.

It was yet very early when he crossed the ford at Richmond.

Hitherto nothing had occurred to lead

him to expect an attack. He had met no troops on the road, and could not discover that any were moving about.

He was just approaching the opposite bank of the river, when the trampling of horse suddenly caught his ears, and informed him that a large party of cavalry was at hand.

A single glance sufficed to show that the leader of the troop was no other than the redoubted Captain Drury, than whom a more dangerous foe could not have been encountered in such a situation.

Sir Ralph did the best he could. It was impossible to avoid the charge, but he might check its force, and he ordered the arquebusiers to fire upon the troopers, as they dashed down the bank, sword in hand.

A tremendous volley was poured upon the

assailants, and next minute a great number of men and horses were lying in the river, reddening its current.

But the others came on, splashing through the stream, till they reached the arquebusiers, whom they cut in pieces.

Had the pikemen stood firm, all would have gone well, but they turned and fled through the fields, and then all was over. Many prisoners were taken, and afterwards hanged at Kingston.

During the confusion of the latter part of the conflict, Sir Ralph Vane managed to get out of the river, and then rode back to London, and reached Somerset House in safety.

Captain Drury galloped off to Shene to report what he had done, but found that the Duke of Northumberland had taken the king to Windsor Castle.

The Earl of Warwick was now left in charge of Shene Palace, and Captain Drury thought he would stay with him: till he received further orders from the duke.

XIII.

HOW THE DUKE OF SOMERSET WITH THE EARL OF ARUNDEL
AND THE LORDS GREY AND PAGET RODE INTO THE CITY;
AND HOW THEY WERE RECEIVED.

MEANWHILE, the Duke of Somerset, attended by the Earl of Arundel, and the Lords Paget and Grey, all splendidly accoutred, and mounted on richly caparisoned steeds, rode into the City, escorted by the duke's *gens d'armes*, and a small troop of horse belonging to the Earl of Arundel.

They were by no means received with the enthusiasm they anticipated. In some

streets there was a good deal of shouting, and a mob followed at their heels, sufficiently large and noisy to frighten the quieter class of citizens, but not armed, except with clubs. Seemingly, an order had been published by the civic authorities forbidding any demonstration whatever to be made in favour of the Duke of Somerset, and the order was strictly obeyed. No opposition was offered him, but no support given. The lord mayor and the sheriffs did not come to meet him, and the 'prentices were probably prevented by their masters from rising in his favour. Having advanced as far as the conduit in Cheapside, the duke thought it would be useless to proceed further, and returned, though at one time he intended to proceed to the Tower, and demand the fortress from the lieutenant, Sir Arthur Markham, but he abandoned the

attempt on perceiving the lukewarmness of the citizens.

Somerset and his friends had expected much from their visit to the City, and its ill success greatly depressed them.

Other circumstances increased their discouragement. Not long after their return, Sir Ralph Vane made his appearance without bringing back one of his soldiers from Richmond. Vane's vexation at his defeat was painful to witness at first, but he soon recovered from it.

"I must wipe out this disgrace," he said, "and then I shall feel easy. Captain Drury and I shall meet again ere long."

"Nay, Sir Ralph," cried Somerset. "You must run no more risks. Without you and Sir Augustin Stewart I could do nothing."

“Where is Sir Augustin?” asked Vane.
“I have not seen him.”

“I left him at Sion House to take care of the duchess. But I expect him here to-night.”

XIV.

HOW SIR RALPH VANE AND SIR AUGUSTIN STEWART SECRETLY
VISITED THE TOWER.

THAT evening Sir Augustin arrived, having escorted the duchess and Margaret.

It appeared that Northumberland had never troubled those left at Sion House, subsequently to the Duke of Somerset's departure, being doubtless much occupied and caring little for the others since his great prize had escaped.

In all respects, the arrival of the party was highly satisfactory to Somerset. He

had an immediate consultation with Sir Augustin, and explained what he desired him to do on the morrow, when it appeared certain the palace would be attacked by Northumberland.

On quitting the duke, Sir Augustin went in search of Vane, and found him on the river terrace with his men. The meeting was cordial, for a warm friendship subsisted between them.

“You are just come in time,” said Sir Ralph. “I have a little project in hand, in which you may like to join me. It will suit you.”

“All Sir Ralph Vane’s projects will suit me. Let me hear it.”

“What say you to a visit to the Tower?”

“To-night?”

“Without loss of time.”

“I should like it, if anything can be

done. But there is no use in risk without a prospect of success."

"I will undertake that we shall enter the Tower, and see Sir Arthur Markham, the lieutenant."

"At this hour of night? He must expect you."

"He does expect me," replied Sir Ralph, significantly.

"Can we secure the fortress?" asked Sir Augustin.

"I cannot say. Had the duke gone there this morning he might have secured it," replied Sir Ralph. "But a strange feeling of irresolution to which he is liable, seems to have come over him, and prevented the execution of his design. Since you are ready, let us go."

Though the river terrace was guarded, as we have explained, a boat with a couple of

oarsmen in it was allowed to remain at the stairs for the convenience of the palace, and into this boat Sir Ralph and his companion now got, and were rowed towards London Bridge.

The night was dark and misty, but the two bold and adventurous personages in the boat cared little for the gloom. On the contrary, they found it advantageous, since, having passed through a side arch of the bridge, they could approach the Tower unobserved.

Feeling certain he could distinguish a figure on the wharf, Sir Ralph leapt boldly from the boat, and Sir Augustin followed him. Nor were they deceived. It was the lieutenant of the Tower whom they found there. Sir Arthur Markham did not allow them to remain upon the wharf; but took

them at once to his lodgings, where they could converse freely.

“I expected the Duke of Somerset to-day,” said the lieutenant. “Had he come and demanded the Tower, I should have delivered it to him.”

“I cannot comprehend why his grace’s heart failed him, but he did not get beyond Cheapside,” said Vane. “I was not with him, having gone on an unlucky expedition to Shene; or I should have urged him to proceed to the Tower.”

“’Twas a grievous error, and one his grace will ever regret,” said the lieutenant; “unless it can be repaired, which I doubt. With my aid to-day, he might have been master of the Tower. What may happen to-morrow, none can say. We may have Northumberland here.”

“But is it too late to-night?” asked Sir Augustin.

“It is not too late now,” replied the lieutenant. “But Somerset does not seem inclined to act. I sent a messenger to him this evening, but no answer came.”

“I now see why you wish to confer with me, Sir Arthur,” observed Vane.

“I wished to learn from you what will be done,” rejoined the lieutenant; “and I confess I am greatly disappointed that you did not bring the duke with you. I fully expected him.”

“We will return, and tell him what you say,” cried Vane. “The success of the plot entirely depends upon the possession of the Tower.”

“No doubt of that,” said Sir Augustin. “I cannot account for the duke’s extraordinary conduct. That he should have

turned back thus when there was no obstacle in the way amazes me.”

He must have suspected some treachery on my part,” said the lieutenant.

“I do not think so,” replied Sir Augustin. “He knows you have always been his staunch friend. But we will bring him. In an hour he shall be here.”

“Then all may yet be well,” said Sir Arthur. “I will be waiting for you on the wharf as before.”

They then quitted the lieutenant’s lodgings, and were conducted by him through the wicket of the Bloody Tower, and in the direction of the Gate Tower, when a loud noise was heard at the Bulwark Gate, as if caused by the arrival of a large troop of horse, that caused them the greatest dismay.

“What is that?” said Vane.

“Heaven grant it prove not Northumberland!” exclaimed the lieutenant. “If so, all our schemes will be frustrated. But I will ascertain the truth in a moment. Remain here till I return. Whoever it may be, I will take care your departure shall not be prevented.”

With this, he hurried forward, and immediately disappeared in the gloom, leaving them in a state of the greatest anxiety.

Though the lieutenant was not absent more than two or three minutes, it seemed an age to those who waited his return. Their uneasiness was increased by the sounds that reached their ears, and left them no doubt that a large body of horse was now entering the outer gate of the Tower.

By this time torches had been lighted, and were held from the battlements of the gates, so as to illumine the drawbridge.

“Impossible the Duke of Somerset can come to the Tower now,” said Sir Augustin.

“We ourselves seem caught in a trap.”

“I will wait here no longer,” said Vane.

They were just about to start when the lieutenant reappeared.

“Follow me instantly,” he cried. “My worst fears are realised. It is Northumberland, with the Duke of Suffolk, and the Marquis of Northampton. They have a regiment of horse with them. I need not say that the Duke of Somerset must not come now.”

“No; that we understand,” replied Vane.

“Had he been here I would have refused his enemies admittance,” continued the lieutenant.

“We will tell him so,” rejoined Sir Augustin, in an incredulous tone.

In another instant they had crossed the narrow drawbridge over the moat on the left of the Gate Tower, and on gaining the wharf, leaped into the boat.

A moment later, and they must have been captured.

Scarcely had they passed when the gate was thrown open, and Northumberland himself entered on horseback.

But he found only the lieutenant.

XV.

HOW THE DUKE RESOLVED TO DEFEND SOMERSET HOUSE.

THE two visitors to the Tower got back in safety, and after satisfying themselves that good watch was kept in the terrace, proceeded to the palace, where they found the duke in the council-chamber with his confederates.

The assemblage listened with much interest to a recital of their adventures, and congratulated them on their escape.

“Had you consulted me, I should not

have allowed you to go to the Tower," observed Somerset. "I suspected the lieutenant of treachery, and that was why I turned back this morning. Had I entered the fortress, I believe I should now be a prisoner there."

"Such is my firm opinion," replied Vane. "I am sorry Sir Arthur Markham should prove a traitor."

"I do not like to charge him with positive treachery," said the duke; "but his conduct is very suspicious. He has displayed great anxiety to get me into his hands, as I should have been if I had entered the Tower. But now comes the question—what shall be done? We have been carefully considering matters, but have arrived at no positive decision. The Tower is now garrisoned by Northumberland, and I fear nothing can be done with the City,

since it is clear the citizens are not inclined to rise. Can we hold out here? You are an experienced soldier, Sir Ralph. What is your opinion?"

"My opinion, your grace," replied Vane, "is that you *can* hold this palace sufficiently long to obtain a large reinforcement, which you are certain to receive from various quarters. I do not despair of the City, and feel confident you will have aid thence tomorrow."

"Some of our friends are not so sanguine," replied the duke, "and counsel surrender and submission."

"Never!" cried Vane. "Should any terms be proposed to your grace, reject them with scorn. They will not be kept. Northumberland has resolved on your destruction."

"I agree with Sir Ralph, your grace,"

said Sir Augustin. "Northumberland is not to be trusted. My firm belief is that you will be able to maintain this palace against any force he can bring."

"At all events, I will not surrender, unless compelled," rejoined the duke.

"I am right glad you have come to that determination," said Vane; "and I promise your grace I will stand by you faithfully to the last."

Somerset hoped that all the rest of his friends would have joined in this energetic declaration, but several of them were silent — and amongst these were the Earl of Arundel and the Lords Paget and Grey.

"I think we should only be sacrificing ourselves by an attempt to maintain this palace against a regular attack," said the Earl of Arundel. "It will be taken in a

couple of hours, and all our men put to the sword."

"I do not think so," said Vane.

"Nor I," added Sir Augustin.

"I am afraid Lord Arundel is right," observed Paget. "Northumberland will think us mad to remain here."

"Then do not stay," cried Somerset, sternly.

"Nay, I would not anger your grace," said Paget; "but I hold it absolute folly to attempt to defend this mansion against a large force."

"Those who think so had best retire in time," said the duke.

"I am one of those who think so," rejoined Lord Arundel. "And since your grace cares not to have me with you, I shall go."

“ And so shall I,” said Paget.

“ And I,” added Lord Grey.

“ I will not ask you to stay, my lords, since you deem you are in danger,” said the duke. “ But my gratitude is doubled towards those who will not desert me.”

“ Take my advice, I pray your grace,” said the Earl of Arundel, “ and let not Northumberland find you here to-morrow.”

“ Seek safety in flight, as we shall do,” said the Lords Paget and Grey.

“ No; I shall not quit this mansion,” replied Somerset, haughtily.

“ And we will remain with your grace to the last!” said Sir Michael Stanhope, Sir Miles Partridge, and the others.

Bowing stiffly to the duke, the three nobles quitted the council-chamber.

“ Under existing circumstances,” said Sir Miles Partridge, “ your grace will pardon

me if I urge you to make every preparation for the attack which I feel sure will not be delayed by Northumberland."

"It shall be done," said the duke; "and that the palace may be well watched on either side, I assign the guard of the river terrace to Sir Ralph Vane, and that of the court to Sir Augustin Stewart."

Each post was readily accepted by the person appointed to it, and they both departed. At the same time, the council broke up, and the duke, attended by Sir Michael Stanhope and Sir Miles Partridge, went forth to make his rounds.

XVI.

HOW CAPTAIN DRURY WAS KILLED BY SIR RALPH VANE.

AFTER a careful inspection of the men, both in the court and garden, Somerset satisfied himself they were all on the alert.

On his return to the palace after this survey, he found the duchess and Margaret, who had not retired to rest during the night.

“Is all tranquil?” asked the duchess.

“As yet,” he replied; “but we may expect an attack as soon as it becomes light.”

I think you had better return to Sion House. You will be safer there."

"I have no fear," she replied, resolutely. "If you quit the palace, I will go with you—not otherwise."

"I have determined to remain," replied the duke.

At this moment Sir Augustin made his appearance. His looks proclaimed that he brought some important intelligence.

"I come to inform your grace that a regiment of horse have just halted in the Strand," he said.

"Coming from the City?" demanded the duke.

"No, from Whitehall," replied Sir Augustin. "They are stationed within a bow-shot of the great gate."

"Who commands them?" inquired the duke.

“I know not,” replied the other. “They are too far off to see distinctly. But we shall soon learn.”

Just then an officer entered and said :

“A party of soldiers are at the gate, and demand admittance to the palace in the king’s name.”

“And you have refused it?” cried the duke.

“Ay, your grace,” replied the officer. “They are still there. Their captain bade me take a message to your grace, and say that if the gates be not thrown open to him within half an hour, he will enter by force.”

“An insolent message!” exclaimed the duke. “Who is their leader?”

“Captain Drury,” replied the officer.

“Captain Drury!” exclaimed the duke. “Then it is no idle threat. We must be

prepared. Tell Sir Ralph Vane what has just occurred," he added to Sir Augustin ; "he may wish to be in the court-yard."

Well knowing Sir Ralph's ardent desire to encounter Captain Drury, Sir Augustin set off instantly to the garden to tell him what had occurred.

Meanwhile the duke proceeded to the court, and found that the party had retired for the present, but intended to return at the appointed time.

Morning was now breaking, and it was evident it would be quite light before the attack commenced.

The duke had mounted to the summit of the gate, and was surveying the troop of horse, when Vane and Sir Augustin made their appearance, and immediately joined him.

It has been stated that two small pieces

of ordnance were placed on the top of the gate, and as the cannoneers were ready, Sir Ralph proposed that fire should be opened on the troop.

To this the duke assented, but gave orders that the first shot should be fired over the heads of the enemy.

The direction was obeyed, but the next shot did considerable execution.

Thereupon Captain Drury shouted to his men to advance, and instantly dashed up, bringing with him a much larger piece of artillery than those directed against him, which he planted with the evident intention of battering down the gate.

Meantime a party of arquebusiers had mounted the gate, and the cannoneers were once more ready.

Captain Drury seized this moment to again demand admittance in the king's

name, but was peremptorily refused by Sir Ralph Vane.

At the same time, a volley was fired by the arquebusiers, which brought down three or four troopers, while the confusion among them was materially heightened by a second discharge of the cannon, though no aim could be taken with the guns at that height.

The piece of artillery brought up by the assailants was now discharged against the gate, and at once burst it open; upon which Captain Drury and some of his men dashed in, but they were met by the Duke of Somerset, who was now on horseback, and supported by his *gens d'armes*. Close behind him were Sir Ralph Vane and Sir Augustin Stewart.

A fierce encounter took place, which lasted for two or three minutes; but Drury

and his troopers were driven back, and the piece of artillery brought by them was captured, and carried into the court-yard. At the same time the arquebusiers and engineers on the summit of the gateway succeeded in clearing the place.

But Somerset was not content with driving forth the assailants. Leaving Sir Augustin to guard the gate, and accompanied by Sir Ralph Vane, at the head of his whole troop he pursued Drury and his men along the Strand.

Not till his panic-stricken followers reached Charing Cross could the valiant captain check them, and here a general conflict was going on.

A personal encounter took place between Sir Ralph Vane and Drury. The two combatants fought with the utmost fury. Vane was burning to avenge his former defeat,

and Drury was resolved not to let his enemy escape on this occasion.

They were very well matched, and for a few minutes the issue of the conflict seemed doubtful. But at length they came to a close struggle; when Vane, being the stronger of the two, seized his adversary's right arm, and held it extended, while he plunged his sword into his throat, above the gorget.

The brave Drury then fell to the ground, never again to rise.

Vane was still contemplating his fallen foeman, when the Duke of Somerset came up, having routed the enemy, and taken some prisoners.

"You have slain the best of Northumberland's captains," said the duke.

"Ay, it grieves me to have killed him," rejoined Vane, in a sorrowful tone. "Drury

was a brave and generous soldier. But he must not be left here.”

And he bade some of the men carry the body to Whitehall.

In this conflict the Duke of Somerset had sustained very slight loss, while a third of Drury's troop were killed, several wounded, and twenty made prisoners.

The latter were disarmed, and taken to Somerset House.

As the duke rode thither he was hailed as a victor by the few persons he met in the street, for it must be remembered that the hour was still extraordinarily early.

XVII.

HOW SIR AUGUSTIN DEFENDED THE RIVER TERRACE.

THAT the first attack upon Somerset House should have completely failed, was naturally matter of great rejoicing to the garrison, and led them to believe they should be able to hold out against Northumberland in person; while Sir Ralph Vane was elevated into a hero in consequence of his victory over the brave Drury. The event produced a great sensation, and Northumberland could scarcely credit the circumstance when it was reported to him.

However, preparations were made by the besieged for another and more formidable attack, that might be expected in the course of the day.

The gate, that had been burst open, was strongly barricaded, and the captured cannon was so placed that it could be used against the assailants in case they should succeed in entering the court.

But no one was so elated as the duchess. She regarded the victory as an augury of future success, and felt it would help to raise the duke from the state of depression into which he had fallen.

When he returned she was standing with Margaret on the steps leading to the grand entrance of the palace, and Sir Michael Stanhope, Sir Miles Partridge, and Sir John Thynne were likewise with her.

She had listened with pride and delight

to the loud and continuous shouts with which the duke was hailed by the men. As he dismounted from his steed, she rushed towards him and embraced him.

“You have begun well,” she cried. “A complete victory will follow.”

Nor did she neglect Sir Ralph Vane, who had been enthusiastically received by the soldiers, but complimented him highly upon his prowess.

They all then entered the palace, and proceeded to the great banqueting-hall, where a repast was prepared, to which they sat down.

But they were not allowed to enjoy it undisturbed. The alarm bell was rung from the top of the palace, and at the same moment a messenger entered, to say that a number of boats, filled with armed men, were collecting in front of the terrace.

Though it was satisfactory to the duke to learn that Sir Augustin was superintending the defence of the garden, he nevertheless immediately rose from the table, and attended by Sir Ralph Vane, hastened to the terrace.

Scarcely had they entered the garden, when the roar of artillery, intermingled with the sharper sound of musketry, reached their ears, showing that the attack had commenced, and they quickened their pace.

They could now see that a number of large boats, filled with soldiers, were collected in front of the terrace. In the stern of each boat stood an officer, sword in hand, directing the attack.

Evidently their design was to land, but as yet none had succeeded. Nor did it seem likely they would, in face of the sharp fire to which they were at present exposed.

At the very moment the Duke of Somerset and Sir Ralph Vane gained the terrace, half a dozen boats came up as near as they could to the parapet.

From each boat a scaling-ladder was flung, and up each ladder mounted a dozen men sword in hand.

But Sir Augustin was prepared for them. Very few reached the top of the ladder, and those who did were instantly hurled back from the summit of the parapet into the river.

This repulse, which was admirably effected, was witnessd by the Duke of Somerset and Vane. A second attack was repulsed in like manner. Some fifty or sixty of their comrades having perished in these attacks, the others abandoned the enterprise, and rowed off.

Sir Augustin was highly complimented

by the duke and Sir Ralph Vane on the successful defence he had made.

A second piece of good fortune having so quickly followed the first, the duke now became more hopeful, and was disposed to listen to the duchess when she told him all was going prosperously, and that in a trial of strength he would certainly overcome Northumberland.

“I will challenge him to meet me with a hundred men,” said the duke; “and if he assents, we can thus decide our quarrel.”

“By whom will you send the challenge?” asked the duchess.

“By Sir Augustin Stewart,” replied the duke. “It would not be safe for Vane to take it. I will send Sir Augustin with an escort of a dozen men to the Tower.”

“He will never come back,” said the duchess.

“I am of a different opinion,” rejoined the duke. “He shall take a flag of truce with him. We shall hear what he has to say.”

He then proposed the matter to Sir Augustin, who at once undertook the dangerous errand.

“Have a dozen men ready in an hour,” said the duke, “with a flag of truce.”

XVIII.

HOW THE DUKE WAS ARRESTED, AND AGAIN SENT TO THE TOWER.

AN hour later Sir Augustin Stewart and a dozen *gens d'armes* set off to the Tower.

The troop would not have been allowed to pass through the City, had not one of the men carried a flag of truce conspicuously, whence it was supposed the Duke of Somerset was about to make a pacific proposition to his great rival.

Arrived at the Bulwark Gate of the Tower, Sir Augustin fortunately encoun-

tered the lieutenant, who promised to deliver the Duke of Somerset's letter to Northumberland, and bring back an answer, should one be sent.

Shortly afterwards trumpets were loudly blown, and Northumberland in person came forth from the gates of the fortress, preceded by a guard.

The duke was completely armed, and mounted on a richly caparisoned steed. Close behind him were the Duke of Suffolk and the Marquis of Northampton. From the sounds within the fortification it was evident that a regiment of horse was about to come forth, but was delayed for a few minutes while the duke halted to speak to Sir Augustin Stewart.

“I have read the letter you have brought me from the Duke of Somerset,” said Northumberland, “and am surprised that he

should think I would accept his challenge. I am now marching to Somerset House, with the fixed intention of arresting him, and bringing him to the Tower. Go back, and tell him that is the only way in which I will meet him."

"I will recommend him to prepare for your grace's reception," rejoined Sir Augustin.

And bowing deeply, he turned round, and rode off at a quick pace, followed by his men.

As he passed through the City on his return, Sir Augustin made no halt, but he hoped some of the citizens might join him, as their aid would have been of great service at this juncture; but he was disappointed.

Somerset was curious to learn what answer he brought, and was very wroth that

his challenge had been refused. However, since it was now certain the palace would be immediately attacked, preparations for its defence must be immediately made. These were superintended by Sir Ralph Vane and Sir Augustin; but it struck both of them that the soldiers were not so full of zeal and enthusiasm as they had been at an earlier hour in the morning.

Meanwhile the duke had gone to have a final interview with the duchess, and found her in her own room with Margaret. He told her of Northumberland's refusal of his challenge, and of the approaching attack on the palace.

“I hope I shall be able to hold out,” he said; “but I would have you fly before the attack begins. Take Margaret with you, of course. You will find a boat at the stairs, which will convey you to Sion

House, where you can await the result of this contest. If I am successful, you can return ; if not, you must take such further steps as may be necessary for your safety."

"But wherefore should I fly?" cried the duchess. "I am in no personal danger."

"You are mistaken," rejoined the duke. "If I am defeated, you will be taken to the Tower, where you can render me no aid."

"Then, since it is your grace's wish, I will go to Sion House, though I would far rather remain here. But send me word to-night how you have fared during the day."

"I will," replied the duke. "Nay, it is possible I may bring you intelligence myself."

"Do not quit this palace, unless you

are compelled," said the duchess. "Send Sir Augustin Stewart to me. Come, Margaret."

With this she departed with her attendant, and shortly afterwards embarked in the boat as arranged.

On descending to the court, Somerset mounted his steed, and stationed himself at a short distance from the barricaded gateway, to await the Duke of Northumberland's arrival.

The court was now full of soldiers—the greater part of whom were the arquebusiers furnished by Vane. The remainder were Somerset's own *gens d'armes*.

Opposite the gateway was placed the captured piece of artillery, with two cannoneers beside it.

Just then trumpets were loudly blown, and Northumberland's advanced guard

riding up to the gate, Norroy King-at-Arms denounced the Duke of Somerset as a traitor, and commanded him and all those with him to lay down their arms, and submit themselves to the king's mercy.

To this summons the duke returned a positive refusal, declaring that he was willing to submit to the king, but refused to yield up his palace to the Duke of Northumberland.

Upon this, a cannon was brought forward, and fired against the barricade, which it broke down, but the assailants were unable to enter, for they were confronted by a large piece of artillery, ready to be discharged against them, as well as by a company of arquebusiers. The cannon on the top of the gate were in readiness.

Things were in this position, when Sir Michael Stanhope rode up to the gate, and

said to Norroy that the Duke of Somerset was willing to hold a parley with his Grace of Northumberland, at which it was possible some amicable arrangement might be made, and much bloodshed spared.

Norroy replied that he would willingly repeat what was said to him, but could not tell how it would be received; and he thereupon withdrew for a few minutes, when he returned and stated that the Duke of Northumberland rejected the proposal with scorn, and refused to make any terms with a double-dyed traitor like the Duke of Somerset.

Somerset was again commanded to surrender, and all those with him were enjoined in the king's name to give him up to justice.

On this demand, an effect decidedly unfavourable to Somerset seemed to be pro-

duced, and murmurs were heard among the arquebusiers, and even among the *gens d'armes*, who had hitherto been devoted to him.

Though ordered to fire by Sir Michael Stanhope, the arquebusiers refused, and the cannoneers would not apply a match.

“What is this?” cried Somerset. “Why do you refuse to obey the orders given you? Fire!”

“They will not obey a traitor,” replied Sir Gilbert Dethick. “Throw down your arms,” he shouted to the men, “and I promise you a pardon in the king’s name!”

“Desert me not!” cried Somerset.

“Listen not to him!” cried Norroy. “He would bring you to destruction.”

At this moment Northumberland rode forward, sword in hand, and exclaimed:

“Traitor, I arrest thee!”

As the words were uttered, Somerset was surrounded by a dozen cuirassiers, and disarmed ere he could strike a blow.

Seeing all was lost, the duke’s partisans, who were on horseback, and collected in the court, made an effort to escape.

Sir Ralph Vane and Sir Augustin Stewart succeeded in cutting their way out, and though pursued, neither of them was captured.

Sir Miles Partridge, Sir Michael Stanhope, and Sir Thomas Thynne surrendered, and were placed with Somerset.

Having accomplished his purpose, almost more quickly than he expected, Northumberland ordered the prisoners to be taken to the Tower at once. Accordingly, they were conducted thither by the Duke of

Suffolk and the Marquis of Northampton.

Had not Somerset been very strongly guarded, a successful attempt might have been made to deliver him as he passed through the City.

Armed bands were collected at different points, but they did not venture to attack a regiment of horse; and in consequence of this precaution, the duke and the conspirators were brought securely to the Tower.

Somerset's heart sank within him as he once more passed through the gates of the fortress, and he felt his doom was now sealed.

But he was received with the utmost respect and sympathy by the lieutenant, who conducted him and the other prisoners to his own lodgings, where he assigned

them temporary apartments till prison-chambers could be provided for them.

Much touched by the consideration thus shown him, Somerset began to think he had misjudged the lieutenant.

XIX.

MARGARET ONCE MORE ATTENDS UPON THE KING.

THE Duchess of Somerset and Margaret arrived safely at Sion House, where they were received by the Countess of Warwick, who did all she could to soothe the duchess's anxiety, but with very little success; and ere long came the ill tidings that Somerset House had fallen, and that the duke had been arrested and sent to the Tower.

On receiving this intelligence, the duchess reproached herself that she had not

remained with her lord to the last, and accompanied him in his captivity.

It now became a question with the Countess of Warwick whether anything could be done with the king for her unfortunate father, and after some consideration she resolved to go to Windsor Castle, where his majesty was then staying, and take Margaret with her.

The Earl of Warwick, who was then in charge of Shene Palace, was not consulted, as he would probably have opposed the step. The countess acted with great promptitude. Having made all necessary arrangements for the duchess, she ordered her litter, and started with Margaret for Windsor Castle.

At this juncture, by command of the Duke of Northumberland, strict guard was kept over the king, and few persons were

allowed to enter the castle; but with the countess there could be no difficulty.

On descending from her litter, she and Margaret were conducted to the royal apartments, where they were informed by a gentleman usher that the king was unwell, and it was by no means certain that his majesty would receive the countess.

They were not kept long in suspense. An answer was brought by Doctor Ratclyffe, the king's physician, who seemed surprised and delighted to find that Margaret was with the countess.

"You have just come in time," he said to her. "His majesty is suffering from one of his feverish attacks, and you alone can cure him."

"When did the attack come on?" she inquired, with great concern.

"Ever since his removal from Shene,"

replied the physician. "But he is somewhat worse to-day, having passed a sleepless night. Besides, he has got some delusions on his mind."

"Of what nature?" inquired the countess.

"Of a painful nature," replied Doctor Ratclyffe. "He fancies he is being slowly poisoned, and will neither eat nor drink until his food and wine have been tasted."

"A very distressing delusion," observed the countess.

"No doubt caused by the fever," replied the physician. "I will inform him you are here, and let you know what he says; but I feel sure he will see you."

As soon as the physician was gone, the countess remarked to her companion:

"You must take charge of the king, Margaret. If you cure him now, his gratitude

will be unbounded, and you may ask any favour you like."

"I will do my best," she replied. "I would lay down my life to preserve him."

Shortly afterwards, Doctor Ratclyffe returned, and said :

"Come with me. His majesty will see you."

He then took them to the king's privy chamber ; but before drawing aside the tapestry that masked the entrance gave them a fresh caution.

Edward was passing quickly to and fro within the room, but stopped suddenly as they came in, and regarded them with distrust. They both thought him greatly changed. He scarcely noticed the obeisances they made him.

“I am sorry to find your majesty is unwell,” observed Margaret.

“No wonder,” he rejoined, sharply. “For two nights I have not slept. If I do not sleep to-night I shall go mad. You have the secret of soothing me, and must exercise it.”

“I will gladly do so, my liege,” she rejoined.

“Ay, but there is more the matter with me now than when you tended me before,” he said, gravely. “Poison has been given me.”

“You alarm yourself unnecessarily, my liege,” said Margaret.

“No,” rejoined Edward, catching her arm, and gazing at her fixedly. “I cannot be deceived. A slow poison has been given me.”

“Dismiss this foolish notion, my liege,” she rejoined. “Carefully watched as you are by Doctor Ratsclyffe, how could anything noxious be given you?”

“I feel its effects,” said the king. “On that table are various meats; but I dare touch none of them.”

“Then let me serve as your majesty’s taster,” said Margaret.

“There is really nothing to fear, my liege,” cried the countess, taking his hand, and drawing him gently towards the table.

With a little persuasion the king sat down, and some chicken that Margaret had tasted was placed before him. He ate of it, and apparently with relish.

Then followed a slice of pastry, the wholesomeness of which was proved in a similar manner; and then came a cup of wine,

which Margaret raised to her lips before offering it to his majesty.

Doctor Ratclyffe, who had looked on with great satisfaction, now deemed it necessary to interpose.

“His majesty has eaten sufficient,” he said, as he led him to a couch, and persuaded him to recline upon it.

He glanced at Margaret, who, without further solicitation, commenced one of those simple melodies that had formerly proved so successful.

The effect was magical. Almost immediately the king began to manifest an inclination to slumber, and ere long was fast asleep.

Doctor Radclyffe was enchanted.

“I believe you have cured him,” he whispered. “But you must not leave him.”

A perfect restoration depends upon the next few hours."

Under these circumstances, the Countess of Warwick decided upon remaining at the castle till the dangerous crisis should be got over, and the litter was sent back to Sion House.

Both fair watchers remained by the king till he awoke, when it was evident he was much better; but he was greatly afraid they might leave him, and laid his commands upon both to remain with him till he gave them permission to depart.

XX.

HOW AN ATTEMPT WAS MADE UPON THE KING'S LIFE IN
WINDSOR FOREST.

EDWARD passed a very good night, and was so much better next day that he proposed a ride in the forest, to which Doctor Ratelyffe saw no objection, provided his fair attendants accompanied him ; and since this was what the king especially desired, it was so arranged.

About noon a large party set forth from the castle on horseback. Half a dozen

falconers were with them, so that those who liked hawking might enjoy the sport.

Edward rode a palfrey, and the countess and Margaret were furnished with peculiarly gentle steeds, as the king had been ordered by his physician to proceed slowly.

On the first halt, which occurred after he had ridden about a mile, the king dismissed all the young nobles and gentlemen in attendance upon him, together with his grooms; and when thus left quite alone with his fair companions seemed easier than he had done.

In this part of the forest, which commanded a fine view of the castle, there were many noble old oaks, and Edward stationed himself under one of these to survey the scene.

He now seemed quite cheerful, talked

and laughed as usual, and his companions began to feel perfectly easy about him.

The Countess of Warwick thought this a favourable moment to plead for her father, the Duke of Somerset, and was about to do so, when the twang of a bow-string was suddenly heard, and a dart from an arbalist flew past the king's head, so closely that it almost touched him, and plunged into the oak at the rear.

Though aware that an attempt had been made upon his life, Edward manifested no fear, but turning quickly, saw a man, armed with a cross-bow, hurry away, and plunge into an adjoining thicket.

None of his attendants were in sight, so that he could not summon them; and he was talking calmly of the occurrence to his companions, both of whom were greatly

alarmed, when a horseman emerged from the thicket, dragging the cross-bowman towards the king.

It was Sir Augustin Stewart. Both the countess and Margaret regarded him with astonishment.

“Here is the villain who has just attempted your majesty’s life!” he cried.

Though the king recognised Sir Augustin, he made no remark, but addressed the intending assassin.

“Who art thou?—and what is thy motive for this atrocious act?” he demanded.

“It matters not how I am called,” rejoined the man, boldly. “I am a Romanist, and desire to see the Lady Mary on the throne.”

“Heaven is against thee,” said the king, “and has thwarted thy evil design.”

“So it seems,” rejoined the man. “I

deny not my crime, and am prepared to suffer for it."

"Though thou wouldst have taken my life, I will not take thine," said the king. "Set him free."

Sir Augustin obeyed the mandate, but he nevertheless observed :

"The wretch deserves not your majesty's clemency."

The man threw himself down before the king.

"I repent what I have done, my liege," he cried, "and rejoice that my hand was turned aside."

"Depart, and let me not behold thee again!" said the king. "If thou art found within the forest, or nigh the castle, thou shalt assuredly be put to death!"

Without another word, the man arose, and hastened away.

Edward then sternly regarded Sir Augustin, and said to him :

“I did not deem a traitor, such as thou art, would dare appear before me ! Thou shouldst be in the Tower with thy master, the Duke of Somerset, and shalt be sent to join him !”

“Nay, my gracious liege ; I pray you have compassion on him !” cried Margaret. “Send him not to the Tower !”

“Would you have him escape punishment for his treason ?” said the king.

“If I have any claim on your majesty, let me exert it now !” cried Margaret. “Spare him, I beseech you !”

“Had I not a father to plead for, I would plead for Sir Augustin Stewart !” said the Countess of Warwick. “Pardon him, I implore you, my liege !”

“I must turn a deaf ear to your en-

treaties," rejoined Edward. "Where all are equally guilty, I can make no exception. I can spare none."

"Then fly!" cried Margaret, to Augustin.

"Without you, my life is not worth preserving," he rejoined. "Come with me."

"I forbid you to go," cried Edward, authoritatively.

"What will you do?" asked Sir Augustin.

"I cannot disobey his majesty," she rejoined.

"Then I stay," he said.

Edward looked somewhat moved.

Seeing he relented, the countess said, in a low tone:

"Have pity upon them, my liege! You will break Margaret's heart if you remain inexorable!"

For a few moments Edward spoke not, but seemed lost in reflection.

He then said to Sir Augustin :

“Go straightway to the castle, and remain there till my return. I will then decide respecting you.”

Both Margaret and the countess looked hopefully at Sir Augustin, as he bowed to the king, and rode off.

XXI.

OF THE ERRAND ON WHICH SIR AUGUSTIN WAS SENT BY
THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

BEFORE reaching the castle, the king was again in a highly feverish state.

The excitement he had undergone was too much for him. He would not see Sir Augustin Stewart, but ordered him to be placed in confinement in the Lieutenant's Tower.

Though grieved by this harsh proceeding on the king's part, the countess and Margaret did not remonstrate with him, as

they felt it would be useless in his present state, and they hoped the attack would soon subside.

Never had they been more useful to his majesty than on this occasion; and Doctor Ratclyffe, who blamed himself for allowing the king to go forth, confessed his great obligation to them.

Somewhat later in the day, the Duke of Northumberland and a portion of his suite arrived at the castle, and was greatly surprised, and, indeed, alarmed, to find the king suffering from fever; but, being satisfied by the physician there was no real danger, he refrained from visiting his majesty, and contented himself with questioning the Countess of Warwick.

From her he learnt that Edward's life had been attempted by some zealous Romanist supposed to be attached to the

Princess Mary, and that the assassin when captured by Sir Augustin Stewart, had been liberated by the king. He also learnt that Sir Augustin was now confined in the Lieutenant's Tower, and awaiting his majesty's pleasure ; but the countess believed he would receive a pardon.

"I shall not oppose it," said the duke.

"I am glad to hear your grace say so," rejoined the countess. "Since you have made this promise, I will pray you to accompany me to the place of Sir Augustin's confinement."

"Willingly," replied the duke. "I would fain speak with him."

They then proceeded to the Lieutenant's Tower. No especial precaution, except a guard at the door, seemed to be taken for the safe custody of the prisoner.

Sir Augustin was placed in the large

upper chamber wherein the Duke of Somerset had been confined.

Northumberland did not allow any one to announce him; so that the prisoner was quite taken by surprise, and would have felt great uneasiness had not the presence of the countess tended to reassure him.

The duke haughtily returned his reverence, and then, sitting down, began at once to interrogate him.

“I understand you witnessed the daring attempt made upon the king’s life in the forest this morning,” he said, “and arrested the assassin. What is your opinion of the man?”

“I believe him to be a monk, your grace,” replied Sir Augustin. “But he was habited like a forester, and armed with an arbalist.”

“Was he alone?” demanded the duke.

“ I saw no one,” replied Sir Augustin ;
“ but I heard sounds that convinced me
there were some horsemen in the thicket.”

“ What were you doing there at the
time ?”

“ I was watching an opportunity to pre-
sent myself to the king, your grace, when
this man, whom I took to be a forester, ran
out, took aim at the king, and then hurried
back ; whereupon I seized him, and dragged
him before his majesty, by whom he was
set free.”

“ That is the exact fact,” remarked the
countess. “ But the man confessed that
he was a Romanist, and devoted to the
Princess Mary. My own belief is that he
was one of the princess’s servants in the
garb of a forester, and that others were in
the thicket.”

“ I am sorry the king allowed him to

depart," said the duke. "The matter ought to have been investigated. The Lady Mary's obstinate refusal to conform to the provisions of the statute for the uniformity of worship has given his majesty the greatest displeasure, and he has threatened to send her head chaplain, Doctor Mallet, to the Tower, unless he discontinues the ancient service, and ceases to celebrate mass at Copt Hall, the princess's residence. Some of the officers of her household may have resented the interference. Inquiries shall be made, and if the intending assassin can be found, he shall be punished."

"Were I to see him again, I could not fail to recognise the man," said Sir Augustin."

"It may be you will be sent to Copt Hall to identify him," said the duke.

"I will go thither at once, if your

grace desires it, and I pledge my word to return."

"You must not go alone," said the duke. "I will send a guard with you. You may want assistance. Should you discover the assassin, you must arrest him. Copt Hall, where the Lady Mary resides, is in Essex, on the borders of Epping Forest, and might be difficult to find; but you shall have a man with you acquainted with the locality to serve as guide, and shall likewise be provided with a warrant for the arrest of any person or persons you may suspect of conspiring against the king's life."

"I understand," replied Sir Augustin. "When does your grace desire me to set forth on the errand?"

"Without delay. In half an hour the warrant and the men shall be ready for you. Halt for the night at Whitehall,

and proceed at an early hour to-morrow. Should the assassin be captured, bring him hither."

The duke then rose, and quitted the chamber.

As the countess, who had listened with much interest to what passed, followed him, she said, in a low tone to Sir Augustin :

"If you succeed in this errand, your pardon is certain."

Sir Augustin could scarcely believe he had been thus suddenly transferred to the Duke of Northumberland ; but felt he could not have acted differently, and it was now too late to retreat.

In less than half an hour an officer of the household appeared, bringing with him a warrant which he delivered to Sir Augustin, and at the same time informed him that all was ready for his departure.

Sir Augustin had no preparations to make. Throwing his mantle over his shoulder, and clapping his bonnet on his brow, he proceeded with the officer to the lower court, where he found a strong steed waiting for him, together with half a dozen *gens d'armes*.

As he sprang into the saddle, he said to the officer :

“Tell his Grace of Northumberland I will attend to his injunctions, and return forthwith.”

Followed by his little troop, he then rode out of the lower gate of the castle.

XXII.

COPT HALL.

BEFORE Sir Augustin reached London it had become dark, and, in pursuance of the instructions he had received, he at once proceeded to Whitehall, where an order from the Duke of Northumberland, delivered by one of the men, procured him all the accommodation he required.

After an early breakfast next morning, he rode with his little troop into Essex, and soon reached the forest, which then

extended beyond Snaresbrook, boasted some of the finest oaks and beech-trees in the kingdom, and abounded in red and fallow deer.

A long ride through the forest brought them to the pretty village of Theydon Bois; and while his men were discussing the contents of a huge black jack and some sausages, for which the place was even then renowned, Sir Augustin ascertained from Tom Torrill, the host of the "Crown," that the Lady Mary was at Copt Hall; and, furthermore, that Sir Anthony Brown, Sir Clement Smith, and a large number of guests, had been lately staying with her, and, for aught he knew, might be there still.

"I hope her grace will not be molested on account of her religion," said Tom. "Methinks she is entitled to as much liberty

of worship as Cranmer and Ridley themselves; and I cannot for the life of me see why she ought not to be allowed to say mass in her own chapel."

"I would counsel you not to talk too boldly about religious matters, mine host, if you would escape pains and penalties," remarked Sir Augustin; "but to conform quietly to the new doctrines."

"So I mean to do, worshipful sir," replied the host, alarmed. "I have adopted the reformed faith in all sincerity, and care not for the ancient liturgy, or for any of the old ceremonies. Nevertheless, I do think great intolerance has been shown towards the Lady Mary; and should she ever come to the throne, as is not unlikely, most assuredly she won't forget it."

"Again I warn you to put a guard on

your tongue, good mine host. Know you not that to speak of the king's successor is treason? Bring me a cup of ale, which should be good, since I perceive my men have emptied their black jack."

"Your worship will find it good, or Tom Torril is no judge," replied the host.

With this he disappeared, but presently returned, bearing a silver cup, the foaming contents of which proved so satisfactory to Sir Augustin, that he ordered the black jack to be replenished for the men, and then continued his converse with Master Torrill, who, it appeared, had anything but a friendly feeling towards the Duke of Somerset, and was well pleased that his grace had been again arrested, and sent to the Tower.

"I hope an end will be made of him" this

time at Tower Hill," he said. "True, there is not much to choose between him and Northumberland, but I prefer the latter."

"Again I advise you to be cautious what you say, Master Torrill," observed Sir Augustin.

"Nay, we may say what we please now of the Duke of Somerset and the conspirators," remarked the host. "'Tis no treason to wish them all beheaded, or hanged. Besides, they did nothing. Somerset House might have been held for a month, but the duke and his partisans couldn't keep it for three days."

"You are talking about what you don't understand," said Sir Augustin, sharply.

"Maybe; but I comprehend the result," rejoined Torrill, "and that is success to your master, the Duke of Northumberland."

“The Duke of Northumberland is not my master,” cried Sir Augustin.

“I thought he was,” remarked Torrill, “Whom, then, do you serve, if I may be bold enough to ask?”

“His majesty!” replied Sir Augustin, haughtily.

Torrill doffed his cap, but made no remark.

Sir Augustin then called out that he was ready, whereupon his men hastily drained the black jack, and mounted their horses.

“What is the name of your captain?” inquired the host, of one of the troopers, who lingered for a moment behind the others.

“Sir Augustin Stewart,” replied the man, laughing at Torrill’s surprise.

“Why, he belonged to Somerset!” cried the host.

“True,” replied the man. “But he now belongs to us.”

And he rode after his comrades.

Guided by one of his men, who was acquainted with the spot, Sir Augustin presently entered a park, that had evidently been enclosed from the ancient forest.

In the midst of it stood a large mansion, built of red brick, in the Tudor style of architecture, and having great bay windows, and tall, twisted chimneys.

Copt Hall, though a stately edifice, had a somewhat gloomy look, being too much shut in by trees: but its secluded air pleased the Princess Mary, who sought retirement, and would have preferred a convent if she could have obtained one.

Copt Hall possessed an outer court, surrounded by high brick walls, and was approached by a turreted gateway.

Besides the porter, two halberdiers were stationed at this gate, one of whom stepped forward and demanded Sir Augustin's business, as he rode up with his men.

"I am the bearer of a message from the Duke of Northumberland to her grace the Lady Mary," said Sir Augustin.

"Her highness is at mass in the chapel," replied the halberdier, stoutly.

"At mass!" cried Sir Augustin, frowning.

"Ay, we all attend mass here!" said the man. "If you desire to see her highness, you must wait till the service is over, and that won't be for an hour. But you can enter the court, if you think proper."

As Sir Augustin passed through the gate with his men, he noticed a gentleman in the court, and inquired whether he was an officer of the household.

"It is Master Rochester, one of the chief

officers," replied the porter. "He will give you any information you may require."

Sir Augustin had not advanced far when the personage in question, who was attired in black velvet, with a chain of gold round his neck, and had a grave and dignified deportment, came forward; and it could be then perceived that he had a string of black beads depending from his girdle, thus proclaiming his adherence to the old religion.

After formal salutations had passed between them, and Sir Augustin had announced himself and explained his errand, Master Rochester invited him into the house.

Thereupon the visitor dismounted, and leaving his horse with one of the troopers, followed his conductor into the great hall, which was quite empty at the time.

“The servants are at mass,” said Rochester.

“I understood so,” replied Sir Augustin. “I suppose all the servants are in the chapel?”

“All who can be spared are there. The princess enjoins their attendance, and they obey.”

“No secret, then, is made that mass is regularly said here?”

“None whatever,” replied Rochester. “You see by the beads I wear that I openly profess my devotion to the Church of Rome. But, Papist as I am, I declare to you emphatically, Sir Augustin, that I will forfeit my own life if it shall be discovered that a servant of the princess’s has attempted to assassinate her royal brother. All the servants shall appear before you; and should you recognise the heinous offender among

them, and it can be shown that he was absent from Copt Hall at the time, her grace, I am well assured, will rejoice to deliver him to justice."

Praying Sir Augustin to be seated, he then left him, and nearly an hour elapsed before he again appeared.

During this interval, no one entered the hall.

Rochester then took the visitor to a corridor, on either side of which were ranged the principal servants, and bade him scrutinise them carefully.

Marching slowly through the ranks, Sir Augustin looked inquiringly right and left, but beheld no one he had seen before.

"Are all here?" he demanded, as he concluded the examination.

"All!" replied Rochester.

And the assertion was confirmed by several voices.

“Then a great mistake has been made, and the Duke of Northumberland shall be disabused,” said Sir Augustin.

“I felt confident such would be the result,” observed Rochester. “Have you any further inquiries to make?”

“I have only to express my profound regret at having troubled her highness; and I pray you to say as much to her.”

“It may be proper you should offer your own excuses to her grace, Sir Augustin,” said Rochester. “I will take you to her anon.”

XXIII.

THE PRINCESS MARY AND MESSIRE SIMON RENARD.

AFTER an absence of about a quarter of an hour, during which all the servants had quitted the corridor, Rochester reappeared, and conducted Sir Augustin to the great hall, at the entrance of which a chamberlain and two ushers were now stationed.

The scene was totally changed. Instead of being empty, the vast apartment was now nearly filled.

At the upper end, on a chair covered by a cloth of estate, sat the Princess Mary, with a number of knights, dames, and country gentlemen on either side, all richly clad in velvets and silks of various hues, and each provided with a string of beads, conspicuously displayed.

Among the important personages present were Sir Anthony Brown and Sir Clement Smith, both of whom were members of the king's household.

Close to the princess, on her right, stood her head chaplain, Doctor Mallet, in the full ecclesiastical costume—amice, alb, stole, and coif—in which he had just officiated at the altar. Behind him were the two other chaplains, and behind them the choristers. In fact, all there assembled had just come from the chapel.

Though the Lady Mary could not boast

any great personal charms, her figure being too thin, and her features, though finely moulded, totally wanting in feminine softness, her demeanour was majestic, and she was always dressed with truly regal splendour.

On the present occasion her gown was of embroidered silver brocade, with black velvet sleeves, and a crimson velvet petticoat, which was visible, since the front of the gown was left open. Her long stomacher and diamond-shaped head-dress were studded with precious stones. Around her neck was a collar of pearls; while her slender waist was encircled by a splendid girdle, from which hung a pair of beads of gold, enamelled black. Her beautifully shaped hands were covered with brilliant rings.

Up to this moment Sir Augustin had

supposed that the princess, who was living in apparent retirement at Copt Hall, was almost alone. To his infinite surprise, he now found she had a large number of important guests staying with her, and maintained an almost royal establishment, together with a sufficiently strong guard, half a dozen halberdiers being stationed at no great distance from her.

Conducted towards the princess by the chamberlain, who carried a white wand, Sir Augustin made a profound reverence, and then said in an apologetic tone :

“ I feel I must have given your highness great annoyance. An attempt has recently been made upon the king’s life in Windsor Forest, which has been wrongfully attributed, as it turns out, to one of your highness’s servants; and, in consequence, I have been sent hither by

the Duke of Northumberland, to arrest the intending assassin, if I should find him."

"Well!" exclaimed Mary, impatiently, "have you found him?"

"No, your grace; and from the investigation just made, I am convinced he is not among your household.

"How could you have recognised the sacrilegious wretch, had he been here?" demanded the princess, sternly.

"I captured him, your grace, immediately after he had levelled a cross-bow at his majesty, the bolt being turned aside by the hand of Heaven."

On hearing this, Mary crossed herself devoutly, and a general murmur of satisfaction was heard among the assemblage.

"How chanced it the wretch escaped, if

he was captured?" remarked Doctor Mallet.
"This requires explanation."

"Ay, why was not the miscreant detained?" demanded Mary.

"He was liberated by the king, your grace," replied Sir Augustin.

"And yet, despite the mercy shown him by his majesty, the Duke of Northumberland now seeks to arrest him," observed the princess.

"The duke is of opinion that such an offence ought not to pass unpunished, your grace."

"But the king has power to pardon the heinous offender, if he deems fit," remarked Doctor Mallet.

"Ay, marry, has he," said the princess.
"But Northumberland ventures to thwart his majesty's gracious purpose. Doubtless

the insolent duke's object in sending you here is to affront me."

"Beseech your highness not to think so!" remarked Sir Augustin. "It is not my business to defend the duke——"

"Not defend him!" cried the princess. "Are you not his servant?"

Here Sir Anthony Brown interposed.

"Sir Augustin Stewart, whom I see with surprise here to-day, your grace, belongs—or *did* belong—to the Duke of Somerset's household, and was with him when Somerset House was attacked by Northumberland."

"In that case, he ought to be a prisoner in the Tower with his master!" said the princess, contemptuously. "But I conclude he is a renegade."

"Your highness does me great wrong by the suspicion," said Sir Augustin, in a

voice of controlled emotion. "I do not voluntarily serve the Duke of Northumberland."

"How comes it you are here, then, to offer this affront to her grace?" demanded Sir Anthony Brown, sternly.

"I refuse to answer the question, Sir Anthony," rejoined the other.

"Then you must rest under the suspicion of treachery to Somerset," said Sir Anthony.

"The duke will acquit me of all blame," rejoined Sir Augustin.

"Your explanation is so unsatisfactory that I shall feel justified in detaining you," said the princess. "How do I know you are sent here by Northumberland?"

"This will prove it, your grace," said Sir Augustin, as he handed her the warrant by Sir Anthony Brown.

“ It proves, also, that you are a traitor,” observed Sir Anthony ; “ and I trust her grace will not allow you to depart.”

“ I am in her highness’s hands,” said Sir Augustin. “ But though I do not belong to the Duke of Northumberland’s household, I doubt not he will resent my detention.”

“ Let him resent it—I care not,” said the princess. “ I set Northumberland at defiance ! My cousin, the Emperor Charles the Fifth, will not suffer me to be affronted with impunity, and I have been grossly affronted by the supposition that I have contrived the king, my brother’s, destruction.”

“ Pardon me, your grace—no such supposition has been entertained,” said Sir Augustin.

“ What else can your visit mean ?” cried

Mary, with increasing anger. "I will show that I set at naught this upstart peer, who was raised from nothing by the king, my father, and has dared to affront me! He shall learn I am his master's daughter—heir presumptive to the throne—and that I declare myself his enemy! Guards," she cried to the halberdiers, and pointing to Sir Augustin as she spoke, "arrest this gentleman!"

"Proceed not too far, gracious princess," cried Sir Clement Smith.

"Involve not yourself in a quarrel with Northumberland," added Sir Anthony Brown. "He may prove a dangerous enemy."

"Listen to your true friends, I beseech your grace," implored Doctor Mallet.

At these remonstrances from persons she knew to be devoted to her, the princess

hesitated, and the halberdiers, who were watching her, held aloof from Sir Augustin for the moment.

Just then, a tall, swarthy-complexioned personage, whose dark eyes gave a very sinister expression to his countenance, appeared at the lower end of the hall, and moved with slow and haughty footsteps towards the princess, preceded ceremoniously by the chamberlain and ushers.

He was dressed entirely in black velvet, and had the order of the *Toison d'or* round his neck, and a very long rapier by his side.

On arriving sufficiently near, he was announced as his excellency, "Messire Simon Renard, the Spanish ambassador."

Messire Simon Renard, who was in great favour with the Emperor Charles the Fifth from his courage, shrewdness, and skill,

devoted himself, by his imperial master's command, to the Princess Mary, and by his vigilance constantly checked the designs of the Council against her.

His unlooked-for arrival at this juncture satisfied Mary that some matter of importance to herself had brought him to Copt Hall.

After making her a profound obeisance, the wily ambassador, with a look that somewhat contradicted his words, said :

“ I bring your highness bad news. I have just learnt by a special messenger from Windsor Castle that the king, your brother, is dangerously ill.”

“ Dangerously ill ?” exclaimed Mary.

“ Ay, your grace,” rejoined Renard. “ His majesty has had a sudden attack of fever. It behoves you to go to Windsor forthwith to see him.”

“ I am greatly concerned to hear of the king’s illness,” replied Mary, “ but I will not place myself in Northumberland’s hands.”

“ Take a large escort with you,” said Renard.

“ We are all ready to attend your highness,” cried the knights and gentlemen standing around.

“ I thank you for your zeal,” replied the princess. “ I never doubted it. But I will not put it to the test just now.”

“ There is nothing to fear from Northumberland,” remarked Renard. “ He must receive your grace with all befitting respect.”

“ I know not that,” said Mary. “ He may resent the treatment just shown his messenger.”

“ He dares not resent it,” said Renard, when informed of what had occurred. “ He has acted most unjustifiably in sending an officer here without the king’s authority—nay, in direct opposition to his majesty’s expressed wish. Nevertheless, I think it best, under the circumstances, that your highness should defer your visit, lest some further complication might arise. Let Sir Augustin return as he came, and state what he will.”

“ I shall simply say I have failed in my errand, your excellency,” said Sir Augustin ; “ and the princess may rest assured I shall make no complaint of any treatment I have experienced.”

At a sign from Mary, the guards immediately retired, and Sir Augustin was set free.

With a profound obeisance to the princess, he then quitted the hall, and proceeded to the outer court, where he found the *gens d'armes* waiting for him, and mounting his steed, rode off.

XXIV.

AT WHOSE SOLICITATION SIR AUGUSTIN WAS PARDONED BY
THE KING.

NOT till next morning did Sir Augustin arrive with his *gens d'armes* at Windsor Castle, and he then learnt, to his great satisfaction, that the king was much better—the fever having completely abated.

The Duke of Northumberland was far from satisfied with the result of the expedition, having quite calculated on the discovery and arrest of the intending assassin ;

but he was glad to find the Princess Mary had postponed her visit to the sick king—especially since she would probably have brought with her Messire Simon Renard.

On quitting the duke, Sir Augustin sought an interview with the Countess of Warwick, who told him the king attributed his recovery entirely to Margaret.

“His majesty has been inquiring about you this morning, and wishes to see you,” said the countess. “You may now regard your pardon as certain.”

“I do not seek a pardon,” said Sir Augustin. “I would rather join the duke, my master, in the Tower, and share his fate. I have been reproached by the princess with deserting him, and her taunts have stung me to the quick.”

“Heed them not,” said the countess. “Those who know you as well as I do

will not doubt your fidelity to the duke, my father. Besides, the sacrifice would be useless. How can you serve him now?"

"I may help to lighten his captivity."

"He does not lack society," replied the countess. "The duchess, my mother, is with him, and he has already too many friends. Sir Ralph Vane was captured yesterday."

"In what manner?" inquired Sir Augustin.

"He was discovered in the stable of a hostel in Southwark, where he had tried to conceal himself," replied the countess; "and though a dozen arquebusiers were sent to arrest him, he well-nigh overpowered them all. Had he been able to mount his horse, he would have got off."

“I would he had escaped,” cried Sir Augustin. “A braver knight than Sir Ralph Vane does not exist.”

“His valour will not help him now that he is a prisoner in the Tower,” said the countess. “He ought to have died in battle.”

The short pause that ensued was broken by Sir Augustin, who remarked :

“I thought I should find Margaret with your ladyship.”

“She will be here anon,” replied the countess. “Her father, who has just arrived at the castle, wishes to take her back with him to Hethersett.”

“Will she go?” demanded Sir Augustin, anxiously.

“I cannot tell,” replied the countess. “I rather think not. But here she comes to answer for herself.”

And as she spoke, Margaret entered the apartment, accompanied by her father.

She did not look well, and the hectic flush upon her cheek alarmed Sir Augustin.

After Flowerdew had been presented to the countess, a warm greeting passed between him and Sir Augustin.

“You will guess the object of my visit here,” said Flowerdew. “I have come for Margaret, but cannot prevail upon her to return with me.”

“Before I consent, I must ascertain the duchess’s wishes,” said Margaret. “She may desire me to attend upon her in the Tower.”

“I am sure she will,” replied the countess.

“Then I shall certainly go to her,” said Margaret.

“In that case, I must submit without a murmur,” rejoined Flowerdew. “But I trust a day will come when Hethersett may again be gladdened by my daughter’s presence.”

“That day, I fear, is still far off, dear father,” said Margaret, sadly.

“One thing may be accomplished,” said Flowerdew. “Your long - delayed union with Sir Augustin may take place. That accomplished, I shall feel comparatively easy.”

“Why should we be united, only to separate?” said Margaret. “No; I dare not decide now. We must wait the course of events.”

“Be it so,” rejoined Sir Augustin, in a tone of resignation, while her father heaved a deep sigh.

The painful silence was broken by the entrance of an usher.

Bowing ceremoniously, the usher said he was commanded to conduct the whole party to the king.

“Where is his majesty?” inquired the countess.

“In his inner privy chamber,” replied the usher.

“Is he alone?”

“No one but Doctor Ratclyffe is with him,” replied the usher.

Again bowing profoundly, he passed out; and, marching before them with some other servants in the royal livery, brought them to the king's presence.

Edward had recovered with marvellous rapidity. Very few traces of his late illness could now be discerned.

By the combined skill of his physician, who perfectly understood the management of his delicate constitution, and the care taken of him by the countess and Margaret—especially the latter—a perfect cure had been effected.

The feverish attacks, to which the young monarch was subject, were very dangerous while they lasted, but the crisis was generally soon over. In this instance, the fever had endured somewhat longer than usual; but happily it was now completely subdued.

All his previous excitement and irritation being allayed, Edward was in a most amiable mood, and accorded his “two preservers,” as he termed them, a very gracious reception.

He was seated on a crimson velvet fau-

teuil, and close behind him stood Doctor Ratsclyffe, who smiled blandly at Margaret as she entered.

The customary reverences made, the countess congratulated his majesty on his recovery.

“But for you and Margaret, I should not be here now, fair cousin,” said the king. “How can I best evince my gratitude to you both for the care you have taken of me?”

“Your majesty can easily requite us, if you are so inclined,” replied the countess; “and I pray you to understand that, in rewarding Margaret, you will reward me. Whatever may be done for her, I shall consider done for myself.”

“Speak, then,” said Edward, addressing Margaret.

On this, the damsel in question flung herself at his feet, and said :

“ If your majesty is really desirous to make me happy, you will pardon this gentleman.”

“ You ask much,” said the king. “ But the request shall not be denied. Arise ; your prayer is granted. And let Sir Augustin Stewart ever recollect that he owes his life to you.”

“ And he will try to pay off the debt, my liege,” cried Sir Augustin, as he prostrated himself before the king, and strove to express his gratitude.

“ Your majesty must be aware,” said the countess, “ that the gracious act you have just performed will necessarily lead to a marriage.”

“ I trust so,” said Edward, smiling. “ I will do all I can to promote it. But Mar-

garet's father is here, if I mistake not. What says he?"

"He greatly desires the union, my liege," replied Flowerdew, with a profound reverence, "and would have it take place on the earliest day possible."

"The earliest day possible would be to-morrow," remarked Edward.

"To-morrow is the day I would choose, my liege, if the choice rested with me," interposed Sir Augustin.

"And I will answer for Margaret," said the countess.

"Nay, let her answer for herself, cousin," observed the king. "How say you, Margaret? Shall the marriage take place to-morrow in Saint George's Chapel, and in our presence?"

"Alas, my liege," she replied, "it cannot be!"

“Cannot be! Wherefore not?” cried the king, greatly surprised.

“Ask me not for an explanation, I entreat your majesty!” she rejoined. “I can give none that would appear satisfactory.”

“Then is it your wish that the engagement should be broken off?” asked the king.

“It is, my liege!” she replied.

All were filled with consternation by the unexpected answer, and Sir Augustin with difficulty repressed a cry.

When the king afterwards spoke of the matter to Doctor Ratclyffe, the physician said, with unwonted gravity:

“I will give your majesty an explanation of the distressing circumstance. The poor damsel is in a decline, but will avow her illness to none but me.”

“Is the illness incurable?” asked Edward.

“It is, my liege,” replied Doctor Ratclyffe. “She will not be alive two months hence !”

XXV.

HOW THE DUKE OF SOMERSET AND THE CONSPIRATORS
PASSED THEIR TIME IN THE TOWER.

THE Duke of Somerset, who had now been for some time in the Tower, was confined in the Beauchamp Tower, but the duchess, who was treated very leniently, was allowed apartments in the palace, and attended upon by Margaret Flowerdew. She was likewise permitted by Sir Leonard Chamberlain, who was now Lieutenant of the Tower, to receive a certain

number of visitors, chief among whom was her daughter, the Countess of Warwick.

With the single exception of Sir Augustin Stewart, all those engaged in Somerset's conspiracy were now lodged in the Tower, and consequently the whole of the fortifications in the ballium wall used as prison-lodgings were filled.

In the Bell Tower, which adjoined the Beauchamp Tower, and had a means of communication with it, was confined the Earl of Arundel. The two chambers in the Flint Tower were allotted to Sir Michael Stanhope and Sir Thomas Arundel. Sir Ralph Vane was placed in the upper chamber of the Devilin Tower, and Sir Miles Partridge in the lower. To the Lords Paget and Grey were assigned rooms in the lieutenant's lodgings. Sir Thomas Palmer, Sir Thomas Holcroft, Sir John Thynne,

Sir Nicholas Poyntz, Sir Thomas Stradling, and some others were confined elsewhere.

When it is borne in mind that at this time the Duke of Norfolk was a permanent prisoner in the Tower, that Gardiner and two other prelates were likewise confined there, and that there were several other State prisoners, it will be easily understood that the fortress must have been inconveniently crowded.

Somerset bore his captivity well. He had little or no hope of liberation, feeling sure that Northumberland would procure his condemnation at the approaching trial; and he had but slight hope of a pardon from the king.

But he passed his days calmly. By the indulgence of Sir Leonard Chamberlain, he was allowed to take an airing daily

on the green, where he met his fellow-prisoners, who were permitted an hour's exercise at the same time.

During these promenades, a party of arquebusiers were drawn up to prevent any attempt at escape.

All the State prisoners were, likewise, permitted to attend the services in Saint Peter's Chapel on the green, or in the chapel in the White Tower.

Such was the routine of Somerset's life. He seemed to have quite reconciled himself to his fate, as, indeed, had all the other prisoners, except Sir Ralph Vane, who sometimes broke into fits of ungovernable rage, and could with difficulty be restrained.

Towards the end of November, 1551, extraordinary preparations were made for the Duke of Somerset's trial, which was ap-

pointed by the Council to take place on the 1st December.

A large scaffold, covered with crimson cloth, and ascended by wide railed steps, was reared in the midst of Westminster Hall. On this structure there were seats for the twenty-six peers who were to sit as judges at the trial, together with a cloth of estate, supported by two lofty posts, beneath which was a bench destined for the Lord William Paulet, Marquis of Winchester, and Lord High Treasurer, who was to preside at the trial as High Steward of England.

At this period, witnesses were not confronted with the accused party, but previously examined, and their evidence taken down and read—a course pursued in the case of the Duke of Somerset's trial.

Sir Thomas Palmer, with three of the

duke's servants, Crane, Hammond, Barteville, and some others who had already confessed, were examined on the first day of the trial, when Somerset was not present, the result being such as to leave little hope of his grace's acquittal.

On the evening of that all-important day, Sir Augustin Stewart, who had been present at the examination of the witnesses, came to visit the duke in the Beauchamp Tower, having obtained permission from the lieutenant.

“I see from your looks that all has gone against me to-day,” said Somerset, as Sir Augustin entered the prison-chamber. “But it could not be otherwise.”

“The judges are adverse, undoubtedly,” was the reply; “but the vast audience assembled in the hall manifested a strong

feeling in your grace's favour. You are still idolized by the people."

"I am glad to hear that," observed the duke. "As I have no hopes of acquittal, I shall not be disappointed. The trial will be a mere mockery. But I have something to say respecting the treasure you brought me from Norwich. I have never used it. Should my enemies triumph over me to-morrow, as I feel certain they will, I restore the money to you. It is hidden beneath the floor of the garden pavilion at Somerset House. Remove the boards, and you will find it. Take it, I enjoin you."

Sir Augustin made some objections, but the duke overruled them.

"The treasure properly belongs to you," he said; "and it would give me an ad-

ditional pang if I thought it would fall into the hands of my enemies."

"That shall not be, if I can prevent it," said Sir Augustin. "With Flowerdew's aid I feel certain the treasure can be secured."

The entrance of the duchess and Margaret at this juncture prevented any further converse on the subject; and, shortly afterwards, Sir Augustin quitted the Tower.

XXVI.

THE TRIAL OF THE DUKE OF SOMERSET IN WESTMINSTER
HALL.

THE trial of the Duke of Somerset had caused an extraordinary sensation, and orders were given by command of the Council that all householders should keep at home with their families, and not go abroad till they should be called; but, notwithstanding this injunction, an immense number of people were collected to see the illustrious prisoner proceed from the Tower to Westminster Hall; it having

been arranged—as if in contradiction of the before-mentioned order—that the duke should walk from the Tower to the Vintry Wharf, and thence be conveyed in a barge to Westminster.

On that morning the duke spent several hours in devotion, and after taking leave of the duchess, and committing her to the care of Margaret, who was scarcely able to fulfil the duty, being greatly affected herself, he marched forth from the gates of the Middle Tower, preceded by a troop of horse, and guarded by a great number of men armed with bills, gleaves, pole-axes, and halberts.

Immediately in front walked the headsmen, bearing on his shoulder the axe of the Tower, the edge being turned from the duke.

In this manner the *cortége* took its way

along Tower-street, in sight of an immense assemblage, many of whom loudly expressed their hope that the illustrious prisoner might be acquitted—till, having passed by London Bridge, at the approach to which a fresh crowd was encountered, they came to the Vintry.

Here the mounted guard was drawn up, and the throng forcibly kept back, while the duke embarked in the barge waiting for him.

Not till the halberdiers and billmen had taken their places, and the headsman had stationed himself at the prow, with the axe borne on his shoulder as before, did the barge move on.

It will easily be imagined with what painful feelings Somerset beheld the old palace of Whitehall, with which he had so many proud associations; but he could not

be insensible to the universal sympathy expressed for him by the concourse as he landed, and proceeded with the guard to Westminster Hall.

But his feelings again changed when he set foot within the vast hall, and beheld the huge scaffold rising above the heads of the densely-packed multitude.

Already the peers were in their places, and the Lord High Steward of England, sitting beneath the cloth of estate, wore a gown of cloth of gold, with a gold coif on his head, and the collar of the Garter round his neck, and had an embroidered velvet cushion to sustain his feet.

On the right, but a degree lower, sat the Duke of Northumberland, and on the left the Duke of Suffolk, both being in their full robes, and wearing the Garter.

With them, on either side, were the Mar-

quis of Northampton, the Earls of Derby, Bedford, Huntingdon, Rutland, Bath, Sussex, Worcester, Viscount Hereford, and the Lords Abergavenny, Audley, Wharton, Evres, and ten others.

Halberdiers were drawn up in double line from the great entrance of the hall to the foot of the scaffold; and between them marched Somerset, slowly and majestically, preceded by an officer with a drawn sword.

As the duke mounted the steps, he looked neither to the right nor to the left, and endeavoured to appear unconcerned; but the murmur of the vast assemblage somewhat shook him and brought a flush to his pale visage.

As he set foot on the scaffold, all the peers rose and formally saluted him.

Somerset returned their salutations with

great dignity, and then bowed to the Lord High Steward, who bowed in return, but did not rise.

These ceremonies performed, the duke sat at a small table placed for him opposite the Lord High Steward, but at a certain distance.

During the trial, Sir Augustin Stewart was allowed to serve as the duke's secretary.

Somerset was then arraigned of several acts of high treason, which may be reduced to the following. First, that he had sought to render himself master of the king's person, and of the administration of the affairs of the realm. Next, that he had formed the foul design of slaying or poisoning the Duke of Northumberland, the Marquis of Northampton, and the Earl of Pembroke.

Thirdly, that he had endeavoured to cause a rising in London, had fortified his mansion in the Strand, and held it with a large armed force against the king and the Duke of Northumberland.

The depositions of the witnesses were then read by the Crown lawyers, by whom the duke himself was interrogated. He positively denied the charges of treason and rebellion against the king, but admitted that he had formed designs against the Duke of Northumberland and the other peers.

The trial, which was very carefully conducted, lasted for six hours—namely, from nine o'clock in the morning till three in the afternoon, when the peers, having heard all the evidence against the illustrious prisoner, unanimously acquitted him of high

treason, but condemned him to death for the crime of felony—a charge infinitely more degrading than the other, and which had, doubtless, been suggested by Northumberland.

On hearing the sentence, which he had fully expected, though he did not expect to be acquitted of high treason, the duke simply bowed his head to the High Steward.

A deep hush prevailed throughout the hall while the sentence was pronounced.

Death for felony.

Since it was not customary to bear the axe before those condemned for felony, the headsman now departed.

Bowing around, the Duke of Somerset slowly descended the steps of the scaffold, and followed the officer to the entrance of

the hall, where the guard was waiting for him.

And here a singular circumstance occurred. The vast concourse collected in the area outside Westminster Hall, seeing the duke come forth unattended by the bearer of the axe, concluded his grace had been pardoned, and set up a loud and prolonged shout that was heard beyond Charing Cross, and indeed was carried on to the very gates of the City—nay, even to the Tower itself, causing general rejoicing, which was shortly afterwards changed into loud lamentation, when the truth was discovered.

As the duke landed at the Vintry Wharf, a great crowd rushed after him to offer him their congratulations, but he checked them, saying:

“ Good friends, ye ought to condole with me, since I have been condemned of felony, and shall suffer for that offence.”

Thereupon, manifestations of grief were made, and the duke was accompanied by a sorrowing crowd to the Tower.

The sad news had anticipated him.

Before the duke's arrival at the Tower, it was known that he had been condemned, and though this sad result was anticipated by all, it produced a very painful effect upon his friends, especially when they learnt he had been condemned for felony, which they all regarded as a degradation.

“ High treason is nothing,” said Sir Ralph Vane; “ but felony involves hanging! Give me the axe, and not the rope. The one belongs to the gentleman, the other to the felon !”

Unfortunately for this brave knight, he himself, though charged with high treason and other misdemeanours, was condemned for felony, and sentenced to be hanged.

XXVII.

OF THE LAST INTERVIEW BETWEEN THE KING AND THE
DUKE OF SOMERSET.

NEARLY a month had elapsed since the trial, and although the duke had always the fear of death before his eyes, no notice had been given him when the execution would take place.

The illustrious prisoner passed his time in study and prayer, or in calm converse with the duchess and Margaret, the latter of whom had now become seriously ill, though she still remained in the Tower.

One day, quite unexpectedly, the king, who was then staying at Greenwich, came to the Tower.

He was only attended by Cranmer, Doctor Cox, and his physician, Dr. Ratclyffe, and had no courtiers with him. His majesty landed at the wharf, where he was received by the lieutenant, who immediately conducted him to a large gloomy-looking apartment in the palace.

On entering this room his majesty commanded the lieutenant to bring the Duke of Somerset before him.

Sir Leonard Chamberlain willingly obeyed the mandate, hoping that the king intended to pardon his uncle. But Edward was influenced more by curiosity than any other motive.

On the lieutenant's return with the illus-

trious prisoner, the king scrutinised his uncle's countenance as he advanced towards him, and thought him much changed, and looking older, graver, and sadder than formerly.

On approaching his royal nephew, Somerset would have cast himself at his feet, but Edward waved him back, and the duke obeyed, though evidently much hurt by the prohibition.

Nothing could be more cold and impassive than the king's demeanour. His expression was not stern and menacing like that of his royal father, but utterly devoid of feeling.

"I think it right to state," he said, in accents as freezing as his looks, "that in sending for your grace I have yielded to the request of the Archbishop of Canter-

bury, and that no change whatever has taken place in my own sentiments towards you."

"I am sorry to find your majesty still regards me with displeasure," said the duke. "I pray you to believe that I have ever been faithful and devoted to you, and I trust a day will come when you will think of me with feelings of kindness."

"Do not deceive yourself, my lord," cried Edward, coldly. "My present feelings towards your grace can never change."

Somerset looked inexpressibly hurt at this observation, and his head fell upon his breast.

"My liege," said Cranmer, in a tone of rebuke, "I would not have urged this interview had I supposed your majesty would treat the duke your uncle thus harshly."

"I no longer regard him as an uncle,"

said Edward. "Once I was strongly attached to him, but then I knew him not, and could not have conceived the ambitious designs he secretly nourished. He has risen in rebellion against me, and would have cast me from the throne had he not been prevented."

"My liege, you judge him too severely," said Cranmer.

Doctor Cox and Doctor Ratcylffe added words to the same effect, but Edward seemed wholly unmoved.

Raising his head, and regarding the king with a sad and half-reproachful expression of countenance, Somerset now said :

"My liege, in view of the death I shall shortly meet, I solemnly declare that I have been faithful to your majesty, and have ever sought to maintain you on the throne, and defend you against your ene-

mies. I ask not forgiveness for any faults I have committed—I only desire justice to be done me.”

The earnest manner in which this address was delivered produced a visible effect on the king.

“Though I hold your grace to be a great traitor,” he said, “I would not do you an injustice.”

“Then I entreat your majesty not to call me a traitor,” said Somerset. “I have been, and am, the enemy of Northumberland and others of the Council, and have been forced into violent measures by their aggressive designs; but to your majesty I have ever been true and faithful—a loving uncle and a good counsellor. I pray you to believe thus much of me.”

And as he spoke, he flung himself at the king's feet.

“ You must not expect pardon,” said the king, coldly.

“ I neither ask pardon nor expect it, my liege,” said the duke. “ I am fully prepared for death. But I do ask to be restored to your affections, which I feel I ought never to have forfeited.”

Edward made no reply, but extended his hand towards him.

The duke eagerly pressed it to his lips.

“ Your majesty will never regret what you have just now done,” said Cranmer, approvingly.

“ I can do nothing more,” rejoined Edward. “ I have promised not to pardon the duke, and I must keep my word.”

“ You should never have given that promise, my liege,” said Cranmer. “ But it is not binding on you.”

“ I deem it so,” said Edward. “ Fare-

well, your grace!" he added, to Somerset.
"We shall meet no more on earth."

"May we meet above, my liege," said Somerset, rising, "where our actions will be rightfully judged. May your majesty henceforward be as carefully watched over as you would have been watched over by me."

And, with a profound obeisance, he departed with the lieutenant.

XXVIII.

HOW MARGARET BREATHED HER LAST IN THE KING'S
PRESENCE.

EDWARD was preparing for his departure, when Doctor Cox inquired whether he would see the Duchess of Somerset.

“No,” replied the king; “but I should like to see Margaret Flowerdew, who I believe is staying with her grace.”

“I will bring her to your majesty straightway,” said Doctor Ratclyffe. “I know she is here in the palace; but I fear she is very ill.”

And he went forth for the purpose, but shortly afterwards returned with a very mournful expression of countenance.

“My liege!” he said, “you will be grieved to learn that the opinion I expressed some two months ago respecting Margaret is confirmed. She is dying!”

“Dying!” exclaimed Edward.

“Ay, my liege,” replied Doctor Ratclyffe, mournfully. “I do not think she has more than three or four hours to live.”

“Where is she?” demanded Edward, with great emotion.

“In the apartments accorded to the Duchess of Somerset,” replied the physician. “The Countess of Warwick is with her.”

As the words were uttered, the countess herself rushed into the room, and threw herself at the king’s feet, exclaiming :

“ Poor Margaret is dying, and greatly desires to behold your majesty before she breathes her last.”

“ I will go to her at once !” cried Edward.

“ Hold, my liege !” exclaimed Cranmer.
“ She may be suffering from fever. There may be danger to your majesty.”

“ There is none,” said Doctor Ratclyffe.
“ His majesty will run no risk whatever. She is dying of consumption.”

“ Let all attend me,” said Edward.

And he followed the countess, who led him to an apartment at the further side of the palace, in which he found Margaret lying on a couch, and sedulously attended by the Duchess of Somerset.

Death was written in her countenance, but her features, though sharp and thin, still retained traces of their former beauty.

On beholding the king, she made an

effort to raise herself, and partly succeeded with the assistance of the duchess, who sustained her.

Hastening towards her, Edward expressed his great concern at finding her so ill, and said :

“ You have twice saved my life. Would I could now save yours !”

A faint smile played upon her lips.

“ I am inexpressibly beholden to your majesty,” she replied, in accents that were scarcely audible. “ But I feel I am beyond all human help. Nothing could have gratified me so much at this moment as your visit.”

“ Be sure I shall greatly regret you,” said the king, taking her thin fingers, “ for I sincerely love you. None can replace you in my regards.”

Fixing a look of inexpressible gratitude

and devotion upon him, she murmured a few words, that did not reach the king's ear.

“Have you any request to prefer to me?” said Edward. “Is there aught I can do for you?”

On these words from the King, the Duchess of Somerset and the Countess of Warwick looked entreatingly at her, but she replied, in a low voice :

“Nothing.”

At this moment, Cranmer came forward, and standing beside the couch, said :

“Have you made your peace with Heaven, daughter?”

“I trust so, your grace,” she replied, meekly. “But I pray you commend my soul to Heaven.”

Thus adjured, the archbishop stretched out his arms, and exclaimed :

“ I recommend thee, dear sister, to Almighty God, and consign thee to the care of Him whose creature thou art, that when thou shalt have paid the debt of all mankind by death, thou mayest return to thy Maker, who formed thee from the dust of the earth. May Jesus Christ, the true shepherd, acknowledge thee for one of His flock. May he absolve thee from all thy sins, and place thee at His right hand in the midst of His elect. Mayest thou see thy Redeemer face to face, and standing always in His presence, behold with happy eyes the most clear truth. And mayest thou be placed among the companies of the blessed, and enjoy the sweetness of the contemplation of thy Lord for ever !”

“ Amen !” exclaimed the pious king.

On the conclusion of the archbishop’s re-

commendatory prayer, a sweet smile seemed to play on Margaret's countenance.

But it soon faded away, and as she moved not, Doctor Ratsclyffe placed his hand upon her heart, and declared that life was extinct.

Her gentle spirit had passed away.

Cranmer again stretched out his hands, and, calling to the others to join him in prayer, said :

“ To Thee, O Lord, we recommend the soul of Thy servant, just departed this life, that, being dead to this world, she may live to Thee ; and whatever sins she may have committed in this life through human frailty, do Thou in Thy most merciful goodness pardon !”

For a few moments Edward remained gazing at the inanimate body, which the

duchess had gently laid down upon the couch ; and then, unable to control his grief, he quitted the room, attended by Cranmer and the others.

But he did not immediately leave the Tower. He had intended to proceed to Greenwich to meet the Duke of Northumberland, but he gave up the plan, and remained for some hours in converse with Cranmer and Dr. Cox.

The scene he had witnessed made an ineffaceable impression upon him.

By his command, Margaret was interred in Saint Peter's Chapel, her father and Sir Augustin being present when she was laid there.

XXIX.

HOW THE WARRANT FOR SOMERSET'S EXECUTION WAS
SIGNED BY THE KING.

SOMERSET'S execution was so long deferred that hopes began to be entertained that he might be pardoned ; but they proved fallacious.

At length the day was fixed by Northumberland and the Council, and the warrant for the duke's execution was signed by the king with far less hesitation than he had displayed in the case of his other uncle, Lord Seymour of Sudeley.

On receiving the warrant, with other instructions from Northumberland, the lieutenant immediately proceeded to the Beauchamp Tower, where he found the illustrious prisoner alone, and reading the Bible, and intimated to him, with every consideration, that he must prepare to meet his doom at an early hour next morning.

Somerset received the intelligence with great firmness, and pointing to the sacred volume, said he was already prepared.

“As your grace has expressed some anxiety on the subject,” observed the lieutenant, “I hasten to state that you will die, as becomes your rank and dignity, on Tower Hill, and by the hand of the headsman.”

On hearing this, the duke displayed some little emotion, and said, “I thank my ene-

mies for the grace. It was the only favour I would have asked of them."

"I have also to inform your grace," pursued the lieutenant, "that his majesty will send Doctor Cox to attend you on the scaffold."

"I am much beholden to his majesty for his consideration," remarked the duke. "I have a great regard for Doctor Cox. His presence will be a real comfort to me."

"And now let me add a word on my own part," said the lieutenant. "During your grace's long confinement, I have endeavoured to prove, so far as has been in my power, the great regard I have for you. I will now manifest it still further, at my own personal risk. On receiving from your grace an assurance that you will not attempt flight, you shall be under no real

restraint till the moment when you set out for Tower Hill to-morrow morning, but shall be free to pass the interval with the duchess in her apartments in the palace, and take leave of your friends there. If there is aught else I can do to add to your comfort, your grace has only to name it."

"I thank you from the bottom of my heart, good Sir Leonard," replied the duke, much moved. "I pledge my word that your kindness shall not be abused. It will be the greatest satisfaction to me to take leave of my friends. There is one further favour I would ask of you, and I am certain you will grant it, should it be in your power to do so. I would fain have Sir Augustin Stewart with me on the scaffold."

"Your grace may rest easy on that score," replied the lieutenant.

With this, he took his departure.

Owing to the consideration thus shown by the lieutenant, a meeting took place in a room in the palace between the duke and his friends and fellow-prisoners, the Earl of Arundel, Lord Paget, Lord Grey, Sir Ralph Vane, Sir Thomas Arundel, Sir Michael Stanhope, Sir Miles Partridge, and others.

Except Paget and Grey, they all anticipated the same fate, and regrets were generally expressed that they could not die at the same time as the duke.

After a couple of hours spent in their society, the duke felt that the meeting could not be prolonged.

Embracing them, he bade them all an eternal farewell, and they separated—never to meet again in this world.

The parting between Somerset and Sir

Ralph Vane was characteristic of the brave knight.

“Farewell, your grace,” said Vane. “I shall follow you in a few days, and I should not repine had not the malice of my enemies condemned me to die by the hands of the hangman. Can aught be more dishonouring to a soldier than such a death? May my curses alight on Northumberland’s head!”

“Nay, let us part in peace with the world, good Sir Ralph,” rejoined the duke. “Since we must suffer, what matters it how we die?”

“To me it matters much,” cried Vane. “I should care nothing to die like a gentleman; but as a felon—’tis intolerable. Never will Northumberland have another night’s rest after thus disgracing me!” he added, fiercely.

“Well, I forgive him ; and I have more to forgive than you, Sir Ralph,” said Somerset.

“But this great wrong outweighs all the rest,” cried Vane. “However, I will say no more, since I perceive my words trouble your grace. Oh, that I could die sword in hand !”

In order to check any further ebullition of rage, the duke here embraced him, and bade him farewell.

Sad, very sad was the parting of Somerset and the duchess ; but still sadder was his parting with his beloved daughter, the Countess of Warwick.

XXX.HOW THE DUKE OF SOMERSET WAS BEHEADED ON TOWER
HILL.

ON the morning appointed for his execution, Somerset, who had slept soundly, arose at a very early hour, and with the aid of a servant, attired himself richly, as if for some important ceremonial—putting on a shirt embroidered with gold; a doublet of embroidered purple velvet; and a magnificent crimson velvet gown.

Overnight, he had bidden an everlasting

adieu to the duchess and his daughter, the Countess of Warwick, and resolved not to see them again, lest his firmness should be shaken.

Sir Augustin Stewart, who had passed the night at the lieutenant's lodgings, came to the Beauchamp Tower early, as did Doctor Cox, and both accompanied the duke to Saint Peter's Chapel, where a service was performed at six o'clock, at which all Somerset's fellow-prisoners were allowed to attend.

The little chapel being lighted up, presented a very striking sight.

On going forth, Somerset embraced all his friends, and bade them a last farewell.

In compliance with a precept from the Council to the Lord Mayor, all house-

holders were strictly charged not to stir forth till ten o'clock, but the order was utterly disregarded.

Persons of both sexes from all parts of the city, and from the suburbs, flocked to the place of execution, so that although the morning was dull and gloomy, by seven o'clock the entire summit of Tower Hill was covered by a vast concourse, while every window of every habitation that looked upon the scene was occupied.

On the scaffold, which was draped with black, were the headsman and his two aids, putting the block and coffin in their places, and scattering straw thickly upon the boards.

From the loudly expressed observations made by the crowd in Somerset's favour, it was apprehended that a rescue might be

attempted, and an additional guard of archers was sent for by the lieutenant from East Smithfield.

A road was kept clear by a double line of halberdiers and billmen from the steps of the scaffold to the Bulwark Gate, along which the sheriffs, with their officers, rode to receive their illustrious prisoner. A guard of arquebusiers was placed round the scaffold.

Meanwhile, preparations had been made within the fortress for the duke's departure.

At seven o'clock the bell began to toll, and the muffled drum was beaten. The lieutenant came forth from his lodgings, and proceeded to the Beauchamp Tower, where he found Somerset conversing calmly with Doctor Cox and Sir Augustin.

“I cannot wish your grace a good morrow,” said the lieutenant; “but it gladdens me to see you looking so tranquil.”

“I do not think I was ever so well prepared to quit the world as I am now, good Sir Leonard,” replied Somerset. “As to the manner of my death, that is nothing. I prefer the sharp stroke of the axe to a lingering illness. I die in full vigour, and in possession of all my faculties; and having sincerely repented of my sins, trust I shall be forgiven.”

“Of a truth, his grace departs this life in a very enviable frame of mind, as I shall be able to report to his majesty,” observed Doctor Cox.

“I am right glad to hear it,” said the lieutenant.

“Yes; I have too late discovered that all earth’s greatness is but vanity,” said

the duke; "and, therefore, I have no regrets at leaving it. But I now declare, and desire what I say to be remembered by those who hear me, that I have always loved, and faithfully served, the king, my nephew. Earnestly have I striven to carry out the intentions of his royal sire; but I have failed, because I have been interfered with. The fault, therefore, is not mine; nor can the responsibility rest with me. I hope his majesty may be well served; but I have many fears. He is surrounded by seeming friends, but traitors at heart."

"Say no more, I pray your grace," remarked Doctor Cox. "You are in the presence of friends who understand your meaning, who love you, and will cherish your memory. Ordinarily, when dying men speak, their faculties are clouded. In your grace's case, it is different. Nay,

your judgment is clearer than before, rather than disturbed by the near approach of death."

"You are right, sir," said the duke; "and I feel, at this supreme hour, that I can foresee the future. The king, my nephew, will be exposed to great dangers, with no one to protect him—no one!—for his real friends will be destroyed. Mark me!" he cried, in an almost prophetic tone, and with a look that greatly impressed his hearers; "his majesty will not live long!"

"Not live long, your grace?" cried Sir Augustin.

"I have said it," observed the duke, solemnly; and if you are spared, you will see whether or not my words come true. An attempt will be made by Northumberland to gain the throne, but it will not

succeed. What will follow I cannot so clearly foresee. But bear in mind that the Princess Mary is heiress to the throne; and consider what will happen to the Protestant faith should she succeed."

"I perfectly understand it, your grace," said Doctor Cox. "Heaven guard us from such an event!"

A moment's silence ensued, which was broken by the lieutenant, who, looking earnestly at the duke, said:

"By this time, the sheriffs must have arrived, your grace."

"I am quite ready," replied Somerset.

Preceded by the lieutenant, and attended by Sir Augustin and Doctor Cox, the duke then descended to the green, where a dozen warders armed with halberts were drawn up.

The bell continued to toll as the party

passed beneath the archway of the Bloody Tower, through the gates of the By-ward Tower and the Middle Tower, until they came to the Bulwark Gate, where the sheriffs, who were on horseback, and wore their robes and chains, were waiting with their officers.

Somerset was then delivered up to them, and ceremoniously received.

Without any delay, the gloomy *cortége* proceeded to the scaffold.

A guard of royal *gens d'armes* rode first. Then came the sheriffs with their officers. After them the Duke of Somerset on foot, his stately figure towering above the warders, who marched on either side of him. Next came Doctor Cox and Sir Augustin Stewart. Then followed the Lieutenant of the Tower on horseback, with a mounted guard.

All the while the bell could be heard tolling dolefully.

As Somerset passed along, loud manifestations of sympathy greeted him on all sides, and continued till the *cortége* reached the scaffold.

After a brief delay, the lieutenant came to the duke, and conducted him up the steps of the scaffold, at the top of which he was met by the sheriffs.

Somerset's dignified deportment filled all with respect. He appeared perfectly calm, and after bowing around, advanced to the south side of the scaffold, where an open space was left for him.

On the way thither, the duke passed the executioner, who was standing by the block, and leaning on his axe, but he did not notice him.

Standing beside the rail, and looking around, the duke was astonished at the appearance of the vast concourse—so much larger than he expected.

As he bowed to them with great dignity, a cry arose that so shook him, that for a few minutes he was unable to proceed.

After a while, he again bowed around, and taking off his velvet cap, so as fully to display his lofty brow, proceeded to address a few words to the assemblage in a voice distinctly heard amid the hush that now prevailed.

“Good friends,” he said, “I am brought hither to suffer death as a traitor to the king and the country, although I have been faithful and loyal to his majesty, and, as ye wot well, have maintained the true interests of the realm. When I filled the high position from which I have been de-

posed, owing to no fault of my own, I was ever diligent about his majesty's affairs, and no less diligent to maintain the honour and dignity of the realm."

"Yea, yea!" cried the crowd. "It is most true!"

"Let me also remind you, good friends, that so long as I was in authority, I upheld the Protestant faith; and I will venture to assert, without arrogating too much, that I assisted in establishing that religion, and in so doing I consider I have conferred a great boon upon you all."

"You have—you have!" shouted the concourse. "We are fully sensible of the boon!"

"Times may be at hand," pursued the duke, "when it will be necessary for you to defend the Protestant faith, and I earnestly exhort you to do so."

“ We will !—we will !” cried the crowd.

Just then an unlooked for and most unfortunate interruption occurred.

The archers, who had been summoned by the lieutenant from East Smithfield, entered the postern-gate at the back of Tower Hill at this moment, and, finding themselves late, pushed forward, shouting to the dense crowd to make way.

The disturbance and noise alarmed the concourse here collected, who thought an attempt was being made to rescue Somerset by the archers, and many felt inclined to support them.

But the throng was too dense, and impeded their progress. Numbers were thrown down and trampled under foot, and above a hundred were precipitated down the steep sides of the Tower moat.

Somerset was much disturbed by this

misadventure, but, being unable to do anything to aid the sufferers, he did not quit his position; and, when quiet was restored, resumed his address.

“I have a few words more to say to you,” he began; “and I pray you give ear to me. Having been in many conflicts, death has no terror for me; and life has now no attraction. Save from a few chosen friends, one or two of whom are with me at this moment, I have met with nothing but baseness and ingratitude; incurring hatred where I expected to find regard, and giving offence where I intended none, but the very contrary. Can I desire to remain longer in such a world? No. Having no regrets myself, I would have no man grieve for me.”

The injunction was not obeyed, many loud lamentations being heard.

But they were suddenly changed to shouts of joy as a well-mounted horseman, whose attire proclaimed him a person of importance, and who was immediately afterwards recognised by the duke as Sir Anthony Brown, suddenly issued from Tower-street, and galloped towards the scaffold.

Not unnaturally it was thought by the people that he brought a reprieve. They tossed their caps and cloaks into the air, and shouted loudly, "A pardon!—a pardon!"

But Somerset was not to be deceived. He called out:

"He who now comes here is my bitter enemy. He does not bring me a pardon, but hastens to see me die! Fare you well, good friends. Let us join together in prayer for the king, to whom I have ever

been a faithful, true, and most loving subject!"

Then turning round, he knelt down, while Doctor Cox knelt beside him.

After he had passed some minutes in prayer, Doctor Cox delivered a brief exhortation, and commended his soul to Heaven.

Arising with a very serene countenance, as if his troubles in this world were over, the duke bade farewell to the sheriffs, and to the Lieutenant of the Tower, whom he again thanked most heartily for his kindness.

Next he embraced Sir Augustin Stewart, and said a few words to him in a low voice, which perchance related to the treasure.

His grace's last adieu was to Doctor Cox, who gave him his benediction, and promised

to repeat to the king what the duke had said of his majesty.

Having given some pieces of gold to the headsman, Somerset took off his gown and doublet, and delivered them to Sir Augustin.

He then caused the executioner to turn down his shirt collar so that his neck might be completely bared, and telling the man he would give him a signal when to strike, laid himself down on the block, and covered his face with his handkerchief.

Doctor Cox then knelt beside him ; and, lifting up his hands, exclaimed, “ Receive, O Lord, Thy servant into the place of salvation, which he hopes to obtain through Thy mercy !”

“ Amen !” exclaimed all around.

The duke then called thrice on the name of Jesus ; and, as the final ejaculation was

uttered, his head was stricken off at a single blow."

Many regarded the "good duke," as he was called, as a martyr; and, creeping under the scaffold, dipped their handkerchiefs in his blood.

Some of these dread mementos were waved before Northumberland, when he, in his turn, appeared on Tower Hill.

Somerset's remains were interred in Saint Peter's Chapel in the Tower.

Solamen magnum patriæ, solamen amicis.

THE END.

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