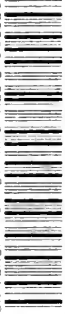


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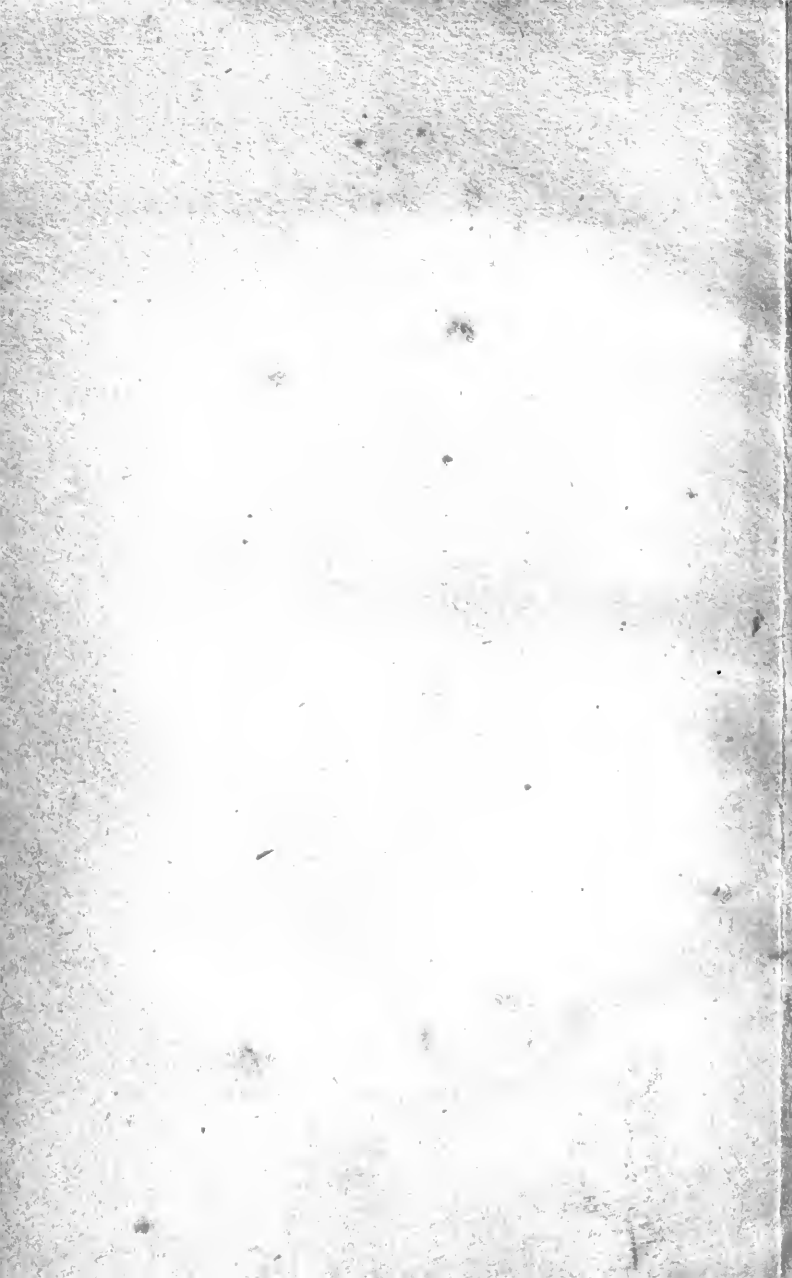
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THE
FORTUNES
OF
PERKIN WARBECK,

A ROMANCE.

BY THE
AUTHOR OF "FRANKENSTEIN."

MS. Shelley

J'ai veü filz d'Angleterre, Richard d'Yorc nommé,
Que l'on disoit en terre, estinct et consommé,
Endurer grant souffrance; et par nobles exploitz,
Vivre en bonne esperance, d'estre Roy des Angloys.

Old French Chronicle.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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PERKIN WARBECK.

CHAPTER I.

I am your wife,
No human power can or shall divorce,
My faith from duty.

FORD.

————— With
My fortune and my seeming destiny,
He made the bond, and broke it not with me.
No human tie is snapped betwixt us two.

SCHILLER'S WALLENSTEIN.

FRION believed that he held the strings, which commanded the movements of all the puppets about him. The intrigues of party, the habitual use of ill-means to what those around him deemed a good end, had so accustomed him to lying and forgery, that his conscience was quite

seared to the iniquity of these acts; truth to him was an accident, to be welcomed or not according as it was or was not advantageous to his plots.

King James prepared a fleet for the conveyance of the Prince; and the Earl of Huntley, as a matter of course, promised to entertain his daughter royally, until, in a palace in Westminster, she should find her destined title and fit abode. The Lady Katherine thanked him, but declared that she was nothing moved from her bridal vow, and that she never would desert Richard's side. All that her father urged was of no avail. State and dignity, or their contraries, humiliation and disgrace, could only touch her through her husband; he was her exalter or debaser, even as he rose or fell; it was too late now to repine at degradation, which it ill-beseemed the daughter of a Gordon to encounter; it was incurred when she plighted her faith at the altar; wherever she was, it must be hers. As a princess she was lost or redeemed by her husband's fortunes. As a woman, her glory and all her honour must consist

in never deviating from the strait line of duty, which forbade her absence from his side.

The Earl disdained to reason with a fond doating girl, as he called the constant-minded lady, but applied to the King, representing how it would redound to his discredit, should a princess of his blood wander a vagrant beggar over sea and land. James had passed his royal word to Katherine, that she should have her will on this point; and when, at her father's suit he tried to dissuade her, he was at once silenced by her simple earnest words; "Ask me not," she said, "to place myself on the list of unworthy women: for your own honour's sake, royal cousin, permit your kinswoman to perform a wife's part unopposed. You and my father bestowed me, a dutiful subject, an obedient daughter, according to your will; you transferred my duty and obedience, and truly as I paid it to you, so will I keep it for my lord."

"What can we reply, my good Earl Marshall," said James, turning to Huntley, "I rebelled against the religion through which I reign, did I deny our sweet Kate free allow-

ance to follow the dictates of her generous heart. Nor let us grudge the White Rose this one fair bloom. Love, such as Katherine feels, love, and the dearest, best gift of God—alas! too oft denied to poor humanity, and most to me—self-complacency, arising from a good conscience, will repay her every sacrifice.”

Huntley retired in high indignation; his will was opposed; his word, which he deemed a law, had but a feather's weight. The blood of the Gordon was stirred to rage; and he broke forth in fierce and cruel expressions of anger, calling his daughter, ingrate—her lord base, and a traitor. Such muttered curses were reported to Lord Buchan: in the scheme on foot they had somewhat dreaded to incur Huntley's displeasure and revenge; knowing how dearly he prized the hope of royalty for his daughter; but now they fancied that they might draw him in, ere he was aware, to approve their deed. The crafty Frion was set on to sound him; the iron was hot, most easily, to their eyes, it took the desired form.

Huntley was a Scot, cunning even when angry

—cautious when most passionate. The first intimations of the conspiracy were greedily received by him. He learnt the falsehood of the letter pretending to come from the Earl of Surrey; and the use that was to be made of this decoy to seize on the Duke of York's person. He did not scruple to promise his assistance; he reiterated his angry imprecations against his unworthy son-in-law; he thanked Frien with cordial warmth for affording him this opportunity for revenge; he declared his gratitude towards the confederate nobles; and the Frenchman left him, with the full belief that he was ready to lend his best aid to deliver over the English Prince to ignominy and death.

Such was the end of King Henry's last scheme to obtain possession of his too noble, too excelling rival, by means of Scottish fraud, and the treason of York's dependents. The Earl of Huntley conducted the whole affair with the utmost secrecy. Apparently he acted the part designed for him by the conspirators. He reconciled himself to the prince; he urged an instant compliance with Surrey's invitation.

The English had asked for some guarantee of Surrey's truth. Huntley obviated this difficulty. Through his intervention a new and sufficing impulse was given. Richard appointed the day when he should repair to Greenock, there to meet the envoy who was to lead him to Lord Surrey's presence. In the harbour of Greenock rode the bark which was to convey him to his English prison. King Henry's hirelings were already there; Frion conducted the victims blindfold into the net: they had meant to have gathered together a troop of ruffian borderers to prevent all resistance; but Huntley promised to be there himself with a band of Highlanders. The whole thing only seemed too easy, too secure. The wily secretary had overshot his mark in taking so readily for granted Huntley's assent to the ruin of the Duke of York. He had come upon him in his angry hour: his honied words were a dew of poison; his adjurations for peace, oil to fire. Then, as the noble strode through the hall, imprecating vengeance, he slid in words that made him stop in full career. Men are apt to see their wishes mirrored in the object before them; and, when the Earl bent his grey

eyes upon the Provençal and knit his time-furrowed brow in attention and interest, Frion saw the satisfaction of a man on the brink of dear revenge. He was far a-field. The very rage in which the Earl had indulged, by a natural reaction, softened him towards his children: and, when the traitor spoke of schemes ripe to deliver York into his adversary's hands, he recoiled at once from the path of vengeance opened before him, and listened with horror to the detail of a conspiracy which would tear the very shadow of a diadem from his daughter's brow; yet he listened, and his words still enticed the over-wily Frion. "Balmayne," said the Earl, "all must succeed, even to the death. Where he intermeddles, he is ruthless;" thus ran his comments: "My good Lord Buchan, what the Foul Fiend makes him so busy? English gold! Yes: Buchan loves the gilding better than the strong iron that it hides. The honour of the royal house, my most reverend uncle! Is his animosity so stirring? Oh! priests are your only haters. So Richard's tale is told. The chroniclers will speak of Duke Perkin, of the canker that ate out the heart

of Gordon's fair rose, the gibbet, instead of a throne, to which she was wed; a fair eminence! My Kate will hardly ascend it with him: she must halt at the gallows' foot." These words, said with bitterness, seemed to Frion the boiling sarcasm of an exasperated parent. The man's vanity was the trap in which he was caught: he could not believe that a savage Scot, an untaught Highlander, could enter the lists with one nurtured in the subtle atmosphere of Provence, with the pupil of Louis the Eleventh; a man schooled in eastern lore, who had passed a whole life of contrivance and deceit.

The Scottish nobles, Moray, Buchan, and Bothwell, were satisfied in having given their countenance to the English hirelings; and, now that the more powerful Huntley promised to watch over the execution of their designs, they were glad enough to withdraw from the rude and inhospitable act. Huntley had every thing in his own hands. He, with a party of Highlanders, escorted the Duke and Duchess of York, with their friends and attendants, to Greenock. Frion had never shown himself so

humble or so courteous; he seemed afraid that any one of his victims should escape: he was particularly anxious to entice his old enemy, the Prior of Kilmainham, into the snare. His readiness and vivacity were remarked by all: it was attributed to the high hopes he entertained of his royal master's success through the alliance of the Earl of Surrey; and, while York expressed his affectionate approbation, he smiled blandly, and painted every feature in the very colouring he wished it to wear.

The vessel rode at anchor; the English sailors, on the arrival of York, went on board, got her under weigh, and dropt down the coast. With the dawn Lord Howard of Effingham, with a chosen troop, was, according to the false hopes of Richard, to arrive at the rendezvous, a wood about two miles south of the town, bordering the sands of the sea. Here the English emissaries were congregated, and here a score of Highlanders were in ambush, to assist in the capture of the White Rose. Hither, even before dawn, the wakeful Frion came, to announce the speedy arrival of his lord. He

found his English friends in some anxiety. Clifford, who, under the name of Wiatt, had been chief among them, was seized with panic or remorse, and had gone on board the vessel, which had cast anchor but a few furlongs from the shore. The others were mean underlings: Frion's presence gave them courage; he was elated; his laugh was free; he had neither doubt nor scruple; no, not even when he turned from the vulgar, brutalized countenances of these ruffians, to behold the princely victim in all the splendour of innocence, with one beside him so lovely, that the spirit of good itself had selected her form for its best earthly bower; or to see Edmund, whose dark eyes beamed with unknown joy, and Neville, whose haughty glance was exchanged for a glad smile. The man's sole thought was exultation at his own cleverness and success, in having inveigled so many of the noble and the brave to this dark fate.

“What tidings of Effingham?” asked York.

“Are ye ready?” cried Huntley.

“All!” replied Frion; “all save him ye name Wiatt. Sir Robert, forsooth, is but half

a man, and never does more than half deed, though that half makes a whole crime. All is ready. I hear the sound of oars; the boat nears the shore."

Through the tall, bare trunks of the trees, a glimpse of the beach might be gained; the roaring of the surges was distinct, now mingled with the cry of sailors.

"Then lose we no time," said Huntley. "My Lord of York, these words sound strange. You expected a noble countryman, to lead you to victory; you find nameless fellows, and the prince of knaves, most ready and willing to lead you to everlasting prison. Lo; the scene shifts again! Never be cast down, Master Frion; you are as subtle as any of your race—only to be outwitted by a niggard Scotchman, who can ill read, and worse write; except when villainy is blazoned in a man's face, and his sword indites a traitor's fate. Your clerkship will find none among us learned enough to afford you benefit of clergy."

Huntley drew his sword; and at the signal his Highlanders arose from their ambush. Frion was seized and bound. None, who even a mo-

ment before had seen the smooth-faced villain, could have recognised him; he was pale as the snow on Ben Nevis. A Highlander, an adept in such acts, dexterously threw a knotted rope over his head; and cast his eye up to the trees for a convenient branch. Such had been the orders; such the summary justice of the Earl.

Richard meanwhile looked on the blanched visage and quailing form of his betrayer in mere compassion. "Is it even so, Etienne?" he said; "and after long companionship we part thus."

The trembling craven fell on his knees, though he tightened the halter by the movement, so that when Richard turned away, saying, "I had thought better of thee: Jesu pardon thee as readily as I—farewell!" he had scarce voice to cry for mercy.

"Aye," cried the Gordon; "such mercy as we grant the wolf and thievish fox. Short shrift be thine, Master Secretary!"

"By our Lady's grace, stay!" said Katherine; "do not kill the false-hearted knave. He is a coward, and dares survive his honour; let him live."

Richard looked sternly on the kneeling slave. To the good there is something awful in the sight of a guilty man: It is a mystery to them how the human heart can be so perverted. Is it a spirit from hell, that incorporates itself with the pulsations of our mortal bosom; a darkness that overshadows; a fiendly essence that mingles with the breath God gave to his own image? York felt a shrinking horror. "Thou hast pursued me since my youth," he said, "forcing thyself into my councils; sometimes as a wily enemy; at others, befriending me in seeming, raising my soul, that flagged beneath the world's unkind ministry; dropping balm by thy words into a wounded heart; to end thy office thus! Was this thy purpose ever; or what demon whispered thee to betray? Die! oh, no! too many, the good, the great, the true, have died for me; live thou a monument—a mark to tell the world that York can pardon, York can despise—not so base a thing as thee—that were little, but even thy employer. Go, tell my sister's husband that I bear a charmed life; that love and

valour are my guards. Bid him bribe those, nor waste his ill-got crowns on such as thee. Unbind him, sirs; make signal to the boat; let him on board; the winds stand fair for England."

The fall of many a hope, roused by the forgery on Surrey's name, was forgotten by Richard, as he sickened at this other mark of man's wickedness and folly. He was surely the dear sport of fortune, a tale to chronicle how faithless friends may be. If such thoughts, like summer clouds, darkened his mind, they vanished, driven by the winds of life that bore him onward. This was no time for mere gloomy meditation. Though he was obliged to return to his forgotten Irish scheme, and to dismiss the glorious anticipation in which he had indulged, of leading the chivalry of England to the field; though no real defeat had ever visited him so keenly as this mockery of one; yet he was forced to forget himself, and to apply himself to console and rouse his downcast friends; but his skill was well repaid, and soon he again awoke to

those feelings of buoyant hope, unwearied energy, and unshaken confidence which were the essence of his character.

In this last trial he felt how much good he might derive from the sweetness and constant spirit of the Lady Katherine. She hoped for none of the world's blessings, except they came in the shape of loves from him to whom she was united; happiness—all her's as centered in her blameless affections; and her confidence was placed in the belief and knowledge, that by devoting herself to her lord, to the wandering out-cast who so dearly needed her sacrifice, she fulfilled her destiny upon earth, and pleased the "great Task Master," who for happiness or misery, but certainly for good, had given her life. All her gentle eloquence was spent in dissuading Richard from those unkind thoughts towards his species, which the treason of these base men, the caprice of James, the harsh sentence (for this was again brought home to him by disappointment) of Surrey, awakened in his bosom. It proved no hard task; soon the princely Adventurer, with eagle flight, soared

from the sad prostration of spirit, the birth of his disasters, to fresh hopes and lofty resolves.

It was necessary immediately to prepare for his departure. The Earl of Huntley, struck by his magnanimity, no longer opposed his daughter's wish. The English exiles were eager for a new, and, they believed (for untired is Hope in man); for a prosperous career. Scotland grew rude, confined, and remote in their eyes. In Ireland were placed for them the portals of the world, to be opened by their swords; the dancing sea-waves invited them; the winds of heaven lent themselves to their service. "My friends," said Richard, "dear and faithful partners of my wayward fortunes, I would fondly believe that we are favoured of heaven. We are few; but the evil and the treacherous are no longer among us. And does old Time in all his outworn tales tell any truer, than that the many, being disunited, and so false, have ever been vanquished by the loving, bold, and heroic few? That a child may scan with its fingers our bare arithmetic, will therefore be to us the source of success, as assuredly it will be of

glory. The English were few when they mowed down thickly planted French at Cressy and Poitiers. Which among us, armed as we are in the mail of valour, but would encounter ten of Tudor's scant-paid mercenaries? For me! I do believe that God is on my side, as surely as I know that justice and faith are; and I fear no defeat."

It is thus that man, with fervent imagination, can endue the rough stone with loveliness, forge the mis-shapen metal into a likeness of all that wins our hearts by exceeding beauty, and breathe into a dissonant trump soul-melting harmonies. The mind of man—that mystery, which may lend arms against itself, teaching vain lessons of material philosophy, but which, in the very act, shows its power to play with all created things, adding the sweetness of its own essence to the sweetest, taking its ugliness from the deformed. The creative faculty of man's soul—which, animating Richard, made him see victory in defeat, success and glory in the dark, the tortuous, the thorny path, which it

was his destiny to walk from the cradle to the tomb.

Oh, had I, weak and faint of speech, words to teach my fellow-creatures the beauty and capabilities of man's mind; could I, or could one more fortunate, breathe the magic word which would reveal to all the power, which we all possess, to turn evil to good, foul to fair; then vice and pain would desert the new-born world!

It is not thus: the wise have taught, the good suffered for us; we are still the same; and still our own bitter experience and heart-breaking regrets teach us to sympathize too feelingly with a tale like this; which records the various fortunes of one who at his birth received every gift which most we covet; whose strange story is replete with every change of happiness and misery; with every contrast of glorious and disgraceful; who was the noble object of godlike fidelity, and the sad victim of demoniac treason; the mark of man's hate and woman's love; spending thus a short eventful life. It is not spent; he yet breathes: he is on the world of waters.

What new scene unfolds itself? Where are they who were false, where those who were true? They congregate around him, and the car of life bears him on, attended by many frightful, many lovely shapes, to his destined end. He has yet much to suffer; and, human as he is, much to enjoy.

CHAPTER II.

One moment these were heard and seen ; another
Past, and the two who stood beneath that night,
Each only heard, or saw, or felt the other.

SHELLEY.

THE hour had now arrived when Richard took leave of Scotland. The King was humbled by the necessity he felt himself under, of sending forth his friend and kinsman into the inhospitable world ; and he felt deep grief at parting with his lovely cousin. She grew pale, when for the last time she saw the friend of her youth. But Katherine looked upon life in a mode very different from the usual one : the luxuries and dignities of the world never in her mind for a moment came in competition with her affections and her duty ; she saw the plain path before her ; whatever her father's or her royal cousin's idea

had been in giving her to the Duke of York, she knew that, being his, her destiny upon earth was to share his fortunes, and soothe his sorrows. This constant looking on, giving herself up to, and delighting in one aim, one object, one occupation, elevated her far above the common cares of existence. She left

—————“ All meaner things,

The low ambition and the pride of Kings ;”

—to shroud herself in love; to take on herself the hallowed state of one devoting herself to another's happiness. Cleopatra, basking in sunny pomp, borne, the wonder of the world, in her gilded bark, amidst all the aroma of the east, upon the gently rippling Cydnus, felt neither the pride nor joy of Katherine, as, on the poor deck of their dark weather-beaten skiff, she felt pillowed by the downy spirit of love, fanned by its gentle breath.

The Duke of York was more depressed ; he thought of how, since his miserable childhood, he had been the sport of fortune and her scorn. He thought of the false, the cold, the perished : a dark wall seemed to rise around him ; a murky vault to close over him : success, glory, honour, the world's treasures, which he had been brought

up to aspire to as his dearest aim, his right, were unattainable ; he was the defeated, the outcast ; there was a clog in his way for ever ; a foul taint upon his name. Thus seated on the deck, his arm coiled round a rope, his head leaning on his arm, while the stars showered a dim silvery radiance, and the sparkling sea mocked their lustre with brighter fires ; while the breeze, that swelled his sail, and drove him merrily along, spent its cold breath on him ; he, painting all natural objects with the obscure colouring suggested by his then gloomy spirit, distorting the very scenery of heaven and vast ocean into symbols of his evil fate, gave himself up to the very luxury of woe,—meanwhile the shadow of a lovely form fell on him, soft fingers pressed the curls of his hair, and Katherine asked, “ Are the nights of Andalusia more glorious than this ? ”

At the voice of the charmer the dæmon fled : sky and sea cast off the dim veil his grief had woven, and creation was restored its native beauty. Hitherto the halls of palaces, the gaiety of a court, the council-chamber, had been the scenes in which the princely pair had lived toge-

ther ; linked to an engrossing state of things, surrounded by their partizans, they had been friends, nay lovers, according to the love of the many. But solitary Nature is the true temple of Love, where he is not an adjunct, but an essence ; and now she alone was around them, to fill them with sublime awe, and the softest tenderness. In Richard's eyes, the kingdom of his inheritance dwindled into a mere speck ; the land of her nativity became but a name to Katherine. It sufficed for their two full hearts that they were together on the dark wide sea ; the bright sky above, and calm upon the bosom of the deep. They could ill discern each other in the shadowy twilight ; a dream-like veil was cast over their features, as sleep curtains out the soul, so that we look on the beloved slumberer, and say " He is there, though the mystery of repose wraps me from him ;" so now darkness blinded and divided them : but hand clasped hand ; he felt that one existed who was his own, his faithful ; and she rejoiced in the accomplishment of the master-sentiment of her soul, the desire of self-devotion, self-annihilation, for one who loved her.

The passion that warmed their hearts had no fears, no tumult, no doubt. One to the other they sufficed; and, but that the trance is fleeting, Happiness, the lost child of the world, would have found here her home; for when love, which is the necessity of affectionate hearts, and the sense of duty, which is the mystery and the law of our souls, blend into one feeling, Paradise has little to promise save immortality.

For many days this state of forgetful extacy lasted. Plantagenet and Neville spoke of wars in England; Lord Barry and Keating of their Irish schemes—the Prince listened and replied; but his soul was far away—Oh, that for ever they might sail thus on the pathless, shoreless sea!—Nothing mean or trivial or ignoble could visit them; no hate, no care, no fear—this might not be, but to have felt, to have lived thus for a few short days, suffices to separate mortal man from the groveling part of his nature—no disgrace, no despair can so bring him back to the low-minded world, as to destroy the sense of having once so existed. And Richard, marked for misery and defeat, acknowledged that power which

sentiment possesses to exalt us—to convince us that our minds, endowed with a soaring, restless aspiration, can find no repose on earth except in love.

CHAPTER III.

“ Now for our Irish wars !”

SHAKSPEARE.

AGAIN the Duke of York approached the rocky entrance of the Cove of Cork, again he passed through the narrow passage, which opening, displayed a lovely sheet of tranquil water, decked with islands. The arrival of his fleet in the harbour was hailed with joy. Old John O'Water had returned to his civic labours, and had contrived to get himself chosen mayor for this year, that he might be of greater assistance to the White Rose in his enterprize.

As soon as the arrival of his ships off the coast was known, O'Water dispatched messen-

gers to the Earl of Desmond, and busied himself to give splendour to Richard's entrance into Cork. Tapestry and gay-coloured silks were hung from the windows; the street was strewn with flowers—citizens and soldiers intermixed crowded to the landing-place. York's heart palpitated with joy. It was not that thence he much hoped for success to his adventure, which required more than the enthusiasm of the remote inhabitants of the south of Ireland to achieve it, but Cork was a sort of home to him; here he had found safety when he landed, barely escaped from Trangmar's machinations—here he first assumed his rightful name and title—here, a mere boy, ardent, credulous, and bold—he had seen strangers adopt his badge and avouch his cause. Five years had elapsed since then—the acclaim of a few kind voices, the display of zeal, could no longer influence his hopes as then they had done, but they gladdened his heart, and took from it that painful feeling which we all too often experience—that we are cast away on the inhospitable earth, useless and neglected.

He was glad also in the very first spot of his claimed dominions whereon he set foot, to see the Lady Katherine received with the honours due to her rank. Her beauty and affability won the hearts of all around, and O'Water, with the tenderness that an old man is so apt to feel towards a young and lovely woman, extended to her a paternal affection, the simplicity and warmth of which touched her, thrown as she was among strangers, with gratitude.

Lord Desmond arrived—he was struck by the improvement in York's manner, still ingenuous and open-hearted: he was more dignified, more confident in himself than before—the husband of Katherine also acquired consideration; as an adventurous boy, he might be used according to the commodity of the hour—now he had place—station in the world, and Desmond paid him greater deference, almost unawares.

But the Earl was sorely disappointed; “Reverend Father,” said he to Keating, “what aid does Scotland promise? Will they draw Tudor with his archers and harquebussiers, and well-horsed Knights, to the north, giving our Irish

Kern some chance of safe landing in the west?"

"Peace is concluded between Scotland and England," replied Keating.

Desmond looked moody. "How thrives the White Rose over the water? How sped the Duke, when he entered England? Some aid somewhere we must have, besides yonder knot of wanderers, and our own hungry, naked kerns."

"By my fay!" replied Keating, "every budding blossom on the Rose-bush was nipped, as by a north-east wind. When Duke Richard sowed his hopes there, like the dragon's teeth of Dan Cadmus, they turned into so many armed men to attack him."

"Sooth, good Prior," said the Earl, with a sharp laugh, "we shall speed well thereby: would you a re-acting of the gleeful mime at Stowe?"

"Wherefore," said Keating, "fix your thoughts on England? The dark sea rolls between us, and even the giants of old broke their causeway, which in the north 'tis said they built, ere it laid its long arm on the English

shore. The name of Ireland reads as fair as England; its sons are as brave and politic, able to defend, to rule themselves: blot England from the world, and Ireland stands free and glorious, sufficing to herself. This springal, valorous though he be, can never upset Tudor's throne in London; but he can do more for us by his very impotence. He is the true Lord of Ireland: we are liegemen in maintaining his right. Plant his banner, rally round it all men who wish well to their country; drive out the good man Poynings; crush the Butlers—aye, down with them; and when Richard is crowned King of Erin, and the Geraldines rule under him, our native land will stand singly, nor want England for a crutch—or, by'r Lady! for a spear to enter her heart, while she leaneth on it; so the wars of York and Lancaster may free us from the proud, imperious English; and the Irish, like the Scotch, have a king and a state of their own."

Desmond's eyes flashed for a moment, as Keating thus presented before them the picture he most desired to behold; but they grew cold

again. "The means, reverend Prior, the arms, the money, the soldiers?"

"A bold stroke brings all: strike one blow, and Ireland is at our feet. We must not tarry; now the Butlers and their party are asleep in their security; gather men together; march forward boldly; strike at the highest, Dublin herself."

"Father," replied the Earl, "long before I were half way there, my litter would be abandoned even by its bearers, and we left alone among the bogs and mountains, to feed as we may, or die. If there be any sooth in your scheme, it can only prove good, inasmuch as we secure Connaught to ourselves, and turn this corner of the island into a kingdom; but neither one word, nor one blow, will gain Dublin. You are right so far, something must be done and speedily; and, if it be well done, we may do more, till by the aid of the blessed St. Patrick and white tooth'd Bridget! we tread upon the necks of the Butlers."

This one thing to be undertaken, after much consultation among the chieftains, was the siege

of Waterford: it had been summoned to acknowledge Duke Richard as its lord, and had refused: Keating was very averse to spending time before a fortified town. “On, on, *boutez en avant!*” He reminded Lord Barry of his device, and strove to awaken ambition in him. The Prior of Kilmainham had spent all his life in Dublin, a chief member of the government, a seditious, factious but influential man: the capital to him was all that was worth having, while, to these lords of Munster, the smallest victory over their particular rivals, or the gaining a chief city in a district, which was their world, appeared more glorious than entering London itself victoriously, if meanwhile Waterford, or any one of the many towns of Ireland, held out against them.

On the fifteenth of July, 1497, the Duke of York, the Earl of Desmond, and the other many chief of many names, some Geraldines, all allied to, or subject to them, as the O'Briens, the Roches, the Macarths, the Barrys, and others, assembled at Youghall, a town subject to the Earl of Desmond, and situated about

mid-way between Cork and Waterford, at the mouth of the river Blackwater.

On the twenty-second of July the army was in movement, and entered the county of Waterford; the chiefs, at the head of their respective followers, proceeded to the shrine of St. Declan at Ardmore, to make their vows for the success of their expedition. The church at Ardmore, the round tower, the shrine, and healing-rock, were all objects of peculiar sanctity. The Countess of Desmond, and her young son, and the fair Duchess of York, accompanied this procession from Youghall. After the celebration of mass, the illustrious throng congregated on the rocky eminence, on which the mysterious tower is built overlooking the little bay, where the calm waters broke gently on the pebbly beach. It was a beautiful summer day; the noon-day heat was tempered by the sea breeze, and relieved by the regular splash of the billows, as they spent themselves on the shore. A kind of silence—such silence as there can be among a multitude, such a silence as is preserved when the winds sing among the pines—possessed the crowd:

they stood in security, in peace, surrounded by such objects as excited piety and awe; and yet the hopes of the warrior, and, if such a word may be used, a warrior's fears, possessed them; it was such a pause as the mountain-goat makes ere he commits himself to the precipice. A moment afterwards all was in motion; to the sound of warlike instruments the troops wound up the Ardmore mountains, looking down on the little fleet, that stemmed its slow way towards the harbour of Waterford. The ladies were left alone with few attendants. The young Duchess gazed on that band of departing warriors, whose sole standard was the spotless rose; they were soon lost in the foldings of the hills; again they emerged; her straining eye caught them. That little speck upon the mountain-side contained the sole hope and joy of her life, exposed to danger for the sake of little good; for Katharine, accustomed to the sight of armies, and to the companionship of chiefs and rulers, detected at once the small chance there was, that these men could bring to terms a strongly fortified city; but resignation supplied the place of hope;

she believed that Richard would be spared; and, but for his own sake, she cared little whether a remote home in Ireland, or a palace in England received them. She looked again on the mountain path; no smallest moving object gave sign of life; the sun-light slept upon the heathy uplands; the grey rocks stood in shadowy grandeur; Katharine sighed and turned again to the chapel, to offer still more fervent prayers, that on this beauteous earth, beneath this bright genial heaven, she might not be left desolate: whatever else her fortune, that Richard might be hers.

The army which the Earl of Desmond led against Waterford, did not consist of more than two thousand men. With these he invested the western division of the city. Richard, with his peculiar troop, took his position at the extremity of this line, nearest Passage, close to Lumbard's Marsh, there to protect the disembarkment of troops from the fleet.

Neither party failed in zeal or activity. The first days were actively employed in erecting works and bringing the cannon to play upon

the town. On the third, in the very midst of their labours, while the Earl in his litter was carried close under the walls among the pioneers, and Lord Barry in his eagerness seized a spade and began to work, signals of attack were made from the town, and the troops poured out from the nearest gate. The advanced guard were too few to contend with them; they were driven back on the entrenchments. The citizens were full of fury and indignation; they rushed forward with loud cries, and created a confusion, which Desmond and Lord Barry were not slow to encounter; they brought a few regular troops to stand the assault; a well pointed cannon from the town swept the thin lines; they fell back; a yell of victory was raised by the men of Waterford; it reached the out-post of Duke Richard: he, with a score of men, five among them, with himself, being cavaliers armed at all points, were viewing a portion of the walls that seemed most open to assault; the roar of cannon and the clash of arms called him to more perilous occupation; he galloped towards the scene of action; and, while still the faltering

men of Desmond were ashamed to fly, yet dared not stand, he, with his little troop, attacked the enemy on their flank. The white steed, the nodding plume, the flashing sword of York were foremost in the fray; Neville and Plantagenet were close behind; these knights in their iron armour seemed to the half-disciplined Irish like invulnerable statues, machines to offend, impregnable to offence; twenty such might have turned the fortunes of a more desperate day: their antagonists fell back. The knight of Kerry led on at this moment a reinforcement of Geraldines, and a cannon, which hitherto had been rebel to the cannoner's art, opened its fiery mouth with such loud injurious speech, that for many moments the dread line it traced remained a blank. Richard saw the post of advantage, and endeavoured to throw himself between the enemy and the city: he did not succeed; but, on the contrary, was nearly cut off himself by a reinforcement of townsmen, sent to secure the retreat of their fellows. Those who saw him fight that day spoke of him as a wonder: the heart that had animated him

in Andalusia was awake; as there he smote to death the turbaned Moor; so now he dealt mortal blows on all around, fearless of the pressing throng and still encreasing numbers. While thus hurried away by martial enthusiasm, the sound of a distant trumpet caught his ear, and the echo of fire arms followed; it came from the east—his own post was attacked: now, when he wished to retreat, he first discerned how alone and how surrounded he was; yet, looking on his foes he saw, but for their numbers, how despicable they were; to a knight, what was this throng of half-armed burghers and naked kerns, who pell mell aimed at him, every blow ineffectual? But again the loud bellow of distant cannon called him, and he turned to retreat—a cloud of missiles rattled against him; his shield was struck through; the bullets rebounded from his case of iron, while his sword felled an enemy at every stroke; and now, breaking through the opposing rank on the other side, his friends joined him—the citizens recoiled. “Old Reginald’s tower,” they averred, “would have bled sooner than these Sir Tristans—they were charmed

men, and lead and good arrow-heads were softer than paper-pellets on their sides." The first movement of panic was enough; before their leaders could rally them again to the attack, the English knights were far, riding at full speed towards the eastern gate.

Here Richard's presence was enough to restore victory to his standard—flushed, panting, yet firm in his seat, his hand true and dangerous in its blows, there was something superhuman in his strength and courage, yet more fearful than his sharp sword. The excess of chivalrous ardour, the burning desire to mingle in the thickest fight, made danger happiness, and all the terrible shows of war entrancing joys to York. When reproached for rashness by his cousin, his bright eye was brighter for a tear, as he cried, "Cousin, I must have some part of my inheritance: my kingdom I shall never gain—glory—a deathless name—oh, must not these belong to him who possesses Katherine? The proud Scots, who looked askance at my nuptials, shall avow at least that she wedded no craven-hearted loon."

With the morrow came a new task. Their little fleet had made its way up Waterford Harbour into the river Suir; and the troops destined to join his were partly disembarked. To protect the landing, he and Neville rode across the marsh to the strand. On their return a fresh sight presented itself—the ponds of Kilbarry were filled, the besieged having raised a mound of earth to stop the course of the river which flows from Kilbarry into the Suir; and the road back to their camp was completely cut off. There was no mode of getting round save by the road to Tramore; yet to the active mind of Richard, it seemed that even this disaster might be turned into a benefit. He reembarked the troops; he himself went on board the principal vessel; he called to secret council the captains:—the conclusion was not immediately divulged, but some adventure of peril was assuredly planned among them.

The long summer day went slowly down; the hum of men from Waterford reached the ships; the quay was thronged with soldiers; several vessels were anchored in the advance,

and manned with troops; but the English fleet, their anchors cast, their sails furled, seemed peacefully inclined. As night came on, the quay became a desert; the ships were worked back to their former stations. It grew darker; the city, with its old rough tower and spires, was mirrored indistinctly in the twilight tide; the walls grew dim and gigantic; the sound of fire-arms ceased; the last roll of the drum died away; the city slept, fearless of its invaders. At this moment, the ebbing tide began to flow. Assisted by the rising waters, Richard and Neville ran a small boat under the cover of the opposite bank of the river, to observe what defences the quay might possess. The low tide at that hour was its best defence: a watch-tower or two with their centinels, completed the guard of a part of the town, whose defence on that side was neglected: by midnight also the tide would have risen, but it was necessary to wait for the following night; for first he must communicate with Desmond, that a night attack in the opposite direction might effectually leave the water-side deserted. The vessels meanwhile dropt

down below Little Island, at once to get out of shot of Reginald's tower, which commands the harbour, and to remove from the citizens any apprehensions they might entertain of attack. The winding of the river concealed them entirely from the town.

The next day, a burning August day, declined into a dewy night; imperceptibly during the dark the vessels were nearer the city; and, while the warders of the city fancied that the troops on board the fleet were finding a circuitous path over land to Desmond's camp, the stars of night twinkled through the shrouds upon decks crowded with men, arming themselves in busy silence. Suddenly it was reported to Richard that a stranger caravel was among them; she was the only vessel with set sails, and these were enlarged by night, till as she neared, she seemed a giant, a living thing stalking between heaven and the element beneath. A sudden shiver convulsed the Prince; to his eye it was the likeness of that vessel which long ere this had traversed, he hoped in safety, the western sea, stemming its mountainous waves towards

the beauteous Indian Isles. Had it been wrecked, and this the spectre? It was the illusion of a moment; but it was necessary to ascertain the nature and intentions of the stranger, who was now close among them. York's vessel, at his command, got alongside of her; he leapt upon the deck, and saw at once him whom the dim night had concealed before, Hernan de Faro upon the deck.

A thousand emotions, wonder, fear, delight, rushed into the youth's heart; while the Mariner, yet more weather-beaten, thin to emaciation, but still erect, still breathing the same spirit of fortitude and kindness, grasped his hand, and blessed the Virgin for the meeting. The questions, the anxiety of Richard, could not be uttered in this hour of action; he only said, "You will join us, and we will be doubly strong; or must you remain to guard your daughter?"

"I come from her—she is not with me—more of this anon."

Rapidly he asked and obtained information of the meditated attack; in part he disapproved,

and, with all the sagacity of a veteran in such enterprizes, suggested alterations. Now every boat was lowered with silent expedition, each received its freight of troops, and was rowed with the tide up the Suir. One skiff contained York and the Moor. The Prince, in the anticipation of the hazardous contest, looked serious; while every feature of De Faro's face was bright, his animated, glad smile, his flashing eyes—all spoke the exhilaration of one engaged in his elected pleasure. Richard had never seen him thus before: usually he appeared kind, almost deferential; yet, except when he talked of the sea, heavy and silent, and speaking of that in a subdued tone. He now stood the picture of a veteran hero, self-possessed and calm, but for the joyousness that the very feeling of his sword's weight, as his right hand grasped the hilt, imparted to his warlike spirit.

Had an angel, on poised wings of heavenly grain, hovered over the city of Waterford, gazing on its star-pointing spires, the reflecting waters of the Suir, the tranquil hills and woods

that gathered round the river, he would have believed such quiet inviolate, and blessed the sleep that hushed the miserable passions of humanity to repose. Anon there came the splash of waters, the shout of men, the sentinels' startled cry, the sudden rush of the guard, the clash of swords, the scream, the low groan, the protracted howl, and the fierce bark of the watchdog joining in. The celestial angel has soared to heaven, scared; and yet honour, magnanimity, devotion filled the hearts of those who thus turned to hell a seeming paradise. Led by Richard and De Faro, while a party was left behind to ensure retreat, another rushed forward right through the town, to throw open the western gate, and admit Desmond, before the terrified citizens had exchanged their night-caps for helmets; in vain: already the marketplace was filled with soldiers ready for the encounter; guided by a native, they endeavoured to find a way through the bye-streets; they lost themselves; they got entangled in narrow allies; the awakened citizens cast upon their heads tiles, blocks of wood, all they could

lay hands upon ; to get back to the square was their only salvation ; although the storm and yell that rose behind, assured them that Desmond had commenced the attack. With diminished numbers York regained the market-place ; here he was furiously attacked ; the crowd still increased, until the knot of assailants might have been crushed, it seemed, by mere numbers ; day, bright day, with its golden clouds and swift pacing sun, dawned upon the scene. In one of those pauses which sometimes occur in the most chaotic roar, a trumpet was heard, sounding as it seemed Desmond's retreat from the walls. Richard felt that he was deserted, that all hope was over ; and to secure the retreat of his men was a work of sufficient difficulty. Foot to foot the young hero and the veteran mariner fought ; one by the quickness of his blows, the other by his tower-like strength, keeping back the enemy ; while retreating slowly, their faces to the foe, they called on their men to make good their escape. They reached the quay—they saw the wide river, their refuge ; their vessels near at hand, the boats hovering close, their safety was in sight, and yet hope of

safety died in their hearts, so many and so fierce were those who pressed on them. Richard was wounded, weary, faint; De Faro alone—Reginald's old tower, which, dark and scaithless, frowned on them, seemed his type. They were at the water's edge, and the high tide kissed with its waves the very footway of the quay: "Courage, my Lord, a few more blows and we are safe:" the mariner spoke thus, for he saw Richard totter; and his arm, raised feebly, fell again without a stroke. At that moment, a flame, and then a bellowing roar, announced that the tardy cannoneer had at last opened his battery on the fleet, from the tower. One glance De Faro cast on his caravel; the bolt had struck and damaged one of the vessels, but the Adalid escaped. "Courage, my Lord!" again he shouted; and at that moment a blow was struck at Richard which felled him; he lay stretched at De Faro's feet. Ere it could be repeated, the head of the assailant was cleft by a Moorish scymitar. With furious strength, De Faro then hurled his weapon among the soldiers; the unexpected act made them recoil; he lifted up the

insensible form of Richard with the power of an elephant; he cast him into the near waves, and leapt in after: raising him with one hand, he cut the waters with the other, and swam thus towards his vessel, pursued by a rain of missiles; one arrow glanced on Richard's unstrung helmet, another fixed itself in the joint at the neck; but De Faro was unhurt. He passed, swimming thus, the nearest vessels; the sailors crowded to the sides, imploring him to enter: as if it had been schoolboy's sport he refused, till he reached the Adalid, till his own men raised Richard, revived now, but feeble, to her worn deck: and he, on board her well-known planks, felt superior to every sovereign in the world.

CHAPTER IV.

Farewell, Erin! farewell all
Who live to weep our fall!

MOORE.

ON the height of the tower of Ardmore, the White Rose of young Richard kept her vigils, and looked across the calm sea, and along the passes of the mountains of Drum, in anxious expectation of the event of the expedition. Sad forebodings oppressed her; the sentiment that mastered every other, was that her lord should require her presence, her assistance, while she was far. He had promised to send a post each day; when these failed, her heart sank within her. The only change that occurred, was when she saw the Adalid proceed slowly in the calm towards Waterford.

One sunny morn she from her watch-tower perceived several straggling groupes descending the mountains. She strained her eyes: no banners waved; no martial music spoke of victory. That was secondary in her eyes; it was for Richard's safety that she was solicitous; yet she would not, did not fear; for there is an instinctive sense in human nature which, in time of doubt, sallies forth from the ark of refuge, and brings back tidings of peace or sorrow to the expectant on the perilous flood; a prophetic spirit which, when it despairs—woe the while!—the omen proves not false. The Lady Katherine watched anxiously but not in despair. At length heavy footsteps ascended the tower-stairs; and, to answer the beatings of her heart, Edmund Plantagenet and the Mayor of Cork presented themselves; they eagerly asked, "Is he not here?"

"Nay, he has not fled?" she replied, while for the first time she grew pale.

"Weigh our words as mere air," said O'Water; "for we know nothing, gentle dame, but that I must to Cork, to bar out the men of Waterford. His Highness left us for the fleet; and the filling

up of those cursed ponds of Kilbarry—ill luck to them!—cut off his return. Last night—Saint Patrick knows the deeds of the last night!—weary from our labour the day before, we were all too carelessly asleep, when our camp was assaulted. Earl Maurice had ridden to Lismore to hasten his cousin, the Knight of the Valley. There was some report of an attack upon the town from the ships. Havock was the cry that roused the welkin from east to west. The sum I know not, save that we are runaways—the siege of Waterford is raised.”

“What skiff is that?” interrupted the Duchess. Round the point of Minehead first peeped the bowsprit, then the prow; and last the complete form of a vessel in full sail, yet scarcely touched by the wind, weathered the promontory. “Haste we, my friends,” she continued; “the Duke may be on board; at least we shall have intelligence.”

“I know that craft full well,” said O’Water; “her captain is a converted Moorish pagan.”

“The White Rose waves from her mast-top,” cried Katherine; “oh, he is there!”

“Holy angels!” exclaimed Edmund; “it is the Adalid! I will on board on the instant.”

Already the Duchess was descending the steep narrow stairs; the villagers of Ardmore, with many of the soldiers who had fled from Waterford, were on the shingles, watching the caravel, now full in sight, yet fearful to venture too near the shelving shore. “They are bound for Cork,” cried a man.

“Oh, not till I first speak to them,” said Katherine; “the day is fair; the sea calm; put off a boat. Ah, my cousin Edmund, take me with thee.”

Plantagenet had already got a boat from its moorings. O’Water was beside the Princess to beseech vainly that she would be patient; and poor Astley, who had been left in special attendance on her, waited near with blanched cheeks. Accompanied by these dear or humble friends, the White Rose was borne with the speed of ten oars towards the Adalid. On the deck, half reclining on a rude bed, very pale, yet with lively, wakeful eyes, lay the Prince of England. In a moment Katherine was assisted on board.

There was no death for Richard ; she was there, life of his life ; so young, so beautiful, and true ; the celestial goodness that beamed in her eyes, and dimpled her cherub countenance, was not like that of an inhabitant of this sad planet ; except that spirits of beauty and love ever and anon *do* animate the frames of the earth-born ; so that we behold in the aspects of our fellow-beings glances and smiles bright as those of angels. De Faro himself looked with admiration on the bending form of this lovely one, till accosted by Edmund, whose first question was, “ Don Hernan here — where then is——”

“ My beloved Monina you would ask for,” said De Faro ; “ she, who to please her vagrant father, would have crossed the wild Atlantic to visit the savage Western Isles. Poor child, even at the threshold of this adventure we were nearly wrecked. She is now in England ; she sent me here—to tell of rebellion against King Henry ; to invite Duke Richard to his kingdom.”

Thus they were occupied on the sunny deck ; the sea was calm, the keel almost stationary in

the water; they were bound for Cork; Plantagenet and the Mayor gathered eagerly from De Faro the history of the combat. They learned that it had been expected that Desmond would have assaulted from land, while York invaded the city from the river; but the fellow sent with Richard's missive had been taken, the city put on her guard. Nothing but the desire of the citizens to do too much, and his own desperate valour, had saved Richard; they resolved at once to receive and destroy him, and to sally unawares on the Earl's camp: they hoped to make prisoners of all the chiefs. They failed in this, but succeeded in raising the siege of their city.

Towards evening a land-breeze sprung up, and two others of York's vessels hove in sight, and passed them quickly; for the Adalid was much disabled, and made slow way. Soon in pursuit appeared a ship and two corvettes, which O'Water recognized as belonging to Waterford. The corvettes proceeded on their way; but the larger vessel spied out the Adalid, and, being now in advance of her, hove to, with the

manifest resolve of attacking her on her watery way towards Cork. De Faro, with his keen eyes fixed on the enemy's movements, stood on the forecastle in silence; while Plantagenet and O'Water eagerly demanded arms, and exhorted the sailors to a most vain resistance. From the vessel of the foe the Moorish mariner cast his eyes upwards; the wind was shifting to the west. With a loud voice he shouted to his crew to man the yards; then, seizing the rudder, gave the swift orders that made the caravel go about. Sailing near the wind, her canvas had flapped lazily, now it filled; the keel felt the impulse, and dashed merrily along, bounding forward like a courser in the race; the ship, which had furled its sails in expectation of the combat, was in an instant left far behind; the other vessels from Waterford were still further to the west, towards Cork.

All these manœuvres were mysteries to the landsmen: they gladly hailed the distance placed between them and a superior enemy; but as with a freshening gale the Adalid still held her swift course towards the east, and the land

began to sink on the horizon, O'Water asked with some eagerness whither they were bound.

"To safety," De Faro replied, laconically.

"An idle answer," said Edmund; "we must judge where our safety lies?"

"I have ever found best safety on the wide ocean sea," cried the mariner, looking round proudly on his beloved element. "Your safeties and your Lord's, are, methinks, English born; if this wind hold, on the third morning we shall see the coast of Cornwall."

The mayor was aghast, exclaiming—"Cornwall! England! we are betrayed?"

De Faro looked on him with contempt:—"I do not command here," he continued; "I obey the Prince of England; let him decide. Shall we engage superior force; be boarded; taken by the enemy: or land, be wrecked, perchance, upon this savage coast; alive with vengeful kerns—defeated men among a victorious angry people? Or go where we are called by your leader's cause, where thousands of men are up in arms to receive you like brothers, to fight for

you, with you; where England, the long desired kingdom, makes you welcome to her green, sunny shores? Ask ye your Prince this question; let his word be law."

This statement, upheld by York, brought conviction to the minds of Plantagenet and O'Water. The latter was aware of the risk he ran from the awakened vengeance of Henry, to pursue his having fostered rebellion in the city of which he was magistrate; and a moment's reflection showed him that there was no security for him, except in flight from Ireland. Meanwhile the wind, increasing in its strength, and right astern, carried them over the foaming waters. The early dawn showed them far at sea: they had outrun or baffled their pursuers; and, though, now and then, with anxious thought, they reflected on the comrades left behind, on the poor equipage and diminished numbers with which they were about to land in England, still there was something so miraculous in their escape, so unforeseen in the destiny that cut them off, and carried them, a remnant merely of the war, away from its dangers, that they felt

as if they were under the immediate direction of a ruling Providence, and so resigned themselves; greedily drinking in the while the highly coloured picture De Faro painted of the Yorkist army which awaited them in Cornwall.

Again upon the sea—again impelled by winds and waves to new scenes—new hopes, tost here and there by Fortune, it was Richard's fate to see one frustrated expectation give place to another, which, in its turn, faded and died. This constant succession of projects kept alive within him that sanguine spirit which never could be vanquished. Eagerly he passed from one idea to another, and almost welcomed the last disaster, which appeared but to pioneer the way to future success. During this voyage, weak as his wounds had made him, he talked of England as his own—the dearer, because he must spend his blood to win it. Circumstances had an exactly contrary effect upon Katherine. The continual change of schemes convinced her of the futility of all. She felt that, if the first appearance of the Duke of York, acknowledged and upheld by various sovereigns and dear high-

born relatives, had not animated the party of the White Rose in his favour, it was not now, after many defeats and humiliations on his side, and after triumphs and arrogant assumptions on that of his enemy, that brilliant success could be expected. This conviction must soon become general among the Yorkists, Richard would learn the sad lesson, but she was there to deprive it of its sting; to prove to him, that tranquillity and Katherine were of more worth than struggles, even if they proved successful, for vain power.

It was strange that a girl of royal birth, bred in a palace, accustomed to a queen-like sovereignty over her father's numerous vassals in the Highlands, should aim at restricting the ambitious York to mere privacy; while Monina, the humble daughter of a Moorish mariner, would have felt honour, reputation, all that is dear to man, at stake, if her friend had dreamed of renouncing his claims to the English crown. His cause was her life; his royalty the main spring of all her actions and thoughts. She had sacrificed love to it—she taught her

woman's soul to rejoice in his marriage with another, because his union with a princess was pledge to the world of his truth. Perhaps, had the time ever come when he renounced his struggles, she had felt with a pang that his lowly fortunes might not incongruously be shared by her, and self had mingled in the religion of her heart, which was virtuous devotion to him; but as it was, the idea never presented itself. He must win, or die. Did he win, her happiness would result from the contemplation of his glory; were he to die, the young hero's grave would not be watered by her tears: she believed that in that hour her life would cease.

The Lady Katherine saw a vain mask in all the common-place pomp of palaces; she perceived that power failed most, when its end was good; she saw that in accomplishing its purpose in the cottage, or in halls of state, felicity resulted from the affections only. It was but being an actor in different scenes, to be a potentate or a peasant; the outward garb is not the livery of the mind: the refinement of taste, which enables us to gather pleasure from

simple objects; the warmth of heart which necessitates the exercise of our affections, but which is content when they are satisfied; these, to her mind, were the only, but they were the complete ingredients of happiness; and it was rarer to find, and more difficult to retain them, among false-hearted, ambitious courtiers, and the luxury of palaces, than among simple-minded peasantry, and a plain natural style of living. There was some romance in this idea; Katherine felt that there was, and subdued herself not to lay too much store by any change or guise of outward circumstance. She taught herself to feel and know, that in the tumult of camps and war, in the anxieties of her present vagrant life, on the throne which she might possess, or in the prison she might share; by devoting herself to the happiness of him to whom she was united, whose heroism, goodness and love merited all her affection, she was performing the part assigned to her on earth, and securing a portion of happiness, far beyond the common lot of those whose colder harder natures require something beyond sympathy to constitute their misnamed felicity.

CHAPTER V.

From Ireland thus comes York to claim his right.

If I am not ashamed of my soldiers, I am a soused gurnet.

SHAKSPEARE.

ON the deck of the sea-worn Adalid, watching the renovated strength, and attending on the still remaining weakness of her lord, the soft heart of the Princess possessed to fulness all its desires; while Monina, among the wild rude Cornish rebels, exerted herself, to inspire zeal for his cause, and to increase the number of his partisans, winning them by her thrilling eloquence, ruling them by her beauty and enthusiasm. She had found the whole population ready to second him; but fitting leaders, noble and influential men, were absolutely wanting. She

sent her father to urge Richard to this new attempt, and when he should appear, attended, as she fondly hoped, by a train of high-born Irish lords, of gallant Scotch cavaliers, and devoted English warriors; he would be able to give a martial form to the rout of Cornish insurgents, to discipline their wild, untamed valour, to attract others by name and rank, and Tudor at last must grow pale upon his throne. With eagerness she awaited the fleet that was to bring the chosen band of heroes; when, after a long and calm voyage, on the third of September, the Adalid ran into White Sand Bay, on the western coast of Cornwall, and Plantagenet, at Richard's command; disembarked and proceeded forthwith to Bodmin.

It was strange that the chief partizan of the White Rose should, on his invasion of the island, find a Spanish girl the main source of information—the chief mover of the rebellion by which he was to profit. Yet Plantagenet almost forgot his mortal struggle for a kingdom, in the anticipation of seeing Monina. Plantagenet, prouder, more ambitious for his cousin, than Richard for himself—Plantagenet, who

had but one object, to be the guardian, supporter, defender of York, now wandered in thought far back through many years to their Spanish home; to his tenderness for the sweet child of Madeline; to the developement of the beauty and virtues of the lovely Moor. Thrown apart by their several destinies, he had scarcely seen her since then; and now, in place of the dark, laughing-eyed girl, he beheld a woman, bright with intelligence and sensibility; whose brow wore somewhat the sad trace of suffering, whose cheek was a little sunk, but in whose eyes there was a soul, in whose smile an enchantment not to be resisted. She was all life, vivacity, and yet softness: all passion, yet yielding and docile. Her purpose was steady, stubborn; but the mode of its attainment, her conduct, she easily permitted to be guided. Edmund scarcely recognized her, but she instantly knew him; her elder brother, her kind but serious guardian, whom she had loved with awe, as the wisest and best of men. Now he bore a dearer name, as the unfailing friend of him she loved. To both their hearts this meeting was an unexpected joy.

Monina had thought too much of Richard, to remember his cousin. He had half forgotten his own sensations; or, at least, was quite unprepared for the power and effect of her surpassing beauty.

After the first overflowing of affection, Monina eagerly detailed the forces raised, and dwelt on the spirit and courage of the insurgents. "They are poor fellows," she said, "but true; burning with zeal to right themselves, and to avenge their losses at Blackheath. They are gathered together by thousands. They want merely leaders, discipline, arms, money, ammunition, and a few regular troops to show them the way: these, of course, you bring."

"Alas! no," said Edmund, "we bring merely ourselves."

"Could Ireland, then, furnish no warlike stores?" continued the zealous girl. "But this can be remedied, doubtless. Yourself, your leader, Lord Desmond, Lord Barry, the gallant Neville; tell me who else—who from Burgundy—what Irish, what Scottish knights?"

The last word was said with difficulty: it

made a pause in her rapid utterance; while Edmund, aghast, replied, "Indeed! none of all these, or very few: in a word, we have fled from Waterford in the Adalid. His Highness and myself are the sole English knights. The good old Mayor of Cork must represent all Ireland, gentle and simple, to your eyes—our fair Duchess, Scotland: her attendants will follow in due time, but these are but needy servitors." Monina laughed. "We came to seek, not bring aid," continued Plantagenet gravely.

"Do not be angry," replied Monina. "There is more bitterness and sorrow in my laugh, than in, methinks, a widow's tears. My dear friend, God send we are not utterly lost. Yet his Highness and yourself may work wonders. Only report truly our state, that the Duke be not too dissatisfied with our appearance. Tell him Lord Audley headed a worse organized troop: tell him that Master Heron, the mercer, has no silken soul—that Master Skelton, the taylor, disdains a smaller needle than a cloth-yard shaft."

“And is it to head men like these we have been drawn from our Irish friends?” cried Edmund; “better return. Alas! our path is besieged; the very sea is subject to our enemy; in the wide world the King of England has no refuge.”

“That he is King of England,” said Monina, “let not him, let none of us forget. The very name is powerful: let him, on his native shores, assume it. Surely, if their liege King stand singly in the land of his forefathers, at his sacred name thousands will congregate. He has dared too little, when he had power: at the worst, even now, let him dare all, and triumph.”

Her bold, impetuous language had its effect on Edmund: it echoed his own master passion, which ever cried aloud, “He is a King! and, once give himself that sacred name, submission and allegiance from his subjects must follow.” Buoyed up by these thoughts, his report on board the Adalid was free from those humiliating details, which, even if he had wished, he would have found no voice to communicate to his royal cousin.

Monina's task of imparting to her friends the destitute condition in which their sovereign arrived, was even easier, "He is come among tall men," said the pompous Heron, "who can uphold him for the better king, even to the satin of his doublet."

"And fight for him, even to the rending of our own," cried Skelton.

"And die for him, as he must too, when all's done," said Trereife. "A soldier's death is better than a dastard's life."

"We will have out our men in goodly array," said Heron. "Master Skelton, are the doublets cut from that piece of sad-coloured velvet, last of my wares, slashed with white, as I directed?"

"Slash me no doublets but with a Spanish rapier," squeaked Skelton, "Have I not cast away the shears? Yet, look you now, good lack! I lie. Here in my pouch be a sharp pair, to clip Master Walter of Horneck's ears,—if by the help of the saints we can lay him as flat on the field as his own grey suit was on my board when

a shaping; by the same token that he never paid for it."

"In good hour, Sir Taylor," said Monina: "but the talk now is, how duly to receive his Grace, how induce him to accept your aid."

"Aye, by Saint Dunstan!" cried Trereife, "he has ruffled in France and Burgundy, my masters, and will look on you as clowns and base-born burghers; but no man has more to give than his life, and if he waste that heartily, time was and time may be when villains trod on the necks of knights, as the ghost of Charles of Burgundy could tell us. Courage is the beginning and end of a soldier's catechism."

Such were the chiefs Monina found desirous, and in their own conceit capable, of placing England's diadem on Duke Richard's head. Heron, the bankrupt mercer, who fancied himself the base-born offspring of the late Earl of Devonshire, and whose first deed of arms would find him Heron no more, but Sir John Courtney; Skelton, a luckless wight, whose shears ever

went astray, (the true cause why Walter of Hornbeck paid not for his misshapen suit,) and who, therefore, believed himself born for greater things; and Trereife, the younger prodigal son of a rural franklin, who, cast off and disinherited, had served in the wars in Flanders, gaining in that country no small reverence for the good Duchess Margaret, and ready therefore to right her nephew; besides, like a true hero, he abhorred this silken time of peace, and hoped to gather spoil, if not laurels, in the meditated insurrection.

The noble passengers disembarked from the Adalid. "Welcome to England, sweet Kate! welcome to the country of which thou art Queen," said York; "and even if her reception be cold or rough, love her for my sake, for she is my mother."

"A step-mother I will not call her, dear my Lord," replied the Princess, "but the maternal embrace is strangely wanting on these deserted sands: the narrow deck of yonder caravel were, methinks, a kindlier home: may we go on and prosper; but, if we fail, my Lord will pardon

me, if I welcome the day when I embark again on board the Adalid; to find, when the wide earth proves false, safety and happiness on the free waves of ocean."

CHAPTER VI.

SKELTON. 'Tis but going to sea and leaping ashore, cut ten or twelve thousand unnecessary throats, fire seven or eight towns, take half a dozen cities, get into the market-place, crown him Richard the Fourth, and the business is finished.

FORD.

Am I not king?

Awake, thou coward Majesty! thou sleepest.
Is not the King's name forty thousand names?

SHAKSPEARE.

THESE doughty leaders drew out their followers in a plain just without Bodmin. There were about two hundred men decently clad from the remnants of the mercer's wares, tolerably well armed and disciplined by Trereife; this troop obtained the distinction of being

selected as King Richard's body guard. Skelton was their captain, a rare commander, whose real merit was that he felt happiest when stuck close as a burr to Trereife; for at heart he was an errant coward, though a loud braggart, and talked of slaying his thousands, while the very wounding of his doublet had made him wince.

Heron was brave in his way; a true Cornishman, he could wrestle and cast his antagonist with the strength of a lion; he loved better, it is true, to trust to his arm than to his sword, which, in spite of his strength, Trereife always made fly from his hand in their fencing lessons: not the less did he consider himself a gallant knight, and had cut up many a yard of crimson cramoisy to make a rich suit for himself. He wore Monina's glove in his cap and large yellow roses at his knees; he called himself generallissimo, and marshalled under him full three thousand men, who in truth had

never set a squadron in the field
Nor the division of a battle knew
More than a spinster;

but they were sturdy discontented spirits, who valued life at its worth, which was even nothing to them, who had laboured with all their hearts; till labour was of no avail, and who then left the mine and the furrow to carry their loud complaints to the foot of Henry's throne—they were better pleased with the prospect of overthrowing it.

“ Now, my masters, make yourselves heard,” cried Heron, as he shuffled down a little eminence on a short-legged Welch pony, the only steed he found he could back in safety. “ His Grace is within ear-shot, so you be loud. Long life to King Richard!—down with the taxes—Saint Michael and Cornwall for ever!”

The din was prolonged, ended, began, went on, as the Prince arrived at the summit of the hill with his little train—Fair Katherine was at his side. Plantagenet, O'Water, De Faro, with some dozen soldiers who fled from Waterford; sure never invader came so ill equipped. On the hill-top the illustrious wanderers paused. Richard hastily scanned the rough-suited multitude—then, turning to Plantagenet, “ Cousin,”

he said, "You told me that the insurgent army would be drawn out for my view; is it not strange that yonder rabble should hide it from us? As far as my eye can reach, I see no martial discipline, no banners, no lordly crest; fie on those drums! they have no touch of military concord. What makes our army so slack of duty, Cousin?"

Though no fault of his, Edmund blushed deeply in very shame—the approach of Heron, Skelton, Tereife, and three or four other principal rebels, cut off his reply. It had been agreed that Skelton, who had a gift of eloquence, should speak, and many words he used to welcome his liege—"We will have every man with a Red Rose in his cap, in a drag chain, please your Grace, and give a sound lesson to the saucy burghers of Exeter withall. Not a knight shall live in the land, but of your Majesty's dubbing. We have but to put to rout King Henry's army, to hang the false loon for a traitor, and to set fire to London and the Parliament. Such nobles as please to doff their silken cloaks, and don miners' jackets, may work, the rest shall

hang. Their mere wardrobes, bless the day! will find us and your Grace in cloth of gold, embroidery, and other rich garniture to the end of our lives."

"We thank your zeal, my worthy master," said Richard, courteously, "if our good troops do half your saying, King Henry must look to it."

"Are those men to be worse than their word?" cried Skelton. "There is not one among us but has the arms of ten. We are of a race of giants, please your Majesty, and could knock the walls of Exeter down with our fists. Please you to enter Bodmin, whose very stones will cry for King Richard louder than King Hal's cannon;—to-morrow, God willing, we are for the wars."

The royal party passed on—the dark ferocity or sturdy obstinacy painted on the faces of the ill-armed rout, struck Richard as he passed—he became meditative, while Edmund, shamed and angry, his cheeks burning, his eyes on the ground, listened in indignant silence to Master Skelton, who fastened on him with such talk,

that whether a soldier spoke of killing doublets, or a tailor prattled of fashioning a field of slaughter, was a riddle ill to be devised. At length they passed the gates of Bodmin; and here was a louder cry of welcome from the shrill voices of women, who held up their thin hands and half-starved children, crying for vengeance on Tudor, blessing the sweet faces of Richard and his lovely wife. York's eyes flashed again with their wonted fires; his creative spirit had found materials here to work some project, all poor and rude as they might seem.

They entered the town-hall; when, by some sudden revulsion in the tide of the crowd, every Cornishman fell back, closed the doors, and left the wanderers alone. Something was forgotten surely; for Hercn had paced pompously up to Richard, when suddenly he turned on his heel, crying, "A word, my masters!" and all were gone. The Lady Katherine had marked their backing and hurrying with becoming gravity; but, when the door was fairly shut, she could restrain no longer a heart-felt laugh. Richard joined in her mirth, while Plantagenet

strode through the hall angrily; muttering, "an army a rout of shirtless beggars; is this England's reception for her King?"

"It were fine mumming," said Richard, "under a hedge with the green sward for a stage."

"By our Lady, this passes patience!" reiterated Edmund, "where are the gentlemen of England? Where the sons of those who fell for York? Are we to oppose these half-naked knaves to the chivalry of Henry?"

"It would seem that such is expected," replied the Prince; "and, verily, Cousin, we might do worse. I pray you, treat the honest rogues well; better may come of it; keep we our secret, and have we not an army?"

"My Lord!" cried Plantagenet, in wonder.

"Patience, dear friend," said York; "I have not been apprentice to adversity so many long years, without becoming an adept in my calling. I say, I have an army; bold, though poor—ragged truly, but exceeding faithful. Methinks it were more glorious to put Tudor down with such small means, than to meet him in

equal terms, like a vulgar conqueror. I do beseech you, Edmund, put a good face on it; speak to our Cornish giants, as if they had souls of mettle, and bodies decked like Ponce de Leon and his peers, when they welcomed Queen Isabel to the Spanish camp. You remember the golden array of the knights, Cousin?"

Edmund was impatient of the Prince's gay humour; while Katherine, seeing in his bright eyes heroism and lofty resolve, felt a dewy moisture gather in her own: there is something at once awful and affecting, when a man, the sport of fortune, meets her rudest blow unshrinking, and turns her very spite into arms against herself. The whole secret of Richard's present thoughts she could not divine, but she saw that their scope was worthy of his birth, his aim; her respect—her love augmented; and her gentle heart at that moment renewed its vow to devote herself to him entirely and for ever.

In the same spirit, York answered the deputation that waited on him. He commanded a proclamation to be made, in which he assumed

the title of Richard the Fourth. He announced his intention of immediately penetrating England, and seizing on some walled town or city, before Henry could be aware of his having landed. Nor did he confine his energy to words: he examined the state of his men; their arms and furniture; he provided for their better discipline, and animated his cousin to take an active part in marshalling them to order. He went among them, learned the causes of their dissatisfaction, promised them better days, and so raised a glad spirit in them, that their hearts overleaping both time and circumstance, paid him the honour and the love he might have claimed, had he already led them through fertile England, and planted his victorious standard on the Tower of London. Trereife swore by his beard, he was a proper youth; the old soldier awoke to the remembrance of harvests of spoil he had gathered in the Netherlands, the stern encounters and the joys of success; he gazed on the rough Cornish men, and wondered how they should withstand the nobility of England: but, when Richard glanced hope and

triumph from his bright eyes, when he spoke of the omnipotence of resolved valour, when he drew a picture of their ghastly poverty, and showed them how, by standing firm merely, they might redeem themselves;—while the poor fellows answered with a prolonged shout, or better still, grasped their arms more fiercely, and trod the earth with free and decided steps;—a thousand facilities seemed to be discovered; a thousand resources for the war displayed, undreamt of before. Were these mere words? or at his voice did soldiers rise from the clods, and victory obey the sound?

Plantagenet, seeing his royal Cousin's resolve, strove to second it. With a party of men he assaulted a near fortress, carried it, and seized on a store of arms. This success looked like a mighty victory; Richard exalted it as such; and the very fellows who handled awkwardly their booty, fancied themselves heroes at the mere sight of it.

On the third day they were to proceed to Exeter, it being determined that they should besiege this city. De Faro offered to sail to Cork to

invite the warlike chieftains of Munster to come over with their power; and at least himself to bring back in the Adalid, Neville, and the rest of the English exiles. While Edmund, who looked glad at the thought, counselled that they should entrench themselves in this corner of England, which was so entirely devoted to them, till these forces were added to their number, and till by discipline, they should have made regular troops of the rabble, by courtesy y'cleped an army.

“Wherefore, Cousin,” asked Richard, “do you desire others to share in our disasters?”

“My Lord!” cried Edmund, astounded.

“I have but one wish,” continued the Prince, “that you and my good O’Water were even now in Ireland; so that I might stand the brunt of this war alone. You look amazed. Yet it were more amazing if I, expected to do battle against the Veres, the Howards, the Berkeleys, the Courtneys, and ten thousand other names of high renown, backed by their train of martial adherents, with ragged regiments like those we are about to lead to the field;—even though the kerns of Ireland made their number double,

and the Geraldines; Barry and Neville added by their nobleness dignity to our victor's conquest. Remember Stoke, my cousin Edmund; you may well remember it. Remember my honoured kinsman the Earl of Lincoln and my lamented Lovel. Ah, that I did not now peril your life, then spared!"

"Yet, if your Grace fight at all," said O'Water, bluntly; "methinks we were not the worse for being better appointed for the fray. For victims, even those poor honest varlets are too many."

"That one other life should be wasted for me," replied Richard fervently, "is my saddest thought. I fear it must be so; some few lives, each as dear to him that spends it, as is the life-blood to our own hearts. I can say no more. I have a secret purpose, I confess, in all I do. To accomplish it—and I do believe it to be a just one—I must strike one blow; nor fail. Tudor is yet unprepared; Exeter vacant of garrison; with stout hearts for the work, I trust to be able to seize that city. There the wars of York shall end. So far I confide in your dis-

cretions, that you may not deem me mad. More is the single property of my own soul. Will you help me so far, dear friends—so far hazard life—not to conquer a kingdom for Richard, but to redeem his honour?”

The warm-hearted, grey-headed Irish O'Walter, with gushing eyes, swore to adhere to him to the last.

Edmund replied, “I am but a bit of thee; deal with me as with thyself; and I know thou wilt be no niggard in giving me away to danger.”

De Faro cried, “I am a sailor, and know better how to face death on the waves than victory on shore; but, Santiago! may our blessed Lady herself look shy on me at the great day, if the Mariner of the Wreck prove false to your Grace.”

“Now then to our work,” cried York, “to speak fair to my faithful fellows and their braggart leaders. They at least shall be winners in our game; for my hand is on my prize; a spirit has whispered success to me; my hope and its consummation are married even at their birth.”

CHAPTER VII.

Dost thou hear, lady?

If from the field I shall return once more

To kiss these lips, I will appear in blood;

I and my sword will earn our chronicle;

There is hope in it yet.

SHAKSPEARE.

RICHARD was obliged to plead his cause yet once again. Katherine had watched all his movements; she had eyed curiously the army he mustered to the field; she talked to its leaders, and while they vaunted her affability, she was diving with earnest mind, into the truth of things. No fear that it could be hid from her; love for Richard was the bright light that dispelled every deceptive shadow from the scene. She saw the bare reality; some three thousand

poor peasants and mechanics, whose swords were more apt to cut themselves than strike the enemy, were arrayed against the whole power and majesty of England. On the morrow they were to set forward. That night, while at the casement of his rude chamber, Richard gazed upon the congregated stars, trying to decipher in their intricate bright tracery the sure omen of the good he was told they characterized for him, Katherine, after a moment's hesitation, with a quivering voice, and hand that shook as it pressed his, knelt on a cushion at his feet, saying, "My sweet Richard, hear me; hear your faithful friend—your true wife; call not my councils weak and feminine, but weigh them sagely ere you resolve. May I speak?"

"Lady of my heart, arise," said Richard; "speak my soft-voiced Katherine—my White Rose of beauty—fair flower, crowning York's withered tree. Has not God done all in giving you to me; yet we must part, love, for awhile. Your soldier is for the wars, Kate, while you sit in your bower, weaving victorious garlands for his return."

“ My ever dear Lord,” said Katherine, “ I speak with fear, because I feel that I shall not address myself to your concealed thought. I do not wish to penetrate your secrets, and yet I tremble at their event. You have not so far deceived yourself as to imagine, that with these unfortunate men, you can ride over the pride and the power of this island; did I see on what else you founded the lofty hope, that has, since we came here, beamed in your eyes, I would resign myself to your better wisdom. But, wherever I turn my view, there is a blank. You do not dream of conquest, though you feel secure of victory. What can this mean, save that you see glory in death?”

“ You are too quick-sighted, sweet Kate,” said Richard, “ and see beyond the mark. I do not set my cast upon falling in this fray; though it may well happen that I should: but I have another aim.”

“ Without guessing at what that may be,” replied the lady, “ since you seem desirous to withhold the knowledge, permit me to present another object to your choice; decide between

them, and I submit: but do not carelessly turn from mine. There is all to lose, nought to win, in what you now do. Death may blot the future page, so that we read neither disgrace or prison in its sad lines; but wherefore risk to die. While yet, dear love, we are young, life has a thousand charms, and one may be the miserable survivor, whose heart now bleeds at the mere surmise."

She faltered; he kissed her soft cheek, and pressed her to his heart. "Why may we not—why should we not live?" continued Katherine; "what is there in the name or state of king, that should so take captive our thoughts, that we can imagine no life but on a throne? Believe me, careful nights and thorny days are the portion of a monarch: he is lifted to that awful height only to view more clearly destruction beneath; around, fear, hate, disloyalty, all yelling at him. The cold, heartless Tudor may well desire the prize, for he has nothing save the gilt crown to ennoble him; nothing but the supple knees of courtiers to present to him the show of love. But—ah! could I put fire into

my weak words—my heart's zeal into my supplicatory voice—persuasion would attend upon me, and you would feel that to the young, to two united as we are, our best kingdom is each other's hearts; our dearest power that which each, without let or envy, exercises over the other. Though our palace roof be the rafters of a lowly cot, our state, the dear affection we bear each other, our attendants the duty and observance of one to the other—I, so served by King Edward's son—you, by the rightful queen of this fair island—were better waited on than Henry and Elizabeth, by their less noble servitors. I almost think that, with words like these, I might draw you from the uneasy throne to the downy paradise of love; and can I not from this hard struggle, while death yet guards the palace gate, and you will be pierced through and through long ere you can enter."

"Thus, my gentle love," said Richard, "you would have me renounce my birth and name; you desire that we become the scorn of the world, and would be content that so dishonoured, the braggart impostor, and his dame

Katherine, should spend their shameful days in an ignominious sloth, misnamed tranquillity. I am a king, lady, though no holy oil nor jewelled crown has touched this head; and such I must prove myself."

"Oh, doubt it not," she replied, "it is proved by your own speech and your own nobleness; my heart approves you such; the whole earth, till its latest day, will avouch that the lord of Katherine is no deceiver; but my words avail not with you."

"They do avail, my best, my angel girl, to show me that the world's treasure is mere dross compared with thee: one only thing I prize, not as thy equal, but as that without which, I were a casket not even worthy to encase this jewel of the earth—my honour! A word taught me by my victim brother, by my noble cousin Lincoln, by the generous Plantagenet; I learnt its meaning among a race of heroes—the Christian cavaliers—the Moorish chivalry of Spain; dear is it to me, since without it I would not partake your home of love—an home, more glorious and more blessed than the throne of the universe.

It is for that I now fight, Katherine; not for a kingdom; which, as thy royal Cousin truly said, never will be mine. If I fall, that Cousin, the great, the munificent James, will be your refuge."

"Never," interrupted the lady, "Scotland I shall never see again; never show myself, a queen and no queen, the mock of their rude speech; never put myself into my dear, but ambitious father's hands, to be bartered away to another than my Richard; rather with your aunt of Burgundy, rather in Tudor's own court, with your fair sister. Holy angels! of what do I speak? how frightfully distinct has the bereft world spread itself out as my widowed abode!"

A gush of tears closed her speech. "Think of brighter days, my love," said Richard, "they will be ours. You spoke erewhile of the difficulty of giving true imagery to the living thought; thus, I know not how to shape an appropriate garb (to use a trope of my friend Skelton) for my inmost thoughts. I feel sure of success. I feel, that in giving up every pros-

pect of acquiring my birth-right, I make the due oblation to fortune, and that she will bestow the rest—that rest is to rescue my name from the foul slur Henry has cast on it; to establish myself as myself in the eyes of England; and then to solicit your patience in our calamity—your truth and love as the only sceptre and globe this hand will ever grasp. In my own Spain, among the orange and myrtle groves, the flowery plains and sun-lit hills of Andalusia, we will live unambitious, yet more fortunate than crowned emperors.”

With such words and promises he soothed her fears; to the word honour she had no reply. Yet it was a mere word here; in this case, a barren word, on which her life and happiness were to be wrecked.

The Prince and Monina had met with undisguised delight. No Clifford would now dare traduce her; she need not banish herself from countries where his name enriched the speech of all men; nor even from that which, invited by her, he had come to conquer. He was glad to be able to extend his zealous fraternal protec-

tion over her, to feel that he might guard her through life, despite of the fortune that divided them. He obtained for her the Lady Katherine's regard, which she sought opportunities to demonstrate, while they were avoided by Monina, who honoured and loved her as Richard's wife and dearest friend, yet made occasion to absent herself from both. Nothing beautiful could be so unlike as these two fair ones. Katherine was the incarnate image of loveliness, such as it might have been conceived by an angelic nature; noble, soft, equable from her tender care not to displease others; in spite of the ills of fate, gay, because self-satisfied and resigned; the bright side of things was that which she contemplated: the bright and the tranquil—although the hazards run by him she loved, at this period informed her thoughts with terror. Monina,—no, there was no evil in Monina; if too much self-devotion, too passionate an attachment to one dear idea, too enthusiastic an adoration of one exalted being, could be called aught but virtue. The full orbs of her dark eyes; once flashing bright, were now more se-

rious, more melancholy; her very smile would make you weep; her vivacity, all concentrated in one object, forgot to spend itself on trifles; yet, while the Princess wept that Richard should encounter fruitless danger for a mistaken aim, gladness sat on Monina's brow: "He goes to conquer; God will give victory to the right: as a warrior he treads his native land; as a monarch he will rule over her. The very name of King he bears, will shame the lukewarm English; they will gather round the apparent sun, now that he shows himself unclouded, leaving the false light, Tudor, to flicker into its native nothingness."

"Monina," said the Prince, "you in the wide world can bestow richest largess on the beggar, King Richard." She looked on him in wonder. "I go to conquer or to die: this, lovely one, is no new language for you; a warrior's friend must hear such words unflinching. I die without a fear if you take one charge upon you." Her beaming, expressive eyes replied to him. He continued: "The Adalid and safety are images most firmly united in my mind; if I cannot find security on

board of her myself, let those dear to me inherit my possession there. The hardest thought that I bear with me, is that my fair Queen should become captive to my base-minded foe. May I not trust that if I fall, the Adalid will be her home and refuge to convey her to her native country, or any whither she may direct? I intrust this charge to you, my sister, my far more than sister, my own kind Monina. You will forget yourself in that fateful hour, to fulfil my latest wish?"

"My Prince," she replied, "your words were cruel, did I not know that you speak in over-care, and not from the impulse of your heart. In the same spirit, I promise that your desire shall be accomplished: if you fall, my father will protect—die for my lady the Queen. But why speak these ill-omened words? You will succeed; you will hasten the lagging hand of Fate, and dethrone one never born to reign, to bestow on England its rightful king. The stars promise this in their resplendent, unfailing scrawl—the time-worn student in his lore has proclaimed it—the sacred name of monarch

which you bear, is the pledge and assurance of predestined victory."

"And you meanwhile will stay, and assure Katherine's destiny?"

"My dear Lord, I have a task to accomplish. If I leave her Grace, it is because all spirits of good and power watch over her, and my weak support is needed elsewhere. I am bound for London."

They parted thus. The temerity of their designs sometimes inspired them with awe; but more usually animated them to loftier hopes. When the thickening shadows of "coming events" clouded their spirits, they took refuge in the sun-bright imaginations which painted to each the accomplishment of their several hopes. Monina felt assured that the hour of victory was at hand. Richard looked forward to a mortal struggle, to be crowned with success: a few short weeks or briefer days would close the long account: his word redeemed, his honour avenged, he looked forward to his dear reward: not a sceptre—that was a play-

thing fit for Henry's hand; but to a life of peace and love; a very eternity of sober, waking bliss, to be passed with her he idolized, in the sunny clime of his regretted Spain.

CHAPTER VIII.

Oh, that stern unbending man!
 In this unhappy marriage what have I
 Not suffered—not endured!

SCHILLER'S WALLENSTEIN.

Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more,
 Or close the wall up with our English dead!

SHAKSPEARE.

THE lapse of years had confirmed Henry on his throne. He was extortionate and severe, it is true; and thus revolts had been frequent during the earlier portion of his reign; but they took their rise in a class which even in modern days, it is difficult to keep within the boundaries of law. The peasantry, scattered and dependant on the nobles,

were tranquil: but artificers, such as the miners of Cornwall, who met in numbers, and could ask each other, "Why, while there is plenty in the land, should we and our children starve? Why pay our hard earnings into the regal coffers?" and, still increasing in boldness, demand at last, "Why should these men govern us?"

"We are many—they are few!"

Thus sedition sprung from despair, and assumed arms; to which Henry had many engines to oppose, bulwarks of his power. A commercial spirit had sprung up during his reign, partly arising from the progress of civilization, and partly from so large a portion of the ancient nobility having perished in the civil wars. The spirit of chivalry, which isolates man, had given place to that of trade, which unites them in bodies.

Among these, the White Rose of England had not a single partizan—the nobles who once had upheld the house of York were few; they had for the last eight years been intent upon restoring their fortunes, and were wholly disin-

clined to the endangering them afresh for a stranger youth. When Fitzwater, Stanley, and their numerous fellow-conspirators, and fellow-victims sided with the Duke of York, nearly all England entertained a timid belief in his identity with King Edward's lost son—but those times were changed. Many were glad to soothe their consciences by declaring him an impostor; many so desired to curry favour with Henry; a still greater number either feared to say their thought, or were averse to disturb the tranquillity of their country, by a contest, which could benefit one man alone, and which must entail on them another war like that so lately ended—Abroad, in France, Burgundy, and Scotland, the Prince might be discountenanced from political motives; but he was treated with respect, and spoken of as being the man he named himself: in England it was otherwise—contempt followed hard upon fear, giving birth to derision, the best weapon against the unhappy, which Henry well knew how to wield. He had two motives in this—one was, that by affixing disgrace and scorn to his adversary, he took

away the glitter of his cause, and deterred the young and ambitious from any desire to share in his obloquy. The other was a feeling deeper-rooted in his mind—an intense hatred of the House of York—an exultation in its overthrow and disgrace—a gloating over every circumstance that blotted it with ignominy. If Richard had really been an impostor, Henry had not used half the pains to stigmatise him as low-born—to blast his pride with nicknames, nor have looked forward with the joy he now did, to having him in his power—to the degradation—the mortal stain of infamy he intended to taint him with for ever.

Secure in power—fearless of the result, Henry heard with unfeigned joy that his young rival had landed in England, and was advancing into the interior of the island, at the head of the Cornish insurgents. He himself announced the rising to his nobles. Laughing, he said, “I have tidings for you, gentlemen: a flight of wild geese clad in eagles’ feathers, are ready to pounce upon us. Even now they hover over

our good city of Exeter, frightening the honest burghers with their dissonance."

"Blackheath will witness another victory," said Lord Oxford.

"And my kitchen receive a new scullion," replied the King; "since Lambert Simnel became falconer, our roast meat thinks itself dishonoured at not being spitted by a pretender to my crown; for no Audley heads these fellows, but the King of Rakehells himself, the most noble Perkin, who, to grace the more the unwashed rogues, calls himself Richard the Fourth for the nonce. I have fair hope to see his Majesty this bout, if he whiz not away in a fog, or sink underground like Lord Lovel, to the disappointment of all merry fellows, who love new masks and gaudy mumming."

"Please your Majesty," said the young Lord William Courtney, "it is for the honour of our house that not a stone of Exeter be harmed. With your good leave, my father and myself will gather in haste what force we may: if fortune aid us, we may present your Grace with your new servitor."

“Be it so, my Lord,” replied the King, “and use good dispatch. We ourselves will not tarry: so that, with less harm to all, we may tread out these hasty lighted embers. Above all, let not Duke Perkin escape; it is my dearest wish that he partake our hospitality.”

“Yes,” so ran Henry’s private thoughts; “he must be mine, mine alive, mine to deal with as I list.” With even more care than he put in the mustering his army, he ordered that the whole of the southern sea-coast of England should be guarded; every paltry fishing village had its garrison, which permitted no boat to put off to sea, nor any to land, without the strictest investigation; not content with this, he committed it to the care of his baser favourites to forge some plot which might betray his enemy without a blow into his hands.

“Give me your benison, good Bess,” said the Monarch, with unwonted gaiety of manner; “with daylight I depart on the ungentle errand of encountering your brother Perkin.”

Elizabeth, not less timid than she had ever been, was alarmed by his show of mirth, and by

this appellation bestowed on one she knew to be so near of kin. That very morning she had seen Monina—the enthusiastic Monina, who, confiding in her royal friend's success, visited London to watch over the fate of Elizabeth and her children. The Queen smiled at her offers of service; she felt that no such army could endanger Henry's reign; but she feared for Richard, for her ill-fated brother, who had now entered the net, for whom she felt assured there was no escape. Trembling at her own boldness, she answered the King, "Whoever he may be, you will not destroy him in cold blood?"

"You would have me spare the impostor?" asked Henry. "Spare him who claims your son's throne? By Our Lady of Walsingham, the maternal virtues of the daughter of York deserve high praise."

Elizabeth, dreading more to offend, horror-struck at the idea that her husband should shed her brother's blood, burst into tears. "Silly girl," said Henry, "I am not angry; nay, more, I grant your prayer. Perkin, if not slain by a chance blow, shall live. My word is

passed; trust to it: I neither inquire nor care whether he be the godson or the base brat of the libertine Edward. In either case, my revenge stoops not so low as his paltry life: does this content you?"

"May the saints bless your Grace," said Elizabeth, "you have eased my every fear."

"Remember then that you prove no ingrate," continued the King, "no dupe of report, no traducer of your children's birth. Betray no interest in the knave's downfall, save as he is my enemy. If you display any emotion that awakens a doubt, that this canker rose be aught in your eyes except a base pretender—if you mark any feeling but stern contempt for one so vile—tremble. My vengeance will fall on him; and his blood be on your head."

"Magnanimous Prince!" thought Elizabeth, in bitter scorn, when he had left her: "this is your mercy. You fear! My poor Richard—your sister, a monarch's daughter, is finely taught by this Earl's son. But you will live; then let him do his worst: the Queen of England is not quite a slave; if Henry can bind,

Elizabeth may loose; and the Duke of York laugh in another land at the malice of his enemy."

We return to this Prince, whose lofty spirit was sustained by an aim, an object dearer than a kingdom in his eyes. He arrived before Exeter at the head of seven thousand men. All the discontented in Cornwall and Devonshire joined him. Some of these were younger brothers; some men-at-arms who repined at peace; chiefly they were needy, oppressed men, roused by a sense of wrong, as destitute, but not so hardy as the kerns of Ireland. Still they were many, they were valiant; Exeter was ungarrisoned, unprepared for defence, and there was a possibility that by sudden assault, he might possess himself of the town. With this intent he did not allow his troops time to repose, but at once set on for the attack, endeavouring to scale the lofty walls; unaided by any fitting machinery, scarcely possessed of a single scaling ladder, he was driven back with loss. Foiled but not vanquished, for his heart was set upon this prize, for three days, though unpossessed

of artillery or any warlike engine, he exerted his utmost force to win the city; he contrived rude machinery to cast stones, he planted the ladders himself, he multiplied himself to appear everywhere, flattering, encouraging, leading his troops again and again to the assault. When they found the walls impregnable, he made an attempt on the gates: with fascines and hewed trees he set one of them on fire; his men shouted as they heard the stout oak crackle, and saw it split and crumble, offering a large opening; but the citizens, made desperate, fearful of the ravages this untamed multitude might commit, were true to themselves; they resisted fire by fire, keeping up a fierce blaze within, till with piles of brick and rubbish they had blocked the passage. Richard saw his last hope fail, "This is not the work of the burghers," he cried, "a soldier's skill is here."

"True as my old yard measure!" cried Heron. "It was but last night that my cousin, the Earl of Devon, clambered into the city; he came to the northern wall, where Skelton keeps watch; when my valiant tailor heard the noise,

ran to look for Master Trereife, who, poor fellow, lies cold within the moat. The citizens heard and answered my Cousin the Earl's call; but they were too frightened to let light through the keyhole of a postern; and his lordship, God save him! was obliged to climb the battlements."

"Climb the battlements, noble Captain?" said Richard; "that is, a ladder was let down?"

"It was a stone ladder he scaled, my liege," said Heron; "your Grace may walk up the same. It will scarce budge, seeing that it is the old part of the wall itself."

"Who knows more of this?" asked the Prince.

"I saw the whole," said Skelton; "That is the end. Master Trereife was dead for the nonce, so I came back to lead my men to the fray. There was the Earl, perched like a crow, on the boughs of an old thorn-bush, that grows at the top of the wall. Surely he must have torn his cloak, for the place is thick with all manner of weeds, and rough stones, and brambles. But more than his broad-cloth got a hole; for Clim

of Tregothius handled his bow, and let fly a cloth-yard shaft, which was sticking in his shoulder as he got down the other side."

While the Tailor talked, Richard was proceeding hastily to the spot. It looked tranquil. The old crumbling wall was green with rank grass and tangled weeds. He drew nearer, and then a whole shower of arrows was discharged against him. The Earl had expected that his success would excite their curiosity, and prepared for them, with not the less zeal on account of his own wound. Richard escaped unhurt; but Edmund, who was scantily armed, received an arrow in his side: he fell. That same hour tidings came of the advance of King Henry at the head of a formidable army.

Plantagenet's wound was dressed; it showed signs of danger, and quite disabled him. "My faithful fellows swear to preserve you in safety, Cousin," said Richard; "I must leave you."

"Do you retreat?" asked Edmund.

"No, by my soul! Truly, my hopes have somewhat quailed; yet it is but a lucky blow, and I gain all. I leave you, my friend; but I

will not leave you in doubt and ignorance. Read this paper: it is to enforce its contents—to oblige my haughty foe to lay aside his worst weapon, detraction, that I, against all probability and wisdom, will urge my cause to the last. My kingdom, it is his: my honour he must restore, and I cry him quits. Now you have my secret. Pardon for my poor fellows; pardon, and some alleviation of their cruel lot. For myself, as you will find, I ask little, but I must show no fear, no retreating, to obtain even that. I march forwards, then, towards Taunton: it is a less place than Exeter. The smallest secure port gained, and Henry may grant my boon.”

Plantagenet unfolded the paper, and read these words:

“Richard, legitimate and true son of Edward the Fourth, King of England and France, and Lord of Ireland, to Henry, the reigning Sovereign of these realms. In my infancy I was made a prisoner by an usurping uncle, escaping from his thrawl by aid of the most noble Earl of Lincoln. This uncle, this usurper, you con-

quered, and seized upon his crown. You claim the same by right of Bolingbroke, and strengthen your title through your union with my sister, the Lady Elizabeth. I am poor, and an outcast: you a King. God has destroyed my house, and I submit. But I will not submit to the vile slander that takes from me my name, and brands me a dishonoured man.

“Henry of Richmond, I neither admit nor combat your claim to the crown. Lancaster has many partizans, and the victory is yours. But as Duke of York, I challenge and defy you. I call on you, either by person or by champion, to meet me in the lists, that I may defend my honour, and maintain the right. Let us spare the people's blood. In single combat let my pretensions be set at issue; and my good sword shall cut to pieces the wicked lies and base traditions you have calumniously and falsely forged to my disgrace.

“Body to body, I will meet you or your champion. Name the day, the hour, and the place. With my lance and my sword, to the death I will maintain my birth. If I fall, I ask

that my wife, the Lady Katherine Gordon, be permitted to return to her royal cousin, James of Scotland; that such of my followers as desire it, may be allowed to go beyond seas; that those of your subjects who, goaded into rebellion by your exactions, have taken up arms, receive free pardon and remission of their imposts. If I conquer, I add but one other demand—that you confess to the wide world how foully you have slandered me; revoke the lies you have published, and acknowledge me to all men, the rightful Duke of York.

“If you deny my just demands, be the blood spilt in defence of my honour on your head; England ravaged, your towns destroyed, your realm subject to all the calamities of war; these evils rest with you. I will not sheathe my sword, nor tread one backward step in my undertaking; but as in the lists, so on the dread battle-field, meet your abettors, and conquer or die in defence of my name. Expecting a fitting answer to this just defiance, I bid you heartily farewell.

“RICHARD.

“Written under the walls of Exeter, this twelfth day of September, in the year of our Blessed Lord 1497.”

Plantagenet was deeply affected by his Cousin's gallantry. He sighed, saying, “Tudor has not, will not reply to your challenge?”

“He has not, but he may,” replied Richard. “I have, I know not why, a firm belief that good will come from it. If not, in a few days all will be over. In a very few days you can be conveyed to St. Michael's Mount, where the Queen now is. The Adalid hovers near. Save her, save yourself: save one other, less helpful than my Katherine—be a brother to Monina.”

Richard, erring in his mark, was animated by the most sanguine hopes, to which he was seduced by a constant belief that his life was not near its close, and therefore that his claims would be admitted; as otherwise he had resolved to fall in the assertion of them. Leaving the sick couch of his Cousin, he prepared to advance to Taunton. A conversation meanwhile which he dreamt not of, and would have scorned, had

place in an obscure and gloomy spot in London, fraught with fate to him.

After the base desertion of his royal master, Frion had sailed to England with the other hirelings of Henry; among these was Clifford. Clifford, whose need and whose malice armed him against York's life, but who tried to hide his shame under an assumed appellation. There had always been a false fellowship and a real enmity between Frion and the knight. On his first arrival in Brussels, the secretary looked on him as an interloper; and Clifford, while he used the other, tried to force him into his place as an underling, and to blind him to his own designs. When he betrayed his party, spreading death among the partizans of York, and annihilating the cause, Frion, whose fortunes depended on its success, was unmeasured in his expressions of indignation and contempt. They had worked in direct opposition the year before in Kent; and, when Frion saw the hand of this reprobated man uplifted in midnight assassination, he triumphed in the lowness of his fall. Both were traitors now, both baffled:

Frion looked on Clifford as the worse villain; and Clifford writhed under the familiar impertinence of a menial. They arrived in London; Sir Robert was dismissed with barren thanks, Frion thrown into prison; how far the knight's account gave intimation of the Frenchman's double dealing, and so brought this severity upon him was not known, but for three months this mercurial spirit had languished in confinement.

Addicted to scheming, he had now full leisure to spend his whole thoughts that way; a single, simple plot was too plain for his industrious soul; he wore a whole web of them so intricate, that he sometimes lost the clue himself; not the less did he do his endeavour to put them in action. He intended either to lose Richard or make him; either to be the cause of his overthrowing Henry, or of being overthrown by him; in either case, to reap favour and advantage from the triumphant party.

Sad as is ever a prison-house, it was worse in those days of incivilization: this pen could ill describe the squalid figures and dire visages

that crowded its tumultuous court. Even here Frion reigned umpire; but he broke from a knot of noisy squabblers, who held tattered cards, and appealed to him on a question of fair play, as he saw one enter. Even he a wretch, yet many degrees better than the best of his miserable companions; a scarlet suit, trimmed with gold lace, somewhat tarnished, a cloak of ample folds, but threadbare, a dark plumed bonnet, drawn over his brow, above all, a rapier at his side, distinguished him from the prisoners. "This is kind, Sir Robert," said Frion in his softest manner, "I half feared you were too proud or politic to visit a disgraced man; for these last three days I have despaired of your worship; by my fay! your are right welcome."

Clifford cast a shuddering look around the walls; his eyes were hollow; his cheek sunk; he was the mere shadow of bold Robert. "Few words are best thanks, Master Stephen," he replied; "I am kind to you because the dice are cruel to me; you promise largely, and my wants are no dwarfs. What are your designs?"

"This is no place for parley," said Frion;

“ follow me.” He led the way through several narrow passages to a miserable cell; straw was heaped in one corner for a bed; the walls were dank and tattered; the floor broken and filthy. “ Welcome to my domicile, Sir Knight,” said Frion: whether it were compunction that he had brought him to this, or distrust that the injury would be revenged, Clifford shrunk back and his lips grew livid. “ One would not live here from choice,” said Frion, “ I allow; yet do not grudge me a few moments, it may stead us both.”

“ To the point then,” said the Knight; “ it is not the place, Master Frion; but at the hour of noon—”

“ No excuses, you like the place as ill as I,” said the Frenchman with a bland smile; “ but you are more generous, for I would not dwell an instant’s space here of my own will to gain any man’s salvation. Now, what news from the west? Is it true that the Duke of York is slain? or Exeter taken? both reports are rife. Adam Wicherly and Mat Oldcraft made their escape two days ago, to join the gallant. Mat was

seized again, and says that there were bonfires in Southwark for Richard the Fourth."

Clifford, by a brief detail, answered, and then after some hesitation said, "He is not so low but that the King desires him to be lower: he who could bring him, bound hand and foot, to London, would be a made man. Empson saw Garthe yesterday; and he, who calls me Wiatt, came post to consult with me; but it were hazardous to attempt him; he is ten thousand strong."

"You know me, Sir Robert," said Frion; "there are few things I cannot bring about, so that I have room to ruffle in. I have a plot, King Richard is ours in three days, so one word be said; that word is liberty to me. Take you the reward; I ask no further share in your gains than free leave to set the channel between me and this dingy island."

Each despising, each mistrusting the other, these men conspired for the Prince's fall: like "mousing owls" they hawked at an eagle with too true an aim. York's thoughts were of honour; but through them they were to be

drugged with ignominy and despair. It is melancholy that circumstance and fortune should have power to reach the very shrine of our dearest thoughts; degrading them from their original brightness to a likeness of the foul aspect of the outer world. Richard's free and noble spirit was to become plastic to the touch of such men as the fallen Clifford and crafty Friar. Men, whom he had cast from him as unworthy his regard, could besiege the citadel of his hopes, and garrison it with disgrace; forcing him to occupy himself with ideas as base as those which possessed their own minds. It is the high heart's curse to be obliged to expend its deep and sacred emotions in hatred of, or struggle with things so mean, so very alien to its own aspiring nature.

CHAPTER IX.

Ah! Richard, with the eyes of heavy mind,
I see thy glory, like a shooting star,
Fall to the base earth from the firmament.

SHAKSPEARE.

RICHARD proceeded towards Taunton. Although this was in appearance an advance, his ill-success before Exeter, and report of the large force already brought against them by Sir John Cheney, King Henry's Chamberlain, had so far discouraged his followers as to occasion the desertion of many—so that of the seven thousand he had with him in Devonshire, he retained but three on his arrival near Taunton. These consisted of the original body of insurgents,

Cornishmen, who had proceeded too far to go back, and who, partly in affection for their leader, partly from natural stubbornness, swore to die in the cause. Poor fellows! rusty rapiers, and misshapen lances were their chief arms; a few had bows; others slings; a still greater number their ponderous tools, implements of labour and of peace, to be used now in slaughter. Their very dress displayed at once their unmarital and poverty-stricken state. In all these might be gathered a troop of three hundred foot, not wholly destitute of arms and discipline. The horse were not less at fault; yet among them there were about one hundred tolerably mounted, the riders indeed, but too frequently, disgracing their steeds.

It required all Richard's energy of purpose to hold him back from despair. The bitter sense of degradation visited him in spite of every effort. Had he ever made one of the chivalry of France and Burgundy? Had he run a tilt with James of Scotland, or grasped in knightly brotherhood the mailed hand of Sir Patrick Hamilton? And were these his comrades? unwashed arti-

ficers; ragged and rude peasants; vulgar-tongued traders? He felt, "in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes;" and now to obtain pardon for them, to send them back skaitless to their own homes, was his chief desire, even to the buying of their safety with his own downfall.

After a two days march he arrived near Taunton. On reconnoitring the town, its position and weakness gave him hope that he might carry it, even with his sorry soldiery. To check these thoughts, tidings came, that Sir John Cheney was in close neighbourhood, and Henry himself advancing with a chosen body of men. On the evening of their arrival before the town, a detachment of the enemy entered it, cutting off the last hope of Richard.

The next morning it became evident that the crisis of his fortunes was at hand. The whole country teemed with soldiery. As the troops poured towards a common centre, the array and order of a battle-field became apparent in their operations. A battle, between a very myriad of golden-spurred knights, armed at all points, and

the naked inhabitants of Richard's camp ! call it rather a harvest ; there were the reapers, here the bending corn. When in the north Richard wept over the devastation of the land, he felt that a word of his could counteract the harm—but now, his challenge had proved an airy dagger—substanceless—his resolve to encounter his foe, bringing the unarmed against these iron-suited warriors, grew in his eyes into premeditated murder : his heart heaved in his overcharged breast. To add bitterness to his thoughts there were his companions—O'Water brave in despair ; Astley pale with fear for his lord ; Heron foolish in his unmeaning boasting ; Skelton trembling in every joint, and talking incessantly, apparently to deafen himself to “the small still voice” that whispered terror to his heart.

Richard spent the day among his men. They were prepared to fight ; if needs must, to fall : protestations of sturdy devotion, the overflowing of the rude, manly heart, always affecting, met him at every turn. He was beloved, for he was generous and kind. Often he had exposed his life, when before Exeter, to save some one among

them : when dismayed, he had cheered, when defeated, he had comforted them ; nor did he leave the body of the meanest camp-follower uninterred ; for one of Richard's characteristics was a quick sympathy with his species, and a reverence for all that bore the shape of man. But, while these qualities rendered him dear to all, they inspired him with a severe sense of his duties towards others, and a quick insight into their feelings ; thus increasing to anguish the disquietude that agitated him.

Towards evening he was alone in his tent. At first he was confused by the various aspects, all terrible, that his fortunes assumed. By the caprice of destiny, he who was descended from a line of kings, who had so long been the inhabitant of courts, a Cavalier, honourable in his degree, renowned for his prowess, had not one noble-born partizan near him : not one of his ancient counsellors, to whom he had been used to defer, remained ; he was absolutely alone ; the sense of right and justice in his own heart was all he possessed, to be a beacon-light in this

awful hour, when thousands depended upon his word—yet had he power to save?

An idea, dim at first as a star on the horizon's verge, struggling through vapours, but growing each second brighter and clearer, dawned upon his mind. All then was over! his prophetic soul had proved false in its presumed foreknowledge; defeat, dishonour, disgrace tracked his steps. To lead his troops forth, and then to redeem them at Henry's hand, by the conditionless surrender of himself, was the thought, child of despair and self-devotion, that still struggling with the affections and weaknesses of his nature, presented itself, not yet full fledged, but about to become so.

He had been several times interrupted during his meditations by the arrival of scouts, with various reports of the situation and proceedings of the enemy: Richard, better than these untaught recruits, knew the meaning of the various operations. As if on a map, he saw the stationing of a large and powerful army in expectation of battle; and was aware how incapable he was to cope with their numbers and force. At last

Astley announced the arrival of two men: one was a Fleming, known to Richard as one of Lalayne's men, but the fellow was stupidly drunk; the other was an English peasant. "Please your worship," he said, "I am this man's guide, and must act as his interpreter besides; nothing would serve the spongy fellow but he must swallow ale at every tavern on the way."

"Speak, then," said Richard; "what is the purport of his journey?"

"Please you, Sir, last night three hundred of them came right pop upon us afore we were aware; sore afraid they made us with their tall iron-shafted poles, steel caps, and short swords, calling each one for bread and beer."

"Do you mean," cried the Prince, his eye brightening as he spoke, "that three hundred men, soldiers, armed like yonder fellow, are landed in England?"

So the countryman averred; and that even now they were but at the distance of twenty miles from Richard's encampment. They were still advancing, when the report was spread that

the Prince's forces were dispersed, himself taken prisoner. The rustic drew from the Fleming's pocket a letter, in French, signed by Swartz, a son of him who fell at Stoke, a man in high favour with the Lady Margaret of Burgundy. It said how he had been dispatched by her Grace to his succour; how intelligence of the large army of Henry, and his defeat, had so terrified his men, that they refused to proceed, nay, by the next morning would take their way back to Poole, where they had landed, unless Richard himself came to re-assure them, and to lead them on. Every word of the letter lighted up to forgotten joy young Richard's elastic spirit. With these men to aid him, giving weight and respectability to his powers, he might hope to enforce the conditions of his challenge. All must be decided on the morrow: that very hour he would set forth, to return before morning with these welcome succours.

It was near midnight; his camp was still; the men, in expectation of the morrow's struggle, had retired to repose; their leaders had orders to visit their commander in his tent

at the hour which now the empty hour-glass told was come. Hastily, eagerly, Richard announced the arrival of these German mercenaries; he directed them to accompany him, that with some show of attendance he might present himself to Schwartz. The camp was not to be disturbed; two or three men alone among them were awakened, and ordered to keep guard—in five hours assuredly he must return. In a brief space of time, the troop who were to accompany him, Heron, Skelton, O'Water, and Astley, with some forty more, led their horses to his tent in silence:—there were few lights through all the camp; their honest hearts which beat within slept, while he was awake to succour and save them. This was Richard's last thought, as, mounted on his good steed, he led the way across the dim heath towards Yeovil.

It was such a night as is frequent at the end of September; a warm but furious west-wind tore along the sky, shaking the dark tresses of the trees, and chasing the broad shadows of the clouds across the plains. The moon, at the

beginning of her third quarter, sped through the sky with rapid, silvery wings; now cutting the dark, sea-like ether; now plunging deep amidst the clouds; now buried in utter darkness; anon spreading a broad halo among the thinner woof of vapours. The guide was at the Prince's side; Heron, upon his short sturdy pony, was just behind; Skelton tried to get his tall mare to an even pace with Richard's horse, but she fell back continually: the rushing, howling wind, and rustling trees drowned the clatter of the hoofs. They reached the extreme edge of the common; Richard turned his head—the lights of his little camp burnt dim in the moonshine, its poor apparel of tents was lost in the distance: they entered a dark lane, and lost sight of every trace of it; still they rode fleetly on. Night, and the obscure shapes of night around—holy, blinding, all-seeing night! when we feel the power of the Omnipotent as if immediately in contact with us; when religion fills the soul, and our very fears are unearthly; when familiar images assume an unknown power to thrill our hearts; and the winds and trees

and shapeless clouds, have a voice not their own, to speak of all that we dream or imagine beyond our actual life. Through embowered lanes, whose darkness seemed thick and palpable—over open, moonshiny fields, where the airy chase of clouds careered in dimmer shapes upon the earth—Richard rode forward, fostering newly-awakened hope; glad in the belief that while he saved all who depended on him, he would not prove a mere victim led in tame submission, an unrighteous sacrifice to the Evil Spirit of the World.

CHAPTER X.

Art thou he, traitor ! that with treason vile
Hast slain my men in this unmanly manner,
And now triumphest in the piteous spoil
Of these poor folk ; whose souls with black dishonour
And foul defame do deck thy bloody banner ?
The meed whereof shall shortly be thy shame,
And wretched end which still attendeth on her.
With that himself to battle he did frame ;
So did his forty yeomen which there with him came.

SPENSER.

SOME miles to the east of Yeovil there was a deep stream, whose precipitous banks were covered by a thick underwood that almost concealed the turbid waters, which undermined and bared the twisted and gnarled roots of the various overhanging trees or shrubs. The left

side of the stream was bounded by an abrupt hill, at the foot of which was a narrow pathway; on the green acclivity flourished a beech grove, whose roots were spread in many directions to catch the soil, while their trunks, some almost horizontal, were all fantastically grown, and the fairy tracery of the foliage shed such soft, mellowed, chequered light as must incline the heart of the wanderer beneath the leafy bower, to delicious musings.

Now the moon silvered the trees, and sometimes glimmered on the waters, whose murmurs contended with the wind that sung among the boughs: and was this all? A straggling moonbeam fell on something bright amid the bushes, and a deep voice cried; "Jack of the Wynd, if thou can'st not get to thicker cover, pluck darnels to cover that cursed steel cap of thine."

"Hush!" repeated another lower voice, "Your bawling is worse than his headpiece; you outroar the wind. How high the moon is, and our friends not come;—he will be he here before them."

“ Hark ! a bell ! ”

“ Matins, by the Fiend ! may *he* seize that double-tongued knave ! I much suspect Master Frion ; I know him of old. ”

“ He cannot mar us now, though it be he who made this ambushment. ”

“ Oh, by your leave ! he has the trick of it, and could spring a mine in the broadest way ; he can turn, and twist, and show more faces than a die. He laughed this morn—I know the laugh—there is mischief in ’t. ”

“ But, your Worship, now, what can he do ? ”

“ Do ! darken the moon ; set these trees alive and dancing ; do ! so play the Will o’ the Wisp that the King shall be on Pendennis and the Duke at Greenwich, and each fancy he is within bow-shot of the other ; do ! ask the Devil what is in his compact, for he is but the Merry Andrew of Doctor Frion. Hush ! ”

“ It is he, ” said the other speaker.

A breathless pause ensued ; the wind swept through the trees—another sound—its monotonous recurrence showed that it was a dashing waterfall—and yet again it grew louder.

“ It is he.”

“ No, Gad’s mercy, it comes westward—close, my merry fellows, close, and mind the word ! close, for we have but half our number, and yet he may escape.”

Again the scene sank into silence and darkness: such silence as is nature’s own, whose voice is ever musical; such darkness as the embowering trees and vast island-clouds made, dimming and drinking up the radiance of the moon.

The stillness was broken by the tramp of horses drawing near, men’s voices mingled with the clatter, and now several cavaliers entered the defile; they rode in some disorder, and so straggling, that it was probable that many of their party lagged far behind: the principal horseman had reached midway the ravine, when suddenly a tree, with all its growth of green and tangled boughs, fell right across the path; the clatter of the fall deafened the screech which accompanied it, for one rider was overthrown; it was succeeded by a flight of arrows from concealed archers. “ Ride for your lives,”

cried Richard: but his path was crossed by six horsemen, while, starting from the coppice, a band of near forty men engaged with the van of his troop, who tried to wheel about: some escaped, most fell. With his sword drawn, the Prince rushed at his foremost enemy; it was a mortal struggle, for life and liberty, for hatred and revenge. Richard was the better swordsman, but his horse was blown, and half sunk upon his haunches, when pressed closely by the adversary. Richard saw his danger, and yet his advantage, for his foe, over-eager to press him down, forgot the ward; he rose on his stirrups, and grasped his sword with both hands, when a blow from behind, a coward's blow, from a battle-axe, struck him; it was repeated, and he fell lifeless on the earth.

Sickness, and faintness, and throbbing pain were the first tokens of life that visited his still failing sense; sight and the power of motion seemed to have deserted him, but memory reviving told him that he was a prisoner. Moments were stretched to ages while he strove to collect his sensations; still it was night; the

view of fields and uplands and of the varied moon-lit sky, grew upon his languid senses; he was still on horseback, bound to the animal, and supported on either side by men. As his movements communicated his returning strength, one of these fellows rode to impart the tidings to their leader, while the other stayed to guide his horse; the word "gallop!" was called aloud, and he was urged along at full speed, while the sudden motion almost threw him back into his swoon.

Dawn, which at first seemed to add to the dimness and indistinctness of the landscape, struggling through the clouds, and paling the moon, slowly stole upon them. The Prince became sufficiently alive to make observations; he and his fellow-prisoners were five in number only, their guards were ten; foremost among them was one, whom in whatever guise he could not mistake. Each feeling in Richard's heart stimulated him to abhor that man, yet he pitied him more. Gallant, bold Robin, the frolicksome page, the merry-witted sharer of a thousand pleasures. Time, thou art a thief; how

base a thief—when thou stealest not only our friends, our youth, our hopes, but, besides, our innocence; giving us in the place of light-hearted confidence—guile, distrust, the consciousness of evil deeds. In these thoughts, Richard drew the lowering of the picture, from the fresh and vivid tints that painted his own soul. Clifford's breast had perhaps never been free from the cares of guilt: he had desired honour; he had loved renown; but the early developement of passion and of talent had rendered him even in boyhood, less single-hearted than Richard now.

Clifford was triumphant; he possessed Monina's beloved—the cause of his disgrace—bound, a prisoner and wounded. Why then did pain distort his features, and passion flush his brow? No triumph laughed in his eye, or sat upon his lip. He hated the prince; but he hated and despised himself. He played a dastardly and a villain's part; and shame awaited even success. The notoriety and infamy that attended on him (exaggerated as those things usually are, in his own eyes), made him fear to meet

in the neighbouring villages or towns, any noble cavalier who might recognise him; even if he saw a party of horsemen on the road, he turned out of it, and thus got entangled among bye-paths in an unfrequented part of the country. They continued the same fast career for several hours, till they entered a wild dark forest, where the interminable branches of the old oaks met high-arched over head, and the paths were beset with fern and underwood. The road they took was at first a clear and open glade, but it quickly narrowed, and branched off in various directions; they followed one of its windings, till it abruptly closed: the leader then reined in, and Clifford's voice was heard. Years had elapsed since it had met Richard's ear; the mere, as it were, abstract idea of Clifford was mingled with crime and hate; his voice, his manner, his look were associated with protestations of fidelity; or, dearer still, the intercourse of friendship and youthful gaiety; no wonder that it seemed a voice from the grave to betrayed York. "Halloo!" cried Clifford, "Clim of the Lyn,

my merry man, thou art to track us through the New Forest to Southampton."

"Please your knightship," said a shaggy-headed fellow, "our way is clear, I am at home now: but, by Saint George, we must halt; a thirty miles ride since matins, his fast unbroken, would have made Robin Hood a laggard."

"What would you eat here?" cried Clifford; "a stoup of canary and beef were blessings for the nonce; but we must get out of this accursed wilderness into more Christian neighbourhood, before we find our hostelry."

Clim of the Lyn grinned. "To a poor forester," said he, "the green-wood is a royal inn; vert and venison, your worship, sound more savoury than four smoky walls, and a platter of beef brought in mine host's left hand, while his right already says—'Pay!'"

"They would feed me with mine own venison in way of courtesy, even as the Lion Heart, my namesake and ancestor, was feasted of old; mine—each acre, each rood, and every noble stag that pastures thereon; but I am not so

free as they; and, mine though this wild wood be, I must thank an outlaw ere I dine upon my own."

Thus thought Richard; and at that moment, with his limbs aching through their bondage, and with throbbing temples, liberty in the free forest seemed worth more than a kingdom. The bright sun was high—the sky serene—the merry birds were caroling in the brake—the forest basked in noon-day, while the party wound along the shady path beneath. The languid frame of York revived; at first to pain alone, for memory was serpent-fanged. What bird-lime was this to ensnare the royal eagle! but soon Despair, which had flapped her harpy wings across his face, blinding him, fled away; Hope awoke, and in her train, schemes of escape, freedom, and a renewal of the struggle.

Meanwhile they threaded many a green pathway, and, after another hour's ride, arrived at the opening of a wide grassy dell; a deer, "a stag of ten," leapt from his ferny bed and bounded away; a herd of timid fawns, just visible in the distance, hurried into the thicket;

while many a bird flew from the near sprays. Here the party halted; first they unbitted their steeds, and then dismounted the prisoners, binding them for security's sake to a tree. Richard was spared this degradation, for still he was a prince in Clifford's eyes; and his extreme physical weakness, caused by his blow, made even the close watching him superfluous. He was lifted from his horse, and placed upon the turf, and there left. While some of his guards went to seek and slay their repast, others led their animals to a brook, which murmured near: all were variously and busily employed. Clifford alone remained; he called for water; evidently he was more weary than he chose to own; he took off his casque: his features were ghastly; there was a red streak upon his brow, which was knit as if to endurance, and his lips were white and quivering. Never had crime visited with such torment ill-fated man; he looked a Cain after the murder; the Abel he had killed was his own fair fame—the ancestral honour of his race. How changed from when Richard last saw him, but two years before; his hair was

nearly grey, his eyes hollow, his cheeks fallen in; yet, though thin to emaciation, he had lost that delicacy and elegance of feature that had characterized him. Almost without reflection, forgetting his own position in painful compassion, the Prince exclaimed, "Thou art an unhappy man, Sir Robert!" The knight replied with a ghastly smile, which he meant to be disdainful. "But now," continued Richard, "while thy visor screened thy face, I was on the point of taunting thee as a coward; of defying thee to mortal combat; but thou art miserable, and broken-hearted, and no match for me."

Clifford's eyes glared, his hand was upon his sword's hilt: he recollected himself, replying, "You cannot provoke me, Sir, you are my prisoner."

"Thy victim, Robin; though once saved by thee; but that is past, and there is no return. The blood of Stanley, and of a hundred other martyrs, rolls between us: I conquer my own nature, when even for a moment I look upon their murderer."

The weakness of the prince gave a melancholy softness to his voice and manner; the deep pity he felt for his fallen friend, imparted a seraphic expression to his clear open countenance. Clifford writhed with pain. Clifford, who, though not quick to feel for others, was all sense and sensitiveness for himself: and how often in the world do we see sensibility attributed to individuals, whose show of feeling arises from excessive susceptibility to their own sorrows and injuries! Clifford wished to answer—to go away—he was spell-bound; his cowering look first animated Richard to an effort, which a moment before he would have ridiculed. “Wherefore,” said he, “have you earned all men’s hate, and your own to boot? Are you more honoured and loved than in Brussels? Scorn tracks you in your new career, and worst of all, you despise yourself.”

“By St. Sathanas and his brood!” fiercely burst from the Knight. Then he bit his lip, and was silent.

“Yet, Clifford, son of a noble father, spare yourself this crowning sin. I have heard from

travelled men, that in Heathenesse the unbaptized miscreant is true to him whose hospitality he has shared. There was a time when my eyes brightened when I saw you; when the name of Robin was a benediction to me. You have changed it for the direst curse. Yours are no common crimes. Foremost in the chronicles, your name will stand as a type and symbol of ingratitude and treason, written with the blood of Fitzwater and Stanley. But this is not all. The young and defenceless you destroy: you have stood with uplifted dagger over the couch of a sleeping man."

Clifford had fostered the belief that this vilest act of his life, to which he had been driven rather by fierce revenge than hope of reward, was a secret. A moment before he had advanced with hasty and furious glances towards his enemy. Scarcely had the words passed York's lips, than a kind of paralysis came over him. His knees knocked together: his arms fell nerveless to his side.

"O, man!" continued York, "arouse thy sleeping faculties. Bid the fiend who tortures

thee, Avaunt ! Even now, at the word, he feels his power over thy miserable soul waver. By Him who died on the Cross, I conjure him to leave thee. Say thou 'amen' to my adjuration, and he departs. Cast off the huge burthen of guilt: deliver thy soul into the care of holy men. As thy first act, depart this spot; leave me. It is I who command—Richard of York, thy sovereign. Begone; or kneeling at my feet, seek the grace thou hast so dearly forfeited."

For a moment it almost seemed as if the wretched man were about to obey; but at the moment his groom came from the spring, where he had been watering his horse. The sight of another human being, to witness his degradation, awoke him to phrenzy. He called aloud, "How now, Sirrah! Why, unbit Dragon? Bring him here. I must begone."

"He can't carry your honour a mile," said the fellow.

"A miracle," cried Richard; "you repent, Sir Robert."

"As Lucifer in hell! Look to the prisoner."

Clifford vaulted on his horse: his head was bare, his eyes wild and bloodshot. Clapping spurs to the jaded animal's side, he put him to his speed, and was gone.

“His fit is on him!” cried his attendant, “and what are we to do? He rides a race with the fiend, leaving us to do both their works.” More whisperingly he muttered, “Hold Duke Richard in bonds against his will may I not. He gave me gold in Flanders; he is a King's son and a belted Knight, and I a poor servitor.”

Richard had conceived a faint hope of working on Clifford's manifest remorse, and enlisting him again under the banner of the White Rose. His wonder was great when he saw him flying through the forest with uncovered head and dishevelled hair; the bridle of his horse in the groom's hand, while the wearied animal, spurred to speed, threw up his head, snorting with fear. Not a moment was to be lost, the Prince flew to his comrades in captivity. Already Heron and O'Water had their bonds cut by the sword of which he possessed himself. Heron, in whose

two arms lay his chief strength, and O'Water, at home in a fray, fired with the desire of liberty and life, got speedy hold of battle-axes, and stood at bay. Skelton, the next made free, began to run; but finding his flight was solitary, he secured a bow and arrows, and betook himself to a short, sure aim from behind a tree, while he offered up another sigh to the memory of Tre-reife. Astley threw himself foremost before his master, unarmed. The weapons of their guard were chiefly in a heap, and these, defended by the enfranchised prisoners, were useless to them. Headed by Clifford's groom, who stood in salutary awe of shedding royal blood, a parley commenced. He entreated Richard to submit; he told him that the whole country was in arms against him, his way back to his army beset, the sea-coasts strictly guarded. What then could he do?

“Die, in arms and at liberty. Stand back, sirs; what would you do with me? Your guilty captain has deserted you; is there one of your number who will raise his accursed weapon against a King and a Knight?”

Clym of the Lyn, and another outlawed forester, (Clifford in mustering a troop had gathered together all manner of wild companions) now appeared dragging in a fat buck. Clym grinned when he saw the altered state of things: "Come, my men," he said, "it is not for us to fight King Henry's battles; the more Majesties there be in England, the merrier for us, I trow; and the wider and freer the range of the King of the New Forest. Put up your rapiers, and let us feast like brethren; ye may fall to with your weapons afterwards. Or, if it please your Grace to trust to me, I will lead you where none of the King's men will follow."

"Wilt thou guide me back to Taunton?" asked the Prince.

"Not for my cap full of rose nobles," replied the outlaw; "the way is beset: and trust me your worship's men are scattered far and wide ere this. You are a tall fellow, and I should ill like to see you in their gripe. Be one of us; you shall be King of the Greenwood-shade; and a merrier, freer monarch than he who lives at Westminster."

“Hark!” the word, spoken in a voice of alarm, made the party all ear. There was a distant tramp—every now and then a breaking of bushes—and a whole herd of deer came bounding up the glade in flight. A forester who had rambled further than the rest, rushed back, saying, “Sixty yeomen of the royal guard! They are coming hitherward. Sir Harry de Vere leads them—I know his bright bay horse.”

“Away!”

CHAPTER XI.

He might have dwelt in green forest,
Under the shadows green;
And have kept both him and us at rest,
Out of all trouble and teen.

OLD BALLAD.

IT had been the policy of Richard's captors, to have remained to deliver up their prisoners to a stronger force. But most of them were outlaws by profession, who held the King's men in instinctive horror: these were the first to fly; the panic spread; those who had no cause to fear, fled because they saw others do so. In a moment the sward was cleared of all save the prisoners, who hastily bridled their horses, and followed York down a narrow path into a glen, in an opposite direction from the approaching troop. With what speed they might they made

their way through the forest, penetrating its depths, till they got completely entangled in its intricacies. They proceeded for several hours, but their jaded horses one by one foundered: they were in the most savage part of the wood; there was no beginning nor end to the prospect of knotted trunks, which lifted their vast leafy burthen into the air; here was safety and needful repose. Richard, animated to a sudden effort; could now hardly keep his seat: the state of their animals was imperative for a halt; so here, in a wild brake, they alighted near a running brook; and here O'Water slew a buck, while Astley and Skelton unbridled their horses, and all set about preparing a most needful repast. Evening stole upon them before it was concluded: the slant sun-beams lay in golden glory on the twisted ivy-grown trunks, and bathed the higher foliage in radiance. By the time their appetites were satisfied, Heron and Skelton were discovered to be in a sound sleep; it were as well to follow their example; neither men and horses could proceed without repose; darkness also afforded best safety for travelling,

It was agreed that they should pursue their way at midnight; and so, stretched on the grassy soil, peace and the beauty of nature around them, each gave himself up to a slumber, which, at that extremity of fatigue, needed no courting.

All slept, save the Prince; he lay in a state of feverish disquietude, looking at the sky through the leafy tracery overhead, till night massed and confused every object. Darkest thoughts thronged his mind; loss of honour, desertion of friends, the fate of his poor men: he was to have devoted himself to them, but a stream, driven by a thundering avalanche from its course, had as much power as he to oppose the circumstances that had brought him from his camp near Taunton, to this secluded spot. For an interval he gave himself up to a tumult of miserable ideas, till from the grim troop some assumed a milder aspect, some a brighter hue; and, after long and painful consideration, he arranged such a plan as promised at least to vindicate his own name, and to save the lives of his adherents. Calmed by these thoughts,

soothed to repose by the gentle influence of a south wind, and the sweet monotony of rustling leaves and running water, he sank at last into a dreamless sleep.

A whispering of voices was the first thing that struck his wakening sense: it was quite dark. "Is Master O'Water come back?" asked Heron.

"I am here," replied the Irishman.

"Hast discovered aught?"

"That the night is dark, and the forest wide," replied O'Water; "had we a planet to guide us we might hope to reach its skirts. We are worse off, than the Spanish Admiral on the western sea, for the compass was a star without a cloud to him."

"Saint Mary save us!" said, or rather whined poor Skelton, "our fortunes are slit from top to toe, and no patch-work will make them whole."

"There is hope at the mouth of a culverin," said O'Water, "or at the foot of the gallows, so that a man be true to himself. I have

weathered a worse day, when the Macarthy's swore to revenge themselves on the Roches."

"And by our Lady's grace," interrupted Richard, "shall again, worthy Mayor. My good fellows, fear nothing, I will save you, the ocean cannot be many miles off, for the sun set at our right hand, and blinded our eyes through the day; the wind by its mildness is southerly; we will face it. When once we reach the sea-side, the shore of the free, wide ocean, Tudor's power stops short, and ye are safe; of myself there will then be time to think. Say, shall we proceed now, or give another hour to repose?"

All were eager to start, slowly leading their horses through the tangled paths they could find, the quarter whence the wind blew their only guide: morning found them toiling on, but morning diminished half their labours; and, as the birds twittered, and the east gleamed, their spirits rose to meet and conquer danger. O'Water was in his native element, that of hairbreadth escape and peril. As to Heron and Skelton, they might have flagged, but for Richard; he flattered their pride, raised their

hopes, making weariness and danger a plaything and a jest. As the sun mounted in the sky, their horses showed many a sign of weariness; and, in spite of a store of venison, which the careful Skelton had brought away with him, they needed refreshment: each mile lengthened to ten; each glade grew interminable in their eyes; and the wide forest seemed to possess all England in its extent. Could the Prince's body have conquered his mind, the White Rose had indeed drooped: he was parched with fever, and this, preying on his brain, made him the victim of conflicting thoughts: his heart, his imagination, were in his deserted camp; even fair Katherine, awaiting tidings of him in her far retreat, had not such power to awaken anguish in his heart, as the idea of Henry's vengeance exercised on his faithful, humble friends, whose father and protector he had called himself. There was disease in the fire and rapidity with which these ideas coursed through his mind; with a strong will he overcame them, bent on accomplishing his present purpose, and rescuing these chief rebels, whose

lives were most endangered, before he occupied himself with the safety of the rest.

At length, at noon, his quick ear caught a heavy, distant roar. The trees had begun to be more scattered: they reached the verge of the forest; they were too weary to congratulate each other; before them was a rising ground which bounded their view; some straggling cottages crowned the height; slowly they reached the hill-top, and there beheld stormy ocean, clipping in the circular coast with watery girdle; at a crow's flight it might be a mile distant; a few huts, and a single black boat spotted in one place the else desert beach; a south wind swept the sea, and vast surges broke upon the sands; all looked bleak and deserted.

They stopped at a cottage-door inquiring the road; they heard there was one, which went three miles about, but that the plain at their feet was intersected by wide ditches, which their fagged animals could not leap. Moreover, what hope of putting out to sea, in opposition to the big noisy waves which the wind was hurry-

ing towards shore ! It were safest and best to take a short repose in this obscure village. Heron and Skelton entered the poor inn, while Richard waited on his horse, striving to win him by caresses to taste the food he at first refused. Heron, who was warm-hearted with all his bluster, brought the Prince out a flagon of excellent wine, such, as by some chance, it might be a wreck, the tide had wafted from the opposite coast : Richard was too ill to drink ; but, as he stood, his arm on his poor steed's neck, the creature looked wistfully up in his face, averting his mouth from the proffered grain ; half playfully his master held out to him the wide mouthed flagon, and he drank with such eagerness, that Richard vowed he should have another bottle, and, buying the host's consent with gold, filled a large can from the wine-cask ; the beast drank, and, had he been a Christian man, could not have appeared more refreshed. The Prince, forgetful of his pains, was amusing himself thus, when Skelton, pale and gasping, came from the house, and voiceless through fear, laid one hand on his leader's arm, and with the other

pointed: too soon the hapless fugitive saw to what he called his attention. Along the shore of the sea a moving body was perceptible, approaching towards them from west to east, which soon showed itself to be a troop of horse soldiers. Richard gave speedy order that his friends should assemble and mount, while he continued to watch the proceedings of the enemy.

They were about two hundred strong—they arrived at the huts on the beach; and the Prince perceived that they were making dispositions to leave a part of their number behind. Fifty men were selected, and posted as patrol—the rest then moved forward, still towards the east. By this time the remaining fugitives had mounted, and gathered in one spot—the villagers also were collecting—Skelton's teeth chattered—he asked an old woman if there were any sanctuary near.

“Aye, by our Lady, is there,” replied the dame, “sixteen miles along the coast is the monastery of Beaulieu. A sanctuary for Princes; by the same token that the Lady Margaret,

Saint Henry's Queen, lived safely there in spite of the wicked Yorkists, who would have taken her precious life."

Richard turned quickly round as the woman spoke and heard her words, but again his eyes were attracted to the coast. As the troop were proceeding along the sands, the little knot of horsemen perched upon the hill, caught the attention of a soldier. He rode along the lines, and spoke to the commanding officer; a halt ensued, "We are lost," cried Skelton, "we are taken, Lord! Lord! will they grant us our lives?"

"These trees are tempting, and apt for hanging," said O'Water, with the air of a connoisseur.

"Oh, for Bewley—for Bewley, let us ride!" exclaimed Skelton, longing to go, yet afraid of separating himself from his companions.

Still the Prince watched the movements of the adverse party. Ten men were detached, and began to advance inland—"Oh, dear my Lord," cried Astley, "betake yourself to the forest—there are a thousand ways of baffling

these men. I will meet them, and put them to fault. Ride, for my lady's sake, ride !”

“ Master Astley is a cunning gentleman,” said Skelton; “ our horses are a-weary, and a little craft would help us mightily.”

Still Richard's eyes were fixed on the troopers—the men advanced as far as a broad, deep stream, which intersected the plain; here they hesitated; one of the best mounted leapt across, the others drew back, seeking along the steep, shelving banks for a ford, or a narrowing of the stream. The eyes of the troop on the shore were now turned upon their comrades. “ Our time is come,” cried Richard; “ back to the forest.” One step took them down the other side of the hill, hiding sea and beach and enemy from their eyes, and skreening them also from observation. They soon reached the forest, and entered its shade; and then proceeded along just within its skirts. “ Whither ?” respectfully O'Water asked, after Skelton had for some time been muttering many a hint concerning sanctuary.

“ To Beaulieu,” said the Prince. “ We are

barred out from the ocean—we are beset at land—the little island, ycleped sanctuary, is all that is left to ye. God speed us safely hither.”

Richard's horse was lively and refreshed after his generous draught, but those of the others flagged. The Prince exerted himself to keep up the spirits of all; he rallied Skelton, spoke comfort to Astley, and good hope to Heron. The sturdy apprentice of danger, flight and trouble, O'Water, treated it all as a matter of course—even hanging, if it so chanced, was but a likely accident—the others needed more encouragement. Astley feared for his Lord, even to an appearance of timidity, which, though disinterested, had a bad effect on the others. Heron complained bitterly that his dinner had been left unfinished; while the poor tailor, now fancying that he would run away from all, now fearful of solitary misadventure, kept up a garulous harangue, of which terror was the burthen and the sum. Richard's voice was cheerful, his manner gay; but, placing his hand on Astley, it felt scorching; every moment it required more energy to throw off the clinging lethargy that

fell upon him. It was again evening—a circumstance that had caused them to enter deeper into the forest; and it was to be feared they had lost their way. All were weary—all, save Richard, hungry. The breeze had died away; the air was oppressive, and more and more it felt like a load intolerable to the Prince's burning brow. Night began to close in so very dark, that the horses refused to go forward. Suddenly a roaring sound arose, which was not the sea; and, but that the atmosphere was so still, the wanderers would have said that it was a fierce wind among the trees. Such must it be, for now it came nearer; like living things, the vast giants of the forest tossed their branches furiously; and entire darkness and sudden, pouring rain revealed the tempest, which their leafy prison had before hidden—all was so instantaneous, that it would seem that nature was undergoing some great revulsion in her laws. The Prince's horse snorted and reared, while O'Water's dashed furiously on, striking against a tree, and throwing his rider, from whose lips there escaped a shriek. What would have been the last overflowing drop in the bitter cup to a

weak mind, restored Richard—lassitude and despondency vanished. In an instant he was off his horse at O'Water's side, speaking in his own cheerful, kind voice. "Waste no moment on me," cried the generous Mayor. "My leg is broken—I can go no further—speed you, your Highness, to the sanctuary."

This was the end of hope—the raging storm, the disabled man, dark night, and Richard's resolve not to desert his follower, all were causes of terror and of despair.

A voice in the wood was heard calling aloud; no answer could be returned; it was repeated, and Astley went forward to reconnoitre—even an enemy were help in such disaster, yet Heron and Skelton implored him to remain. Another halloo Richard answered; for he recognized Astley's voice, who in the dark could not find his way back. He came at last, accompanied by a monk—this was heaven's favour revealed; for the holy man was a hermit, and his poor cell was near: poor indeed was it, built with logs, the interstices filled with mud; a bed of dried leaves was nearly all the furniture. The hermit

had gone on first, and lit a torch; as they might, they bore along poor O' Water, and placed him in his agony on the low couch. The hermit looked inquisitively on all the party, neglecting to answer Skelton, who asked for the hundredth time the distance to Beaulieu.

Richard still occupied himself with the Mayor, endeavouring to discover if the limb were broken. "By your leave, your Grace," said the hermit, "I am somewhat of a chirurgeon; I boast of my cures of horses, and have saved a Christian man ere now."

Scarcely did the Prince remember to wonder at the title by which the unknown addressed him. By our Lady's love he besought him to attend to his friend. "Trust me," said the hermit, "I will not fail; but you, my Lord, must not tarry here; the forest is beset with troops: but for night and storm, you would hardly attain Beaulieu in safety. It is but two miles distant: I will guide your Highness thither; and then return to your follower. Have faith in me, my Lord; I have served your royal uncle, and was enlisted under your banner last

year in Kent. I made a shift to escape, and took sanctuary; but the stone walls of a monastery are little better than those of a prison; so I betook me to the woods. Oh, I beseech you, waste no time: I will return to your follower: he is safe till then."

"Direct us, and I will thank you," replied Richard; "but you shall not desert your patient even for a moment."

There was no alternative but to comply: the man gave as clear instructions as he might, and Richard again set forward with his diminished party. They were long entangled by trees; and it was now quite night: the excitement over, the Prince had drooped again. Even this interval was full of peril—a tramp of steeds was heard: they drew up among the trees; a party of horsemen passed; one—could it be the voice of the subtle Friar?—said, "At the end of this glade we shall see the abbey spires. Well I know the same; for when Queen Margaret—"

This speaker was succeeded by a woman's voice: yet greater wonder, she spoke in Spanish, in unforgotten accents—Richard's heart stood

still, as he heard them; but soon both voice and tramp of steeds grew faint; and his brain, becoming more and more bewildered, allowed no thought to enter, save the one fixed there even in delirium. The fugitives continued to linger in this spot until it was probable that the travellers should have arrived. True to the information they had overheard, the forest opened at the end of the glade into a leafy amphitheatre; an avenue was opposite, which led to the abbey gates, whose Gothic spires, buttresses and carved arches, rose above the tufted trees in dark masses. One end of the building was illuminated—that was the church, and the pealing organ stole mournfully on the night, sounding a Miserere; the chaunting of the monks mingled with the harmonious swell, adding that pathos, that touch of solemn, unutterable sentiment, which perhaps no music, save that of the human voice, possesses. Richard's companions were rough-suited, vulgar-minded; but they were Catholic and religious men, and were awe-struck by this voice from heaven reaching them thus in their deso-

lation; a voice promising safety and repose to their harassed, wearied bodies.

A few steps carried them to the very spot; the bell was rung, the gate was opened, sanctuary was claimed and afforded. Skelton sprang forward; the other two hung back; but, on a sign from Richard, they also passed the sacred threshold. "Farewell, my friends," he said, "a short farewell. Astley, I charge you wait for me. Sir priest, close the gate."

The word was said, the order obeyed, Richard was left alone in darkness. "Now for my task—for my poor trusty fellows. The work of murder cannot yet have begun: my life pays for all. Yet awhile bear me up, thou fainting spirit; desert not Richard's breast till his honour be redeemed!"

Vain prayer!—"I must repose," he thought; "it is of no avail to urge nature beyond herself; a few minutes, and I am strong." He dismounted, and, with a sensation of delicious relief, threw himself at his length on the wet grass, pressing the dank herbage to his fevered brow. At first he felt recovered; but in a few

minutes strong spasms shot through his frame; and these yielded to a febleness, that forced him to sink to the ground, when he endeavoured to rise: he forgot his situation, the near abbey, his friends; he forgot wherefore, but he remembered that his presence was required somewhere, and with a resolved effort he rose and staggered towards his horse—he fell. “A little sleep, and I shall be well.” This was his last thought, and he lay in a state between slumber and stupor upon the earth.

CHAPTER XII.

If the dull substance of my flesh were thought,
Injurious distance should not stop my way ;
For then, despite of space, I would be brought
To limits far remote, where thou dost stay.

SHAKSPEARE.

THERE is a terror whose cause is unrevealed even to its victim, which makes the heart beat wildly ; and we ask the voiceless thing—wherefore, when the beauty of the visible universe sickens the aching sense ; when we beseech the winds to comfort us, and we implore the Invisible for relief, which is to speed to us from afar ? We endeavour, in our impotent struggle with the sense of coming evil, to soar beyond the

imprisoning atmosphere of our own identity ; we call upon the stars to speak to us, and would fain believe that mother earth, with inorganic voice, prophecies. Driven on by the mad imaginings of a heart hovering between life and death, we fancy that the visible frame of things is replete with oracles—or is it true? And does air and earth, divined by the sorrow-tutored spirit, possess true auguries? At such dread hour we are forced to listen and believe: nor can we ever afterwards, in common life, forget our miserable initiation into the mysteries of the unexplained laws of our nature. To one thus aware of the misfortune that awaits her, the voice of consolation is a mockery. Yet, even while she knows that the die is cast, she will not acknowledge her intimate persuasion of ill; but sits smiling on any hope brought to her, as a mother on the physician who talks of recovery while her child dies.

The Lady Katherine had yielded to Richard's wishes, because she saw that he really desired her absence. Alone in a monastery, in a distant part.

of Cornwall, she awaited the fatal tidings, which she knew must come at last. She was too clear-sighted not to be aware, that the armed power of a mighty kingdom, such as England, must crush at once his ill-organized revolt. She was prepared for, and ready to meet, all the disasters and humiliations of defeat; but not to be absent from her husband at this crisis. She ordered horses to be kept perpetually in readiness, that she might proceed towards him on the first intimation of change and downfall. She watched from the highest tower of her abode, the arrival of messengers: before she dared open her letters, she read in their faces, what news of Richard? It was a bitter pang to hear that Plantagenet was dangerously wounded; that the Prince had advanced further forward, at the head of his rabble soldiers.

She had no friends, save humble ones, and very few of these: they borrowed their looks from her, yet hoped more than she did. Quickly she was aware of a change in them: they spoke in a low, subdued voice, as if awe-struck by some visitation of destiny. That very day let-

ters arrived from the Prince: they were of ancient date, nor could she lay his terms of endearment and cheering to her heart and be consoled. In the afternoon a torn soiled billet was brought her from Edmund. In spite of his wound, he had dragged himself as far as Launceston, on his way to her. Forced to stop, he sent her tidings of all he knew—Richard's mysterious flight, Henry's bloodless victory, the eagerness the King expressed to learn where she was, and the dispatching of troops in search of her. He besought her to fly. It might be hoped that the Prince had escaped beyond sea, whither she must hasten; or falling into his enemy's hands, she would never see him more.

Perplexed and agitated, knowing that dishonour would result from Richard's strange disappearance, yet persuaded that he had some ulterior view which it behoved her not to thwart, she hesitated what step to take.

An incident occurred to end her uncertainty. Suddenly, in the evening, Monina stood before her. Monina came with the safety-laden Adalid, to bear her to the shores of Burgundy. She

brought the history of the fraud practised upon York, of the ambush laid for his life, of his escape, and the arrival immediately succeeding to hers, of his followers at the Abbey of Beaulieu; how the pawing and trampling of a horse at the gates had brought out the monks, who discovered the hapless Prince senseless on the dark sod. He was carried in, and through her care his name was entered in the sanctuary. She had attended on his sick couch two days and nights, when his first return to reason was to implore her to seek Katherine, to carry her beyond Tudor's power, out of the island prison. Her father's caravel was hovering on the coast. A favouring south-east wind bore her to these shores: she came at his desire: the Adalid was there, and she might sail, not to Burgundy, but even to the spot which harboured Richard. She also could take sanctuary in Beaulieu.

The monastery in which the Duchess of York had taken refuge, was situated on Saint Michael's Mount, not far from the Land's End. The land projects romantically into the sea, forming a little harbour called Mount's Bay. Towards

the land the acclivity is at first gradual, becoming precipitous towards the summit: now, at high water, the tide flows between the rock and the land, but it was in those days connected by a kind of natural, rocky causeway. Towards the sea it is nearly perpendicular. A strong fortress was connected with the church; and a stone lantern was attached to one of the towers of the church. Not far from the castle, in a craggy and almost inaccessible part of the cliff, is situated Saint Michael's Chair, which, on account of its dangerous approach, and the traditions attached to it, became the resort of the pious. Many a legend belonged to this spot. Its thick woods, the hoar appearance of the crags, the wide spread sea, for ever warring against the land, which had thrust itself out into the watery space, usurping a part of its empire, made it singularly grand; while the placid beauty of the little bay formed by the rock, and the picturesque grouping of the trees, the straggling paths, and numerous birds, added every softer beauty to the scene.

Often did Katherine watch the changeful ocean, or turn her eyes to the more grateful

spectacle of umbrageous words; and rifted rock, and seek for peace in the sight of earth's loveliness. All weighed with tenfold heaviness on her foreboding soul. For the first time, they wore to her the aspect of beauty, when now she hoped to leave them. Hopes so soon to fail. A south wind had borne the caravel swiftly into the bay, but the breeze increased to a gale, and even while the ladies were making a few hasty preparations, De Faro had been obliged to slip his moorings, and run out to sea, to escape the danger of being wrecked on a lee shore. With a pang of intense misery, Katherine saw its little hull hurry over the blackening waters, and its single sail lose itself amidst the sea foam. The mariner had even, on anchoring, anticipated a storm; he had informed his daughter of the probability there was, that he should be driven to seek for safety in the open sea; but he promised with the first favourable change of wind to return. When would this come? Fate was in the hour, nor could even Katherine school herself to patience.

Evening shades gathered round them; the

Princess growing each minute, more unquiet and miserable, sought in some kind of activity for relief to her sufferings. "I will go to Saint Michael's Chair," she said; "good spirits for ever hover near the sainted spot; they will hear and carry a fond wife's prayer to the throne of the Eternal."

In silence Monina followed the lady. They were both mountain-bred, and trod lightly along paths, which seemed scarcely to afford footing to a goat. They reached the seat of the rock; they looked over the sea, whose dark surface was made visible by the sheets of foam that covered it; the roar of waves was at their feet. The sun went down blood-red, and, in its dying glories, the crescent moon shewed first pale, then glowing; the thousand stars rushed from among the vast clouds that blotted the sky; and the wind tore fiercely round the crag, and howled among the trees. O, earth, and sea, and sky! Strange mysteries! that look and are so beautiful even in tumult and in storm; did ye feel pain then, when the elements of which ye are composed, battled together? Were ye tortured by the strife of wind and wave, even as the soul

of man when it is the prey of passion? Or were ye unmoved, pain only being the portion of the hearts of the two human beings, who, looking on the commotion, found your wildest rage, calm in comparison with the tempest of fear and grief which had mastery over them.

Sickened by disappointment, impatient of despair, each remained, brooding mutely over their several thoughts.

Poor Katherine; her dearest wish was set upon sharing in all its drear minutiae the fortune of her lord, her gallant knight, her most sweet Richard. He was her husband; he had taken her, timid yet confiding, from the shelter of her father's roof; they had entered the young world of hope and hazard together. Custom, the gentle weaver of soft woman's tenderness, had thrown its silken net over her; his disasters became hers; his wishes, and their defeat, were also hers. She only existed as a part of him; while enthusiastic love made her fondly cling even to the worst that betided, as better in its direst shape than any misnamed good fortune that unlinked them. "My love, my altar-plighted

love ! must I then wake and say no good day to thee ; and sleep, my rest unbenisoned by thy good night ! The simple word, the *we*, that symbolized our common fate, cut in two, each half a nothing, so disjoined."

While Katherine thus struggled with necessity, Monina was given up to patience. The present hour had fulfilled its fear ; her busy thoughts fashioned a thousand plans for his escape, or tremblingly painted a dark futurity. He was a part of her being, though no portion of herself was claimed by him. She was not his, as a lover or a wife, but as a sister might be ; if in this ill world such heart's concord could exist : a sharing of fate and of affection, combined with angelic purity. As easily might she fancy animal life to survive in her body after the soul had fled, as soon imagine that the beating of her heart could continue when the living impulse which quickened its palpitations was still, as that he, her childhood's playfellow, the golden dream of her youth, the shrine at which she had sacrificed that youth, should die, and she live on in the widowed world without him.

The stars glittered over their gentle heads, and the moon went down in the west; fitful, thread-like rays were shed upon the raging sea, whose heady billows foamed and roared at their feet: both these fair gentle creatures remained, careless of the wild wind that swept their limbs, or the spray, which high as they stood, besprent their hair: both young, both lovely, both devoted to one, yet confiding in the reality of virtue and purity, trusting fully each other, the one accepting the heart's sacrifice which the other unreservedly made, they watched for the Adalid; which, a plaything of the waves, was carried afar. Day dawned before they could resolve to quit this spot; then they took refuge in the near monastery; and from its towers, looked out over the sea.

A few anxious hours brought the dreaded consummation of their fears. The ascent of a troop of horse up the steep, told Katherine that she was discovered. Their sudden appearance before her proved that she was a prisoner. For the first time she saw the White and Red Rose entwined; the Earl of Oxford was announced

to her as their leader, and he soon appeared, to claim his prize.

Katherine received him with dignified sweetness; she conquered her ill fate by smiling at its blows, and looked a Queen, as she yielded herself a slave. The watching of the night had all disordered her dress, and deranged her golden tresses; but her wondrous fairness, the soft moulding of her face, her regal throat, and arched open brow, bending over her intelligent, yet soft, blue eyes; her person majestic, even in its slim beauty, were tokens of a spirit, that in destitution must reign over all who approached it.

Her first words, to ease the awe-struck Earl, were an entreaty to be conducted to the King. She showed more earnest desire than he to present herself to her royal victor. In a very few hours, they had descended the Mount; and hastened out of hearing of the roar of the ocean, which had so cruelly deceived her hopes. In her eyes could only be read the mastery she had obtained over her thoughts; no lurking weakness betrayed fear, or even disappointment.— Surely yet she cherished some dear expectation;

yet how, lost to liberty, could she hope to attain it?

But thus we are, while untamed by years. Youth, elastic and bright, disdains to be compelled. When conquered, from its very chains it forges implements for freedom; it alights from one baffled flight, only again to soar on untired wing towards some other aim. Previous defeat is made the bridge to pass the tide to another shore; and, if that break down, its fragments become stepping stones. It will feed upon despair, and call it a medicine which is to renovate its dying hopes.

CHAPTER XIII.

For, when Cymocles saw the foul reproach
 Which him appeached, pricked with noble shame
 And inward grief, he fiercely 'gan approach;
 Resolved to put away that loathly blame,
 Or die with honour and desert of fame.

SPENSER.

AFTER the Prince, by the voyage of Monina, had, as he hoped, provided for the escape and safety of the Lady Katherine, he could not, all weak as he was, remain in repose.

From his early childhood he had been nurtured in the idea that it was his first, chief duty to regain his kingdom; his friends lived for that single object; all other occupation was regarded as impertinent or trifling. On the table of his

ductile boyish mind, that sole intent was deeply engraved by every hand or circumstance. The base-minded disposition of his rival king adorned his cause with a show of use and the name of virtue.

Those were days when every noble-born youth carved honour for himself with his sword; when passes at arms were resorted to whenever real wars did not put weapons in their hands, and men exposed their breasts to sharp-biting steel in wanton sport. Often during his green and budding youth Richard had gloried in the very obstacles set before him; to be cast out and forced to redeem his state, was a brighter destiny than to be lapped in the bosom of guarded royalty. The treason of Clifford and the sacrifice of devoted friends but whetted his ambition; vengeance, the religion of that age, being a sacred duty in his eyes. He had been shaken by Lord Surrey's appeal, but cast the awakened pity off as a debasing weakness.

The painted veil of life was torn. His name had not armed the nobles of his native land, his cause had not been trumpeted with praise

nor crowned by victory; deserted by foreign allies, unsuccessful in Ireland, he had appeared at the head of a rabble army strong only in wrongs and in revenge. Even these he had abandoned, and with nameless hinds taken sanctuary; his story was a fable, his name a jeer; he no longer, so it seemed, existed; for the appellation of Duke of York was to be lost and merged in the disgraceful misnomer affixed to him by the Usurper.

Richard was no whining monk to lament the inevitable, and tamely to await the result. To see an evil was to spur him to seek a remedy: he had given up every expectation of reigning, except such as sprung from his right, and faith in the justice of God. But honour was a more valued treasure; and to his warm heart dearer still was the safety of the poor fellows abandoned by him. On the third day after his arrival at Beaulieu, he arose from his sick couch, donned his armour, and, yet pale and feeble, sent to speak with the cavalier who commanded the party that guarded all egress from the Abbey. With him he held long parley, in conclusion of

which Sir Hugh Luttrell directed three of his followers to be in readiness, and two of his chosen horses to be led to the Abbey gates. Richard took leave of the Abbot; he recommended his poor followers to him, and lightly answered the remonstrance of the holy man, who thought that delirium alone could urge the fugitive to quit the tranquil, sacred spot, where he himself passed his days in quiet, and which held out so secure a protection to the vanquished. His remonstrance was vain; one word weighed more with Richard than a paradise of peace. Infamy, dishonour! No; even if his people were safe—by throwing himself in the self-same peril to which he had apparently exposed them, that stain were effaced. The very gentleman to whom he had surrendered himself, had trespassed on his allegiance to Henry to dissuade him from the fool-hardihood of his adventure. It was a sight of pity to see one so very young walk voluntarily to the sacrifice; and the princely mien and youthful appearance of the self-constituted prisoner, wrought all to compassion and respect. For still this fair White

Rose was in the very opening flower of manhood; he looked, after such variety of fortune, as if evil not only never had, but never could tarnish the brightness of his spirit or of his aspect; illness had a little enfeebled him, without detracting from his youthful beauty, giving rather that softness which made it loveliness, yet painted fairer by his self-immolating resolve,

“ A sweet regard and amiable grace,
Mixed with manly sternness did appear,”

and eagerness withal: for eager he was, even to almost foolish haste, to redeem the lost hours, and establish himself again no runaway.

With fresh joy he addressed himself to retrace his steps to Taunton. Sanctuary and refuge from death—oh! how he trampled on the slavish thought. Death was to him a word, a shadow, a phantom to deride and scorn, not an enemy to grapple with; disgrace was his abhorred foe, and him he thus overthrew. His resolves, inspired by disdain of permitting one taint to blemish his career, were not the expedients of prudence, but the headlong exploit of

daring youth. The iron must indeed have entered our souls, and we be tamed from dear, youthful freedom to age's humble concessions to necessity, before we can bow our head to calumny, smile at the shafts as they rankle in our flesh, and calmly feel that, among the many visitations of evil we undergo, this is one we are compelled to endure.

Thus he, his gentle guide and followers, travelled towards Taunton. In all prudence, from the moment they left sanctuary, Sir Hugh Luttrell ought to have guarded him closely. But even the staid Sir Hugh forgot this duty; rather was Richard the enforcer of this journey, than his guard. Richard it was who at night halted unwillingly, Richard who first cried to horse at morning's dawn; who, in spite of ill-weather, resisted every delay. As they drew near their bourne, the appellation of Perkin first met the Prince's ear; he was unaware that it had ever been applied to him except by Henry's written proclamations. It acted as a galling spur; for he believed, with youth's incapacity of understanding systematized falsehood, that his pre-

sence would put to flight the many coloured web of invention, which his rival had cast over him to mar his truth and obscure his nobility.

After three days they drew near Taunton. The stubble fields, the flowery hedges, the plentiful orchards were passed. From a rising ground they looked upon the walls of the town, and the vacant moor where his camp had stood. Richard halted, saying—"Sir Knight, I will await you here—do you seek your King: say, I come a voluntary sacrifice, to purchase with drops of my royal blood the baser tide of my poor followers. I demand no more—bid him rear the scaffold; let the headsman sharpen the axe, to lop off the topmost bough of Plantagenet. The price I ask, is the despised lives of men, who, but that they loved me, were incapable of merit or of crime in his eyes. For their humble sakes, like my grandfather York, I am prepared to die. If pledge of this be denied me, I still am free. I wear a sword, and will sell my life dearly, though alone."

Sir Hugh Luttrell was perplexed. He knew the stern nature of his royal master, and how

heavily he would visit on him any disappointment in his dearest wish of obtaining possession of his rival's person. The Prince had, during their three days' companionship, gained great power over him: he felt that he was in truth the son of Edward the Fourth, a man he had never loved (for Sir Hugh was a Lancastrian), but one whom he had feared and obeyed as his sovereign. How could he put slavish force upon his gallant offspring? He hesitated, till the Prince demanded—"Wherefore delay—is there aught else that you desire?"

"You pledge your knightly word," said Sir Hugh, "not to desert this spot?"

"Else wherefore am I here?—this is idle. Yet, so to content you, I swear by my vow made under the walls of Granada, by our Lady, and by the blessed Saints, I will abide here."

The knight rode into the town with his followers, leaving young Richard impatient for the hour that was to deliver him to servitude.

Sir Hugh first sought Lord Dawbeny, requesting him to obtain for him instant audience of the King. "His Grace," said the

noble, "is at vespers, or about to attend them."

"I dare not wait till they are said," replied Luttrell, who every minute felt the burthen of responsibility weighing heavier on him.

"Nor I interrupt his Majesty—even now he enters the church."

In haste Sir Hugh crossed the street; and, as the King took the holy water from the chalice, he knelt before him. The few words he spoke painted Henry's face with exulting gladness. "We thank thee, good Sir Hugh," he said, "and will make our thanks apparent. By the mass, thou hast deserved well of us this day! Where hast thou bestowed our counterfeit?"

"Please your Majesty, he awaits your Highness' acceptance of his conditions without the eastern gate."

"You have placed strong guard over him?"

"He pledged his oath to await my return. He is alone."

A dark, angry frown chased all glee from Tudor's brow; bending a stern glance on his erewhile welcome messenger, he commanded:

Lord Wells, his cousin, to take a strong force and to seize this Duke of Runaways. Sir Hugh, timid as he was, interfered: driven by respect for his prisoner, and fear of what might ensue, he tried to enforce York's stipulation. Henry looked on him with scorn, then said, "Truly, Cousin, I have vaunted of a bloodless conquest; so let not the blood of the misborn traitor stain our laurels, nor Sir Luttrell's Duke Perkin shed one precious ruby drop. Say aye to all he asks; for as it seems his demands are as foolish as himself, and need no chaffering. Tell him that his life is safe, but bring him here; set him within our ward and limitation: do this, while we with a *Te Deum* thank our Heavenly Father for his watchful mercies. Sir Hugh, accompany our cousin, and then wend your way whither it please you. We have no pleasure in your presence."

Thus duped, even by his own generous proud spirit, the Duke of York became a prisoner—delivering up his sword, and yielding himself an easy prey to his glad victor. Once, twice, thrice, as he waited the return of Luttrell, it had crossed

his mind, not to fly, his vow being pledged, but to remember that he was now free and unconstrained, and would soon be in other's thrall—when farewell to the aspiring thought, the deed of arms, and to the star of his life, to whose idea, now his purpose was accomplished, he fondly turned!—"Poor Katherine," he whispered, "this is the crown, the fated, fallen youth, the seer foretold." In after-times that scene dwelt on his memory; he called to mind the evening-tide, for the sun was down, and the clouds, lately gold besprent, waxing dun, as the town walls grew high and dark, and the few trees about him waved fitfully in a soft breeze: that wind was free, and could career over the plain; what spell bound the noble knight and stalwart steed, that they coursed not also free as it?

In a few minutes he was a prisoner—and led within those darksome walls. At first, treated with some observance, he was unaware, as is the case in any new position, with whose circumstances and adjuncts we are unacquainted, how utterly he had fallen. He was led to no barred prison; and, for a time, the nobles and knights

who flocked to see him, were no bad exchange for the motley crew he had quitted. But, as if in a dream, he felt gather round him impalpable but adamantine walls—chains hung upon his limbs, not the less heavy, because the iron pierced his soul rather than his flesh. He had been a free man; his name was attended with love and respect, and his aspect commanded the obedience of men. Now, the very appellation given to him was a mortal insult; a stranger seemed to be spoken to when he was addressed, and yet he must answer. He was never alone; and night was the sole suspension from the insulting curiosity of the crowd. He must forego himself; grow an impostor in his own eyes; take on him the shameful name of Perkin: all which native honour, and memory of his Princess bride, made trebly stinging.

To barb the dart came intelligence that the Lady Katherine was a prisoner. King Henry had quitted Taunton, and gone towards Exeter, when, on his arrival there, the Earl of Oxford presented the Scottish Princess to him. Praises of her wondrous beauty became rife,

brought by some of the King's train, returned to Taunton; praises so excessive and warm as could not have been inspired by celestial beauty in adversity, if not egged on by some adventitious stimulant. It was the fashion to speak of her as the Queen of Loveliness; as (for beauty's sake the name belonged to her) the fairest White Rose that ever grew on thorny bush. By this name she was mentioned to York; and it visited his heart as the first gleam of sunshine on his enshadowed misery: dear was the name of the White Rose to the fallen one. It had been his own in fresh and happy days, when first he showed his prowess among the knights of France and Burgundy. Still louder grew the echo of some mighty voice, that gave forth encomium of the prisoner's bride; and the smiles with which some spoke, smiles half of wonder half of mockery, told of some secret charm, which at last was openly commented upon. "Again the King saw the fair one yestermorn; and dallied ere he granted the earnest suit she made, as if he loved so to be entreated."

“The grave King Henry caught in the net of the wanton boy! Oh, this were subject for a ballad for the nonce.”

“Blythe news for gentle Perkin; his wife thrives at court. She takes occasion by too slender a hold, if she raise not her husband from the kitchen to a higher place at court.”

“Now we shall see our Lady, the Queen, jealous of her liege.”

“Our Queen? what midsummer’s dream is this? The White Rose will never flower in our court garden.”

To falsify this assertion came the next day a messenger, with command to convey the noble prisoner with all speed to London; and for the attendance of the Lady Cheney and the Lady Howard, two noble matrons, to wait on the Lady Katherine, who was about to proceed to Westminster. Smiles and whispers were interchanged; and, when to this was added, that as much courtesy should be shewn the counterfeit youth as might not endanger his safe keeping, the light laugh followed; though, as if to meet and overthrow the raillery, it was added,

this was ordered for his royal wife's sake, who was cousin to England's dear ally, the King of Scotland. These idle tales did not reach York's ear: wherever he showed himself, he enforced such personal respect, that there was no likelihood that any conjecture, linked with his lady's name, would be hazarded before him. He was told that the King entertained her royally; and when he heard that she was to be presented to his sister, the Queen Elizabeth, a thrill of joy passed into his heart. His sister! as a boy, he remembered the fair, kind girl, whom he had called his loved and most sweet sister: he knew that she was conscious of his truth, and, though wedded to his rival, loved not her lord. It was a pleasing dream, to fancy these gentle ladies together; to know that, while the one spoke her affection and praise, the other must feel the kindred blood warm in her heart, and proudly, though sadly, acknowledge him her worthy brother.

CHAPTER XIV.

They are noble sufferers. I marvel
 How they'd have looked, had they been victors, that
 With such a constant nobility enforce
 A freedom out of bondage.

TWO NOBLE KINSMEN.

THE vulgar rabble, fond of any sort of show, were greedy of this new one. In all parts the name of the Duke of York, of the counterfeit Perkin, drew a concourse of gazers. The appetite was keenest in London; and many a tawdry masque and mime was put in motion, to deck the streets through which the defeated youth was to pass. Vainly; he entered London at night, and was conducted privately to West-

minster. What strange thing was this? What mark of reality did his very forehead wear, that Henry, so prodigal of contumely on his foes, dared not bring him forward for the public gaze? One man was put in the stocks for a similar remark; and on the following day it was suddenly proclaimed, that Perkin would go in procession from Westminster to Saint Pauls, and back again. A troop of horse at the appointed hour left the Palace: in the midst of them rode a fair young gentleman, whose noble mien and gallant bearing gave lustre to his escort: his sweet aspect, his frank soft smile, and lively but calm manner, had no trace of constraint or debasement. "He is unarmed—is that Perkin? No, the Earl of Warwick—he is a prince sure—yet that is he!" Such murmurs sped around; at some little distance followed another burlesque procession; a poor fellow, a Cornishman, was tied to an ass, his face to the tail, and the beast now proceeding lazily, now driven by sticks, now kicking, now galloping, made an ill-fashioned mirth for the multitude. Whether, as York was not to be

disgraced in his own person, the contumely was to reach him through this poor rogue, or whether the eyes of men were to be drawn from him to the rude mummery which followed, could only be guessed: the last was the effect produced. Richard heard mass at St. Paul's, and returned to Westminster unmolested by insult. It seemed but as if some young noble made short pilgrimage from one city to the other, to accomplish a vow. The visit of ill-fated Warwick to the cathedral, before the battle of Stoke, had more in it of humiliating ostentation.

He returned to the palace of Westminster. A few weeks he spent in mingled curiosity and anxiety concerning his future destiny. It was already accomplished. Modern times could not present any thing more regular and monotonous, than the way of life imposed upon him. It was like the keeping of a lunatic, who, though now sane, might be momentarily expected to break out in some dangerous explosion, rather than the confining of a state-prisoner. Four armed attendants, changed every eight hours, constantly

guarded him, never moving, according to the emphatic language of the old chroniclers, the breadth of a nail from his side. He attended early mass each morning: he was permitted to take one hour's ride on every evening that was not a festival. Two large gloomy chambers, with barred windows, were allotted him. Among his guards, he quickly perceived that the same faces seldom appeared; and the most rigorous silence, or monosyllabic discourse was imposed upon them. Harsher measures were perhaps spared, from respect to his real birth, or his alliance with the King of Scotland: yet greater severity had been less tantalizing. As it was, the corpse in the grass-grown grave was not more bereft of intercourse with the sunny world, than the caged Duke of York. From his windows, he looked upon a deserted court-yard; in his rides, purposely directed to unfrequented spots, he now and then saw a few human beings—such name could be hardly bestowed on his stony-faced, stony-hearted guards.

Richard was the very soul of sympathy; he could muse for hours in solitude, but it must be

upon dear argument, that had for its subject the pleasures, interests or affections of others. He could not entertain a heartless intercourse. Wherever he saw the human countenance, he beheld a fellow-creature; and, duped a thousand times, and a thousand times deceived, "still he must love." To spend the hour in sportive talk; fondly to interchange the gentle offices of domestic life; to meet peril and endure misery with others; to give away himself, and then return to his inner being; laden like a bee with gathered sweets; to pile up in his store-house memory, the treasured honey of friendship and love, and then away to nestle in the bosom of his own dear flower, and drink up more, or gaily to career the golden fields; such was his nature: and now—this was worse than loneliness; this commune with the mutes of office; to be checked by low-born men; to feel that he must obey the beck of an hireling. A month, interspersed with hopes of change, he had endured the degradation; now he began to meditate escape. Yet he paused. Where was Katherine? where his many zealous friends?

The Lady Katherine was in an apartment of the Palace, whose arched and fretted roof, and thick buttresses, were well adapted to impart a feeling of comfortable seclusion from the rough elements without. The dulness of dark November was gladdened by a huge wood fire. The little Prince of Wales was narrating some strange story of fairyland; and bluff Harry was setting two dogs to quarrel, and then beating his favourite for not conquering, which seeing, his sister Margaret drew the animal from him to console and caress it. The gentle Queen bent over her embroidery. Listening she was to her favourite Arthur, interrupting him with playful questions and exclamations, while Katherine now kindly attended to the boy, now turned anxiously at every sound. She rose at last: "Surely vespers are ringing from the Abbey. My lord the King promised to see me before vespers."

"My lord the King is very gracious to you, sweet one," said Elizabeth."

"Methinks by nature he is gracious," replied the Princess; "at least, I have ever found him so."

Surely the shackles of state are very heavy, or ere this he would have granted my prayer, which he has listened to so oft indulgently."

The Queen smiled faintly, and again pursued her work with seeming earnestness. Was it jealousy that dimmed the silk of her growing rosebud by a tear—or what name shall we give to the feeling?—envy we may not call it, she was too sweetly good—which now whispered, "Even he, the cold, the stern, is kind to her: my brother loves her passionately; and many a lance has been broken for her. Happy girl; happy in adversity; while I, England's miserable Queen, am forgotten even by my fellow-prisoner of Sheriff Hutton, poor Warwick! he might have been my refuge: for the rest, how hard and rocky seem all human hearts to me." Her tears now flowed fast. Katherine saw them: she approached her, saying, "Dear and royal lady, none should weep, methinks, but only I, whose mate is caged and kept away; none sigh but poor Kate, whose more than life hangs on state policy; or is it for *him* these tears are shed?"

Still Elizabeth wept. Accustomed to the ex-

cess of self-restraint, timid, schooled to patience, but with the proud fiery spirit of a Plantagenet, tamed, not dead within her, she could be silent, but not speak by halves. The very natural vivacity of her nature made her disdain not to have her will, when once it was awaked. She struggled against her rising feeling; she strove to suppress her emotion; but at last she spoke; and once again, after the ten years that had elapsed since her mother's imprisonment, truth was imaged by her words. To none could she have addressed herself better. The life of the Scottish Princess had been spent in administering balm to wounded minds: the same soft eloquence, the same persuasive counsels, that took the sting of remorse from her royal cousin's conscience, was spent upon the long-hidden sorrows of the neglected wife, the humbled woman. From her own sensitive mind she culled the knowledge which taught her where and how peace and resignation were to be found. The piety that mingled with her talk was the religion of love; her philosophy was mere love; and it was the spirit of love, now kindling the

balmy atmosphere of charity to many, now concentrated in one point, but ever ready to soothe human suffering with its soft influence, that dwelt upon her lips, and modulated her silver voice. Elizabeth felt as if she had wandered long in a wolf-haunted wild, now suddenly changed to a fairy demesne, fresh and beautiful as poet's dream. Timidly she feared to set her untaught feet within the angel-guarded precincts. The first effect of her new friend's eloquence was to make her speak. After years of silence, to utter her very inner thoughts, her woman's fears, her repinings, her aversions, her lost hopes and affections crushed: she spent her bitterest words; but thus it was as if she emptied a silver chalice of its gall, to be refilled by Katherine with heavenly dew.

The weeks of baffled expectation grew into months. It is a dreary portion of our existence, when we set our hearts upon an object which recedes as we approach, and yet entices us on. The king's courtesy and smiles, and evident pleasure in her society, gave birth to warm hopes in the bosom of the princess. She had

asked to share her husband's prison; she had besought to be permitted to see him; it seemed, from Henry's vague but consolatory answers, that to-morrow she would receive even more than her desires. The disappointment of the morrow, which she lamented bitterly at first, then grew into the root, whence fresh hopes sprung again, to be felled by the cruel axe, again to shoot forth: the sickening sensation of despair crept over her sometimes; her very struggles to master it enfeebled her; and yet she did conquer all but the hard purposes of the tyrant. Now a messenger was to be despatched to Scotland; now he expected one thence; now an embassy from Burgundy: he implored her patience, and talked back the smiles into her saddened countenance. He was almost sincere at first, not in his excuses, but in his desire to please her at any sacrifice; but this disinterested wish grew soon into a mere grasping at self-gratification. In a little while he hoped she would be persuaded how vain it was to expect that he should set free so dangerous a rival; and yet he did not choose to extinguish all her

anticipations; for perhaps then she would desire to return to her native country; and Henry would have sacrificed much to keep her where he could command her society. Thus he encouraged her friendship with the Queen, though he wondered how one so wise, so full of reflection and reason as Katherine, could love his feeble-minded wife.

The King underrated the talents of Elizabeth. This hapless woman had perceived that contention was useless; she therefore conceded every thing without a struggle. Her energies, spent upon endurance, made her real strength of mind seem tameness; but Katherine read with clearer eyes. We are all and each of us riddles, when unknown one to the other. The plain map of human powers and purposes, helps us not at all to thread the labyrinth each individual presents in his involution of feelings, desires and capacities; and we must resemble, in quickness of feeling, instinctive sympathy, and warm benevolence, the lovely daughter of Huntley, before we can hope to judge rightly of the good and virtuous among our fellow-creatures.

The strangest sight of all was to see Henry act a lover's part. At first he was wholly subdued,

“ So easy is, t' appease the stormy wind
Of malice, in the calm of pleasant womankind.”

Even generosity and magnanimity, disguises he sometimes wore the better to conceal his inborn littleness of soul, almost possessed him; for a moment he forgot his base exultation in crushing a foe, and for a moment dwelt with genuine pleasure on the reflection, that it was in his power to gratify her every wish, and to heap benefits on one so lovely and so true. When first she was presented to him, in all the calm majesty of her self-conquering mood; her stainless loveliness had such effect, that surely he could deny her nothing; and when she asked that no foul dishonour should be put upon her Lord, he granted almost before she asked: his expressions of service and care were heartfelt; and she lost every fear as she listened. When custom, which, with man, is the devourer of holy enthusiasm, changed his purer feelings into something he dared not name, he continued to

manifest the same feelings, which had bested him so well at first; and to angle with his prey. Though he scarcely knew what he wished, for a thousand worldly motives sufficed to check any dishonourable approach, it was enough that she was there; that, when she saw him, her countenance lighted up with pleasure; that with the sweetest grace she addressed her entreaties to his ear; not in abrupt demands, but in such earnest prayer, such yielding again, to return with another and another argument; that often he thought, even if he had wished to concede, he would hold out a little longer, that still her sweet voice might address him, still her stately neck be bent imploring as she fixed her blue eyes on him.

It was very long before the artless girl suspected that he had any other intent, but to consent at last to her supplications. As it was as easy to him to lure her on with a greater as a lesser hope, she even fancied that, under certain restrictions, York's freedom might be restored; and that with him, in some remote country, she might bless Tudor as a generous adversary.

Elizabeth was afraid to discover the truth to her, for she also dreaded to lose her, and was afraid that, on the failure of her hopes, she would seek to return to Scotland; or at least seclude herself from her husband's jailor. Monina first awoke her to the truth. Monina, who had been to Brussels, to consult with the Duchess Margaret and Lady Brampton, and who came back full of projects for her friend's escape, heard with amazement and scorn the false lures held out by Henry; she impatiently put aside every inducement for delay, and with rash, but determined zeal, framed many a scheme for communicating with him, and contriving means for his flight.

He himself—the chained eagle—was sick at heart. No word—no breath—no hope! Had all forgotten him? Was he, yet living, erased from the lists of memory? Cut off from the beloved beings in whom he had confided, through their own act—no longer a part of their thoughts, their lives, themselves? Stood he alone in this miserable world, allied to it by hate only—the hate borne to him by his foe?

Such gloomy misgivings were so alien to his nature, that they visited him as cruel iron torture visits soft human flesh. That she—the life of his life, should be false and cold! Each friend forgetful—Monina—Plantagenet—all—all! Oh, to stretch his quivering frame upon burning coals, had been to slumber on a bed of roses, in comparison with the agony these thoughts administered. His calmer moods, when he believed that, though tardy, they were true, were scarcely less painful. Then the real state of things grew more galling: the bluntness or silence of his keepers; their imperturbable or rude resistance to his questions; the certainty that, if one answered graciously—that one he should see no more. Often he felt as if he could not endure his present position one hour longer. Fits of hope, meditations on escape, chequered his days; so that all was not so dark—but the transition from one emotion to another, each to end in blank despair, tasked his mercurial soul. Patience died within him—he might perish in the attempt, but he would be free.

Urged by Monina, by her own awakening fears,

and, above all, by the keen burning desire of her heart, the Lady Katherine became very importunate with the crafty monarch to be permitted an interview with her lord. Henry was in no mood to grant her request: the thousand designs he had meditated to disgrace his victim, he had given up for her sake, because he would not refuse himself the pleasure of seeing her, and feared to behold aversion and horror mark an aspect hitherto all smiles towards him. The same fear, nurtured by the expressions of her tender affection, made him hesitate, ere he should endeavour to convince her that she had misallied herself to an impostor. Indeed, when at last he ventured to frame a speech bearing such a meaning, her answer told him, that, if he could have changed the royal York into base-born Perkin, the young and innocent wife would still cling to him to whom she had pledged her vows; to whom she had given herself; whose own, in heaven's and her own eyes, she unalienably was. But now Henry, grown more callous as time elapsed, coined a new scheme, vile as his own soul: he resolved, by acting on

her woman's fears, tenderness and weakness, to make her the instrument of persuading her lord to some damning confession, that must stamp him as a deceiver for ever. This bright project animated him to fresh endeavours to please, and her with fresh hopes; yet he paused a little before he sought to execute it.

Winter crept on into spring, and spring ripened into summer, and still the various actors in this tragic drama were spending their lives, their every thought and heart's pulsation, on one object. Richard had latterly received intimation that he would be permitted an interview with his beloved White Rose; and a week or two more were patiently endured with this expectation. Katherine each day believed, that on the morrow she should see him, whom now she conversed with only in her nightly dreams, and woke each morning to find him fled with them. Some change approached: Henry's promises became more clear in their expression; his assertions more peremptory; he would at last name his conditions, which she was to communicate to her lord; even Elizabeth

almost dared to hope. Mónica alone, deeply impressed with a belief in the malice of Tudor, was incredulous, and reluctantly yielded to Katherine's request to suspend yet a little while her plots.

Whitsuntide arrived, and Henry at last would decide. This festival was to be spent at Shene: thither the royal family went, accompanied by the Princess, who vanquished her disappointment at further delay, not to appear an ingrate to the fair-promising King. Indeed, in the secure hope she cherished of again seeing him who was her earthly paradise, she smiled through the very heart-gushing tears expectation caused to flow. On Whit Sunday she awoke, resolving to discard the heavy load of anticipated evil that involuntarily weighed at her heart. She knelt at mass, and fervently strove to resign her dearest wishes to the direction of her God; and yet that she should see him again soon—oh! how very soon—filled her with such dizzy rapture, that her orisons were forgot midway—remembered, and turned to thanksgivings—till she recollected that still her hope was unfulfilled;

and fear awoke, and with tears and prayer she again strove to ease her agitated heart.

That very night a thunder-storm roused her from slumber: with those unexplained emotions, which, in fateful periods, make so large a portion of our lives, she felt as if every clap spoke audibly some annunciation which she could not interpret: as if every lurid flash were sent to disclose a sight which yet she could not see. At length the rain ceased, the thunder grew distant, the lightning faint; a load was lifted from her soul; she slept, with the firm belief that on the morrow tidings, not all evil, would be brought from London.

Some tidings surely came. What they were she was not permitted to know. For the first time Henry made her a real prisoner; she was carefully guarded, and none were allowed to speak to her. Overwrought by her expectations, this seemed a frightful cruelty; and yet, where caution was used, there must be fear: her—his enemy feared—then good had occurred. She dared not permit her imagination to picture

forth the thing which yet was for ever present to it; and, while all else were amazed to hear that York had escaped and fled, his lovely, anxious wife, cut off from communication with all, knew only that she alone was ignorant of what she would have given her life to learn.

CHAPTER XV.

Thou, God of winds, that reignest in the seas,
 That reignest also in the continent,
 At last blow up some gentle gale of ease,
 The which may bring my ship, ere it be rent,
 Unto the gladsome port of her intent.

SPENSER.

DURING the winter and the untoward late spring, Richard had endured his captivity. The warm happy summer season, calling all nature to a jubilee, at first saddened, then animated him to contrive new projects of escape. The promised interview with his White Rose tempted him to delay; while an inner spirit rebelled even against this dear enticement, and bade him fly.

On the evening of the ninth of June, he was

permitted to attend vespers in a secluded chapel of Westminster Abbey. During the short passage from the Palace to the Cathedral, it seemed to him as if a new life were awake every where; an unknown power, on the eve of liberating him. Never before had he prayed so fervently for freedom: the pealing organ, the dim arched venerable vault above, acted as stimulants to his roused and eager soul; he stood tiptoe, as on the eve of the accomplishment of his desire.

A deep and awful sound suddenly shook the building; a glaring, lurid flash, filled with strange brilliancy the long, dark aisle. A clap of thunder, loud, and swiftly repeated, reverberated along the heavens; the shrill scream of women answered the mighty voice. The priest who read the service, saw his sacred book glared on by so keen a flash, as blinded him to the dimmer light that succeeded. Every being in the church sank on their knees, crossing themselves, and striving to repeat their paternosters and aves; while Richard stood fearless, enjoying the elemental roar, exulting in the peal, the flash, the tempestuous havock, as powers yet rebellious

to his conqueror. Freedom was victorious in the skiey plains; there was freedom in the careering clouds, freedom in the sheeted lightning, freedom in the cataract of sound that tore its way along. On his poor heart, sick of captivity and enforced obedience, the sweet word liberty hung as a spell: every bird and tiny fly he had envied as being free; how much more things more powerful, the chainless destructions of nature. The voice of God speaking in his own consecrated abode was terrible to all; soothing to himself alone. He walked to the southern entrance of the edifice to mark the splashing shower, as it ploughed the stones: two of his keepers remained on their knees, paralyzed by terror; the two others followed trembling. At that moment a louder, a far, far louder clap burst right above them, succeeding so instantaneously the blinding flash, that, while every object was wrapt in flame, the pavement and fretted roof of the Abbey shook with the sound. A bolt had fallen; the priest at the altar was struck: with mingled horror and curiosity one of York's remaining

guards rushed towards the spot; the only remaining one was kneeling in an agony of terror. York stood on the threshold of the porch; he advanced a few steps beyond; a new fear possessed the fellow. "He will escape!—halloo!—James!—Martin!" The very words imparted the thought to the Prince, who filled erewhile with wonder and religious awe, had forgotten his own sad plight. He turned to the man, who was doubtful whether to rush into the chapel for his comrades, or singly to seize his prisoner—his dagger was drawn. "Put up that foolish steel," said York, "it cannot harm one whom God calls to freedom—listen, he speaks;—farewell!" The lightning again flashed: with blue and forked flame it ran along the blade of the weapon raised against him; with a shriek the man dashed it to the earth. Richard was already out of sight.

The rain poured in torrents: it came down in continuous cataracts from the eaves of the houses. On this sunny festival few had remained at home; and those, terror-stricken now, were on their knees: no creature was

in the streets as the fugitive sped on, ignorant whither he should go. London was a vast, unknown labyrinth to him: as well as he could divine, he directed his flight eastward, and that with such velocity, that he might compete with a horse in full career. If any saw him, as thus with winged heels he flew along, they did not wonder that a person should hasten to shelter out of the storm. It was of slight regard to him, that rain and hail ploughed the earth, and continual thunder echoed through the sky; that alone and friendless he fled through the streets of his victor's chief city. His exulting heart, his light, glad spirit told him that he was free; if for a few minutes only, he would joyfully purchase with his life those few minutes' emancipation from his frightful thralldom. No words could speak, no thought image the supreme gladness of that moment.

Meanwhile, dark night, aided by the thick clouds which still poured down torrents of rain, had crept over the dim twilight, and began to imbarrier with doubt the path of the rejoicing fugitive. He found at last, that the lines of houses

receded, and that he was in an open space, in the midst of which rose a gigantic shadow, stretching itself in stillness and vastness on the summit of the rising ground before him;—it was the Cathedral of St. Paul's. Now, cloaked by the dark and inclement night, he began to reflect on his actual situation: London might swarm with his partizans, but he knew not where to find one. Probably all those who were occupied by his fate resided in Westminster, whence he had precipitately fled; whither assuredly he would not return. These reflections perplexed him, but in no way allayed his transport at finding himself free; he felt that if he wandered to the wide fields, and died of hunger there, it were bliss enough to see the sky “unclouded by his dungeon roof;” to behold the woods, the flowers, and the dancing waves; nor be mocked with man's shape, when those who wore it had sold man's dearest privilege—that of allowing his actions to wait upon the free impulses of his heart.

Still therefore he hurried along, and finally became completely bewildered in some swampy,

low fields, intersected by wide ditches. The night was pitchy dark; nor was there any clue afforded him, by which he could even guess whether he might not be returning on his path. Suddenly a small ray of light threaded the gloom; it went and came, and at last remained stationary. With wavering will and irregular steps the Prince proceeded towards it; for he would rather have died where he stood, than discover himself, so to fall again into captivity. Once or twice he lost sight of this tiny earth-star, which evidently shone through some low casement; and, as at last he caught sight of the solitary miserable hut where it was sphered, the recollection of his former asylum, of ill-fated Jane Shore's penurious dwelling, flashed across him; with speedy, reassured pace he hurried on, leaping a ditch that obstructed his path, careless of every physical obstacle, when the malice of man was no longer to be apprehended. "Poor Jane!" he ejaculated: and again he reflected with some wonder that, in every adversity, women had been his resource and support; their energies, their undying devotion and enthusiasm, were

the armour and weapons with which he had defended himself from and attacked fortune. Even one so fallen and so low as poor Jane Shore, was, through the might of fidelity and affection, of more avail than all his doughty partizans, who, in the hour of need, were scattered and forgetful.

The low-roofed cot was before him unmissaken. The crevice whence the light emanated was too small to admit his enquiring glance; amid the driving, pattering rain he fancied that he distinguished voices within; but, with a boldness which bade him fear nothing, he lifted the latch, and beheld in truth a sight of wonder;—Monina, with a shriek started from her seat; she folded him with wild joy in her fair arms, and then, blushing and trembling, threw herself on the neck of Lady Brampton; and Jane herself rose from her couch of straw, more wan, more emaciated than ever;—yet even over her sad pale face a smile wandered, shewing in yet more ghastly hues the ruin it illumined.

Questions, ejaculations, wonder and delight, burst from every lip: “He is here to our wish;

the means of escape are secured, and he is here ! Oh, dearest Lady Brampton, do not the blessed angels guard him?" Monina spoke, and her soft luminous eyes were fixed on him, as if not daring to believe the vision; it was not the chastened delight of age, but the burning, ardent joy of a young heart, who had but one thought, one desire, and that about to be accomplished; her flushed cheeks betokened her rapture: "I have repined, despaired, almost blasphemed; yet he is here: how good is Almighty God! Listen, dear my Lord, how wondrously opportune your arrival is: Lady Brampton will tell you all. Oh, this new miracle is the blessed Virgin's own achievement—you are free!"

Scarcely less animated, the zealous lady detailed the circumstances that united so favourably for him. She had been for some time at Brussels with the Duchess Margaret, who was more grieved than could be imagined at the capture of her beloved nephew. She lived in a state of terror on his account. That his life was awhile spared, availed little to pacify her; the midnight murders and prison-assassinations, so rife

during the wars of York and Lancaster were present to her imagination. She exhausted every device, every bribe, to gain partizans for him to achieve his freedom. Among others, most liberal of promises, was the false Clifford. After Richard had escaped from him in the New Forest, he fell in with Frion, whose double plot being defeated, he strove to capture and accuse the accomplice whom, in fact, he had deceived. The Knight fled; he escaped to the Low Countries; and by a glozing tale easily gained the ear of the Duchess. Lost in England, perhaps he wished to rebuild his fallen fortunes; aided by her munificence, perhaps he prepared some new treachery; however it might be, he was trusted, and was the soul of the present enterprise. De Faro's vessel, refitted and well manned, was now anchored in the mouth of the Thames. Clifford undertook the task of foisting some creature of his own, or even himself, disguised, of undertaking the part of one of Richard's keepers, when he doubted not to be able to secure his flight.

With her usual vivacity Lady Brampton gave

this account; but no explanations on her part could dissipate the horror York felt at the name of Clifford, or inspire him with any thing but distrust of his intentions. Monina, before silenced by her sanguine associates, now gave expression to the terror and abhorrence his interference occasioned; she had come, exposing herself to a thousand perils and pains, merely that she might watch over his acts, and awaken her too credulous friends to a knowledge of his duplicity. But the danger was past; before Clifford could know that he had escaped, York might reach the Adalid.

Almost as an answering echo to these words there was a sound of hurrying steps. "It is he: the traitor comes. Oh, bar the door!" There was no bar, no mode of securing this dwelling of penury; three women alone were his guard: Monina, pale and trembling; Lady Brampton, endeavouring to reassure her; while Richard stood forward, his gaze fixed on the opening door, whose latch was already touched, resolved to meet, with perfect show of frank reliance and intrepidity, the intruders.

Sir Robert Clifford entered. Confusion, attempted boldness, and, last, sullen malice painted his aspect when he beheld the Prince. He was much changed, and looked almost an old man; his dark and profuse hair was grizzled; his grey eyes hollow; and his dress, though that of a cavalier, exhibited signs of habitual neglect. His person, always slight, had been redeemed from insignificance by its exquisite grace and elegance; every trace of this was flown; and his haggard countenance and diminutive size made even York scarcely credit that this was indeed the gay, reckless Robin. His resolve had been already made; he addressed him kindly, saying, "Sir Robert, I hear that you are willing to renew to me your broken vows: may you hereafter keep them more faithfully."

Clifford muttered a few words; he looked towards the door, as if desirous of escape; he struggled with shame, guilt, and some other emotion. As soon as a consultation began as to the means to be adopted for the Prince to reach the sea in safety, he conquered himself,

entering into it with spirit and zeal. The plan he proposed was crafty, his own part in it the principal. He spoke of disguising the prince as a female attendant on Monina; of his and O'Water's accompanying them along the river banks as soon as daylight.

“And wherefore not now? Or rather, wherefore even now do we not hasten to the Thames, and seize a boat?”

“Because,” said Clifford, interrupting Monina, “his Highness's flight is already known; a line of boats intersects the Thames below London Bridge; and lower still every craft is on the alert.”

Each one exchanged looks; the Knight continued: “You all distrust me, and I wonder not. I am in your power now; here are my unarmed hands; even a woman may bind them. Go forth yourselves; seek the path to the sea: before an hour elapses the Duke will be again a prisoner. You may in this wild spot plant your daggers in my heart to avenge, but that will not save him; for I have no power here. But set me free, confide to my care, and, by the

God that made me, he walks the deck of the Adalid ere the setting sun. I could tell you how this can be, and ye would not the more trust me, if I spoke of such alliance with, such power over, the rogues and vagabonds of this saintly city; as enables me to move strange engines to execute my will; even if you credited me, you would disdain that your hero should owe his life to such base means. Be it as you will: believe me; and I pledge my life that his Grace will ride the dancing waves beyond King Henry's reach to-morrow night."

"I accept the pledge," replied York, who had eyed him earnestly as he spoke. "I commit myself to your care; act speedily, without fear of balk or suspicion on my part."

Clifford's lips curled into a triumphant smile; because again he was trusted, or because again he would betray, it was hard to divine. "I must beseech your patience in the first place," said Sir Robert: "I cannot get the fitting disguises during the night."

"Night is no more," replied Richard, throwing open the casement; and the dusky room was

illuminated by the day. In the east there was a very fountain of light, which, welling up, flooded the flecked and broken clouds with rosy hues: the stars were gone; a soft azure peeped between the breaking vapours; the morning air was deliciously fresh; the birds chirped; a distant watch-dog barked. Otherwise all was silent; bland security seemed to walk the earth.

“I will go seek the needful dresses,” said Clifford. “Your Grace will await my return, even though my stay, lengthened beyond my expectation, give some reason for the distrust I read in every eye.”

“It is but too natural,” said the Prince, “that my kind friends should suspect you; for myself, I have said the word; I place myself in your hands: half measures were of no avail. If indeed you are a traitor, bring Tudor’s hirelings here to seize their prey. I cannot fear; I will not doubt; and, if in my soul any suspicion lurk, my actions shall not be guided by it. Go; let your return be speedy or otherwise, I await you here.”

Scarcely had the door closed, when Monina,

whose eyes had been fixed on Clifford's countenance during the whole scene, exclaimed:—"This moment is our own! Fly, my Prince; trust me—I know that bad man; if he find you here when he returns, you are lost."

"Hist!" Jane spoke the word, and a dead silence fell upon the anxious band. The steps of a horse were heard: Monina flew to the casement. "It is our faith Irish friend, my Lord; it is O'Water." The door was opened; and each one crowded round the visitant. He uttered a "By the mischief!" which sounded like a benediction, when he saw the Duke of York, adding, "all is well, all in readiness; I left the Adalid, after the storm yester evening, in safe anchorage."

"Oh yes, safety," cried the enthusiastic Spaniard; "safety or death! Trust not false Clifford—seize the fleeting, precious opportunity.—O'Water's horse—"

"Is blown," said Richard, "he cannot carry me."

"And the ways strangely beset," said the Mayor. "Just now I saw a young gentleman

seized, much to his annoyance, by some patrol. He bribed dearly, but they would not listen—the whole country is alarmed.”

“I will wait for Clifford,” continued York; “and trust in providence. Some kind friend only bestow a dagger on me: I would not be taken like an unarmed girl.”

“A tramp of steeds—they are coming, Clifford guides them hither; we are lost!” cried Lady Brampton.

“Oh, fly—fly—my liege,” said O’Water, “expose not these women to the assault. Poor Rose Blanche can yet bear you fast and far.”

The sound as of a troop of horse neared. The Prince saw O’Water blocking up the casement, and then draw his sword. Monina, wild with agony, fell at his feet:—“Fly, my Lord, fly for the Lady Katherine’s sake: fly for mine own: must I see you die? I, who have lived—alas! how vainly. Lady Brampton—beseech—command—he must fly. O, they will be here—to seize, to murder him!”

“Here is my dagger, my lord,” said O’Water coolly;—“Defend yourself—meanwhile—now

at our last hour—for surely it is come, Our Lady recommend us to God's holy grace.”

The gallop of a troop grew yet more distinct; Richard looked round: Jane was kneeling, her face buried in her hands: Lady Brampton pale, but resolved, was ready to sacrifice the life she had spent for him. O'Water had resigned himself to the final act of a life of peril, sealed in his blood. The lovely Spaniard alone lost all her self-possession; tears streaming from her uplifted eyes; her arms twined round his knees: to fly—fly! was the only thought she could express. “I yield,” said York; “throw open the door.” O'Water's horse had been led within the hut; he vaulted on his back; he placed the dagger in his belt. “That way,” Lady Brampton cried, “it leads to the river's side below.”

A scream from Monina followed his swift departure. “He perishes—he betrays us!” cried O'Water. Richard galloped on; not across the fields away from town, but right into danger; there, whence the troop was certainly approaching. He was lost to view on the instant,

in a straggling lane which stretched out half across the field. A moment after, coming from the other side, unobserved till in the hut, Clifford entered alone. He bore a large bundle; his steps were cautious and swift; his look told that he was intent only on the object of his errand. "I have succeeded beyond my hope. My life on it all is safe. Where have ye hid the Prince? Oh, prithee, fear not, nor trifle: each second is precious."

The confused, wondering looks of all present replied to him. Clifford laughed, a short, sarcastic, bitter laugh: and then, with a fiendlike expression of face, he said, "The Prince has done well; and ye have all done well: and his Grace will thank you anon. Ye grudge me, maybe, the Duchess Margaret's bounty. She promised largely; 'twere pity to share the boon among so many. Now mark the event!"

These words displayed the baseness of his motive, yet vouched for his sincerity. He threw a menacing glance around, and then quitted the hut; and with hurried pace hastened across the field towards the town.

CHAPTER XVI.

Full many a glorious morning have I seen,
Flatter the mountain tops with sovereign eye,
Kissing with golden face the meadows green;
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy;
Anon, permit the basest clouds to ride
With ugly rack on his celestial face,

SHAKSPEARE.

THE Duke of York, urged so earnestly to fly, felt that to do so was to save himself at the expense of his friends, on whom Henry's vengeance would severely fall, when he found himself balked of his victim. He consented to leave Jane Shore's abode, with the resolve not of effecting his escape, but of securing, by surrendering himself, the safety of his defenceless adherents united under her lowly roof. He

directed his course as he believed into the very centre of danger, entering the narrow straggling street whence the sound of the advance of the troop of horse had been heard. He entered the lane; it was empty. The ominous sounds were still sharp and near; it seemed as if they were in some street parallel to the one which he threaded. He turned at right angles into another, to reach the spot; again he turned, led by the baffling noise, in another direction. It was just four in the morning; there were but few abroad so early: he saw a monk gliding stealthily from under a dark archway, and a poor fellow, who looked as if he had slept beneath heaven's roof, and had not wherewithal to break his fast. True to the kindly instincts of his nature, Richard felt at his girdle for his purse; it was long since he had possessed the smallest coin of his adversary's realm. "I, a Prince!" his feeling had been more bitter, but that his fingers came in contact with his dagger's hilt, and the conviction of freedom burst with fresh delight upon him. Free, even in spite of his intents; for the

tramp which had gradually grown fainter, was dying absolutely away.

They had probably reached the hut; thither he must return. It was no easy thing to find his way to it, he had so entangled himself in the narrow lanes, and wretched assemblages of dwellings huddled together on the outskirts of London. At length they opened before him; there was the dingy field, there the hut, standing in quiet beneath the rays of the morning sun, of the opening, summer, soft, sweet day. He was quickly at its threshold; he entered. Jane was within, alone, seated in her wooden chair; her hands clasped; her pale face sunk on her bosom: big tears were gathering in her eyes, and rolling down her faded cheeks unheeded. Jane's aspect was usually so marble (a miraculous chiseling of resigned hopelessness,) her mien so unbending, that these signs of emotion struck the Prince with wonder and compassion.

He knelt at her feet and pressed her thin, but little hand to his lips, saying, "Mother, where are my friends? Mother, bless me before I go."

She dried the drops raining from her eyes, saying in a voice that expressed how occupied she was by her own emotion, "I am a sinful woman; well do these tones remind me of the same: those days are quite, quite gone, even from the memory of all; but once they were as the present hour, when so he spoke, and I was lost, and still am lost; for, through hunger, and cold and shame, I love, and cannot quite repent. Will the hour ever come when I can regret that once I was happy."

Many, many sad years had passed since words like these had dropped from poor Jane's lips; her feelings fed on her, possessed her; but she had been mute; overflowing now, her accent was calm; she spoke as if she was unaware that her thoughts framed speech, and that she had an auditor.

"You have paid a dear penalty, and are surely forgiven," said York, striving in his compassion to find the words that might be balm to her.

"Prince," she continued, "some time ago,— I have lost all date; now the chasm seems

nought, now a long eternity; it was when my poor heart knew nothing of love save its strong necessity and its delight; methought I would see your father's fair offspring, for I loved them for his sake. At the festival of Easter I placed myself near the gate of the royal chapel: I thought to be unseen. The happy Queen held her sons each by the hand; you were then, as now, his image, a little sportive blue-eyed cherub. The Prince of Wales had his mother's look; her large, dark eye, her soft, rosy mouth, her queenlike brow; her beauty which had won Edward, her chaste sweetness, which had made her his wife; my presence, I thought to conceal it better, was revealed. The Queen turned her face away; there was anguish surely written there, for the Prince darted on me a look of such withering scorn—yes, even he—his stainless, fair brow was knit, his bright angel's face clouded: the look sunk in my heart. Edward's beautiful, pure child reproved me, hated me: for three days I felt that I would never see the deluder more: you do not share his ab-

horrence; you do not hate the pale ghost of Shore's wife?"

Such clinging to the past, such living memory of what was so absolutely dead to all except herself, awe-struck the Prince, "We are all sinners in the eye of God," he said, "but thy faults are surely forgiven thee, gentle one; thy tears have washed every trace away, and my brother, my poor murdered Edward, now blesses thee. Alas! would that I could soften this last stage of your suffering earthly life."

"'Tis better as it is," she answered hastily, "once I felt disgrace and privation keenly; perhaps that may atone. Now, would it were more bitter, that so I might wean myself from him whose very memory will lose my soul. You are good, and Our Lady will requite you. Now, listen, the damsel Monina and Master O'Water have gone towards Southend: your remaining friends watch for you here. I shall see them again to-night: meanwhile it is to be feared that Clifford plots vengeance, and you must fly; you must at every hazard go towards Southend. Beyond the town, on the lone sands, there is a

wooden cross, telling where one escaped dreadful peril through the might of Him who died on it for us; the smallest sign, the waving of your cap, will be watched for by the Adalid, they will send a boat to take you on board. Now swiftly depart: your life hangs on the hour; this purse will furnish you with means: Lady Brampton left it for you."

"Bless me, mother, ere I go."

"Can a sinner's blessing avail? fear rather that God' punish me through you, where my heart is garnered. Oh, may he indeed bless and save you; and I shall die in peace."

He kissed her withered hand and was gone; she dragged her failing limbs to the casement; he was already lost among the straggling tenements that bounded her field.

Again York was flying from his foe; again studying to elude pursuit, with how different feelings. Before, his flight was peremptory, for the preservation of others, while he blindly longed to deliver himself to slavery. Now liberty, for its own dear sake, was worth the world to him. He had tasted to its dregs the misery of captivity, and loathed the very name; whatever might betide,

he would never submit willingly again to one hour's thralldom. He felt his dagger's hilt; he drew it from the sheath, and eyed its polished blade with gladness; for eight months he had been living unarmed, under the perpetual keeping of armed jailors; what wonder that he looked on this sharp steel as the key to set him free from every ill.

He got clear of the town: the open sky, the expanse of summer—adorned earth was before him. It was the “leafy month of June;” the far spread corn-fields were getting yellow; and on their weltering surface played the shadows of a few clouds, relics of the last night's storm: the sun was bright, the breeze balmy, already the very foot-paths were dry, and scarcely from its inmost leaves did any tree shake moisture: yet there was a freshness in the scene, a lightness in the air, the gift of tempest. The dazzling sun rose higher, and each island-vapour sunk on the horizon; the garish light clothed all things; the lazy shadows crept up around the objects which occasioned them, while both object and its shade seemed to bask in the sunshine.

Now over head the meeting boughs of trees scarce sufficed to shield him from the penetrating glare; now in the open path he was wholly exposed to it, as his diminished shadow clung almost to the horse's hoofs. The birds twittered above; the lazy mare was stretched basking, while her colt gambled around; each slight thing spoke of the voluptuous indolence of summer, and the wafted scent of hay, or gummy exhalation of evergreens, distilled by the warm noon, fed with languid sweets every delighted sense. If paradise be ever of this world it now embowered Richard. All was yet insecure; his White Rose was far; but nature showered such extasy on him that his whole being was given up to her influence. Latterly the form of man had been ever before his aching sight under the aspect of an enemy; the absence of every fellow-creature he hailed with gladness—free and alone, alone and free! With the pertinacious dwelling on one idea, which is characteristic of overpowering feeling, this combination of words and ideas haunted his thoughts, fell from his lips, and made a part of the soul-subduing rapture now his portion.

May it be added—we must address the unhappy and imaginative, who *know* that the future is so linked with the present as to have an influence over that present, when we add—that the intensity of the liberated Prince's feelings was wrought even to pain, by its being the last time that unalloyed delight would ever be his—the last when he might feel himself the nursling of nature, allied by the bond of enjoyment to all her offspring. He knew not this himself. Immersed in the sense of all that he now possessed, he did not pause to reflect whether this were the last time, that he, the victim of chance and change, might ever see the waving corn or shadowy trees, or hear the caroling birds, or the murmurs of the fresh free brooks gurgling round some pendant bough or jutting stone; but that so it was to be, gave poignancy to his pleasure, a dreamy halo to the whole scene.

It would appear, in spite of the precautions taken by his enemy, that the north bank of the Thames had been neglected. Richard met with no impediment in his progress. Whenever he caught a sight of the river, he perceived unusual

signs of activity. Little wherries shot hither and thither on its surface, revealing to him that keen and vigilant search was being made. Meanwhile he rode on, the broad stream for his guide, avoiding towns and villages. He ventured to purchase bread at a lone farmhouse—he alighted in a little grove beside a rivulet, to rest his tired horse, and to refresh himself. The summer heat recalled Andalusia to his mind; and scenes and objects quite forgotten, wandered from their oblivious recesses back into his recollection. “My happy boyhood! My beloved Spain! Why did I leave the land of beauty, where with Monina—?” The idea of her whose fate was so inextricably linked with his, of his bride, who had quitted her palace home to share his adversity, reproached him. But his imagination could not fix itself on bleak Scotland, its wild haunts, its capricious king: it could only build another bower among the folds of the mountains of Andalusia, and place his White Rose therein.

Again he pursued his way. The slant beams of the descending sun were yet more sultry, but it sank swiftly down; now casting gigantic

shadows, bathing the tree tops in golden dew, and flooding the clouds with splendour ; now it was gone, and the landscape faded into a brown mellow tint. The birds' last chirp was given, the beetle winged her noisy flight, the congregated rooks had flown to the belfry of the church, or to their nests in the church-yard trees ; silence and twilight crept up from the sedgy banks of the river, leaving the pale water alone to reflect the struggling farewell of day. In a little time the banks shelved away, giving place to broad yellow sand. Richard ventured to bend his course along the beach. There was a bark upon the dim tide, whose progress he had watched since noon, whose flapping or full sails were the signs by which he foretold the prosperity of his destined voyage. Now with swelling canvas it walked swiftly over the water.

He passed South End. He perceived the tall rough-hewn cross. Two figures were seated at its foot. He hesitated, but quickly perceiving that one was a woman, he proceeded onwards. The stars were out ; the very west was dim ; in the offing there was a vessel, whose build and

tall slender masts he thought he recognized. The broad expanse of calm ocean was there, whose waves broke in tiny ripples on the beach. He reached the cross. O'Water and Monina saw his approach. The Irishman welcomed him boisterously, in his own language. Monina uttered a benediction in Spanish. The scene was solitary and secure. Every danger was past. There floated the caravel which ensured escape, and the stars alone witnessed their flight. Monina gave her white veil to O'Water, who contrived to elevate it on the cross. In a few moments the splash of oars was heard, and a dark speck floated towards them on the waves, from the direction of the Adalid. "They come; you are safe," murmured his lovely friend; "this hour repays for all." The boat was already on the beach: a seaman leaped on shore. "The White English Rose," he said: such was the word agreed upon; and, hailing it, Monina hurried to embark with her companions. The little boat was pushed from shore. O'Water gave vent to his delight in a shout, that resembled a

yell. Monina crept close to the Duke of York: that he was safe was a truth so dear, so new, that she forgot every thing, save her wish to assure herself again and again that so it was. At that moment of triumph, something like sadness invaded Richard: he had quitted the land for which his friends had bled, and he had suffered,—for ever: he had left his Katherine there, where all was arrayed against him for his destruction. This was safety; but it was the overthrow of every childish dream, every youthful vision; it put the seal of ineffectual nothingness on his every manhood's act.

While each, occupied by their peculiar reveries, were aware only that they were being borne onwards on the waves, a smaller boat shot athwart their bows, and a voice exclaimed in Spanish, "Desdichados, estais allá?"

"My father—we are betrayed," Monina cried: and she threw her arms round Richard, as if by such frail guard to shelter him—another stronger grasp was upon his arm as he endeavoured to rise—a voice, husky from passion, yet still

Clifford's voice, muttered, "The day is mine—you—she—all are mine!"

"Thou fell traitor! What ho! De Faro to the rescue!" already the mariner had thrown a grappling iron—already the Adalid was in motion towards them. Clifford strove to draw his sword. York was upon him in mortal struggle; his keen dagger, unsheathed, uplifted; the boat lurched—his arm descended, but half the force of the intended blow was lost, while both fell overboard. The crew rushed to the boat's side to loosen the grappling iron, which concluded its upset. De Faro, who stood high on the bows of his own boat, had seized Monina. Now another larger skiff was seen approaching, "To your oars!" cried the Moor: they shot swiftly towards the Adalid, and while the sea became alive with craft, they reached the little caravel, who turning her canvass to the wind, dropped down the tide.

CHAPTER XVII.

“ Your love and pity doth th’ impression fill,
Which vulgar scandal stamped upon my brow ;
For what care I who calls me well or ill,
So you o’erskreen my bad—my good allow ?

SHAKSPEARE.

ON the fourth day of her restraint, imprisonment it could hardly be called, Lady Katherine was brought up to Westminster ; she was carried in a close litter, and no familiar face or accustomed attendant came near. Her anxiety, her anguish weighed intolerably upon her—sleep had not visited her eyes ; she lived in perpetual terror that each sound was freighted with fatal tidings. It was in vain that even reason bade her nourish hope—a stronger power than reason

dwelt in her heart, turning all its yearnings to despair.

As she approached the city she thought each step must reveal the truth of what she was to suffer. Lo! the palace was entered—her habitual chamber—silence and solitude alone manifested that some change was even now in its effect; she had no tears to spend upon her grief; her changing colour, her quickened respiration shewed that every faculty was possessed by terror. Two hours, each minute stretched to a long long century, two hours passed, when a little scroll was delivered to her; it came from the Queen, and contained these words, “ My White Rose! the tempest has past—leaving, alas, devastation: we yet remain to each other—come—”

These expressions spoke the worst to her fear-stricken mind—no subsequent agony might ever compare to the pang, that made her very life-blood pause in her failing heart at that moment. Had the present and the future become void for him, to whom she was wedded heart and soul?—wedded in youth, when our hopes stretch

themselves not merely to to-day and to-morrow, but even to eternity. In this state of human woe, we do not describe the disheartening and carking sorrows of those who lag on life's high way—but the swift, poignant, intolerable agonies of the young, to whom the aspiration for happiness is a condition of being. The Queen had been accustomed to witness and admire Katherine's self-command and quiet fortitude; she was awe-struck on beholding the devastation of the last four days, and the expression of wild horror on her soft features. With feminine instinct she read her heart, her first words were, "Sweet love, he lives—and he will live—his life is spared, and we may still hope."

Tears at last flowed from the mourner's eyes, as she asked, "What then will be his fate?—Shall I ever see him more?"

"How can we guess the hidden purposes of the King? By your enforced solitude you have escaped his scowling brow, his violence, his sarcasms; again he smiles. My gentle Kate, my sweet courageous sufferer, hitherto we have played with the lion's fangs — they are un-

sheathed in anger now—let us prepare: he will be here anon.”

The Princess desired not to exhibit too humiliating a spectacle of misery to her cruel foe—she checked her weeping—she endeavoured to forget the burning agony that tortured her beating heart. “Let him but live; let me but once more see him;” and the unbidden tears flowed again. The King soon broke in upon them; his look was haughty even to insolence: an expression of vulgar triumph was in his eyes, that baffled the eager scanning gaze of the hapless Princess. He said, scoffingly, (and was it in man’s nature, or only in Henry’s, to look on the sad, but lovely countenance of his victim, and to mock her woe?) “We congratulate you, Lady, on the return of the gentle Perkin to our good city of Westminster—do not weep—he is in safe keeping now, very safe—it is no feathered shoe our Mercury wears this day.”

“Holy Virgin!” cried Katherine, “your Grace does not surely mean—”

“Fear not—he lives,” continued Henry, his scorn growing more bitter as he spoke; “he

lives, and shall live, till the White Rose acknowledge on what base stock she is grafted, or he twist the rope by some new sleight. Is Perkin's honoured dame satisfied?"

"Oh no, no, no; some covert meaning you have; in pity for a woman speak." The agony her countenance expressed, was the mute echo of the frightful idea that convulsed her frame. "Oh, let me see him! you have tormented me too cruelly; even if my worst fears prove true, he suffers not more than I; and can it be that the young limbs of my own loved Richard are put to torture!"

Elizabeth grew ashy white; the King listened with a sarcastic smile, saying, "I had not thought of that; you are a silly girl to mention such things."

"I do not believe you," exclaimed the Princess, "your looks bely your words; let me but see him afar off, let me catch a glimpse of my princely love—is he in the Tower?"

"Neither the Tower, nor any royal palace detains your lord; he is taking the air, pleasantly I hope, in the high places of our town. To

finish this war of words, and your incredulity, will you visit your prince of plotters, and behold him on whom the King of Scotland bestowed your virgin hand ? ”

“ See him ! Oh, even in death to clasp his decaying limbs were better than this absence ! ”

An indefinable expression passed over Henry’s countenance as he replied, “ Be it as you wish ; you must hasten, for in an hour the occasion will be past ; it is but a few steps ; you shall be attended. ”

At last she was to see him ; this assurance filled and satisfied her ; there was no place in her heart for any other thought, sinister as were her torturer’s looks. Her eyes grew bright, her cheek resumed its vermeil tint, never had she looked more lovely ; it was a dazzling beauty ; one of those ineffable expressions, which, unless language could express music, or painting image fire, it is in vain to attempt to describe : an irradiation of love passed over her countenance ; her form ; something like it dwells in Raphael’s Madonna’s and Guido’s Angel of Annunciation,—Henry was awestruck, yet did

not falter in his purpose; he let the bright angel go forth on her mission of good and love, to meet on her way a sight fiends might rejoice over. Human life and human nature are, alas! a dread, inexplicable web of suffering and of infliction.

In Westminster, in sight of the Abbey where his ancestors had been crowned kings, the spectacle intended to be so opprobrious, was set forth. Henry, in his angry fear on his escape, in his exultation at his re-capture, forgot the soft tyranny of Katherine's looks; or rather he despised himself for the obedience he had yielded to them; and, in the true spirit of baseness, was glad to revenge on her the ill effects that had resulted to him through his involuntary enslavement. It was a triumph to him to disgrace the object of her care, for he was ill read, his understanding affording him no key to the unknown language, in that illuminated page of the history of feminine excellence, which tells the delight she feels in exhausting her treasures of devoted love on the fallen, because they need it most: he believed, that to present her hus-

band to her, under the very infliction of ignominy, would turn her affection to cold disdain—he permitted her to go. Attended by some of the body guard and a gentleman usher, she hastened through the courts of the palace into the open square: there was assembled a crowd of common people, hushed to universal silence: at a distance from the centre some were talking aloud, and the name of “Perkin” was the burthen of their speech; but pity stilled those nearest to the spot, towards which, to the surprise and horror of all, she hastened. The crowd instinctively closed to bar her advance; and, when forced to make way, in spite of the despotism of the times, the word “Shame” burst from the lips of many, especially the women. She was agitated by the obstacles, by the numerous uncourtly eyes turned on her; still she went on, and soon saw—

She understood not what—a kind of wooden machine in which the lord of her heart sat. There had been a time when pride and royal majesty of soul had shed such grandeur over York, that, when exposed as a show, he had

excited reverence, not scoffing. Now he was evidently labouring under great physical suffering; his brow was streaked with mortal paleness, his cheeks were colourless; his fair hair fell in disordered ringlets round his youthful but wan countenance; he leaned his head against the side of the machine; his eyes were half shut; it was not shame, but suffering, that weighed upon their lids, and diffused an air of languor and pain over his whole person. Katherine hastened towards him, she knelt on the unworthy earth at his side, she kissed his chained hands. "You are ill, my love; my ever dear Richard, what has happened? for you are very ill."

Rouzed by such music from the lethargy that oppressed him, yet still overcome, he replied, "Yes; and I do believe that all will soon end, and that I am stricken to the death."

She grew pale; she called him cruel; asking him how he could dream of leaving her, who was a part of him, alone in the desolate world. "Because," he answered with a faint smile, "the world is kind to all, save me. No taint,

dear love, attaches itself to your name; no ill will mark your fate, when you are no longer linked to such a thing as I. God has spoken, and told me that this earth is no dwelling for one, who, from his cradle to this last shame, has been fortune's step-child, and her despised toy. How often have I been dragged to the utmost verge of life: I have felt indignation, anger, despair: now I am resigned; I feel the hand of the Mighty One on me, and I bow to it. In very truth, I am subdued; I sleep away the weary hours, and death will end them all."

With every expression of tenderness, Katherine endeavoured to recall him to life and to herself. She spoke of another escape, which it would be her care to achieve, of the solitude, of the paradise of love they would enjoy together. "My poor girl," he replied, "teach your young heart to seek these blessings apart from me: I were the very wretch Tudor stigmatizes me, could I live under a memory like this. Forget me, my White Rose; paint with gaudier colours the sickly emblem of my fortunes; forget, that, duped by some strange

forgery, you were wedded to — Perkin Warbeck.”

In spite of himself large drops gathered in his eyes, swelling the downcast lids, and then stealing down. Katherine kissed them from his cheek: a thousand times more noble, royal, godlike, she called him; had not the best and worthiest suffered ignominious punishment; even our blessed Lord himself? His own acknowledgment alone could disgrace him; he must recal the false words wrung from his agony; this last vile act of his enemy must awaken each sovereign on his throne to indignation; each would see in him a mirror of what might befall themselves, if fallen. James, her royal Cousin, roused by her, should resent the stigma affixed to his kinsman.”

“ For your own sake, sweet, do so; my soul dying within me is alive again with indignation, to think that your plighted wedded love is he, who is exposed to contumely; but for that, methinks, I would call myself by that wretched name I dared pronounce, so that the annals of the House of York escaped this stain: yet even

thus I seem more closely allied to them; for violent death, treachery, and ill have waited on each descendant of Mortimer; my grandfather bore a paper crown in shame upon his kingly brow."

He was interrupted by the officer, who unclosed the instrument of disgrace. Richard, weak and failing, was assisted to rise; Katherine supported him as a young mother her feeble offspring; she twined her arms round him as his prop, and, in spite of misery, was enraptured once again to see, to hear, to touch him from whom she had been absent so long. "This is not well; it must not be; his Majesty will be much displeased," said the chief of the guard, witnessing the compassion her tender care inspired, "You must return to the palace, Lady."

"One little step," pleaded Katherine; "if I should never see him more, how should I curse your cruelty! I will not speak, as I half thought I would to these good people, to tell them that they may well honour him a Princess loves: drag me not away yet—one more good bye!—"

farewell, noble York, Kate's only love;—we meet again; this parting is but mockery.”

She wept on his bosom; the sound of wailing arose in the crowd; the Prince's eyes alone were dry; he whispered comfort to her; he promised to live, to baffle his foe again for her sake; the words revived her, and she saw him depart with hope, with new joy kindled in her bosom.

There had been another, the public gaze, till Katherine came to draw all eyes to a newer wonder. An emaciated, pale woman, in a garb of penury, who knelt, telling her beads beside York's prison; her face was hid; but her hands were thin and white to ghastliness; during the last scene she had sobbed to agony, and now as the place cleared, went her way silently, with slow, feeble steps. Many marked her with surprise and curiosity; few knew that she was the Jane Shore, whose broken heart whispered misery, as she thought that she beheld King Edward's guilt, in which she had shared, visited on his son. This cruel lesson of religion was a canker in her heart, and most true it was, as far as regarded her royal lover, that his light

loves, and careless playing with sacred ties, had caused the blot of base birth to be affixed to his legitimate offspring, and so strewed the sad way that led them to untimely death.

Henry, cruel as he was, had not the courage to encounter his insulted prisoner on her return. Katherine's feelings were wrought too high for any display of passion; her anxiety was spent on how she could sooth York's wounded feelings, and restore his health; it were vain to ask, she feared; yet, if the King would permit her to attend on him, under whatever restrictions, they should be obeyed; and this while poor Elizabeth besought her pardon with tears, for being the wife of her insolent adversary. She, a proud Plantagenet, was more sorely stung than the White Rose, by the indignity offered to her house; and she intreated her not to love her brother less because of this foul disgrace. "So doing," said the quick-sighted Queen, "you fulfil his dearest wish. While you are Richard's loving wife, he, even he, the fallen and humiliated, is an object of envy to his Majesty, who

sought, by making you witness his ignominy, to detach you from him."

"How strange a mistake," replied Katherine, "for one so sage as the King : the lower my sweet Richard falls, the more need he surely has of me. But that love, such as ours, knits us too indivisibly to admit a reciprocity of benefit, I should say that it is to make me rich indeed, to enable me to bestow, to lavish good on my Lord ; but we are one, and I but give to myself, and myself receive, if my weakness is of any strength to him. Dear sister mine, your liege, wise as he may be, is a tyro in our woman's lore—in the mysteries of devoted love ; he never felt one inspiration of the mighty sprite."

This was not quite true. For some few days Henry had been so inspired ; but love, an exotic in his heart, degenerated from being a fair, fragrant flower, into a wild, poisonous weed. Love, whose essence is the excess of sympathy, and consequently of self-abandonment and generosity, when it alights on an unworthy soil, appears there at first in all its native bloom, a very wonder even to the heart in which it has

taken root. The cold, selfish, narrow-hearted Richmond was lulled to some slight forgetfulness of self, when first he was fascinated by Katherine, and he decked himself with ill-assorted virtues to merit her approbation. This lasted but a brief interval; the uncongenial clime in which the new plant grew, impregnated it with its own poison. Envy, arrogance, base desire to crush the fallen, were his natural propensities; and, when love refused to minister to these, it changed to something like hate in his bosom; it excited his desire to have power over her, if not for her good, then for her bane.

The Duke of York was imprisoned in the Tower. No further measures were apparently in action against him. Katherine no longer hoped any thing from her foe; and day and night there lay beneath her eye-lids the image of Richard, wasting and dying in captivity. Something must be done, some aid afforded him; she was anxious also to learn the details of his flight, and how again he fell into the hands of his foe. Monina, who in a thousand disguises had been used to penetrate every where;

was seen no more. Still public report informed her of many things.

It was known, that Sir Robert Clifford, the old spy and traitor of the White Rose, had become aware of the measures taken by York's adherents to insure his escape from England. He had followed him down the river, and by a knowledge of the signs and countersigns of the party, decoyed him into a boat that was to convey his victim back to his prison-house. The deceit was discovered, and a mortal struggle ensued on-board the tiny bark; it sunk, and many perished, Clifford among the rest. On the morrow his body was found upon the beach, stiff and stark; a gaping wound in his neck showed that the waters alone had not been his foe; in his clenched hand he grasped a mass of golden hairs, severed by some sharp implement from the head to which they grew: as if nought else could liberate his enemy from his hold. There he lay, bold Robin Clifford, the dauntless, wily boy, hunted through life by his own fell passions, envy, cupidity, and libertinism; they had tracked him to this death; his false-

hoods were now mute, his deceptions passed away; he could never more win by his smiles, or stab by his lying words; death alone had a share in him, death and the cold sands beneath which he was interred, leaving a name, the mark of scorn, the symbol of treachery.

They had struggled beneath the strangling waves, Richard and his adversary. The Prince was wounded in the scuffle, and became enfeebled almost to insensibility before he could sever from his enemy's grasp the fair locks he clutched—he swam away, as well as he might, and, with the instinct of self-preservation, made for the shore—he forgot, that England was a wide prison—he only strove to master the fate which beat him to the ground. He reached the sands—he sought the covert of some near underwood, and threw himself upon the earth in blind thankfulness; exhausted, almost inanimate, he lay there, given up only to the sense of repose, and safety from death, which visited his failing heart with a strange sense of pleasure.

The following morning was far advanced, be-

fore he could rouse himself from this lethargy. He looked upon the waters; but the Adalid was no more to be seen—he was quite alone; he needed succour; and none was afforded him. Well he knew that every field, lane, dingle and copse swarmed with enemies, and he shuddered at the likelihood that unarmed, and weak as he was, he should fall into their hands. He desired to reach London again as his sole refuge; and he journeyed, as he hoped, towards it, all unknowing of the route. No way-worn traveller in savage lands, pursued by barbarous enemies, ever suffered more than the offspring of Edward the Fourth amidst the alienated fields of his paternal kingdom. Cold and rain succeeded to the pleasant summer weather:—during night he lay exposed to the tempests—during day he toiled on, his limbs benumbed, his heart wasted by hunger and fatigue; yet never, at the head of the Scottish chivalry, never in Burgundy or in England, did he feel more resolute not to submit, but, baffling fortune and his enemy's power, to save himself in spite of fate. He had wandered far inland, and knew not where he

was—he had indeed passed beyond London, and got up as high as Barnes. It was the fourth day from that of his escape—he had tasted little food, and no strength remained in him, except that which gave energy to his purpose. He found himself on a wide, heathy common, studded with trees, or desolately open—the rainy day closed, and a bleak east wind swept over the plain, and curled the leaden coloured waters of the river—his love of life, his determination not to yield, quailed before the physical miseries of his lot; for some few moments, he thought that he would lie down and die.

At this time another human figure appeared upon the scene. A Benedictine lay-brother, who in the freedom of solitude, in defiance of wind and rain, trolled a ditty, fitter for a ruffling swaggerer's bonnet, than a monk's cowl. He started not a little, on perceiving our wanderer leaning against the scathed trunk of a solitary tree; nor less did he wonder when he recognised the fallen Prince. It was Heron himself, the magnanimous mercer, who having

effected his escape with a well-hoarded purse, contrived to introduce himself into the house of Bethlem, at Shene, which was called the Priory. He was a little frightened to perceive his ancient leader; but pity succeeded to fear; and with many fair words and persuasions he induced him to permit himself to be conducted to the Priory. There, since he believed himself to be dying, he might receive the last sacraments—there perhaps, for some few minutes, he might again behold his Katherine.

Thus was the fugitive again led within the pale of his enemy's power. The Prior, a man esteemed for holiness, did not delay to make his sovereign acquainted with the capture of his rival. His awe of Katharine having vanished, Henry was left at liberty to follow the ungenerous dictates of his groveling spirit. Many a courtier, true man or false, counselled the death of the aspiring youth; and they praised their master's magnanimity, when he rejected this advice, and in lieu exposed him, whom he knew to be the descendant of a line of kings, to beggarly

disgrace. Thus worn and weak, the ill-fated son of York was made a public spectacle of infamy. But Henry went a step too far; and, when he thrust the Scottish Princess forward on the scene, he turned defeat to triumph.

He was not to die—but rather to pine out a miserable existence—or had the sage monarch any other scheme? The high-spirited Prince was to be cooped up within the Tower—there, where the Earl of Warwick wasted his wretched life. Did he imagine that the resolved and ardent soul of Richard would, on its revival, communicate a part of its energy to the son of Clarence, and that ere long they would be enveloped in one ruin? Some words had transpired that appeared to reveal such an intention; and his order to the Lieutenant of the Tower, that, without permitting, he should connive at any covert intercourse between the two—his recommendation of a noted spy and hireling to a high trust, and the order this fellow had to bring each day intelligence to the palace from the prison—spoke loudly of some design; for Henry never

did aught in vain. It was in circulation also among the lower officers in the fortress, that an attempt to escape was expected on the part of the prisoners, and that rich reward would attend its discovery.

CHAPTER XVIII.

And bare, at once, Captivity displayed,
Stands scoffing through the never-opened gate ;
Which nothing through its bars admits, save day
And tasteless food.

BYRON.

THE Lady Katherine, no longer trusting the good intentions of the insolent tyrant, was eager to communicate with her royal cousin of Scotland, to urge him to save from death or disgrace, if not to effect the liberation, of him to whom he had given her hand. The difficulty of finding a messenger was great. The Queen, all amiable and sorrowing as she was, shrunk from any act, which, if discovered, would enrage the King. Where did Monina tarry while her

friend was in this strait? Of all his sometime associates was there not one who would risk all to retard the last steps of fate. Since York's escape she had been so vigilantly guarded, that a thousand schemes she had formed for her own evasion proved abortive at their very outset:

Help was at length afforded her unexpectedly, when most despairing. Edmund Plantagenet stood before her: changed indeed from what he had been; she had not seen him since the siege of Exeter, where he was wounded; but slight was his bodily hurt in comparison to the death-blow his mind received.

Plantagenet was one of those concentrated characters, whose very outward show of softness and gentleness serves the more to force the texture of their souls to receive one indelible impression. He had passed a boyhood of visions, given up to mighty aspirations and engrossing reverie. His thoughts were stirring as the acts of others; his forest-school had so tutored him, that he could live in bodily repose, while his mind ruminated: he could be quickened to hope and fear, to lofty ambition, to generosity, and devoted

courage, feeling in his heart the keenest impulses—while around him were the mute trees of the wild wood and pathless glades. He could be satisfied with such dreamy illusions; so that action with him was never the result of physical restlessness, nor of youthful emulation, nor of that stirring spirit of life which forces us to abhor repose. It flowed from an imperious sense of duty; it welled up from the very sources of his soul. Other men perform the various parts allotted to them, and yet are something else the while; as is the actor, even while he struts in the garb of royalty: but Edmund yielded himself wholly up, and was the mere creature of the thought within.

To be great and good—great from the good he should effect, was his boyhood's aspiration. It is probable that, if he had not been subjected to extraneous influence, he would have devoted himself to religion, and become a saint or martyr; for his all, his understanding, heart, and person, would have been given up to the holy cause he espoused. His being led him to King Richard's tent, the night before the

battle of Bosworth Field, gave a new and inextinguishable law to his life. Unknown duties were imposed. The first and dearest was, to redeem his father's soul from the guilt of murderous ambition, by elevating his injured nephew to his original greatness. He devoted himself to his cousin. Soon he learned to love Richard as the work of his own hands. He had reared his tender infancy; he had been his tutor in martial exercises, teaching him to curb the fiery steed, to wield the lance, and, more than all, to meet danger in the field fearlessly; to be honourable, brave and kind. He had led him to war, and shielded him with his own body from the cruel Moor. If ever they were divided, his thoughts dwelt only the more carefully with him. Last, he had brought him from glorious combats in Spain, to conquer his ancestral kingdom, and set him up the rival of a powerful king—the mark of his vengeance.

It was all over. Edmund possessed no innate strength to rise from the blow; he was a mariner on the wide ocean, without compass or rudder. The universe had one central point for

him; that was destroyed, and a total blank remained. York's first surrender visited him as a death stroke; he struggled against it. Enfeebled by his wound, more by despair, he passed over to Ireland; there he expected to find friends of the White Rose; he found only enemies of Duke Perkin: men eager to exculpate themselves, from the charges of ill faith or ingratitude, gladly adopted a phraseology, or a belief, that reduced to dust the golden glories of poor Edmund's idol. Perkin Warbeck! Oh thou flower of York! thou nursling of love, though child of calamity, is even thy bright name so to be tainted? Not by those immediately arrayed by self-interest against thee; but by the vulgar crew, ever eager to crush the fallen. There was no hope in Ireland. Keating, the Prior of Kilmainham, was dead. The Earl of Desmond was reconciled to the English Government. Lord Barry had fled to Spain. The Citizens of Cork were busy redeeming, by eager servility, their Mayor's disloyalty.

Overcome by these sad changes, a malignant fever seized on Edmund: in addition to every

other disappointment, he had the consciousness that his aid was necessary to his cousin; that his absence was probably misinterpreted by his friends as cowardly dereliction. York was calling on him in vain. Monina perhaps suspected his truth. Next to the sun of his life, the noble Richard, Monina lay nearest his heart. It was a mixture of many feelings; and even love, subdued by hopelessness, quickened them to greater intensity. As soon as he could rise from his couch, he directed his course to England. He arrived in London on the day of the Duke of York's worst disgrace. It was reported to him as the gossip of the town: at the fatal word a mortal change seized upon his frame: his limbs were as if struck by palsy; his cheeks fell in; his hair grew white. On his arrival he had taken up his abode in a monastery in the habit of a poor pilgrim: the sage monks who beheld his state, possessed no leech-craft to administer his cure: he lay with beating pulses and open eyes, while the work of the grave appeared already in operation against him: he wasted into a fleshless skeleton. And then

another secret change came over him; he conquered death, and crawled forth, the ghost of what he was, into the hopeless world.

He contrived to gain admission to the Princess. She did not recognize him, such was the pale disguise disease had put upon him. His voice, hollow as from a tomb, was altered; his dark, melancholy eyes, occupying too large a portion of his face, gleamed from under his streaked and wan brow. Yet his was a visit of comfort, for he could do her mission to Scotland, and invite the forgetful James to succour his friend and kinsman. Edmund listened eagerly to this proposal: a draught of soothing balm descended into his frame, with the thought that yet all was not lost. His physical energy almost returned: he hurried to depart—"How will you traverse this wide kingdom?" asked the lady. "Cannot the Adalid come as before, to aid and speed you on your way?"

"The Adalid is sailing on the far ocean sea," replied Plantagenet; "we are all as dead, in the eyes of De Faro and our Monina."

"Faithless girl!"

With a trace of his ancient warmth and sweetness, Edmund entered upon the gentle maiden's exculpation. He related that a poor fellow lay on the bed next his in the convent hospital, whom he recognised to be an Irishman, who had escaped from Waterford, and sailed with them in the Adalid to Cornwall. From him he heard the tale of what had befallen De Faro and his child. He heard how the mariner had long haunted the English coast waiting for an opportunity to carry off the Prince; of the fatal night, when snatching his daughter from the watery peril, he saw Richard, as he believed, perish in the waves. What more had the Moorish mariner and his daughter to do with this miserable, guilty island? He called his men together; he told them his resolve finally to quit the eastern world for the golden islands of the west, inviting those who were averse to the voyage to go on shore at once, before the fair wind that was rising, should hurry them into the open sea. The poor Irishman alone desired to land: before he went he saw the Spanish damsel; he described her as calm and mild, though there

was something unearthly in her gleaming eyes and in the solemn tone of her voice: "If," she said, "you meet any of our friends, any who ask for De Faro and his daughter, if you see Lady Brampton, Lord Barry, or Sir Edmund Plantagenet, tell them that Monina lives, that she tarries with her father, and tasks herself to be his comfort and support. We seek the Western Indies; well may it betide us that we never reach the unknown strand; or we may be cast away in an uninhabited solitude, where my care and companionship may stead my dear father much; or I may teach the sacred truths of our religion to the wild Indians, and speak the dear name of Christ to the unbaptized of those wilds; or soften, as best I may, the cruel Spaniard, and save the devoted people from their barbarity. Tell them, whichever way I look, I perceive a thousand duties to which our great Taskmaster calls me, and these I live to fulfil, if so my feeble body will permit; tell them that my only hope is death; that, and that by my obedience to the Almighty will, I may

partly merit to join in Paradise the earthly angel who now survives there."

Tears choked further speech ; she imprinted her words by a gift of gold. The boat which had been hailed, came alongside. The man on board, the sails of the Adalid swelled proudly in the gale ; the little caravel ran lightly along on the top of the roughening waters. In less than two hours she was out of sight, speeding swiftly over the sea towards the wild western ocean.

Plantagenet departed ; and the Princess was yet more cheered when she found that no further injury was meditated against her lord. Imprisonment in the Tower was his sole punishment. Her pure, gentle mind could not divine the full extent of King Henry's villainy, nor guess how he undermined the edifice he claimed praise for not levelling with the ground.

Nor could her resigned, patient, feminine spirit conceive the cruel, biting impatience of his lot that York endured. He had yielded at first to the overwhelming sense of disgrace, and felt that last, worst emotion of the injured,

which answers the internal question. "What have I done so to be visited?" in the poet's words,—

———" I cannot charge
My memory with much save sorrow—but
I have been so beyond the common lot
Chastened and visited, I needs must think
That I was wicked."

But soon his eager, eagle spirit spurned the tame debasing thought: he resolved again to struggle, and at last to conquer; the fire burned brighter for its short smouldering; almost with a light heart he laughed, as he resolved again to endeavour.

His prison life was more than irksome; it was unendurable. No change, which is the soul of enjoyment, varied it. No sympathy, the parent of content, came anear. In his young days he had trod on the verge of life's wave, watching it recede, and fancying that it would discover glittering treasures as it retreated into the ocean of eternity: now the tide ebbed sullenly; the barren sands grew dark; and the expanse before afforded no hope—what was to be done?

He was in the Tower, whence he had twice escaped; where the Earl of Warwick was immured, pining in fruitless vegetation, rather than living. Should he do as he had done, and become a cypher, a forgotten prisoner, a mere thing to wake and sleep, and be as nothing? The very dog that guards a cottage-door from nightly harm, had more dignity and purpose in his life, than this victim of ambition. The bird that alighted on the sill of his iron-barred casement, and carried off a crumb for her nestlings, was an emblem of utility and freedom in comparison, which Warwick, cut off from all, must weep to mark. How different was Richard's fate; he had dear friends ready to risk all for him, whose life's sacrifice he could repay only by being true to himself: he had a wife, wedded to him in youth's early flower, whose happiness was unalterably linked to his. He had courage, fortitude, energy; he would not cast these gifts away, a thankless boon; he valued them at their price: if death crowned his efforts, it were well; he was a mere toy in the hands of God, and he submitted; but, as a man, he was ready to cope

with men, and though defeated never to be vanquished.

Not a month after his removal to the Tower he had observed his facilities, marked his instruments, and resolved to enter on his schemes: they were quickened by other circumstances.

Warwick heard of his cousin's arrival; and he believed this to be the signal of his own deliverance. His first chief desire was to have communication with him. Among his attendants there was one to whom he could apply; he was a lank, tall fellow, with little understanding and but one idea—gratitude to the Duke of Clarence. This man, called Roger, and nicknamed Long Roger, his length being his chief distinction, had been very poor, and burthened besides with several infant children: accidents and a bad season brought them to the verge of starvation, when a chance threw him in the way of the Duke of Clarence, who got him made servitor in the Tower. When this unfortunate Prince was imprisoned within its fatal walls, Long Roger underwent a thousand perils to wait on him by stealth, and to do what service he might.

Long Roger had a prodigious appetite, and his chief delight was to smuggle dainties, cooked by his Madge, into the prison chamber of the Duke. The manner of Clarence's death, which Roger affirmed to accord with the popular tradition, alone consoled the faithful sympathizing fellow. Now he had turned the key for thirteen years on the Duke's hapless son : in spite of his watchful care and proffered cates, he had seen the poor youth dwindle to a skeleton, when suddenly the progress of delay was checked by Our Lady: it was a miracle to see Lord Edward grow fat and comely to look upon, changing his woe-begone looks into gracious smiles : by the Mass, there was witchcraft in it ! Warwick often thanked Long Roger, and told him what he would do when restored to freedom and rank ; which will never be, Roger said, except among the saints in Paradise ; unless it pleased God to remove his Majesty, when my Lady the Queen should fully know how fervently her cousin prayed for her ; and, forsooth, with sweet Prince Arthur, his royal mother would be all powerful. Long Roger's visions went not be-

yond. He never imagined the possibility of effecting the Earl's escape; his limited understanding suggested no relief, save a bottle of Canary, or bunches of White Roses in June, which in fact was Dame Madge's feminine idea; and often had the simple flowers soothed Warwick's care. To this man the poor prisoner applied, to enable him to see and converse with the newly arrived Richard: two are better than one to a feast; and, the next time Roger meditated a dainty supper for his lord, he resolved to endeavour that York should partake it with him as a guest.

In his own guileless way, the simple-hearted man began to practise on and bribe one of his fellows, without whom it had been difficult to accomplish his desire. Abel Blewit had lately been appointed to his service: he was nearly a dwarf, with bushy eyebrows and red hair; there was something of ill omen in his physiognomy, but as the tall yeoman looked over the head of his comrade, his courage rose: "The whippersnapper could not rebuff me," he thought, as he drew himself up to his full height, and began to

propound the mighty deed of conducting Perkin by mistake to the Lord Edward's chamber, on his return from vespers. Roger paused suddenly; for, in spite of his stature, he was appalled by the glance Blewet shot up from under his penthouses of brows: still he gave a willing assent, and even took upon himself the chief risk of the undertaking.

The following evening, while Richard was yet pondering how to commence his machinations, undecided, though resolved; and while he made up his mind not to betray his thoughts to the sinister-looking being before him, he was surprised to find that he was led through an unaccustomed gallery; and still more, on entering the chamber into which he was introduced, to recognise it as that where he had unexpectedly found refuge during his last visit to the Tower, and to perceive that Warwick himself was there expecting him.

Was this the thin, wasted being he had seen three years before? Had Warwick been then set free to hunt upon the hills, he had not regained more flesh and bloom than now that

hope had been his only medicine. His cousin York had inspired him with marvellous confidence; his last entrance into the formidable Tower, and his speedy exit, had appeared a miracle to the poor Earl, to whom these high walls and sad chambers formed a world, from which, as from the larger one, death only promised egress. He had pined and wasted in his appetite to be free, to be without those gates, beyond that fosse and giant battlements that girded him in: these portentous, insuperable obstacles were mere cobweb chains to Richard. He had come in, he had departed, and all as easily, so Warwick thought, as the unregarded fly, that had perhaps flown from Westminster, from Elizabeth's chamber, to light upon his cheek. In all the subsequent tales of York's checks and overthrow, he smiled at the idea that one born to victory could be thus overcome. He laughed at the chains Henry had thrown over him; and his transfer to the Tower elated him with a firm belief that liberty was at hand. Dwelling on these thoughts Warwick ceased to be the dead alive; he was cheerful, erect, elastic in his gait,

his complexion glowed with health, while sickness still lingered on the cheek of the younger Plantagenet, and a more subdued spirit dwelt in his heart.

Long Roger beheld the cousins embrace : he heard the Earl call him, named Perkin, his liege, and most dear kinsman : from that moment the opprobrious name was banished from Roger's lips : he was convinced of York's truth; and the Lord Edward's friend became an object of reverence and of love.

...of his...
...of his...
...of his...
...of his...

CHAPTER XIX.

...of his...
...of his...
...of his...

Gentle Cousin,

If you be seen, you perish instantly.

For breaking prison.

No, no, Cousin,

I will no more be hidden, nor put off

This great adventure to a second trial.

TWO NOBLE KINSMEN.

QUICK on the first greeting followed Warwick's question. "And, noble Cousin, what have you projected? when shall we escape?"

Richard's being in durance with him, seemed sufficient pledge, that without delay they should both be free. While York, wearied by opposition to his mighty foe; just foiled in his endeavours to preserve his freedom, even when he had attained it, saw giant obstacles in his path; and,

although resolved to endeavour all, was fully conscious of the fatal end that must wait upon his too probable failure. His reply was dictated by these feelings; he was averse to drag one so inexperienced, and so unhappy, into the pit he believed that he was digging for himself. He besought the Earl well to weigh the value he set upon life; to place the fatal scaffold in prospect; to teach himself to know what death was, and to be ready to meet it, before he planned escape from the wily Tudor. Warwick listened with impatient wonder; but when Richard concluded with affirming, that he himself, in sober sadness, preferred hazarding all to the remaining in prison, and that he would be free, the Earl's countenance again grew light and gladsome. "But when, Coz, when?" was still his eager question.

Thus they had changed characters. Warwick, so many years secluded from the world, was in total ignorance of its ways. Had the Tower-gates been opened to him, he had trembled to walk forth alone; but restraint had made him feminine; and with his cousin he would have rushed upon an army of spears, in sure

belief that some unseen ægis would protect him. His position rendered him timid, indolent, and dependent; but he relied on Richard, as a woman on her lover. York beheld all things in their clear, true light; he was aware of every difficulty; of the means he possessed for overcoming them, and of the hazards he ran in using these means. A sentiment, born of the highest generosity, made him hesitate before he concerted any plan with Warwick. It was not alone that he was averse to risking another life; but he felt that his cause would receive advantage from this link with an undoubted Plantagenet; nay, that, in the prison itself, the attachment and respect felt towards the son of Clarence, by some of the very men he meant to use, would serve him. That he should reap benefit from exposing the ill-fated Prince to untried dangers, revolted his high and independent nature. Warwick had recourse to many an entreaty and persuasion, ere he brought Richard to consent that their fortunes should be joined, and that, last of the White Rose, they would rise or fall together. Still York was obliged to check his

cousin's impatience, and to show that they must slowly work out the end they had in view.

To gratify the Earl's greedy curiosity, York related his adventures; they afforded him an inexhaustible fund of surprise and delight. He sighed over his tale of wedded happiness; and half wondered that angelic woman, seated high on the throne of loveliness and love, should deign to devote herself for man. A pang, not of envy, but of regret, on comparing their fates, shot across him; soon the usual current of feeling returned; and, when he heard that his idolized, lost Elizabeth was the friend and companion of the devoted wife of York, his affection for Richard was increased. Night was far advanced before they separated, and then only in certain expectation of meeting again.

York's hopes grew brighter, and he indulged in visions of the future, which lately had been so blank. He verily believed that he might escape, though still he doubted whether he should. He remembered the fondness of the Duchess of Burgundy for her brother Clarence, and how she had deplored the hard destiny of

his offspring; he would present that son, liberated by him, to her. His junction with the Prince must revive the old Yorkists in his favour; this worst blast of fortune might be the gale to speed him to the harbour of his hopes. The royal cousins met again and again; nor was it long before their own desires, and Henry's craft, began to weave that fatal web which entangled them even in the very mode the hard-hearted king devised.

Summer was gone: quicker than he was wont, the sun withdrew his embattled array of light and heat; and cold and tempest, erewhile driven to mountain fastnesses, or to their own frozen kingdoms in the north, took courage and force, and broke with wild fury upon the defenceless world: the bleak winds were their coursers; savagely they yelled and howled over the land they desolated. First, the growth of flowers was their prey; the fruits, and then the verdure of the earth, while the sun, each day retreating, afforded further scope to their inroads. York resolved not to pass another winter in prison. He had quickly perceived that his purpose could

only be effected by corrupting their guards, and then all would depend upon the fidelity of these men. His first attempts were followed by an almost too easy success: good-hearted, dull-headed, Long Roger heard with unreplying credulity the assertions of Warwick, that Richard must succeed in all he undertook, and readily promised his aid. Abel Blewet, in spite of his dogged, sinister aspect, yielded at once to the seduction of a promised bribe. Two others, by his advice, were associated as necessary to their success. Strangeways, a ruffling, drunken fellow, who had been thrice dismissed, but whose pretty wife each time procured his re-appointment; and Astwood, a saving miser, who lent money to his fellow-servitors on usury. With these instruments the Cousins went to work: Warwick in full belief of success: York, perceiving treason and discovery close to them, but ready to defy these bloodhounds to their worst.

“And now, Coz,” said Warwick, “in very truth there needs no further delay. Methinks were the drawbridge down, you would mistrust some gin, and wait to throw an arch of your-

own across the moat. Sooth, my Lord, I am a weary of your sloth."

There was a caressing sweetness in Warwick's voice and manner; an ignorant, indolent, confiding enthusiasm, so unlike quick-witted Clifford, or any of Duke Richard's former friends, that he felt a new emotion towards him—hitherto he had been the protected, served, and waited on, of his associates, now he played the protector and the guardian.

"My gentle Cousin," he replied, "even as you trust, so you shall find me—wait but a little, and all will be past. Yet I grieve to say, where you see escape, I perceive an ambushment of death; and, though ready to face the grim skeleton, we must arm ourselves against him. I wish I could show you even as I see, the dangers that environ us—perhaps you would shrink; and it is yet time. What do you do? Not only plan escape, but ally yourself, and give the sanction of your untarnished name, to one whom Tudor brands as an impostor, and abhors as a rival. His vengeance will fall heavily for this deed, if he reach you. While a few years, like the many

already gone by, may lead him to his grave, and you to liberty. I have too often met danger to be frightened by him: and I endure worse than death, each day I pass of youth, apart my sweet White Rose. You have no lady-love to beckon you across the path of peril. Bethink you well, my ever dear Lord, will you not regret this prison, when the cruel axe glitters before your eyes?"

"Do you refuse then to take me with you?" said Warwick, mournfully.

"Be the choice yours; to go with me is fraught with danger—to stay—"

"Hush, Cousin!" cried the Earl, eagerly, "speak not the ill-omened word. Stay,—to endure days and nights of guarded doors; to eat viands served up poisoned by the jailor's touch; to see the sky but through those iron bars; alas! in my dreams, when heaven and its stars are before me, they are crossed and paled by those accursed lines. Give me but an hour to tread earth a free man—or, mark, Cousin; sometimes I win good Roger to lead me to the roof of the White Tower; it is high, and overhangs the deep, dangerous river—The day you

quit my side, I seek that tower, I leap from its height, and the cold waters shall drink up my being, rather than I endure another hour my prison-life."

"My dear, dear Cousin," said York, "it is written by the Fates, and I yield—our fortunes shall be one. A few days now brings the hour; it will move along the dial; it will become a portion of past time—what it will leave us, is in the hands of God."

That hour came—full soon it came—the evening hour which preceded their escape. Long Roger served supper to the kinsmen; the last they were to partake within the fated walls. The poor fellow heaved a bitter sigh, as he waited by his lord's chair. "Thou art downcast, good Roger," said the Earl, "pledge me, my man, in this ruby wine of Burgundy—think of to-morrow, not of to-night—to-morrow the deed will be done."

Roger quaffed the proffered bowl—he set it down with another sigh, almost a groan, adding, "Better drown reason than life in the vat!" Then recollecting to what he alluded, and before

whom, he blushed scarlet to his very ears, and like a bashful man he made it worse by going on blunderingly, "I was never handy at these sort of things; it is for all the world like turning out of a warm bed on a cold snowy morning, only to think of them—and when they are about,—by the Cross, I thought no hole far enough or dark enough, when my Lord your father—"

"Roger!" exclaimed Warwick.

The wine had not decreased the man's terror, but it had opened his mouth, and taken away his discretion; he continued: "It was an awful night. We all knew what was going to be done. I am sure, as Thomas Paulet said, we heard our very hearts beat. Then there was grim-faced Hobler, who at the Judgment might be taken for the born twin of Master Abel, only he was taller by a span—even he looked uglier, nor spoke above his breath—'Is he at his prayers?' asked he, and Sir Brakenbury was as white as the earth itself—it was the beginning of Lent; and the snow lay three feet deep on it."

By no uncommon law of our nature, the dread design of the present night awoke keen recollection in the usually drowsy mind of this man. At first, with thrilling horror, Warwick interrupted him, but now the very terrors of the theme he chose, assumed an awful charm—he was fascinated to listen, while his knees knocked together—Richard felt also the magic of such perilous excitement.

“Oh, Lord Edward,” continued Roger, “these walls have seen fiendly sights—the blood of many a Plantagenet, York or Lancaster, is on its pavement. Was it not in this room that the pious King, Saint Henry, as Father Piers calls him—you will not sleep another night in it, so there is no harm now, telling you that his poor ghost has been seen on the battlements coming from this very chamber, where he was murdered.”

The night wind rushed round the massy walls, the autumnal wind, fierce and howling—York started up, “No more of this unreason, while we need all our strength, and God’s grace to boot, to nerve us to our task. Oh, ghost of

Lancaster! if indeed thou hauntest this spot, where those akin to me did the foul deed, be thy pious soul propitiated now; many a mass shall be told for thy repose!”

Roger crossed himself, and said an ave; then in his usual voice he rejoined, “Would the thing did not require blood. Master Abel vows by the saints—’twere better when men make bad oaths to swear by the fiends—that Sir John must die; old wrinkled Astwood squeaks out, ‘By’r Lady, it were not worth while, with only promises for reward, if we have not the rifling of the Lieutenant’s private chamber. They are bloody-minded men; my Lord; Mat Strangeways, when he is sober, and I, fasting or feasting, hold out that we might bind him, and get the keys.’ ‘Blockhead,’ says Master Blewet, saving your presence, ‘thou goest the way to hang us all.’”

Another goblet had set Roger talking. Warwick had quitted the table. He threw open the casement: it was very dark, and the wind howled fearfully—“Oh, iron bars of my prison house,” cried the ill-fated Prince, “can only midnight-

murder wrench ye asunder? It is a dread act to disobey God's word, and lay the soul under mortal sin—must it be done?"

"My dear Cousin," said York, "do not mistake—a month ago the choice was yours; now there is no going back. We have no right to draw these poor men into peril, and then to quarrel at the precaution they take for their safeties. We said, aye, when the matter was proposed. Again I repeat the word; they must look to it, who so savagely have driven us to the fatal pass. When Digby undertook the ungentle task of jailor, he knew that he must hold it at the hazard of his life."

"Sir John has ever been kind to me," said Warwick, "forgive the word, my Lord, I am firm now—away with mercy! To win an easy egress from these murderous walls, I could myself plant the dagger."

"We are not executioners," interrupted the Duke, who felt none of Warwick's vacillations, now sinking beneath the required tone, now wound up far above it, and was perfectly calm, though his heart, he scarce knew why, enter-

tained no hope of success. Warwick believed that he should win, and mourned the losers in the frightful game. Richard knew that he might fail, and assuredly would, did he not meet each necessity and hazard with a dauntless spirit.

The sound of a bell from a neighbouring convent was brought fitfully by the wind—"They are ringing matins—there is our signal," cried Roger.

"And Digby's knell." The door of the chamber opened as Warwick said these words, and Blewet, with his usual catlike pace, slid in; he walked straight up to Roger, and casting on him a glance from under his brows, said only "Come."

"Are all at rest?" asked the Earl.

"Two hours ago," said Master Abel, "I have kept myself awake sharpening my steel;" he touched the handle of a huge butcher's knife stuck in his girdle, whose glittering blade did credit to his care. Warwick turned pale and sick. "It will be dulled anon," continued Blewet.

"Where are thy comrades?" Richard asked.

"They wait at the end of the corridor—

Master Astwood is counting his gains. Come, Long Roger."

Poor Roger followed him to the door, then turning to the Princes; "My royal masters," said he, "if this deed goes ill, and I never see ye more, by Christ and his Cross, I pray a blessing on ye; if I may pray, but by the mass I fear I shall never pray, nor sup more."

They were gone—Warwick strove to look, to be firm, but he grew ashy white—a door, clapped to at a distance, made him almost faint. Richard was pale also; but his hand shook not in the least, as he presented a cup of wine to his cousin. "Give me water rather," said the Earl, shuddering, "that cup is red—hark—it is his groans!"

"It is the wind around the turret, where my liege and brother died," said York, endeavouring to give other thoughts to the poor Prince, who cried,

"It is the hell-born laugh of fiends viewing the deed." With the breeze indeed came a sound of laughter. "Are we betrayed!" cried York: but the sound passed away in wailing.

Warwick was on his knees—"I cannot pray," he cried, "a sea of blood is before me."

"Hush!"

Steps now approached along the corridor, and Blewet, his stained, half-wiped knife in his hand, appeared—Again the monosyllable "Come," was pronounced—fraught with how different a meaning. A life had been torn from an innocent breast since then by that fell instrument. The Princes, awestruck, one trembling with dread, the other striving to quell his horror for a murderer, followed him, as he led through the gallery—at the end stood Astwood with a bunch of keys—there were no stains on his hands; he looked anxious, but brightened up when he saw the prisoners.

They trod stealthily along. Warwick's faltering steps scarce kept pace with their conductor's. After passing through many narrow high passages, they reached a low postern door. Astwood put the key in the lock—the sound was magical to the fearful Earl. "Farewell, old frightful walls," he cried, "farewell, dark mur-

derous prison house, the Foul Fiend possess thee! such is my benison."

Blewet looked at him—York marked the sarcasm, the scorn of his glance—the gate meanwhile was opened: at that moment a clash of arms was heard. "The sentinels at the Eastern gate," remarked Abel.

"God grant it!" cried Warwick, "God grant—yet can it be! and am I free?"

He rushed through the open door, intent to seize upon liberty, as Tantalus on his forbidden feast—his first step beyond the threshold of his prison was followed by a shriek—almost a woman's shriek, it was so shrill and piercing. What he quailed before, gave presence of mind to York—experienced in ills. Whatever the new evil might be, he went out to meet it calmly. A party of archers and yeomen were drawn up in the court yard. "This truly is a mime," he said, "in which one at least wins. Our good Lieutenant is safe; we are lost."

Grim Sir John had much disliked even this masque of murder. He saw their seizure with a grin of delight. He abhorred Richard, as the

prime mover of the meditated assassination; but he hated Warwick more, who thus could lay in ambush for the life of one, who he believed had been a most courteous and soft-hearted jailor to him—he commanded his myrmidons to lead the royal kinsmen to the strongest ward-rooms of the Tower, with dogged, savage joy.

In dark and separate cells, in solitude and night, these ill-fated victims of craft and ambition were consigned to biting reflection and sinister anticipation. Warwick, worn out by the unusual excitement of the last weeks, by his eager hopes, and overwhelming despair, had no one thought, but ten thousand thoughts, making a chaos and hell of his poor heart. Richard felt more for his cousin than for himself. “But for me,” he repeated internally, “he had still been a patient prisoner. Yet to break prison is not crime capital—he may yet be saved. Elizabeth will intercede; Tudor, for very shame, cannot do further wrong to one so near akin, so powerless and unfortunate. For myself;—I am

dead already: the Duke of York died, when first I became a slave. So that my memory survive in my own White Rose's heart—let the victor dispose at his pleasure of this mere shell of Richard.”

CHAPTER XX.

Tempestuous Fortune hath spent all her spite,
 And thrilling Sorrow thrown his utmost dart :
 Thy sad tongue cannot tell more heavy plight
 Than that I feel and harbour in my heart.

SPENSER.

THE morning of the first of November dawned; a cheery day. Men went to their usual works: the earth, despoiled of her summer garniture, yet bore the change with sober content; for the sun shone; and soft airs, despite the coming winter, lightly shook the scant and altered foliage of the woods:

All rose to do the task He set to each,
 Who shaped us to his ends, and not our own.
 And many rose
 Whose woe was such, that fear became desire.

Among such fate-hunted victims was the Duke of York. Hope had died in his heart; and his few remaining days were only to be spent in celebrating her dark funeral. Morning opened its eyes on Prince Richard's dungeon, showing him vanquished by grievous overthrow and change. To look back through his tumultuous life, to dwell upon its chances, to think of the many who had suffered for him, were sad but fitting thoughts, to which he betook himself, till death became lovely in his eyes. But intermingled with such retrospection were other memories: his own sweet love was before him, in her tears or smiles; he looked into her dear eyes, he closed his own, and thrilling kisses pressed his burning lips, and soft, white arms were round him; at thought of such he grew impatient of his chains, and the fearful cutting off from all that awaited him. He began to calculate on the probability that his life would be spared, and grew cowardly the while; to feed upon those roseate lips, to drink life from those eyes, to clasp his beautiful, fond wife, feeling that beyond the circle of his arms

nought existed worthy his desires, became a fierce, impatient hunger, to gratify which he would call himself impostor, give up fame and reputation, and become Perkin Warbeck in all men's eyes.

There was but one refuge from this battle of youth and life with the grim skeleton. With a strong effort he endeavoured to turn his attention from earth, its victor woes, and still more tyrant joys, to the heaven where alone his future lay. The struggle was difficult, but he effected it; prayer brought resignation, calm; so when his soul, still linked to his mortal frame, and slave to its instincts, again returned to earth, it was with milder wishes and subdued regrets. *Moina's* lovely form wandered into his mind; she was an angel now, a blessed spirit, he believed; for, what deceived her, deceived him; and he fancied that he alone had escaped from the watery perils of that night; she had arrived there, where he soon should be, in the serene immutability of eternal life; he began, in the revulsion of his thoughts, to pity those destined still to exist. Earth was a skaited planet, a roofless, shel-

terless home; a wild where the human soul wandered a little interval, tortured by sharp, cruel storms; lost in thorny, entangled brakes; weary, repining, till the hour came when it could soar to its native birthplace, and find refuge from its ills in promised Paradise.

His cell was indeed the haven of peace, compared to the turbid, frightful atmosphere in which his Katherine lived. Edmund had not returned; every attempt she made to communicate with Scotland or Burgundy, failed. She had past a summer of wretchedness, nor could the tender attention of Elizabeth sooth her. In spite of all, the poor Queen was almost happier than she had ever been; for many years she had been "the cannibal of her own heart," devouring her griefs in voiceless, friendless, solitude; her very joys, and they were those of maternity, were locked up in her own bosom. It was the birth of happiness to share her griefs with another; that other being so gentle, so wise, and yet so sensitive, as the fair White Rose, who concealed her own worst pains, to sooth those of one possessing less for-

titude and fewer internal resources than herself. Yet, while thus she forgot herself, she never quitted in thought her Richard's side; since the day she had seen him delivered over to ignominious punishment, pale and ill, he was as it were stamped on every outward object, an image placed between her and her thoughts; for, while those were employed apparently on many things, he, in truth, was their first, last, all-possessing idea, more engrossing than her own identity. At one time she spent every effort to obtain an interview with him in prison; and then she learned, through covert means, of the plots carrying on in the Tower for his escape, while the name of Warwick, mingling in the tale, roused the latent feelings of Elizabeth. When the last, worst hour came, it was less replete with pain than these miserable, unquiet days, and sleepless, tearful nights; the never-ending, still beginning round of hours, spent in fear, doubt, and agonizing prayer.

After a restless night, the Princess opened her eyes upon the day, and felt even the usual

weight at her heavy foreboding heart increased. The tale was soon told of Richard's attempted escape and failure: "What can be done?" "Nothing; God has delivered the innocent into the hands of the cruel; the cruel, to whom mercy is as unknown, as, methinks, it is even to the awful Power who rules our miserable lives." Such words, with a passionate burst of tears, burst from the timid Elizabeth, whose crushed and burning heart even arraigned the Deity for the agony she endured.

Katherine looked on her with sweet compassion, "Gentle one," she said, "what new spirit puts such strange speech into your mouth, whose murmurings heretofore were those of piety?"

"It is a bad world," continued the Queen; "and, if I become bad in it, perchance I shall prosper, and have power to save: I have been too mild, too self-communing and self-condemning; and the frightful result is, that the sole being that ever loved me, perishes on the scaffold. Both will perish, my White Rose, doubt it not. Your own York, and my devoted only,

loved Edward. In his prison I have been his dream; he breaks it, not to find liberty again, but Elizabeth. Wretched boy! knows he not that he shall never again find her, who roamed with a free spirit the woodland glades, talking to him of the future, as of a scene painted to my will; faded, outworn, a degraded slave—I am not Elizabeth.”

“Did you know the dearest truth of religion,” replied Katherine, “you would feel that she, who has been tried, and come out pure, is a far nobler being than—”

“I am not pure, not innocent; much you mistake me,” said the Queen: “wicked, impious thoughts harbour in my heart, and pollute my soul, even beyond the hope of mediation. Sometimes I hate my beautiful children because they are his; sometimes in the dark hour of night, I renounce my nuptial vow, and lend ready, willing ear to fiendish whisperings which borrow Edward’s voice. I court sleep, because he wanders into my dreams; and—What do I say, what am I revealing? Lady, judge me not: you married him you loved,

fulfilling thus the best destiny that can be given in this hard world to woman, whose life is merely love. Though he perish in his youth, and you weep for him for ever, hug yourself in the blessed knowledge that your fate is bright as angels; for we reap celestial joys, when love and duty, twined in sisterly embrace, take up their abode together within us: and I—but, Katherine, did you hear me?—They perish even as I speak: his cruel heart knows no touch of mercy, and they perish.”

“They shall not, dearest,” said York’s White Rose; “it cannot be, that so foul a blot darken our whole lives. No; there are words and looks and tones that may persuade. Alas! were we more holy, surely a miracle might be vouchsafed, nor this Pharoah harden his heart for ever.”

All her love-laden soul beaming in her eyes, with a voice that even thrilled him, though it moved him not, the White Rose addressed Henry. She had yet to learn that a tyrant’s smile is more fatal than his frown: he was all courtesy, for he was resolved, implacable; and

she gathered hope from what proved to be the parent of despair. She spoke with so much energy, yet simplicity, in the cause of goodness, and urged so sweetly her debt of gratitude; telling him, how from the altar of their hearts, prayers would rise to the Eternal, fraught with blessings to him, that he encouraged her to go on, that still he might gaze on lineaments, which nobility of soul, the softest tenderness, and exalted belief in good, painted with angelic hues. At length he replied that his Council were examining witnesses, that her cause depended on facts, on its own justice; that he hoped report had blackened the crimes of these rash men; for her sake he sincerely hoped their guilt, as it was detailed to him, had been exaggerated.

For a moment the Princess was unaware what all this jargon might mean; his next words were more perspicuous. "Indeed, fair dame, you must forget this coil: if I consent, for the welfare of my kingdom, to sacrifice the Queen's nearest relative, you also must resign yourself to a necessity from which there is no

appeal. Hereafter you will perceive that you gain, instead of losing, by an act of justice which you passionately call cruelty: it is mercy, heaven's mercy doubtless, that breaks the link between a royal princess and a baseborn impostor."

A sudden fear thrilled Katherine: "You cannot mean that he should die," she cried; "for your own sake, for your children's sake, on whom your sins will be visited, you cannot intend such murder: you dare not; for the whole world would rise against the unchristian king who sheds his kinsman's blood. All Europe, the secret hearts of those nearest to you, your own knowledge, all proclaim your victim, your rival—to be your brother, and will brand you a fratricide. You are Lancaster, your ancestors were kings, you conquered this realm in their name, and may reign over it in peace of conscience; but not so may you destroy the Duke of York. His mother avouched him, the Duchess of Burgundy acknowledges him, I was given to him by my royal cousin, as to one of equal rank, and he upholds him—More than all, his princely

self declares the truth; nor can evil counsellors, nor false chroniclers, stand between you, and heaven and the avenging world. You vainly seek to heap accusation on him you term Crookback's head: time will affix the worst indelible stain upon you. You cannot, will not slay him."

What were words to the fixed mind of Henry? A summer breeze, whispering round a tempest-withstanding watch-tower—he might grow chill at this echo of the fears his own heart spoke; but still he smiled, and his purpose was unshaken.

It became known that the Princes were to be arraigned for treason: first the unhappy, misnamed Perkin was tried, by the common courts, in Westminster Hall. When a despot gives up the execution of his revenge to the course of law, it is only because he wishes to get rid of passing the sentence of death upon his single authority, and to make the dread voice of misnamed justice, and its executors, the abettors of his crime.

When Tragedy arrays itself in the formal

robes of law, it becomes more heart-rending, more odious, than in any other guise. When sickness threatens to deprive us of one, round whom our heart-strings have twined—we think inextricably—the skill of man is our friend; if merciless tempest be the murderer, we feel that it obeys One whose ways are inscrutable, while we strive to believe that they are good. Groping in darkness, we teach our hearts the bitter lesson of resignation. Nor do we hate nor blame the wild winds and murderous waves, though they have drank up a life more precious and more beloved than words have power to speak. But that man's authority should destroy the life of his fellow man; that he who is powerful, should, for his own security and benefit, drive into the darksome void of the tomb, one united to our sun-visited earth by ties of tenderness and love—one whose mind was the abode of honour and virtue; to know that the word of man could still bind to its earthly tabernacle the being, voice, looks, thoughts, affections of our all; and yet, that the man of power unlocks the secret chamber, rifles it of all its

treasures, and gives us, for the living mansion of the soul, a low, voiceless grave:—against such tyranny, the softest heart must rebel; nor scarcely could religion in its most powerful guise, the Catholic religion, which almost tore aside for its votaries the veil between time and eternity, teach submission to the victims.

Days flowed on. However replete with event, the past is but a point to us; however empty, the present pervades all things. And when that present is freighted with our whole futurity, it is as an adamantine chain binding us to the hour; there is no escape from its omnipotence and omnipresence; it is as the all-covering sky. We shut our eyes; the monster's hollow breath is on our cheek; we look on all sides; from each his horrid eyes glare on us; we would sleep; he whispers dreams. Are we intelligible? Will those possessed by present tell us whether any bondage, any Bastille, can suggest ideas of more frightful tyranny, misery, than the cruel present, which clings to us, and cannot be removed.

“ It is so; he attempted to escape, and was discovered; he is low in his dungeon; his dear eyes are faint from disappointed hope. He

will be tried. Tyranny will go forth in a masque, and with hideous antics fancy that she mantles with a decorous garb her blood-thirsty acts. He will be condemned; but he will not die! not die! Oh no, my Richard is immortal—he cannot DIE!”

“My royal Cousin, when you gave me to my sweet love, and pledged your word that in weal or woe I should be his; and I promised myself still dearer things, to be the guardian angel and tutelar genius of his life; and took pleasure, fond, foolish girl that I was, in the anticipation of misfortunes that I should rob of all power to hurt; no thought, among the many that strayed into futurity, told me of this desertion, this impotence of effecting good. Alas! how deaf and cruel man is: I could more easily tear asunder his prison-walls with my hands, and break with my weak fingers his iron chains, than move one, as liable to suffer and to die as even his victim, to pity!”

Elizabeth listened pale and silent to these complaints—bitter as they were, they were hushed to more heart-rending silence, when the hour of

trial came—she should only pray to die, before the word that spoke his condemnation met her ear. Accustomed as a Princess—a high-born and respected daughter of one most powerful, to be obeyed and served; to find herself destitute of all influence, seemed to place her in another planet—it was not men—not her fellow-creatures that were around her; but fiends who wore the mask of humanity. An uninhabited desert had not been more solitary than this populous land, whose language she possessed not; for what is language, if it reach not the heart and move it?

Richard, the wonder of the time, gathered courage as ill-fortune pressed more hardly upon him; in the hour of trial he did not quail, but stood in bold, fearless innocence before the men, whose thoughts were armed against his life. He was not guilty, he said, for he could not be guilty of treason. When the indictment was read which treated him as a foreigner and an alien, the spirit of the Plantagenet flashed from his eyes, and the very stony-hearted clerk, who read, casting his regards on him faltered and

stammered, overawed by a blaze of dignity, which, did we foster antique creeds, we might believe was shed over him by some such spirit as imparted divine majesty to the person of the King of Ithaca. Proudly and silently Richard listened to the evidence on his trial. It touched only on such points as would afterwards be most material for inculcation of poor Warwick. In the end he was asked what he had to plead, wherefore judgment should not pass upon him—but he was bid to be brief, and to beware not to use any language derogatory to the high and mighty Prince, Henry, king of these realms. A smile curled his lips at this admonition, and with even a playful air he said, “My very good Lord, I ask for nothing, save that a little mercy be extended to the memory of my gracious uncle, my Lord of Gloucester, who was no child-murderer.”

At the word he was interrupted, and sentence pronounced. As the ignominious words were said, Richard, who from the beginning had abstracted himself in prayer, so that his ears might be as little wounded as possible by an

unconquerable impulse put his hand where his sword might have been. Its absence and the clanking of his chains recalled him to the truth, and he muttered the words, "Oh, basely murdered York!" in recollection of his unhappy grandfather, to whose miserable fate he often recurred, as an example of suffering and patience.

Thus ended the bitter scene; one he had long expected, for which he had nerved himself. During nearly the whole, his look was as if he were absent from it. But who could read the secrets of his heart, while his impassive eyes and lips were no index to the agonies that tortured it?

CHAPTER XXI.

So young to go

Under the obscure, cold, rotting, wormy ground !

To be nailed down into a narrow place ;

To see no more sweet sunshine ; hear no more

Blithe voice of living thing ; muse not again

Upon familiar thoughts, sad, yet thus lost—

How fearful !

SHELLEY.

“ Speak to me, Lady, sister, speak ! your frozen glances frighten me ; your fingers as I touch them, have no resistance or life. Dearest and best, do not desert me, speak but one word, my own White Rose.”

Katherine raised her blue eyes heavenward : as if the effort were too great, they fell again on the ground, as she said, in a voice so low that

Elizabeth could hardly catch the sound; "I must see him once again before he dies."

"And you shall, dearest, I promise you. Cheer up, my love, not to affright him by looks like these. Indeed you shall see him, and I will also; he shall know that he has a sister's prayers, a sister's love. Patience, sweet Kate, but a little patience."

"Would I could sleep till then!" replied the miserable wife: and she covered her face with her hands, as if to shut out the light of day, and sighed bitterly.

When our purposes are inflexible, how do insurmountable obstacles break before our strong will? so that often it seems that we are more inconstant than fortune, and that with perseverance we might attain the sum of our desires. The Queen, the weak, despised, powerless Queen, resolved to gratify this one last wish of her beloved friend. Many a motive urged her to it; compassion, love, and even self-interest. At first she almost despaired; while Richard continued in the Tower it was impossible; but on the twenty-third of November,

two days before the destined termination of his fatal tragedy, on the day of the trial of poor Warwick, he was removed to the prison of Ludgate. And here, at dead of night, Henry, being absent inspecting his new palace at Richmond, Elizabeth, timid, trembling, shrinking now at the last—and Katherine, far too absorbed in one thought to dream of fear, took boat at Westminster, and were rowed along the dark, cold tide to Blackfriars. They were silent; the Queen clasped her friend's hand, which was chill and deathlike. Elizabeth trembled, accustomed to hope for, to seek refuge in her stronger mind, she felt deserted, now that she, engrossed by passion, silent and still, the wife of the near prey of death, could remember only that yet for a little while he was alive. Their short voyage seemed endless; still the oars splashed, still the boat glided, and yet they arrived not. Could it last for ever—with one hope ever in view, never to know that he was *dead*? The thought passed into Katherine's mind with the sluggish but absorbing tenacity of intense grief, and at last possessed it so

wholly, that it was with a scream of fear that she found herself close to shore.

The necessity of motion restored Katherine to her presence of mind, while it deprived the Queen of the little courage she possessed. Something was to be said and done: Elizabeth forgot what; but Katherine spoke in a clear, though unnatural voice, and followed their conductors with a firm step, supporting the faltering Queen. Yet she addressed her not; her energies were wound up to achieve one thing; more than that it would have cost her her life to attempt. They reached the dark walls of the prison; a door was unbarred, and they were admitted. The Princess passed the threshold with a quick step, as if overjoyed thus to be nearer her wish. Elizabeth paused, trembled, and almost wished to turn back.

They crossed the high-walled court, and passed through several dark galleries: it seemed as if they would never arrive; and yet both started, when they stopped at the door of a cell.

“Does his Grace expect us?” asked Katherine.

The turnkey looked as not understanding; but their guide, who was the chaplain of the jail, answered,

“He does not. Fearful that some impediment might intervene, unwilling to disturb by a disappointed hope a soul so near its heavenly home, I have told him nothing.”

“Gently, then,” said Katherine, “let our speech be low.”

The door opened, and displayed the son of the proud, luxurious Edward, sleeping on a wretched mattress, chained to the pavement. The ladies entered alone. Katherine glided noiselessly to his side; her first act was to bend down her cheek, till his breath disturbed the ringlet that rested on it; thus to assure herself that life was within his lips. Elizabeth fixed her earnest gaze on him, to discover if in aught he reminded her of the blue-eyed, flaxen-haired bridegroom of Anne Mowbray: he more resembled a picture of her father in his early manhood; and then again her aunt the Duchess of Burgundy, whom she had seen just before King Edward's death. He lay there in placid ease; thought and feeling absent; yet in that

form resided the soul of Richard; a bright casket containing a priceless gem: no flaw—no token of weakness or decay. He lived—and at a word would come back from oblivion to her world of love. A few days and that form would still exist in all its fair proportion. But veil it quick; he is not there! unholy and false is the philosophy, that teaches us that that lurid mockery was the thing we loved.

And now he woke, almost to joy; yet sadness succeeded quickly to rapture. “My poor girl,” he said, “weep not for me; weep for thyself rather; a rose grafted on a thorn. The degraded and disgraced claims no such sorrow.”

Katherine replied by an embrace; by laying her beautiful head on his bosom, and listening with forgetful, delicious extacy to the throbbings of his beating heart.

“Be not unjust to thyself,” said a soft, unknown voice, breaking the silence of the lovers; “be not false to thy house. We are a devoted race, my brother; but we are proud even to the last.”

“This is a new miracle,” cried the Prince.

“Who, except this sainted one, will claim kindred with Tudor’s enemy?”

“Tudor’s wife; your sister. Do you not remember Elizabeth?”

As these words were said, Katherine, who appeared to have accomplished her utmost wish, sat beside him, her arms around him, her sweet head reposing, her eyes closed. Kissing her soft hair and fair brow, York disentwined her clasped hands, and rose, addressing the trembling Queen:

“My sister,” he said, “you do a deed which calls for blessings from heaven upon you and yours. Till now, such was my unmanly spirit, the stigma affixed to my name, the disgrace of my ignominious death, made me odious to myself. The weakness of that thought is past; the love of this sweetest sweet, and your kindness restore me. Indeed, my sister, I am York—I am Plantagenet.”

“As such,” replied the Queen, “I ask a boon, for which, selfish as I am, I chiefly came; my brother will not deny me?”

“Trifler, this is vanity. I can give nothing.”

“ Oh, every thing,” exclaimed the lady ; “ years of peace, almost of happiness, in exchange for a life of bitter loneliness and suffering. You, my dearest Lord, know the celestial goodness of that fair White Rose ; in adversity and peril *you* have known it ;—*I* amidst the cold deceits of a court. She has vowed never to return to her native land, to bear a questioned name among her peers ; or perhaps to be forced by her father to change it for one abhorred. Though she must hate me as the wife of her injurer, yet where can she better be than with your sister ? She would leave me, for I am Tudor’s Queen ; bid her stay with her Lord’s nearest kinswoman ; tell her that we will beguile the long years of our too young life with talk of you ; tell her that no where will she find one so ready to bless your name as poor Elizabeth ; implore her, ah ! on my knees do I implore you to bid her not to leave me, a dead-alive, a miserable, bereft creature, such as I was ere I knew her love.”

“ What say’st thou, sweet ? ” asked Richard ; “ am I yet monarch of that soft heart ? Will my single subject obey the crownless Richard ? ”

Katherine stretched out her hand to the Queen, who was at York's feet, in token of compliance: she could not speak; it was a mighty effort to press the fingers of Elizabeth slightly; who said,

“Before heaven and your dear Lord, I claim your promise; you are mine for ever.”

“A precious gift, my Bess; was it not thus my infant lips called you? I trust her to you; and so the sting of death is blunted. Yet let not too fond a lingering on one passed away, tarnish the bright hours that may yet be in store for her. Forget me, sweet ones; I am nought; a vapour which death and darkness inhales—best unremembered. Yet while I live I would ask one question—our victim-cousin, Edward of Warwick?”

Elizabeth could no longer restrain her tears as she related, that, however weak Warwick might heretofore have seemed, he appeared a Plantagenet on his trial. He disdained the insulting formalities of law, where the bitter Lancastrian, Lord Oxford, was the interpreter of justice; he at once declared himself guilty of

plotting to put the English crown on the head of his cousin, the Duke of York. He was quickly interrupted, and condemned to be beheaded.

“Generous, unhappy Warwick. Ah! is not life a misery, when all of good, except ye two angelic creatures, die.”

The signal was now given that the interview must end. Elizabeth wept. Katherine, still voiceless, clung closer to her husband; while he nerved himself to support these gentle spirits with manly fortitude. One long, affectionate kiss he pressed on the mouth of Katherine; and as her roseate lips yet asked another, another and another followed; their lives mingled with their breath.

“We meet in Paradise, mine only one,” whispered York; “through our Lord’s mercy assuredly we meet there.”

He unwound her arms; he placed her in those of Elizabeth. “Cherish, preserve her. Bless thee, my sister; thee, and thy children. They at least will, by my death, reign rightfully over this kingdom. Farewell!”

He kissed her hand, and then again the life-

less hand of his wife, who stood a breathing statue. She had not spoken; no words could utter her despair. Another moment, and their fair forms were gone; the door of his cell was closed; and, but for the presence of the God he worshipped, Richard was left alone to solitude and night.

CONCLUSION.

Love is too young to know what conscience is,
 Yet who knows not, Conscience is born of Love?
 Then, gentle cheater, urge not my amiss,
 Lest guilty of my faults thy sweet self prove.

SHAKSPEARE.

* TIME, we are told by all philosophers, is the sole medicine for grief. Yet there are immortal

* I do not know how far these concluding pages may be deemed superfluous: the character of the Lady Katherine Gordon is a favourite of mine, and yet many will be inclined to censure her abode in Henry the Seventh's court, and other acts of her after life. I desired therefore that she should speak for herself, and show how her conduct, subsequent to her husband's death, was in accordance with the devotion and fidelity with which she attended his fortunes during his life.

regrets which must endure while we exist. Those who have met with one, with whose every feeling and thought their thoughts and feelings were entwined, who knew of no divided past, nor could imagine a solitary futurity, to them what balm can time bring? Time, the giver of hours, months, and years, each one how barren, contemptible, and heavy to bear to the bereft!

There was no consolation for Katherine, which could make her for a moment forget that her present existence was but the lees of life, the spiritless remnants of a nectareous draught. But Katherine was gentle, good, and resigned; she lived on, dispensing pleasure, adored by all who approached her, and gladly hailing any visitation of happiness, which might reach one whose affections were too fondly linked to the grave.

Years had passed, since the last act of the sad tragedy which destroyed her dearest hopes. She accompanied the Queen of England on a progress made by her, and they remained one night at Eastwell Place, the seat of Sir Thomas Moyle. There was a park, and

stately pleasure-grounds belonging to the house, undulating uplands, shady copses, and sweet running brooks to diversify the scene. A crowd of the noble and the gay were there, and the royal party was unusually mirthful; fireworks, masks and dances were employed; and all joyously gave themselves up to the spirit of the hour. The chords of a harp, a well-known air, first awoke in the bosom of the White Rose that languid melancholy, so near allied to pleasure, so close a neighbour to pain. By degrees memory grew busy in her brain; she could no longer endure the laughter of her companions, their sallies, nay, nor their kindness; for Elizabeth perceived her dear friend's change of countenance, and was approaching, when Katherine, making her a sign not to remark her, stole away, and entering a straggling path, wandered on, struggling with the tears, which the beauty of the evening, and the very hilarity which just before she had shared, caused to gush, warm and fast from her eyes.

She reached a little streamlet, and was passing forward, when she became aware of the

presence of another in the scene. A labouring man, of middle age, (but his hair was grey, and flowed on his shoulders,) was seated on the rustic masonry of a rude fountain, reading; he rose when he saw the lady, and doffed his hat; she, with the cordial sweetness that accompanied her slightest acts, gave him an evening benison. Her voice, her look, her cordial manner moved to its depths a heart lately hardened against her. As she passed on, the man followed hastily, "Lady!" he cried.

It struck the Princess that this poor fellow had some request to prefer to his master, and that he wished to do it through her medium; she turned with a benevolent smile, "Can I do aught for you, good friend?"

His voice failed him; he stretched out his hand, which held his book, she took it: the tiny volume was no stranger to her eyes; as if a ghost had looked on her lonely watching, she trembled and grew pale, when she opened it, and saw written in fair characters, by a hand now dust, "La Rosa Blanca." The rustic knelt before her.

“Lady, Queen!” he cried, “Sole relic of the unforgotten! is it thus that we meet?”

“My cousin Edmund!”

“Hush! breathe not even to the silent woods the unknown word. Fancy not that I am Plantagenet; for all that was of worth in him you name, died when the White Rose scattered its leaves upon the unworthy earth.”

“Ah! would that we had all died in that hour,” cried Katherine: “why, when the ungrateful world lost him, did not all the good and true die also, so that they might no longer suffer!”

Plantagenet cast a reproachful glance on her, as he said, “Happy indeed are those who die. O God! when I think of the many and the beloved, who, a few years ago, were alive around me, and among whose low silent graves I now walk alone, methinks I am dead; it is but the ghost of him you knew that lingers upon earth.”

“Yes, they are all gone,” said the Princess; “all who linked me to the past, and were portions of my Richard’s being. They are gone from before me. But are they truly no more, or do they live, like you, brooding over the lost,

disdaining to communicate with one who lives but to remember them? Of the death of several I have heard; but often I have longed with bitterness to hear of you, and of the Spanish maiden, Monina de Faro.”

“Her gentle soul,” replied Edmund, “has flown to join him for whom she lived and died. It is now two years since I was assured of this. A friar, whom I had formerly well known, visited Lisbon; and I entreated him to enquire for De Faro and his child. The commander of the Adalid was almost forgotten; at last, an old sailor was found, who remembered that, some years before, he had sailed for the Western Indies, and was never heard of more.”

“His daughter accompanied him?”

“In the churchyard of a convent, placed high among the foldings of those lovely hills which overlook Lisbon, he was shown an humble tomb, half defaced; her dear sacred name is carved upon it, and half the date, the 14—, which showed that she died before the century began, in which we now live.* She could not have

* Richard was put to death in 1499.

survived our Prince many months; probably she died before him, nor ever knew the worst pang of all, the ignominy linked with his beloved memory."

"And you, my kinsman, how long have you wedded penury and labour in this obscure disguise?"

"Penury and labour," said Plantagenet, "are not confined to the humble occupation I have adopted. I was made poor by the death-blow of my hopes; and my chief labour is to tame my heart to resignation to the will of God. Obscure you may indeed call my destination. Would I could shroud it in tenfold night! Dearer to me is the silence and loneliness of this spot, where I can for ever commune undisturbed with the past, than a pomp which is stained by the blood of him, whom once I thought we all loved so well.

"When—oh, let me not name the frightful thing!—when he was gone for ever, the whole world was to me but one miserable tomb. I groped in darkness, misery my mate, eternal lamentation my sole delight. The first thing that brought

peace to my soul; was the beauty of this visible universe. When God permitted, for some inscrutable purpose, moral evil to be showered so plentifully over us, he gave us a thousand resources out of ourselves in compensation. If I mingled with my fellow-creatures, how dearly should I miss him, who was single among men for goodness, wisdom, and heaven-born nobility of soul. My heart sickens at the evil things that usurp the shape of humanity, and dare deem themselves of the same species: I turn from all, loathing. But here there is no change, no falling-off, no loss of beauty and of good: these glades, these copses, the seasons' change and elemental ministrations, are for ever the same—the type of their Maker in glory and in good. The loveliness of earth saves me from despair: the majesty of Heaven imparts aspiring hope. I bare my bosom to the breeze, and my wretched heart throbs less wildly. I drink in the balmy sweetness of the hour, and repose again on the goodness of my Creator.

“ Yours is another existence, Lady; you need the adulation of the crowd—the luxury of

palaces; you purchase these, even by communing with the murderer of him who deserved a dearer recompense at your hands."

Katherine smiled sadly at these last words, which betrayed the thought that rankled in her kinsman's mind. "I thank you," she replied, "for your details. I will not blame you for the false judgment you pass on me. When years and quiet thought have brought you back from the tempest of emotion that shakes you, you will read my heart better, and know that it is still faithfully devoted to him I have lost."

"Ah! say those words again," cried Plantagenet, "and teach me to believe them. I would give my right hand to approve your conduct, to love and reverence you once again."

"Will you have patience with me then, while I strive to justify myself?"

"Oh, speak! My life, my soul's salvation, to hang upon your words."

Katherine raised her blue eyes to the now starry sky, as if to adjure that to be the witness of her innocent thoughts; and then she said,

“ We are all, dear Cousin, impelled by our nature to make ourselves the central point of the universe. Even those, who as they fancy, sacrifice themselves for the love of God, do it more truly for love of themselves; and the followers of virtue too often see their duties through the obscure and deceptive medium, which their own single, individual feelings create. Yet we have one unerring guide; one given us at our birth, and which He who died on the cross for us, taught us to understand and to appreciate, commanding us to make it the master-law of our lives. Call it love, charity, or sympathy; it is the best, the angelic portion of us. It teaches us to feel pain at others pain, joy in their joy. The more entirely we mingle our emotions with those of others, making our well or ill being depend on theirs, the more completely do we cast away selfishness, and approach the perfection of our nature.

“ You are going to answer, perhaps to refute me—do not. Remember I am a woman, with a woman’s tutelage in my early years, a woman’s education in the world, which is that of the

heart—alas! for us—not of the head. I have no school-learning, no logic—but simply the voice of my own soul which speaks within me.

“ I try to forget, you force me back upon myself. You attack; and you beseech me to defend myself. So to do, I must dwell upon the sentiments of a heart, which is human, and therefore faulty, but which has neither guile nor malice in it.

“ In my father’s house—and when I wandered with my beloved outcast, I had no difficulty in perceiving, nor—God was so gracious to me—in fulfilling my duties. For, in childhood I was cherished and favoured by all; and when I became a wife, it was no wonder that I should love and idolize the most single-hearted, generous, and kindly being that ever trod the earth. To give myself away to him—to be a part of him—to feel that we were an harmonious one in this discordant world, was a happiness that falls to the lot of few:—defeat, chains, imprisonment—all these were but shows; the reality was deep in our hearts, invulnerable by any tyrant less remorseless than death. If this

life were the sum and boundary of our being, I had possessed the consummation and fulfilment of happiness.

“ But we are taught to believe that our existence here is but the stepping stone to another beyond, and that ‘death is the beginning of life.’ When we reach the summit of our desires, then we fall, and death comes to destroy. He was lost to me, my glory, and my good ! Little could I avail to him now. The caresses, love, and watchful care, the obedience and the heart’s sacrifice, of a poor thing who groped darkling upon earth, could avail nought to a spirit in Paradise. I was forced to feel that I was alone : and, as to me, to love is to exist, so in that dark hour, in the gaspings of my agony, I felt that I must die, if for ever divided from him who possessed my affections.

“ Years have passed since then. If grief kills us not, we kill it. Not that I cease to grieve ; for each hour, revealing to me how excelling and matchless the being was, who once was mine, but renews the pang with which I deplore my

alien state upon earth. But such is God's will; I am doomed to a divided existence, and I submit. Meanwhile I am human; and human affections are the native, luxuriant growth of a heart, whose weakness it is, too eagerly, and too fondly, to seek objects on whom to expend its yearnings. My Richard's last act was to bestow me on his sister: it were impious to retract a gift made by the dying. We wept together—how long, and how bitterly—the loss of our loved one; and then together we turned to fulfil our duties. She had children; they became as dear to me as to her. Margaret I cherish as the betrothed bride of my ever dear cousin, the King of Scotland; and, when I endeavour to foster the many virtues nature has implanted in the noble mind of Prince Arthur, I am fulfilling, methinks, a task grateful in the eyes of Richard, thus doing my part to bestow on the England he loved, a sovereign who will repair the usurper's crimes, and bestow happiness on the realm.

“Nor is this all—despise me if you will, but I confess that I regard others among those with

whom I associate, with a clinging affection that forbids me to separate myself from them. Did I not love the noble and good, even as he did, while Richard lived? Does he not now, in his heavenly abode, love them? And must my living heart be stone, because that dear form is dust, which was the medium of my communication with his spirit? Where I see suffering, there I must bring my mite for its relief. We are not deities to bestow in impassive benevolence. We give, because we love—and the meshes of that sweet web, which mutual good offices and sympathy weaves, entangle and enthral me, and force me to pain and pleasure, and to every variety of emotion which is the portion of those whom it holds within its folds.

“ I quarrel not with—I admire—those who can be good and benevolent, and yet keep their hearts to themselves, the shrine of worship for God, an haven which no wind can enter. I am not one of these, and yet take no shame therefore: I feel my many weaknesses, and know that some of these form a part of my strength; the

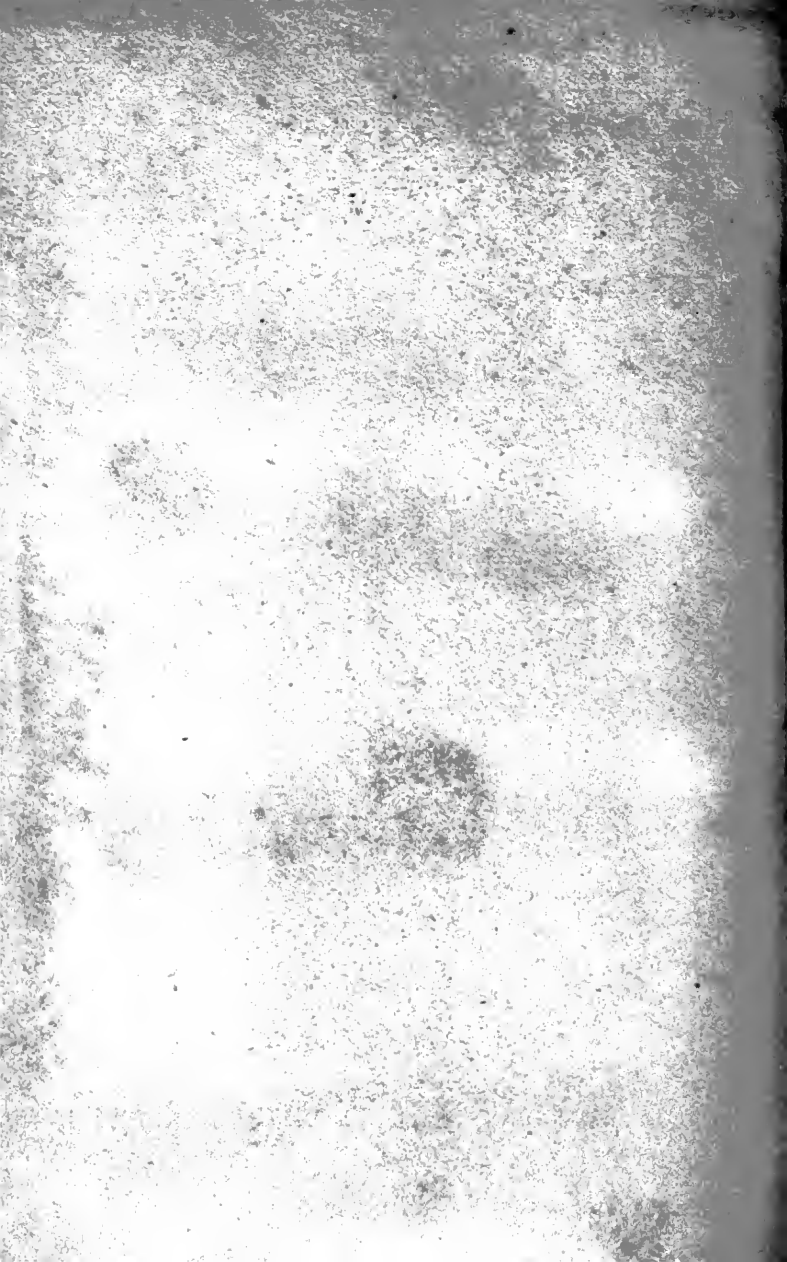
reviled part of our nature being a portion of that which elevates us to the godlike. My reason, my sense of duty, my conscientious observance of its dictates, you will set up as the better part; but I venerate also the freer impulses of our souls. My passions, my susceptible imagination, my faltering dependence on others, my clinging to the sense of joy—this makes an integral part of Katherine, nor the worst part of her. When my soul quits this ‘bower of flesh,’ these leaves and flowers, which are perhaps the growth of it, may decay and die. I know not; as it is, I am content to be an imperfect creature, so that I never lose the ennobling attribute of my species, the constant endeavour to be more perfect.

“ I do not blame you, my Cousin, for seeking repose in solitude after much endurance. But unquiet should I feel in the unreplying loneliness, which forms your peace. I must love and be loved. I must feel that my dear and chosen friends are happier through me. When I have wandered out of myself in my endeavour

to shed pleasure around, I must again return laden with the gathered sweets on which I feed and live. Permit this to be, unblamed—permit a heart whose sufferings have been, and are, so many and so bitter, to reap what joy it can from the strong necessity it feels to be sympathized with—to love.”

THE END.





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