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Kenilworth

By Sir Walter Scott, Bart.

Toronto: The Copp, Clark Co., Limited
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KENILWORTH

BY SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

LONDON: ADAM & CHARLES BLACK
1891
INTRODUCTION

A certain degree of success, real or supposed, in the delineation of Queen Mary, naturally induced the Author to attempt something similar respecting 'her sister and her foe,' the celebrated Elizabeth. He will not, however, pretend to have approached the task with the same feelings; for the candid Robertson himself confesses having felt the prejudices with which a Scotsman is tempted to regard the subject; and what no liberal historian avows, a poor romance-writer does not discern. But he hopes the influence of a prejudice, almost as natural to him as his native air, will not be found to have greatly affected the sketch he has attempted of England's Elizabeth. I have endeavoured to describe her as at once a high-minded sovereign, and a female of passionate feelings, hesitating between the sense of her rank and the duty she owed her subjects on the one hand, and, on the other, her attachment to a nobleman who, in external qualifications at least, amply merited her favour. The interest of the story is thrown upon that period when the sudden death of the first Countess of Leicester seemed to open to the ambition of her husband the opportunity of sharing the crown of his sovereign.

It is possible that slander, which very seldom favours the memories of persons in exalted stations, may have blackened the character of Leicester with darker shades than really belonged to it. But the almost general voice of the times attached the most foul suspicions to the death of the unfortunate countess, more especially as it took place so very opportunely for the indulgence of her lover's ambition. If we can trust Ascham's Antiquities of Berkshire, there was but too much ground for the traditions which charge Leicester with the murder of his wife. In the following extract of the passage the reader will find the authority I had for the story of romance.

*At the west end of the church is the ruins of a manor, anciently belonging (as a cell or place of
Waverley Novels

There is a great love story here. It is the story of...
CUMNOR HALL.

The dews of summer night did fall;  
The moon (sweet regent of the sky)  
Silvered the walls of Cumnor Hall,  
And many an oak that grew thereby.

Now sought was heaved beneath the skies  
The sounds of busy life were still,  
Save an unhappy lady's sighs;  
That issued from that lonely pile.

"Leicester," she cried, "is this thy love  
That thou so oft hast sworn to me,  
To leave me in this lonely grove,  
Immured in shameful privacy?"

"No more thou comest with lover's speed,  
Thy once beloved bride to see;  
But she alive, or she dead,  
I fear, stern Earl, is the same to thee.

Not so the usage I received  
When happy in my father's hall;  
No faithless husband then me grieved,  
No chilling fears did me appall.

"I rose up with the cheerful morn,  
No darken'd shade, no cloud my eye;  
And, like the bird that hants the thorn,  
So merrily sung the long-drown.

If that my beauty is but small,  
Among court ladies all despised,  
Wry didst thou rend it from that hall,  
Where (scornful Earl) it well was prized?

And when you first to me made suit,  
How fair I was you oft would say!  
And, proud of conquest—pluck'd the fruit,  
Then left the blossom to decay.

"Yes! I now neglected and despised,  
The rose is pale,—the lily's dead:—  
But he that once their charming so prized,  
Is sure the cause those charms are fled.

"For know, when sick'ning grief doth press,  
And tender love's requit with scorn,  
The sweetest beauty will decay—  
What flow'ret can endure the storm?"

"At court, I'm told, is beauty's throne,  
Where every lady's passing rare;  
That eastern flow'rs, that shame the sun,  
Are not so glowing, not so fair.

Then, Earl, why didst thou leave the beds  
Where roses and where lilies vie,  
To seek a primrose, whose pale shades  
Must sicken—when those gaules are by?

"Mong rural beauties I was one,  
Among the fields wild flow'rs are fair;  
Some country swain might me have won,  
And thought my safety was no rare.

But, Leicester, (or I much am wrong),  
Or 'tis not beauty lures thy vows:  
Rather ambition's gilded crown  
Makes thee forget thy humble spouse.

Then, Leicester, why, again I plead  
The injured surely may repine,  
Why didst thou wed a country maid,  
When some fair princess might be thine?

"Why didst thou praise my humble charms,  
And, oh! then leave them to decay?  
Why didst thou win me to thy arms,  
Then leave me to mourn the long-drown day?"

"The village maidens of the plain  
Salute me lowly as they go;  
Envious they mark my silken train,  
Nor think a countess can have woes.

"The simple nymphs! they little know  
How far more happy their estate:—  
—To smile for joy—than sigh for woe—  
—To be content—than to be great.

How far less best am I than them,  
Daily to pine and weep with care!  
Like the poor plant that, from its stem  
Divided—feels the chilling air.

"Nor cruel Earl! can I enjoy  
The humble charms of solitude;  
Yours minions proud my peace destroy  
By sullen frowns or prating rude.

"Last night, as I chamber'd to stray,  
The village death-bell smote my ear;  
They didst the evil, and seem'd to say,  
"Countess, prepare—thy end is near!"

"And now, while happy peasants sleep,  
Here I sit lonely and forlorn;  
No hour to soothe me as I weep,  
Save Phoebus on yonther hill.

"My spirits flag—my hopes decay—  
Still that dread death-bell suites my ear;  
And many a howling seems to say,  
"Countess, prepare—thy end is near!"

Thus sore and sad that lady grieve'd  
In Cumnor Hall so low and drear;  
And many a heartfelt sigh she heave'd,  
And let fall many a bitter tear.

And ere the dawn of day appear'd,  
In Cumnor Hall, so lone and drear,  
Full many a piercing scream was heard,  
And many a cry of mortal fear.

The death-bell thrice was heard to ring,  
An aerial voice was heard to call,  
And thrice the raven flipp'd its wing  
Around the towers of Cumnor Hall.

The mournful howl'd at village door,  
The cocks were shatter'd on the green;  
Woe was the hour—fore never more  
That hapless countess e'er was seen!

And in that hour now no more  
Is cheerful feast and sprightly hall;  
For ever since that dreary hour  
Have spirits haunttd Cumnor Hall.

The village maidens, with fearful glance,  
Avoid the ancient moss-grown wall;  
Nor ever lead the merry dance  
Among the groves of Cumnor Hall.

Foll many a traveller oft hath sigh'd,  
And pensively wept the countess' fall  
As wandering onwards they've espied  
The haunted towers of Cumnor Hall.

ABBOTSFORD, 1st March 1819.
CUMMEN HALL or PLACE.

[As a valuable work, by Mr. Allard, on Peony Reboart, the Earl of Leicester, and Kentishworth, 5vo, London 1870, the author says that Cumnor Place was originally one of the country seats of the Abbots of Abingdon, and that, on the dissolution of the monasteries, it was granted by Henry VIII. to his physician, George Owen. At Owen's death in 1531, it was bought by Anthony Foster, and was occupied by him for several years; and at his demise it passed into the hands of the Earl of Leicester. The Place ultimately became the property of Lord Abingdon.]

"For a long period," says Mr. Allard, "Cumnor was deserted; the recollection of Amy Dudley's melancholy end was revived amongst the ignorant villagers, whose imaginations conjured up forms and horrors before un-

heard of, and hence arose the legendary tales that have descended to the present time. Decay followed fast on description, and, with the aid of the wanton and mischievous, before a century had rolled away it had become almost a ruin."

"A few fine elms scattered here and there are all that is left to aid in realising the former picturesque appearance of this retreat, where we are privileged to sympathise with suffering innocence and blighted affection."
CHAPTER I.

I am an innkeeper, and know my grounds,
And study them; Brain o' man, I study them.
I must have jovial guests to drive my ploughs,
And whistling boys to bring my harvests home,
Or I shall hear no sails twack.

THE NEW INN.

It is the privilege of tale-tellers to open their story in an inn, the free rendezvous of all travellers, and where the humour of each displays itself without ceremony or restraint. This is especially suitable when the scene is laid during the old days of merry England, when the guests were in some sort not merely the inmates, but the messmates and temporary companions of mine host, who was usually a personage of privileged freedom, comely presence, and good humour. Patronized by him, the characters of the company were placed in ready contrast; and they seldom failed, during the emptying of a shalloped pot, to throw off reserve, and present themselves to each other, and to their landlord, with the freedom of old acquaintance.

The village of Cumnor, within three or four miles of Oxford, boasted, during the eighteenth year of Queen Elizabeth, an excellent inn of the old stamp, conducted, or rather ruled, by Giles Gosling, a man of goodly person, and of somewhat round belly; fifty years of age and upwards, moderate in his reckonings, prompt in his payments, having a cellar of sound liquor, a ready wit, and a pretty daughter. Since the days of old Harry Bulle of the Tabbard in Southwark, no one had excelled Giles Gosling in the power of pleasing his guests of every description; and so great was his fame, that to have been in Cumnor, without wetting a cup at the bonnie Black Bear, would have been to avouch one's self utterly indifferent to reputation as a traveller. A country fellow might as well return from London without looking in the face of majesty. The men of Cumnor were proud of their host, and their host was proud of his house, his liquor, his daughter, and himself.

It was in the court-yard of the inn which called this honest fellow landlord, that a traveller alighted in the close of the evening, gave his horse, which seemed to have made a long journey, to the hostler, and made some inquiry, which produced the following dialogue betwixt the myrmidons of the bonnie Black Bear.

"What ho! John Tapster."

"At hand, Will Hostler," replied the man of the spigot, showing himself in his costume of loose jacket, linen breeches, and green apron, half within and half without a door, which appeared to descend to an outer cellar.

"Here is a gentleman asks if you draw good ale," continued the hostler.

"Besbwew my heart else," answered the tapster, "since there are but four miles betwixt us and Oxford.—Marry, if my ale did not convince the heads of the scholars, they would soon convince my pate with the pewter flagon."

"Call you that Oxford logie?" said the stranger, who had now quitted the rein of his horse, and was advancing towards the inn door, when he was encountered by the goodly form of Giles Gosling himself.

"Is it logie you talk of, Sir Guest?" said the host; "why, then, have at you with a downright consequence—"

"The horse to the rack,
And to fire with the sack."

"Amen! with all my heart, my good host," said the stranger; "let it be a quart of your
best Canaries, and give me your good help to drink it.

'Now, you are but in your residence yet, Sir Traveller; if you call on your host for help for such a sipping matter as a quart of sack—were it a gallon, you might lack some neighbourly aid at my hand, and yet call yourself a toper.'

'Fears me not,' said the guest; 'I will do my devotion as becomes a man who finds himself within five miles of Oxford; for I am not come from the field of Mars to disredit myself amongst the followers of Minerva.'

As he spoke thus, the landlord, with much semblance of hearty welcome, ushered his guest into a large low chamber, where several persons were seated together in different parties; some drinking, some playing at cards, some conversing, and some, whose business called them to be early risers on the morning, concluding their evening meal, and conferring with the chamberlains about their night's quarters.

The entrance of a stranger procured him that general and careless sort of attention which is usually paid on such occasions, from which the following results:—dulled:—The guest was one of those who, with a well-made person, and features not in themselves unpleasing, are nevertheless so far from handsome, that, whether from the expression of their features, or the tone of their voice, or from their gait and manner, there arises, on the whole, a disinclination to their society. The stranger's address was bold, without being frank, and seemed eagerly and hastily to claim for him a degree of attention and deference, which he feared would be refused, if not instantly vindicated as his right. His attire was a riding-cloak, which, when open, displayed a hauberk of mail, and a girdle, with a buff girdle, which sustained a broadsword and a pair of pistols.

You ride well provided, sir,' said the host, looking at the weapons as he placed on the table the mauld sack which the traveller had ordered.

'Yes, mine host; I have found the use out in dangerous times, and I do not, like your modern gentlemen, turn off my followers the instant they are useless.'

Ay, sir!' said Giles Gosling; 'then you are from the Low Countries, the land of pluck and caliver.

'I have been high and low, my friend, broad and wide, far and near; but here is to thee in a cup of thy sack—fill thyself another to pledge me; and if it is less than superlative, even drink as you have browsed.'

'Less than superlative!' said Giles Gosling, drinking off the cup, and smacking his lips with an air of ineffable relish—'I know nothing of superlative, nor is there such a wine at the Three Cranes, in the Vintry, to my knowledge; but if you find better than that in the sherry, or in the Canary's either, I would I may never touch either pot or penny more. Why, hold it up betwixt you and the light, you shall see the little motes dance in the golden liquid like dust in the sunbeam. But I would rather draw wine for ten clowns than one traveller. I trust your honour likes the wine?'

'It is neat and comfortable, mine host; but to know good liquor, you should drink where the vine grows. Trust me, your Spaniard is too wise a man to send you the very soul of the grape. Why, this now, which you account so choice, was common but as a cup of bastard at the Groyme, or at Port Saint Mary's. You should travel, mine host, if you would be deep in the mysteries of the butt and jottle-pot.'

In troth, Signior Guest,' said Giles Gosling, 'if I were to travel only that I might be discontented with that which I can get at home, methinks I should go but on a fool's errand. Besides, I warrant you, there is many a fair man who can turn his nose up at good drink without ever having been out of the smoke of Old England; and so ever granercy mine own fireside.'

'This is but a mean mind of yours, mine host,' said the stranger; 'I warrant me, all your town's folk do not think so basely. You have gallants among you, I dare undertake, that have made the Virginia voyage, or taken a turn in the Low Countries at least. Come, engulge your memory. Have you no friends in foreign parts that you would gladely give tidings of?'

'Troth, sir, not I,' answered the host, 'saving Robin of Drysandford was shot at the siege of the Drill. The devil take the caliver that fired the ball, for a thunder lad never filled a cup at midnight. But he is dead and gone, and I know not a soldier, or a traveller, who is a soldier's mate, that I would give a peal of codling for.'

'By the mass, that is strange. What! so many of our brave English hearts are abroad, and you, who seem to be a man of mark, have no friend, no kinsman, among them!'

'Nay, if you speak of kinsmen,' answered Gosling, 'I have one wild slip of a kinsman, who left me in the last year of Queen Mary; but he is better lost than found.'

'Do not say so, friend, unless you have heard ill of him lately. Many a wild colt has turned out a noble steed. His name, I pray you?'

'Michael Lambourne,' answered the landlord of the Black Bear; 'a son of my sister's—there is little pleasure in recollecting either the name or the connection.'

'Michael Lambourne!' said the stranger, as if endeavouring to recollect himself—'What, no relation to Michael Lambourne, the gallant cavalier who behaved so bravely at the siege of Venlo, that Grave Maurice thanked him at the head of the army! Men said he was an English cavalier, and of no high extraction.'

'It could scarcely be my nephew,' said Giles Gosling, 'for he had not the courage of a ham-pardige for aught but mischief.'

'O, many a man finds courage in the wars,' replied the stranger.

'It may be,' said the landlord; 'but I would have thought our Mike more likely to lose the little he had.'

'The Michael Lambourne whom I knew,' continued the traveller, 'was a likely fellow—went always gay and well attired, and had a hawk's eye after a pretty wench.'

'Our Michael,' replied the host, 'had the look of a dog with a tail at his feet, and wore a coat, every rag of which was bidding good day to the rest.'
It is too wise a man to choose the grape.

"O, men pick up good apparel in the wars," replied the guest.

"Our Mike," answered the landlord, "was more likely to pick it up in a frippery warehouse, while the broker was looking another way; and, for the hawk's eye you talk of, his was always after my stray spoons. He was ta'poy here in this blessed house for a quarter of a year; and between misreckonings, miscarriages, mistakes, and misdemeanours, he had dwelt with me for three years longer, I might have pulled down sign, shut up house, and given the devil the key to keep."

"You would be sorry, after all," continued the traveller, "were I to tell you poor Mike Lambrine was shot at the head of his regiment at the taking of a town in Macclesfield!"

"Sorry!—it would be the blackest news I ever heard of him, since it would insure me he was not hanged. But let him pass—I doubt his end will never do such credit to his friends: were it so, I should say—(taking another cup of wine)"

"Here's God rest him, with all my heart."

"Tush, man," replied the traveller, "never fear but you will have credit by your nephew yet, especially if he be the Michael Lambrine whom I knew, and loved very nearly, or altogether, as I was myself. Can you tell me no mark by which I could judge whether they be the same?"

"Faith, none that I can think of," answered Giles Gosling, "unless that our Mike had the gallows branded on his left shoulder for stealing a sliced candle-cup from Dame Sarah of Hogsheitch."

"Now, there you lie like a knife, uncle," said the stranger, slipping aside his ruff, and turning down the sleeve of his doublet from his neck and shoulder; "by this good day, my shoulder is as unscarred as thine own.

"What, Mike, boy—Mike!—exclaimed the host;—'and of it thou in good earnest! Nay, I have judged so for this half hour; for I knew no other person would have ta'en half the interest in thee. But, Mike, an thy shoulder be unscarred as thou sayest, thou must own that Goodman Thomas, the hangman, was merciful in his office, and stamped thee with a cold iron.""

"Tush, uncle—truce with your jests. Keep them to season your sour ale, and let us see what hearty welcome thou wilt give a kinsman who has rolled the world around for eighteen years; who has seen the sun set where it rises, and has travelled till the west has become the east."

"Thou hast brought back one traveller's gift with thee, Mike, as well see; and that was what thou least didst need to travel for. I remember well, among thine other qualities, there was no crediting a word which came from thy mouth."

"Here's an unbelieving pagan for you, gentle-

ment!" said Michael Lambrunbe, turning to those who witnessed this strange interview between uncle and nephew, some of whom, being natives of the village, were no strangers to his juvenile

wildness. "This may be called saying a Cummer fatted calf for me with a vengeance. But, uncle, I come not from the huts and swine-trough, and I care not for thy welcome or no welcome; I carry that with me will make me welcome, wend where I will."

So saying, he pulled out a purse of gold, indifferent well filled, the sight of which produced a visible effect upon the company. Some shook their heads, and whispered to each other, while one or two of the less scrupulous speedily began to recollect him as a school-companion, or a

kinsman, or so forth. On the other hand, two or three grave, sedate-looking persons shook their heads, and left the inn, hinting that, if Giles Gosling wished to continue to thrive, he should turn his thriftless, godless nephew adrift again as soon as he could. Gosling demeaned himself no otherwise than he was much of the same opinion; for even the sight of the gold made less impression upon the honest gentleman than it usually doth upon one of his calling."

"Kinsman Michael," he said, "put up thy purse. My sister's son shall be called to no reckoning in my house for supper or lodging; and I reckon thou wilt hardly wish to stay longer where thou art even but too well known.

"For that matter, uncle," replied the traveller, "I shall consult my own needs and conveniences. Meantime, I wish to give the supper and sleeping up to those good townsmen, who are not too proud to remember Mike Lambrune, the 'sister's boy, and you will let me have entertain-

ment for my money, so—if not, it is but a short two months' walk to the Hare and Thorough, and I trust our neighbours will not grudge going thus far with me."

"Nay, Mike," replied his uncle, "as eighteen years have goved thy head, and I trust thou art somewhat amended in thy conditions, thou shalt not leave my house at this hour, and shall n'en have whatever in reason you list to call for. But I would know that that purser of thine, which thou vapoured of, were as well come by it as it seems well filled."

"Here is an infidel for you, my good neigh-

bours," said Lamborne, again appealing to the audience. "Here's a fellow will rip up his kins-

man's follicles of a good score of years' standing—

And for the godly sirs, I have been where it grew, and was to be had for the gathering. In the New World have I been, man—in the El-

orado, where urchins play at cherry-pit with diamonds, and country wenches thread rubies for necklaces, instead of rowan-tree berries; where the pantiles are made of pure gold, and the paving-stones of virgin silver.

"By my credit, friend Mike," said young Laurence Goldthred, the cutting mercer of Abing-

don, 'that were a likely coast to trade to. And what may lawns, eypresses, and ribands fetch, where gold is so plenty?"

"O, the profit were unutterable," replied Lamborne, "especially when a handsome young merchant bears the pack himself; for the holies of that elime be bona-rolas, and, being them-

selves somewhat sunburnt, they catch fire like tinder at a fresh complacency like thine, with a head of hair inclined to be red."

"I would I might trade thither," said the merchant, chuckling.

"Why, and so then mayest," said Michael; "that is, if thou art the same brisk boy who was partner with me at robbed the Abbot's orchard—"tis but a little touch of alchemy to disguise thee thy house and land into ready money, and that ready money into a tall ship, with sails, anchors.
cords, and all things conforming: then chap, thy warehouse of goods under latches, put fifty good fellows on deck, with myself to command them, and so hoist to sail, and hey for the New World!

Thou hast taught him a secret, kissman," said Giles Godling, "to decoct, an that be the word, his pond into a penny, and his wets into a thread,—Take a fool's advice, neighbour Goldthorpe. Tempt not the sea, for she is a devourer.

Let cards and cockatrices do their worst, thy father's bales may hide a hanging for a year or two, ere thou comest to the Spital; but the sea hath a bottomless appetite,—she would swallow the wealth of Lombard Street in a morning, as easily as I would a poached egg and a cup of clary—and for my kissman's Eldorado, never trust me if I do not believe he has found it in the pocketholes of some such gulls as myself.—But take no snuff in the nose about it: fall to and welcome, for here comes the supper, and I heartily bestow it on all that will take share, in honour of my hopeful nephew's return, always trusting that he has come home another man.—In faith, kissman, thou art as like my poor sister as ever was son to mother.

"Not quite so like old Benedict Lambourne, her husband, though," said the mercer, nodding and smiling. "Deed thou remember, Mike, what thou saidst when the schoolmaster's ferule was over thee for striking up thy father's crotchets:—it is a wise child, saidst thou, that knows its own father.

"Dr. Braham laughed till he cried again, and his crying saved yours."

"Well, he made it up to me many a day after," said Lambourne; "and how is the worthy pedagogue?"

"Dead," said Giles Godling, "this many a day since.

That he is," said the clerk of the parish: "I sat by his bed the whilst. —He passed away in a blessed frame, "Mortis—mortem suam et peculii."—These were his latest words, and he just added, "My last verb is conjugated."

"Well, peace be with him," said Mike; "he owes me nothing.

"No, truly," replied Goldthorpe; "and every lash which he laid on thee, he always was wont to say, he spared the hangman a labour.

One would have thought he left him little to the then," said the clerk; "and yet Goodman Thong had no sinecure of it with our friend, after all.

"Volo a Dios!" exclaimed Lambourne, his patience appearing to fail him, as he snatched his broad shovel hat from the table and placed it on his head, so that the shadow gave the sinister expression of a Spanish bravo to eyes and features which naturally boded nothing pleasant. "Harkee, my masters—all is fair among friends, and under the roof; and I have already permitted my worthy uncle here, and all of you, to use your pleasures with the frolics of my nanage. But I carry sword and dagger, my good friends, and can use them lightly too upon occasion—I have learned to be dangerous upon points of honour ever since I served the Spanish and I would not have you provoke me to the degree of falling foul of.

"Why, what would you do?" said the clerk.

"Ay, sir, what would you do?" said the mercer, bustling up on the other side of the table.

"Sift your throat, and spell your Sunday's quaverings, Sir Clerk," said Lambourne fiercely; "engage you, my worshipful dealer in flimsey saracenet, into one of your own bales."

"Come, come," said the host, interrupting, "I will have no swaggering here.—Nephew, it will become you best to Thường no haste to take offence; and you, gentlemen, will do well to remember that, if you are in an inn, still you are the innkeeper's guests, and should spare the honour of his family.—I protest your silly broils make me as obstreperous as yourself; for yonder sits my silent guest, as I call him, who hath been my two days' inmates, and hath never spoken a word, save to ask for his food and his reckoning—gives no more trouble than a very pleasant—puts his job like a prince royal—looks but at the sum-total of the reckoning, and does not know what day he shall go away. O, 'tis a jewel of a guest! and yet, hang-dog that I am, I have suffered him to sit by himself like a castaway in yonder obscure nook, without so much as asking him to take his pipe or sup along with us. It was but the right goodrow of my invidelity, were we to set off to the Hare and Taper before the night grows older."

With his white napkin gracefully arranged over his left arm, his velvet cap laid aside for the moment, and his best silver flagon in his right hand, mine host walked up to the solitary guest upon whom he mentioned, and thereby turned upon him the eyes of the assembled company.

He was a man aged between twenty-five and thirty, rather above the middle size, dressed with plainness and decency, yet bearing an air of ease, which almost amounted to dignity, and which seemed to infer that his habit was rather beneath his rank. His countenance was reserved and thoughtful, with dark hair and dark eyes—the last, upon any momentary excitement, sparkled with uncommon visture, but on other occasions had the same meditative and tranquil cast which was exhibited by his features. The busy crowd of the little village had been employed in discovering his name and quality, as well as his business at Cumnor; but nothing had transpired on either subject which could lead to its gratification. Giles Godling, head-borough of the place, and a steady friend to Queen Elizabeth and the Protestant religion, was the last inclined to suspect his guest of being a Jesuit; or seminary priest, of whom Rome and Spain sent at this time so many to grace the galls in England. But it was scarce possible to retain such a precocious against a guest who gave so little trouble, paid his reckoning so regularly, and who, as proposed, as it seemed, to make a considerable stay at the bennis Black Bear.

"Papists," argued Giles Godling, "are a pinching, close-laced race, and this man would have found a lodging with the wealthy squire at Besselsley, or with the rich knight at Cotton, or in some other of their Roman dens, instead of living in a house of public entertainment, as every honest man and good Christian should.

Besides, on Fridays, he stuck by the salt beef and egg... the cocked hat of the host.

How sweetly he kept his good manners in a decked house, with his hair was given a turn, and to a shine. The strains of the intelliging the host's little daughter was good poetry and unison to his ear.

"By reputation, high house, the lining of the Commons, Mr. Cumnor's evil manner, and the clapping of brows that are almost before my eyes—suns and to very beauty, and let me be said—"

"By nature and such tropics; and will not we wish to have her with Helen, in a glorious procession, Come, sit down to the host, and let the looks of the ladies serve for a grace?

"Why, there is no more in his own house a bonnet? As long as he has thought, an hour and to very beauty, and let me be said—"

'By nature and such tropics; and will not we wish to have her with Helen, in a glorious procession, Come, sit down to the host, and let the looks of the ladies serve for a grace?"
And carrot, though there were good spitchcocked eggs on the board as ever were taken out of the Isin.'

Honest Giles, therefore, satisfied himself that his guest was no Roman, and with all comely courtesy besought the stranger to pledge him in a draught of the cool tankard, and honour with his attention a small collection which he was giving to his nephew, in honour of his return, and, as he verily hoped, of his reformation. The stranger at first shook his head, as if declining the courtesy; but mine host proceeded to urge him with arguments founded on the credit of his house, and the construction which the good people of Cumnor might put upon such an uncouth humour.

"Is my faith, sir," he said, "it touches my reputation that men should be merry in my house, and we have ill tongues amongst us at Cumnor (as be there be not?) who put an evil mark on men who pull their hat over their brows as if they were looking back to the days that are gone, instead of enjoying the billest sunny weather which God hath sent us in the sweet looks of our sovereign mistress, Queen Elizabeth, whom Heaven long bless and preserve!"

"Why, mine host," answered the stranger, "there is no tradition, in a man's enjoying his own thoughts, under the shade of his own bonnet? You have lived in the world twice as long as I have, and you must know there are thoughts that will haunt us in spite of ourselves, and to which it is in vain to say, begone, and let me be merry."

"By my sooth," answered Giles Gosling, "if such troublous thoughts haunt your mind, and will not get them gone for plain English, we will have one of Father Bacon's pupils from Oxford to conjure them away with logick and with Hebrew—Or, what say you to laying them in a glorious red sea of claret, my noble guest? Come, sir, excuse my freedom. I am an old host, and must have my talk. This peevish humour of melancholy sits ill upon you; it suits not with a sleek boot, a hat of a trim block, a fresh cloak, and a full purse—A pike on it, send it off to those who have their legs swathed with a hay-wisp, their heads thatched with a felt bonnet, their jerkin as thin as a cobweb, and their yinch without ever a cross to keep the fiend melancholy from dancing in it. Cheer up sir, and by this good liquor we will banish thee from the joys of the bishopric company into the mists of melancholy and the land of little ease. Here be a set of good fellows willing to be merry, do not scowl upon them like the devil looking over Lincoln."

"You say well, my worthy host," said the guest, with a melancholy smile, which melancholy as it was, gave a very pleasant expression to his countenance—"You say well, my jovial friend; and they that are moody like myself, should not disturb the mirth of others who are happy—I will drink a round with your guests with all my heart, rather than he termed a martess."

So saying, he arose and joined the company, who, encouraged by the prospect and example of Michael Lambourn, and consisting chiefly of persons much disposed to profit by the opportunity of a merry meal at the expense of their landlord, had already made some inroads upon the limits of temperance, as was evident from the tones in which Michael inquired after his old acquaintances in the town, and the busts of laughter with which each answer was received. Giles Gosling himself was somewhat scandalised at the obstreperous nature of their mirth, especially as he involuntarily felt some respect for his unknown guest. He paused, therefore, at some distance from the table occupied by these noisy revellers, and began to make a sort of apology for their licence.

"You would think," he said, "to hear these fellows talk, that there was not one of them who had not been bred to live by Stand and Deliver; and yet to-morrow you will find them a set of as painstaking mechanics, and so forth, as ever cut an inch of short measure, or paid a letter of change in light c hungry over a counter. The meaning there wears his hat away, over a shagged head of hair, which looks like a curvy water-dog's back, goes unbridled, wears his cloak on one side, and affects a ruthlessly vapouring humour—when in his shop at Abington, he is, from his flat cap to his glistening shoes, as precise in his apparel as if he was named for mayor. He talks of breaking parks, and taking the highway, in such fashion that you would think he haunted every night betwixt Hounslow and London; when in fact he may be found sound asleep on his feather-bed, with a candle placed beside him on one side, and a Bible on the other, to fright away the goblins."

And your nephew, mine host, this same Michael Lambourn, who is lord of the feast—is he, too, such a would-be ruffler as the rest of them?

"Why, there you push me hard," said the host; "my nephew is my nephew, and though he was a desperate fick of yore, yet Mike may have mended like other folks, you wit—and I would not have you think all I said of him, even now, was strict speech—I know the wag all the while, and wished to slack his heels from him—and now, sir, by what name shall I present my worshipful guest to these gallants?"

"Marry, mine host," replied the stranger, "you may call me Tressilian."

"Tressilian!" answered my host of the Bear; "a worthy name; and, as I think, of Cornish lineage; for what says the south proverb—"

"By Pol, Tre, and Pen, You may know the Cornish men."

Shall I say the worthy Master Tressilian of Cornwall?

"Say no more than I have given you warrant for, mine host, and so shall you be sure you speak no more than is true. A man may have one of those honourable prefaces to his name, yet be born far from Saint Michael's Mount."

Mine host pushed his curiosity no further, but presented Master Tressilian to his nephew's company, who, as one after exchange of salutations, and drinking to the health of their new companion, entered into the conversation in which he found them engaged, seasoning it with many an intervening pledge.
CHAPTER II.

Talk you of young Master Lancelot! MERCHANT OF VENICE.

AFTER some brief interval, Master Goldthred, at the earliest instigation of mine host, and the joyous concurrence of his guests, indulged the company with the following morse of melody:

Of all the birds on bush or tree,
Commend me to the caste,
Since he may best ensample be
To those the cap that trod.
For when the sun hath left the west,
He chooses the tree that he loves the best,
And he whom up his song, and he laughs at his jest;
Then though hours be late, and weather foul,
We'll drink to the health of the bonnie, bonnie owl.

The lark is but a bumpkin foul,
He sleeps in his nest till morn;
But my blessing upon the jolly owl,
That all night blows be's horn.
Then up with your cup though you stagger in speech,
And match my eyes to catch till you swagger and scooch,
And drink till you wink, my merry men each;
For though hours be late, and weather be foul,
We'll drink to the health of the bonnie, bonnie owl.

'There is savour in this, my hearts,' said Michael, when the merer had finished his song, 'and some good-ness seems left among you yet—but what a bead-roll you have read me of old comrades, and to every man's name tucked some ill-omened motto! And so Swashing Will of Wallingford hath bid us good-night.'

'If he died the death of a fat back,' said one of the party, 'being shot with a crossbow bolt, by old Thatcham, the duke's stout park-keeper at Donnington Castle.'

' Ay, ay, he always loved venison well,' replied Michael, 'and a cup of claret to boot—and so here's one to his memory. Do me right, my masters.'

When the health of this departed worthy had been duly honoured, Lambourne proceeded to inquire after Prince of Padworth.

'Pranced off—made immortal ten years since,' said the merer; 'marry, sir, Oxford Castle and Goodman Thong, and a tenpenny-worth of cord, best know how.'

'What, so they hung poor Prince high and dry? so much for loving to walk by moonlight—a cup to his memory, my masters—all merry fellows like moonlight. What has become of Hal with the plume?—he who lived near Vattenborough, and worn the long feather—I forget his name.'

'What, Hal Hamspeed!' replied the merer.

'Why, you may remember, he was a sort of a gentleman, and would meddle in State matters, and so he got into the mire about the Duke of Norfolk's matter those two or three years since, fled the country with a pursuivant's warrant at his heels, and has never since been heard of.'

'Nay, after these banalls,' said Michael Lambourne, 'I need hardly inquire after Tony Foster; for when ropes, and crossbow shafts, and pursuivants' warrants, and such-like gear, were so rife, Tony could hardly escape them.'

'Which Tony Foster mean you?' asked the innkeeper.

'Why, he they called Tony Fire-the-Fagot, because he brought a light to kindle the pile round Latimer and Ridley, when the wind blew out Jack Thong's torch, and no man else would give him light for love or money.'

'Tony Foster lives and thrives,' said the host.

'But, kinsman, I would not have you call him Tony Fire-the-Fagot, if you would not provoke the state.'

'How! is he grown ashamed on't!' said Lambourne; 'why, he was wont to boast of it, and say he liked as well to see a roasted heretic as a roasted ox.'

'Ay, but, kinsman, that was in Mary's time,' replied the landlord, 'when Tony's father was reeve here to the Abbot of Abingdon. But since that, Tony married a pure precision, and is as good a Protestant, I warrant you, as the best.'

'And looks grave, and holds his head high, and scorns his old companions,' said the merer.

'For he had prospered, I warrant him,' said Lambourne; 'for ever when a man hath got nobles of his own, he keeps out of the way of those whose exchequers lie to other men's purchase.'

'Prospered, quotha!' said the merer; 'why, you remember Cummor Place, the old mansion-house beside the churchyard!'

'By the same token, I robbed the orchard three times—what of that?—It was the old Abbot's residence when there was plague or sickness at Abingdon.'

'Ay,' said the host, 'but that has been long over; and Anthony Foster hath a right in it, and lives there by some grant from a great courtier, who had the church-lands from the crown; and there he dwells, and has as little to do with any poor wight in Cummor, as if he were himself a belted knight.'

'Nay, the merer said, 'it is not altogether pride in Tony neither—there is a fair lady in the case, and Tony will scarce let the light of day look on her.'

'How!' said Tressilian, who now for the first time interfered in their conversation; 'did ye not say this Foster was married, and to a preciation?'

'Married he was, and to as bitter a precision as ever ate flesh in Lent; and a cat-and-dog life she led with Tony, as men said. But she is dead, rest be with her, and Tony hath but a slip of a daughter—so it is thought he means to wed this stranger, that men keep such a coil about.'

'And why so?—I mean, why do they keep a coil about her!' said Tressilian.

'Why, I vot not,' answered the host, 'except that she says she is as beautiful as an angel, and no one knows whence she comes, and every one wishes to know why she is kept so closely mewed up. For my part, never saw her—yet, I think, Master Goldthred!'

'That have, old boy,' said the merer.

'Look you, I was riding lithier from Abingdon—I passed under the east orid window of the old mansion, where all the old saints and histories and such-like are painted.—It was not the common path I took, but through the park; for the postern-door was upon the latch, and I thought I might take the privilege of an old comrade to ride across the trees, both
and she will never leave thy old tricks.'

'Not so,' said the mercer, with a smiling laugh: 'not altogether so—but curiosity, thou knowest, and a strain of compassion within,—for the poor young lady sees nothing from mor to mor but Tony Foster, with his scowling black brows, his buff's head, and his bony legs.'

And then would whimsically show her a dapper body, in a silken jerkin—a thing like a shortlegged hen's, in a corseted boot, and a round, stumpier, what-she-back sort of a countenance, set off with a velvet bonnet, a Turkey feather, and gilded brooch! Ah, jolly mercur, they who have good wine are fond to show them! Come, gentle，《 not the least of the way—here's to long spurs, short boots, bonnets, and empty sacks!

'Nay, now you are jealous of me, Mike,' said Goldthried; 'and yet my luck was but what might have happened to thee, or any man.'

'Narly, confound these misprisions!' retorted Lambourne; 'thou wouldst not compare thy puddling face and arsonet manners to a gentleman and a soldier—

'Nay, my good sir,' said Tressilian, 'let me beseech you—will not interrupt the gallant citizen; methinks he tells his tale so well, I could hearken to him till midnight.'

'Ver's more of your favour than of my desert,' answered Master Goldthried; 'but since I give you pleasure, worthy Master Tressilian, I shall proceed, mugge all the gibes and quips of this valiant soldier, who, peradventure, hath had more ellis than crowns in the Lowlands.'—And so, sir, as I passed under the great painted window, leaving my rein loose on my ambling palfrey's neck, partly for mine ease, and partly that I might have the more leisure to peer about,

'I hear it my dear lady in the light of day how for the first occasion; 'did ye ever see a precioun throst so stinking in the stock and to a prouder life, that to every precision so sick and dog life But she is a nevther such but a slip in her gait means to wed them into the corn of cell about.'

'So that they keep a throst, except a sick throst is an angel, and every one in every one cloesiely mowed as you have, I am no friend to the mercer.'

From Abingdon to the bow of the old manor house was not the park; through the park; through the park; I saw the edge of an old throst on the trees, both

'I did not ask you of her attire, sir,' said Tressilian, who had shown some impatience during their conversation, 'but of her complexion—the colour of her hair, her features.'

'Touching her complexion,' answered the mercer, 'I am not so special certain; but I marked that she had an ivory handle cut only in hand;—and then again, as to the colour of her hair, why, I can warrant, he it were what it might, that she wore above it a net of green silk, parcel twisted with gold.'

'A most mercer-like memory,' said Lambourne; 'the gentleman asks him of the lady's beauty, and he talks of her fine clothes.'

'I tell thee,' said the mercer, somewhat disconcerted, 'I had little time to look at her; for just as I was about to give her the good time of day, and for that purpose had puckered my features with a smile—'

'Like those of a jackanape simpering at a chestnut,' said Michael Lambourne.

'—Up started of a sudden,' continued Goldthried, without heeding the interruption, 'Tony Foster himself, with a cudgel in his hand—'

And broke thy head across, I hope, for thine impertinence, said the entertainer.

'That were more easily done than done,' answered Goldthried indignantly; 'no, no—there was no breaking of heads—it's true, he advanced his cudgel, and spoke of laying on, and asked why I did not keep the public road, and suchlike; and I would have knocked him over the pate handomely for his pains, only for the lady's presence, who might have swooned, for what I know.'

'Now, out upon thee for a faint-hearted slave,' said Lambourne; 'what adventures knight ever thought of the lady's terror, when he went to thwack giant, dragon, or magician, in her presence, and for her deliverance?—But why talk to thee of dragons, who would be driven back by a dragon-fly! There thou hast missed the rarest opportunity!'

'Take it thyself, then, bully Mike,' answered Goldthried—'Yonder is the enchanted manor, and the dragon, and the lady, all at thy service, if thou dost venture on them.'

'Why, so I would have a quart of sack,' said the soldier—'Or stay—I am foolishly out of my hand—will thou let a piece of Holland against these five angels, that I go not up to the Hall tomorrow, and force Tony Foster to introduce me to his fair guest!'

'I accept thy wager,' said the mercer; 'and think, though thou hadst even the impudence of the devil, I shall gain on thee this bout. Our landlord here shall hold stakes, and I will stake down gold till I send the linen.'

'I will hold stakes and no other such matter,' said Gosling. 'Good now, my kinsman, drink your wine in quiet, and let such ventures alone. I promise you, Master Foster hath interest enough to lay you up in lavender at the Castle of Oxford, or to get your legs made acquainted with the town-stocks.'

'That would be but renewing an old intimacy; for Mike's shins and the town's wooden pinfold have been well known to each other ere now,' said the mercer; 'but he shall not budge from his wager, unless he means to pay forfeit.'

'Forfeit! I' said Lambourne; 'I seem it. I value Tony Foster's wrath no more than a shelled
Waverley Novels

Pea-cod; and I will visit his Lindabradies,* by Saint George, he be willing or no!

"I would gladly pay your drab in the risk, sir," said Tressilian, "to be permitted to accompany you on the adventure.

"In what would that advantage you, sir?" answered Lambourne.

"In nothing, sir," said Tressilian, "unless to mark the skill and valour with which you conduct yourself. I am a traveller, who seeks for strange encounters and uncommon passages, as the knights of yore did after adventures and feats of arms.

"Nay, if it pleases you to see a trout tickled," answered Lambourne, "I care not how many witnesses my skill. And so here I drink success to your enterprise; and he that will not pledge his on his knees is a rascal, and I will cut his legs off by the garters."

The draught which Michael Lambourne took upon this occasion had been preceded by so many others, that reason tottered on her throne. He swore one or two incoherent oaths at the mercur, who refused, reasonably enough, to pledge him to a sentiment which inferred the loss of his own wager.

"Wilt thou chop logic with me," said Lambourne, "thou knave, with no more brains than a skin of ravelled silk? By Heaven, I will cut thee into fifty yards of galloon lace!"

But, as he attempted to draw his sword for this doughty purpose, Michael Lambourne was seized upon by the tapster and the chamberlain, and conveyed to his own apartment, there to sleep himself sober at his leisure.

The party then broke up, and the guests took their leave; much more to the contentment of mine host than of some of the company, who were unwilling to quit good liquor, when it was to be had for free cost, so long as they were able to sit by it. They were, however, compelled to remove; and go at length they did, leaving Gosling and Tressilian in the empty apartment.

"By my faith," said theformer, "I wonder where the great folks find pleasure, when they spend their means in entertainments, and in playing mine host without sending in a reckoning.

"It is what I but rarely practise; and whenever I do, by Saint Julian, it grieves me beyond measure. Each of these empty stumps, now, which my nephew and his drunken companions have swilled off, should have been a matter of profit to one in my line, and I must set them down a dead loss. I cannot, for my heart, conceive the pleasure of noise, and nonsense, and drunkenness, and drunkards, and smut, and blasphemy, and so forth, when a man loses money instead of gaining by it. And yet many a fair estate is lost in upholding such a useless course, and that greatly contributes to the decay of publicans; for who the devil do you think would pay for drink at the Black Bear, when he can have it for nothing at my lord's or the squire's?"

Tressilian perceived that the wine had made some impression even on the seasoned brain of mine host, which was chiefly to be inferred from his declaiming against drunkenness. As he him-

Nay, I'll hold touch—the game shall be play'd out, it ne'er shall stop for me, this merry wager:

That which I say when gamsome, I'll avouch
In my most sober mood, ne'er trust me else.

**CHAPTER III.**

And how doth your kinsman, good mine host?

"I said Tressilian, when Giles Gosling first appeared in the public room on the morning following the revel which we described in the last chapter. "Is he well, and will he abide by his wager?"

"For well, sir, he started two hours since, and has visited I know not what purilities of his old companions; hath but now returned, and is at this instant breakfasting on new-laid eggs and m designed; and for his wager, I caution you as a friend to have little to do with that, or indeed aught that Mike proposes. Wherefore, I counsel you to a warm breakfast upon a custis, which shall restore the tone of the stomach; and let my nephew and Master Goldthire swagger about their wager as they list."

"It seems to me, mine host," said Tressilian, "that you know not what well to say about this kinsman of yours; and that you can neither blame nor commend him without some twinge of conscience.

"You have spoken truly, Master Tressilian," replied Giles Gosling. "There is natural affection whispering into one ear, "Giles, Giles, why wilt thou take away the good name of thy own neighbour? Wilt thou defame thy sister's son, Giles Gosling? wilt thou debauch thine own nest, dishonour thine own blood?""

"And then, again, comes Justice, and says, "Here is a worthy guest as ever came to the bonnie Black Bear; one who never challenged a reckoning'" (as I say to your face you never did, Master Tressilian—not that you have had cause). "one who knows not why he came, so far as I can see, or when he is going away; and wilt thou, being a publican, having paid scoop and lot these thirty years in the town of Cumnor, and being at this instant head-

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*Lindabradies, a female of doubtful reputation.*
brough, wilt thou suffer this guest of guests, this man of men, this six-shotted pot (as I may say) of a traveller, to fall into the meshes of thy nephew, who is known for a sharper and a de- sperate Dick, a carver and a dice, a professor of the seven damnable sciences, if ever man took degrees in them?" No, by Heaven! I might wish, and let him catch such a small butterfly as Goldthorpe; but then, my guest, shall be fore- aught, forsooth, so thou wilt but listen to thy trusty host.

Why, mine host, thy counsel shall not be cast away; replied Tressilian; 'however, I must up- hold my share in this wager, having once passed my word to that effect. But lend me, I pray, is he, and why makes he such mystery of his female inmate?"

'Troth,' replied Gosling, 'I can add but little to what you heard last night. He was one of Queen Mary's Papists, and now he is one of Queen Elizabeth's Protestants; he was an on- hangr of the Abbot of Abingdon, and now he lives as master of the manor-house. Above all, he is poor and acute. Folk talk of private apartments in his old waste manor-house; bedizened fine enough to serve the queen, God bless her. Some men think he found a treasure in the orchard, some that he sold himself to the devil for treasure, and some that he cheated the abbot out of the church plate, which was hidden in the old manor-house at the Reformation. Rich, however, he is, and God and his conscience, with the devil perhaps besides, only know he came by it. He has sly ways, too, breaking off intercourse with all that are of the place, as if he had either some strange secret to keep, or hold himself to be made of another clay than we are. I think it likely my kinsman and he will quarrel, if Mike thrust his acquaintance on him; and I am sorry that you, my worthy Master Tressilian, will still think of going in my nephew's company.'

Tressilian again answered him that he would proceed with great caution, and that he should have no fear on his account; in short, he be- stowed on him all the customary assurances with which those who are determined on a rash action are wont to parry the advice of their friends.

Meantime, the traveller accepted the landlord's invitation, and had just finished the excellent breakfast which was served to him and Gosling by pretty Cicely, the beauty of the bar, when the hero of the preceding night, Michael Lambourne, entered the apartment. His toilet had ap- parently cost him some labour, for his clothes, which differed from those he wore on his journey, were of the newest fashion, and put on with great attention to the display of his person.

'By my faith, uncle,' said the gallant, 'you made a wet night of it, and I feel it followed by a dry morning. I will pledge you willingly in a cup of bastard.—How, my pretty coz, Cicely! why, left you but a child in the cradle, and thou stand'st in thy velvet waistcoat, as tight a gis as England's sun shines on. Know thy friends and Cicely, and come hither, child, that I may kiss thee, and give thee my blessing.'

'Concern not yourself about Cicely, kinsman,' said Giles Gosling, 'but even let her go her way, o' God's name; for although your mother were her father's sister, yet that shall not make you and her cater-cousins.'

'Nay, uncle,' replied Lambourne, 'thinkst thou I am an invalid, and would harm those of mine own house?"

'It is for no harm that I speak, Mike,' an- swered his uncle, 'but a simple humour of pre- caution which I have. True, thou art as well guided as a snake when he casts his old slouch in the spring-time, but, for all that, thou coolest not into my Eden. I will look after mine Eve, Mike, and so content thee.—But how brave thou best, lad! To look on thee now, and compare thee with Master Tressilian here, in his sand- coloured riding-suit, who would not say that thou wert the real gentleman, and he the tajster's boy?"

'Troth, uncle,' replied Lambourne, 'no one could say so but one of your country breeding, that knows you better. I will say, and I care not who hears me, there is something about the real gentrity that few men come up to that are not born and bred to the mystery. I went not without the trick lies; but although I can enter an ordinary with as much andacity, rebuke the waiters and drawers, and loudly, drink as deep a health, swear as round an oath, and fling my gold as freely about, as any of the jingling spurs and with white feathers that are around me,—yet, hang me if I can ever catch the true grace of it, though I have previ- ed as many times. The man of the house sets me lowest at the board, and carves to the last; and the drawer says,—"Coming, friend," without any more reverence or regardful addition. But hang it, let it pass; care killed a cat. I haveيمن enough to pass the trick on Tony Fire-the-Fire-bag, and that will do for the matter in hand.'

'You hold your purpose, then, of visiting your old acquaintance?' said Tressilian to the adventurer.

'Ay, sir,' replied Lambourne; 'when stakes are made, the game must be played; that is gamster's law, all over the world. You, sir, unless my memory fails me (for I did step it somewhat too deeply in the sack-butt), took some share in my hazard.

'I propose to accompany you in your adventure,' said Tressilian, 'if you will do me so much grace as to permit me; and I have staked my share of the forfeit in the hands of our worthy host.'

'That he hath,' answered Giles Gosling, 'in as fair Harry-nobles as ever were melted into sack by a good fellow. So, luck to your enterprise, since you will needs venture on Tony Foster; but, by my credit, you had better take another draught before you depart, for your welcome at the Hall yonder will be somewhat of the driest. And if you do get into peril, be wary of taking to cold steel; but, mind for me, Giles Gosling, the head- borough, and I may be able to make something out of Tony yet, for as proud as he is.'

The nephew and kindred obeyed his uncle's hint, by taking a second powerful pull at the tankard, observing that his wit never served him so well as when he had washed his temples with a deep
morning's draught;—and they set forth together for the habitation of Anthony Foster.

The village of Cumnor is pleasantly built on a hill, and in a wooded park closely adjacent was situated the ancient mansion occupied at this time by Anthony Foster, of which the ruins may be traced. The park was then full of large trees, and, in particular, of ancient and mighty oaks, which stretched their giant arms over the high walls surrounding the demesne, thus giving it a melancholy, sequestered, and monastic appearance. The entrance to the park lay through an old-fashioned gateway in the outer wall, the door of which was formed of two huge oak leaves, thickly studded with nails, like the gate of an old town.

'Ve shall be finely helped up here,' said Michael Lambourne, looking at the gateway and gate, 'if this fellow's suspicious humour should refuse us admission altogether, as it is like he may, in case this linskey-wolsley fellow of a merchant's visit to his premises has disquieted him. But no,' he added, pulling the huge gate, which gave way, 'the door stands invitingly open, and here we are within the forbidden ground, without other impediment than the passive resistance of a heavy oak door, moving on rusty hinges."

They stood now in an avenue overshadowed by such old trees as we have described, and which had been bordered at one time by high hedges of yew and holly. But these, having been untrimmed for many years, had run up into great bushes, or rather dwarf-trees, and now encroached with their dark and melanchoy boughs upon the road which they once had screened. The avenue itself was grown up with grass, and, in one or two places, interrupted by piles of withered bruswood, which had been lopped from the trees out down in the neighbouring park, and was here stacked for drying. Formal walks and avenues, which, at different points, crossed this principal approach, were, in like manner, choked up and interrupted by piles of bruswood and billets, and in other places by underbrush and brambles. Besides the general effect of deolation which is so strongly impressed, whenever we behold the contrivances of man wasted and obliterated by neglect, and witness the marks of social life effaced gradually by the influence of vegetation, the size of the trees, and the outrunning extent of their boughs, diffused a gloom over the scene, even when the sun was at the highest, and made a proportional impression on the mind of those who visited it. This was felt even by Michael Lambourne, however alien his habits were to receiving any impressions, exciting from things which addressed themselves immediately to his passions.

'This wood is as dark as a wolf's mouth,' said he to Tressilian, as they walked together slowly along the solitary and broken approach, and had just come in sight of the monastic front of the old mansion, with its shafted windows, brick walls overgrown with ivy and creeping shrubs, and twisted stalks of chimneyies of heavy stone-work. 'And yet, continued Lambourne, 'it is fairly done on the part of Foster; for since he chooses not visitors, it is right to keep his place in a fashion that will invite few to trespass

upon his privacy. But had he been the Anthony Foster once knew him, those sturdy oaks had long since become the property of some honest woodmonger, and the monascky-close here had looked lighter at midnight than it now does at noon, while Foster played fast and loose with the price, in some cunning corner in the purses of Whitefriars.'

'Was he then such an unthrift?' asked Tressilian.

'He was,' answered Lambourne, 'like the rest of us, no saint, and no savior. But what I liked worst of Tony was, that he loved to take his pleasure by himself, and grudged, as men say, every drop of water that went past his own mill. I have known him deal with such measures of wine when he was alone, as I would not have ventured on with aid of the best toper in Berkshire;—that, and some way towards superstition, which, no man by his temperance, rendered him unworthy the company of a good fellow. And now he has earthened himself here, in a den just befitting such a fox as himself.'

'May I ask you, Master Lambourne,' said Tressilian, 'since your old companion's humour jumps so little with your own, whereby you are so desirous to renew acquaintance with him?

'And may I ask you, in return, Master Tressilian,' answered Lambourne, 'wherefore you have shown yourself so desirous to accompany me on this party?'

'I told you my motive,' said Tressilian, 'when I took share in your wager,—it was simple curiosity.'

'A sty you there now!' answered Lambourne; 'see how you civil and discreet gentlemen think to use us who live by the free exercise of our wits! Had I answered your question by saying that it was simple curiosity which led me to visit my old comrade Anthony Foster, I warrant I had set it down for an evasion, and a turn of my trade. But any answer, I suppose, must serve my turn.'

'And wherefore should not bare curiosity,' said Tressilian, 'be a sufficient reason for my taking this walk with you?'

'O, count yourself, sir,' replied Lambourne; 'you cannot put the change on me so easy as you think, for I have lived among the quick-stirring spirits of the age too long, to swallow chaff for grain. You are a gentleman of birth and breeding—your bearing makes it good; of civil habits and fair reputation—your manners declare it, and my uncle avouches it; and yet you associate yourself with a sort of scent-of-grace, as men call me; and, knowing me to be such, you make yourself my companion in a visit to a man you are a stranger to,—and all out of mere curiosity, forsooth! The excuse, if curiously balanced, would be found to want some scruples of just weight, or so.'

'If your suspicions were just,' said Tressilian, 'you have shown no confidence in me to invite or deserve mine.'

'O, if that be all, said Lambourne, 'my motives lie above water. While this gold of mine lasts,—taking out his purse, chucking it into the air, and catching it as it fell,—I will make it my pleasure, and when it is out, I must have more. Now, if this my curious Lady of the
‘Not to-day or perchance to-morrow,’ answered Lambourne; ‘I expect not to catch the old jack till I have disposed my ground baits handomely. But I know something more of his affairs this morning than I did last night, and I will so use my knowledge that he shall think it were perfect than it is. Nay, without expecting either pleasure or profit, or both, I had not stepped a stride with a small manor, I can tell you; for I promise you I hold our visit not altogether without risk. But here we are, and we must make the best of it.’

While he thus spoke, they had entered a large orchard which surrounded the house on two sides, and the trees, abandoned by the care of man, were overgrown and mossy, and seemed to bear little fruit. Those which had been formerly trained as espaliers, had now resumed their natural mode of growing, and exhibited grotesque forms, partaking of the original training which they had received. The greater part of the ground, which had once been parterres and flower-gardens, was suffered in like manner to run to waste, excepting a few patches which had been dug up, and planted with ordinary pot-herbs. Some statues, which had ornamented the garden in its days of splendour, were now thrown down from their pedestals or broken in pieces; and a large summer-house, having a heavy stone front, decorated with carving, representing the life and actions of Samson, was in the same dilapidated condition.

They had just traversed this garden of the shaggard, and were within a few steps of the door of the mansion, when Lambourne had ceased speaking; a circumstance very agreeable to Tressilian, as it invited him to come hither. Lambourne knocked roundly and boldly at the huge door of the mansion, observing, at the same time, he had seen a less strong one upon a county jail. It was not until they had knocked more than once, that aged, sour-visaged domestic reconnoitred them through a small square hole in the door, well secured with bars of iron, and demanded what they wanted.

‘To speak with Master Foster instantly, on pressing business of the State,’ was the ready reply of Michael Lambourne.

‘Methinks you will find difficulty to make that good,’ said Tressilian in a whisper to his companion, while the servant went to carry the message to his master.

Tressilian replied the adventurer; ‘no soldier would go on he always to consider when and how he should come off. Let us once obtain entrance, and all will go well enough.’

In a short time the servant returned, and, drawing a careful hand both bolt and bar, opened the gate, which admitted them through an archway into a square court, surrounded by buildings. Opposite to the arch was another door, which the serving-man in like manner unlocked, and thus introduced them into a stone-paved passage, where there was but little furniture, and that of the rudest and most ancient fashion. The windows were tall and ample, reaching almost to the roof of the room, which was composed of black oak; those opening to the quadrangle were obscured by the height of the surrounding buildings, and, as they were traversed with massive slates of solid stonework, and thickly painted with religious devices and scenes taken from Scripture history, by no means admitted light in proportion to their size; and what did penetrate through them, partook of the dark and gloomy tinge of the stained glasses.

Tressilian and his guide had time enough to observe all these particulars, for they waited some space in the apartment ere the present master of the mansion at length made his appearance. Prepared as he was to see an insipid and ill-looking person, the ugliness of Anthony Foster considerably exceeded what Tressilian had anticipated. He was of middle stature, built strongly, but so clumsily as to border on deformity, and to give all his motions the ungainly awkwardness of a left-legged and left-handed man. His hair, in arranging which men at that time, as at present, were very nice and curious, instead of being carefully cleaned and disposed into short curls, or else set up on end, as is represented in old paintings, in a manner resembling that used by fine gentlemen of our own day, escaped in sable negligence from under a furred bonnet, and hung in elf-locks, which seemed stranglers to the comb, over his rugged brow, and around his very singular and unpossessing countenance. His keen dark eyes were deep set beneath broad and shaggy eyebrows, and, as they were usually bent on the ground, seemed as if they were themselves ashamed of the expression natural to them, and were desirous to conceal it from the observation of men. At times, however, when more intent on pleasing others, he suddenly raised them, and fixed them keenly on those with whom he conversed, they seemed to express both the ferret passions, and the power of mind which could at will suppress or disguise the intensity of inward feeling. The features which corresponded with these eyes, this form were irregular, and marked so as to be inflexibly fixed on the mind of him who had once seen them. Upon the whole, as Tressilian could not help acknowledging to himself, the Anthony Foster who now stood before them was the last person, judging from personal appearance, upon whom one would have chosen to intrude an unexpected and undesired visit. His attire was a doublet of russet leather, like those worn by the better sort of country folk, girt with a buff belt, in which was stuck on the right side a long knife or dagger, and on the other a cutlass. He raised his eyes as he entered the room, fixed a keenly penetrating glance upon his visitors, then cast them down as if counting his steps, while he advanced slowly
into the middle of the room, and said, in a low
and solemn tone of voice, 'Let my prayer, gentle
men, to tell me the cause of this visit.'
He looked as if he expected the answer from
Tressilian; so true was Lamourne's observation,
that the superior air of breeding and dignity,
shone through the disguise of an interior dress.
But it was Michael who replied to him, with the
easy familiarity of an old friend, and a tone
which seemed 'unembarrassed by any doubt of
the most cordial reception.

'Hal ! my dear friend and uncle, Tony Foster, I
exclaimed, seizing upon the unwilling hand,
and shaking it with such emphasis as almost to
address it; 'how fares it with you for many a
long year?—What have you altogether for-
gotten your friend, gossip, and playfellow, Michael
Lamourne ?'

'Michael Lamourne !' said Foster, looking at
him a moment; then dropping his eyes, and with
little ceremony extracting his hand from the
friendly grasp of the person whom he was
addressed, 'are you Michael Lamourne ?'

'Ay; sure as you are Anthony Foster,' replied
Lamourne.

'Tis well,' answered his sullen host; 'and what
may Michael Lamourne expect from his
visit hither ?'

'Esto a Deus !' answered Lamourne; 'I ex-
pected a better welcome than I am like to meet,
I think.'

'Why, thou gallows-bird—thou jail-rat—thou
friend of the hangman and his customers,' replied
Foster, 'hast thou the assurance to expect com-
tenance from any one whose neck is beyond
the compass of a Tyburn tippet ?'

'It may be with me as you say,' replied Lamour-
ne; 'and suppose I grant it to be so for
argument's sake, I were still good enough society
for mine ancient friend Anthony Fire-the-Fugit,
though he be, for the present, by some
inscrutable title, the master of Cumnor Place.'

'Hark you, Michael Lamourne,' said Foster,
'you are a gambler now, and live by the count-
of chances—Compute me the odds that I do not,
on this instant, throw you out of that window
into the dire! there.'<

'Twenty is one that you do not,' answered the
stud visitor.

And wherefore, I pray you,' demanded
Anthony Foster, setting his teeth, and compro-
mising his lips, like one who endeavours to suppress
some violent internal emotion.

'Because,' said Lamourne coolly, 'you dare
not for your life lay a finger on me. I am younger
and stronger than you, and have in me a double
portion of the fighting devil, though not, it may
be, so much in the underlimning flesh, that
finds an understanding way to his purpose—who
hides halters under his collars, and who puts
ratsbane into their porridge, as the stage-play
says.'

Foster looked at him earnestly, then turned
away, and paced the room twice, with the same
steady and considerate pace with which he had
entered it; then suddenly came back, and ex-
tended his hand to Michael Lamourne, saying,

'Be not wrath with me, good Mike; I did but
try whether thou hast parted with aught of
three old and honourable frankness, which your
enemies and haters called sanguine impudence.

'Let them call it what they will,' said Michael
Lamourne, 'it is the commonwealth we must carry
through the world with us.—It is aaggars ! I
tell thee now, mine own stock of assurance was
so small to trade upon; I was fain to take in
futton or two more of bays at every port where I
touched in the voyage of life; and I started
overboard what modesty and I had remaining,
in order to make room for the stowage.

'Nay, nay,' replied Foster, 'touching scruples
and modesty, you sailed h incro in ballast. But
who is this gallant, honest Mike—is he a
Corinthian—a cutter like thyself ?'

'Pray, know Master Tressilian, bully Lamourne,' replied Lamourne, presenting his friend
in answer to his question; 'know him in his
gentleman of many admirable qualities; and though he traffics in
my line of business, at least so far as I know,
he has, nevertheless, a just respect and admira-
tion for artists of our class. He will come to
in time, as seldom fails; but as yet he is only a
nothyg, only a prolyse, and frequents the
company of cocks of the game, as a peay fencer
does the schools of the masters, to see how a foil
is handled by the teachers of defence.

'If such be his quality, I will pray your com-
pany in another chamber, honest Mike, for what
I have to say to thee is for thy private ear—
Meanwhile, I pray you, sir, to abide us in this
apartment, and without leaving it—there be
those in this house who would be alarmed by the
sight of a stranger.'

Tressilian acquiesced, and the two worthies
left the apartment together, in which he remained
alone to await their return.*

CHAPTER IV.

Not serve two masters?—Here's a youth will try it—
Wot! serve God, yet give the devil his due:
Says grace before he dath a deed of villainy.
And returns his thanks devoutly when 'tis acted.

OLD PLAY.

The room into which the master of Cumnor
Place conducted his worthy visitor, was of
greater extent than that in which they had at
first conversed, and had yet more the appearance
of dilapidation. Large oak presses, filled with
shelves of the same wood, surrounded the room,
and, had at one time, served for the arrangement
of a numerous collection of books, many of which
yet remained, but torn and defaced, covered with
dust, deprived of their costly clasps and bindings,
and tossed together in heaps upon the shelves,
as things altogether disregarded, and abandoned
to the pleasure of every spoiler. The very presses
themselves seemed to have incurred the hatred of
those enemies of learning, who had destroyed
the volumes with which they had been here-to-
fore filled. They were in several places dis-
mantled of their shelves, and other use broken
and damaged, and were, moreover, mantled with
cowwebs, and covered with dust.

* Note B. Foster, Lamourne, and the Black Bear.
The men who wrote these books," said Lamber- 
house, looking round him, "little thought 
whose keeping these were to fall into." 

"Nor what yeoman's service they were to do 
me," quoth Anthony Foster—" the cook hath 
used them for scouring his pewter, and the 
gnome hath thought else to clean my boots with 
this many a month past to this time in the 

And yet," said Lamberhouse, "I have been in 
light where such learned commodities would 
have been deemed too good for such officers.

"Shaw, I shaw!" answered Foster; "they are 
puddish trash, every one of them;—private 

I shall not, said Lamberhouse, "I have been 
in cities where such learned commodities would 
have been deemed too good for such officers; 

"Gad-a-mercy, Master Tony Fire-the-Fagot!" 
said Lamberhouse, by way of reply. 

Foster scowled darkly at him, as he replied. 

"Dark ye, friend Mike; forget that name and 
message which it relates to, if you would not 

"Why," said Michael Lamberhouse, "you were 
glorious in the share you had in the death of 

And yet, said Anthony Foster, "be not 
over-scrupulous—be not over-greedy. 

"You shall have no cause to say so, unless you 

When a youth will try it— 

"I will say, if it is, I have a sort of 

"Thou hast come," said Lamberhouse, "as is 
true. 

"I speak peace," said Lamberhouse, "I have 
con 

From the Master of Cumnor when a youth will try it — the death's due: 

"Old Play.

The master of Cumnor was, of his own 

"Our master of Cumnor was, of his own 

"I would have you to think of that 

"In the house, in which he remained 

The Master of Cumnor was, of his own 

A youth will try it — the death's due: 

When a youth will try it — the death's due: 

Old Play.
By this light—those then art mood, as
waved languid, and yet described rather
the gentleman usher to a portion's wife, than
the follower of an ambitious courtier. Yes,
such a thing as thou wouldst make of me,
should wear a lock at his side; instead of a
pillow and might just be suspended as much
hast enough to quell a proud dame-citizen to
the hostess of Saint Anthony's, and quarrel in
her cause with any hot-tempered thread-maker
that would take the fall of her. He must
ruffle it in another sort that would walk to
court in a nobleman's train.

'O, content you, sir,' replied Foster, 'there
is a change since you knew the English world;
and there are those who can hold their way
through the holdest courses, and the most secret,
and yet never a swaggering word, or an oath, or
a profane word in their conversation.'

'That is to say,' replied Lambilour, 'they are
in a trading parliamry, to do the devil's business
without mentioning his name in the town!—Well,
I will do my best to counterfeit rather than lose
ground in this new world, since thou sayest it is
grown so precise. But, Anthony, what is the name
of this nobleman, in whose service I am to
this present?'

'Ah!' Master Michael, are you there with
your bears?' said Foster, with a grim smile; 'and this is the knowledge you pretend of my
concernments?—How know you now there is
such a person in real nature, and that I have
not been putting a jaque upon you all this time?'

'Nor that a jaque upon me, then sudden-blunted
gull!' answered Lambilour, nothing flattered;
why, dark and unready as thou think'st thyself,
I would engage in a day's space to see as clear
through thee and thy concerements, as thou
call'st them, as through the filthy horn of an
old stable lantern.'

At this moment their conversation was
interrupted by a scream from the next apartment.

'By the holy Cross of Ablingdon,' exclaimed
Anthony Foster, forgetting his Protestantism in
his alarm, 'I am a ruined man!'

So saying, he rushed into the apartment whence the scream issued, followed by Michael
Lambilour. But to account for the sounds
which interrupted their conversation, it was
necessary to receive a little way in our narrative.
It has been already observed, that when
Lambilour accompanied Foster into the library, they
left Tressilian alone in the ancient parlour. His
dark eye followed them forth of the apartment
with a glance of contempt, a part of which his
mind instantly transferred to himself for having
stood to be even for a moment their familiar
companions. 'These are the associates, Amy,—
it was thus he communed with himself,—to
which thy cruel eye,—thine unthinking and
most unmannered face. Amy, has condemned him
of whom his friends once—of other things,
and who now scorns himself. He will be scorned
by others, for the baselessness to the love of thee.'

'But I will not pursue the purpose
of the thing the object of my most
and most-devoted affection, though to me thou canst
henceforth be nothing but a thing to weep over
—till I will save thee from thy betrayer, and from
thyself—I will restore thee to thy parents—to

thy God. I cannot bid the bright star again
sparkle in the sphere it has shot from, but

A slight noise in the apartment interrupted
his reverie. He looked round, and in the beauti-
ful and kindly attire female who entered at that
instant by a side-door, he recognised the object
of his search. The first impulse arising from this
discovery urged him to conceal his face with the
collar of his cloak, until he should find a favour-
able opportunity of making himself known. But
his purpose was discovered by the young lady (she
was not above eighteen years old), who ran joy-
fully towards him, and, pulling off the cloak,
said playfully, 'Nay, my sweet friend, after I
have waited for you so long, you come not to my
bower to play the masquer—You are arraigned
of reason to true love and fond affection; and
you must stand up at the bar, and answer it
with face uncovered—how say you, guilty or not?'

'Alas, Amy!' said Tressilian, in a low and
melancholy tone, as he suffered her to draw the
mantle from his face. The sound of his voice,
and still more the unexpected sight of his face,
changed in an instant the lady's playful mood.
—She staggered back, turned as pale as death,
and put her hands before her face. Tressilian
was himself for a moment much overcome,
but seeming suddenly to remember the necessity
of using an opportunity which might not again
occur, he said in a low tone, 'Amy, fear me not.'

'Why should I fear you?' said the lady, with
drawing her hands from her beautiful face, which
was now covered with crimson,—'Why should
I fear you, Mr. Tressilian—or wherefore have you
intruded yourself into my dwelling, uninvited, sir,
and unwished for?'

'Your dwelling, Amy!' said Tressilian. 'Alas!
A prison your dwelling!—a prison guarded
by one of the most sordid of men, but not a greater
wretch than his employer!'

'This house is mine,' said Amy, 'mine while
I choose to inhabit it—If it is my pleasure to live
in seclusion, who shall gainsay me?'

'Your father, maiden,' answered Tressilian,
your brother-heard father; who despatched me
in quest of you with that authority which he
cannot exert in person. Here is his letter, which
I have made a while, whilst he blessed his pain of body, which somewhat
stunned the agony of his mind.'

'The pain!—is my father then ill?' said the
lady.

'So ill,' answered Tressilian, 'that we
must haste may not restore him to health, but
all shall be instantly prepared for your departure
the instant you yourself will give consent.'

'Tressilian,' answered the lady, 'I cannot,
I must not, I dare not leave this place. Go back
to my father—tell him I will obtain leave to see
him within twelve hours from hence. Go
back, Tressilian—he knows me well, I am happy
—happy could I think he was so—tell him not to
be afraid that I will come, and in such a manner
that all the grief Amy has given him shall be forgotten
—the poor Amy is now greater than she dare
name.—Go, good Tressilian—I have injured thee
too, but believe me have power to heal the
wounds I have caused—relieving you of a childish
heart, which was not worthy of you, and can
repeat the loss with honours and advancement.'
'Do you say this to me, Amy?—Do you offer me pages of idle complaint, for the quiet peace you have robbed me of?—But let it be so; I care not to upbraid, but to serve and to free you.

You cannot disguise it from me; you are a prisoner. Otherwise your kind heart—for it was once a kind heart—would have been already at your father's bedside. —Come, poor, deceived, unhappy maiden!—all shall be forgiven—all shall be forgotten. Fear not my importunity for what regarded our contract—it was a dream, and I have awaked. —But come—your father yet lives—Come, and one word of affection—one tear of penitence, will erase the memory of all that has passed.'

'Have I not already said, Tressilian, replied she, that I will surely come to my father, and that without further delay than is necessary to discharge other and equally binding duties?—Go, care for the news—come as sire as there is light in heaven—that is, when I obtain permission.'

'Permission!—permission to visit your father on his sick-bed, perhaps on his death-bed?' repeated Tressilian impatiently: 'and permission from whom? from that villain who, under disguise of friendship, eloped every day, of stealth and to be from thus your father's roof?—

Do him no slander, Tressilian!—He whom thou dost speck of wears a sword as sharp as thine—sharper, wain friend; for the best deeds that hast ever done in peaceful war, were as unworthy to be named with his; as thy obscure rank to match itself with the sphere he move—. Leave me! Do mine errand to my father, and when he next sends to me, let him choose a more repel force.'

'You are not to move at your command, sir,' answered the lady.

'Nay, but you must, fair lady,' replied Foster: 'excuse my freedom, but, by blood and nails, this is no time to strain courtesies—you must go to your chamber. —Mike, follow that meddling cuckold, and, as you desire to thrive, see him safely clear of the premises, while I bring his headstrong lady to reason. —Draw thy tood, man, and after him.'

'I'll follow him,' said Michael Lmbourne, and see him fairly out of Flanders—But for hurting a man I have drunk my morning's draught with, who can stand against my conscience.'

So saying, he left the apartment. —Tressilian, meanwhile, with hasty steps, pursued the first path which promised to conduct him through the wild and overgrown part in which the mansion of Foster was situated. haste and distress of mind led his steps astray, and instead of taking the avenue which led towards the village, he chose another, which, after he had pursued it for some time with a hasty and reckless step, conducted him to the other side of the demesne, where a postern-door opened through the wall, and led into the open country.

Tressilian paused an instant. It was indifferent to him by what road he left a spot so odious to his recollections; but it was probable that the postern-door was locked, and his retreat by that pass rendered impossible.'

'I must make the attempt, however,' he said to himself; 'the only means of reclaiming this lost—this miserable—this still most lovely and most

Two headslands on the Cornish coast. The expressions are proverbial.
unhappy girl—must rest in her father's appeal to the broken laws of his country—I must haste to apprise him of this heart-rending intelligence.'

As Tressilian, thus conversing with himself, approached to try some means of opening the door, or climbing over it, he perceived there was a key put into the lock from the outside. It turned round, the bolt revolved, and a cavalier who entered, muffled in his riding cloak, and wearing a slouched hat, with a drooping feather, stood at once within four yards of him who was desirous of going out. They exclaimed at once, in tones of resentment and surprise, the one 'Varney!' the other 'Tressilian!'

'What make you here?' was the stern question put by the stranger to Tressilian, when the moment of surprise was passed. 'What make you here, where your presence is neither expected nor desired?'

'Nay, Varney,' replied Tressilian, 'what make you here? Are you come to triumph over the innocence I have destroyed, as the vulture or carrion-crow comes to bolt on the lamb, whose eyes it has first plucked out?—Or are you come to encounter the merited vengeance of an honest man?—Draw, dog, and defend thyself!'

'To defend his sword as he spoke, but Varney only laid his hand on the hilt of his own, as he replied, 'Thou art mad, Tressilian—I own appearances are against me, but by every oath a priest can make, or a man can swear, Mistress Amy Roberts hath no hurt from me; and in truth I were somewhat loath to hurt you in this case—Then know'st I can fight.'

'I have heard thee say so, Varney,' replied Tressilian; 'but now, methinks, I would fain have some better evidence than thine own word.'

'That shall not be lacking, if blade and hilt be but true to me,' answered Varney; and, drawing his sword with the right hand, he threw his cloak around his left, and attacked Tressilian with a vigour which for a moment seemed to give him the advantage of the combat. But this advantage lasted not long. Tressilian added to a spirit determined on revenge, a hand and eye admirably well adapted to the use of the rapier; so that Varney, finding himself hard pressed in his turn, endeavoured to avail himself of his superior strength, by closing with his adversary. For this purpose he hazarded the receiving one of Tressilian's passes in his cloak, wrapped as it was around his arm, and ere his adversary could extricate his rapier thus entangled, he closed with him, shortening his own sword at the same time, with the purpose of despating him. But Tressilian was on his guard, and, unsheathing his poniard, parried with the blade of that weapon the stroke which would otherwise have finished the combat, and, in the struggle which followed, displayed so much address, as might have confirmed the opinion that he drew his origin from Cornwall, whose natives are such masters in the art of wrestling, as, were the games of antiquity revived, might enable them to challenge all Europe to the ring. Varney, in his ill-advised attempt, received a fall so sudden and violent, that his sword flew several paces from his hand, and, ere he could recover his feet, that of his antagonist was pointed to his throat.

'Give me the instant means of relieving the victim of thy treachery,' said Tressilian, 'or take the last book of your Creator's blessed sun!'

And while Varney, too confused or too sullen to reply, made a sudden effort to arise, his adversary drew back his arm, and would have executed his threat, but that the bow was arrested by the grasp of Michael Lambourne, who, directed by the clashing of swords, had come up just in time to save the life of Varney.

'Come, come, comrade,' said Lambourne, 'there is enough done and more than enough—put up your fox, and let us be jogging—The Black Bear grows for us.'

'Off, adjud! said Tressilian, striking himself free of Lambourne's grasp; 'darest thou come between me and mine enemy?'

'Adjut, adjud!' repeated Lambourne; 'that shall be adjudged with cold steel whenever a bowl of saek has washed out many of the morning's draught that we had together. In the meanwhile, do you see, sho—trump—begone—we are two to one.'

He spoke truth, for Varney had taken the opportunity to regain his weapon, and Tressilian perceived it was madness to pass the quarrel further against such odds. He took his parole from his side, and, taking out two gold nobles, flung them to Lambourne: 'There, caitiff, is thy morning wage—thou shalt not say thou hast been my guide unkind.'—Varney, farewell—we shall meet where there are none to come between us.' So saying, he turned round and departed through the postern-door.

Varney seemed to want the inclination, or perhaps the power (for his fall had been a severe one), to follow his retreating enemy. But he glared darkly as he disappeared, and addressed Lambourne: 'Art thou a comrade of Foster's, good fellow?'

'Swear friends, as the haft is to the knife,' replied Michael Lambourne.

'Here is a broad piece for thee—follow yonder fellow, and see where he takes it, and bring me word up to the mansion-house here. Cautions and silent, thou know, as there valieth thy threat.'

'Enough said,' replied Lambourne; 'I can draw on a scent as well as a slen!-hounds.'

'Begone then,' said Varney, sheathing his rapier; and, turning his back on Michael Lambourne, he walked slowly towards the house. Lambourne stopped but an instant to gather the nobles which his late companion had flung towards him so unmerrionously, and muttered to himself, while he put them up in his purse along with the gratuity of Varney, 'I spoke to yonder gulls of Eldorado—By Saint Anthony, there is no Eldorado for men of our stamp equal to bonnie Old England! It rains nobles, by Heaven! They lie on the grass as thick as dewdrops—you may have them for gathering. And if I have not my share of such glittering dewdrops, may my sword melt like an icicle.'
CHAPTER I.

—He was a man

Verted in the world as pilot in his compass;

The needle pointed ever in that direction

Which was his boudoir, and he spread his sails

With vantage to the edge of others' passion.

The PERSECUTOR—A TRAGEDY.

ANTHONY FOSTER was still engaged in debate

with his fair guest, who treated with scorn every

entreaty and request that she would retire to her

own apartment, when a whistle was heard at the

entrance-door of the mansion.

"We are fairly sped now," said Foster; "younder

is thy lord's signal, and what to say about the

disorder which has happened in this household,

by my knowledge, I know not. Some evil fortune

ds the hogs of that unhallowed rogue Lam-

bourn, and he has 'scaped the gallowses against

every chance, to come back and be the ruin of me!

"Peace, sir," said the lady, "and undo the gate to

your master.—My lord! my dear lord!" she then

exclaimed, hastening to the entrance of the

apartment; then added, with a voice expressive

of disappointment,—"Poo! Is it but Richard

Varney!"

"Ay, madam," said Varney, entering and saluting

the lady with a respectful obeisance, she who

returned with a careless mixture of negligence

and of displeasure; "It is but Richard Varney; but

even the last grey cloud should be acceptable,

when it lightens in the east, because it

announces the approach of the blessed sun."

"How! comes my lord hither to-night?" said the

lady, in joyful, yet startled agitation; and

Anthony Foster caught up the word, and echoed

the question. Varney replied to the lady, that

his lord proposed to attend her, and would have

proceeded with some compliment, when, running

to the door of the parlour, she called aloud,

"Janet—Janet—come to my tiring-room

instantly."

Then turning to Varney, she asked if her lord

sent any further communications to her.

This letter, honoured madam," said he, tak-

ing from his bosom a small parcel wrapped in

scarlet silk, and with a token to the queen

of his affection. With eager speed the lady

hastened to undo the silken string which sur-

rounded the little packet, and, failing to unloose

readily the knot with which it was secured, she

again called loudly on Janet, "Bring me a knife

—scissors—sharpen that may undo this elusive

knot!"

"May not my poor squire serve, honoured

madam?" said Varney, presenting a small daggier

of exquisite workmanship, which hung in his

turkey-leather sword-hilt.

"No, sir," replied the lady, rejecting the instru-

ment which he offered.—Steel poniard shall

cut no true-love knot of mine."

"It has cut many, however," said Anthony

Foster, half-aside, and looking at Varney. By

this time the knot was divested without any

other help than the heat and nimble fingers

of Janet, a simply-behaved, pretty maiden, the

daughter of Anthony Foster, who came running

at the repeated call of her mistress. A necklace

of orient pearl, the companion of a perfumed

billet, was now hastily produced from the pocket.

The lady gave the one, after a slight glance, to

the charge of her attendant, while she read, or

rather devoured, the contents of the other.

"Savourly," said Janet, gazing with admiration

at the neck-string of pearls, "the daughters of

Tyre wore no fairer neck-jewels than those—

And then the posy, "For a neck is fairer,"—each

pearl is worth a freehold.

"Each word in this dear paper is worth the

whole string, my girl—But come to my tiring-

room, girl; we must be brave, my lord comes

hither-to-night.—He bids me grace you, Master

Varney, and to me his wish is a law—I bid you

to a collation in my bower this afternoon, and

you too, Master Foster. Give orders that all is

fitting, and that suitable preparations be made

for my lord's reception to-night."

With these words she left the apartment.

"She takes state on her already," said Varney,

and distributes this favour of her presence, as

if she were already the partner of his dignity.

—Well—it is wise to practise beforehand. In the

part which fortune prepares us to play—the young

eagle must gaze at the sun, ere he soars on strong

wings to meet it."

"If holding her head aloft," said Foster, "will

keep her eyes from dazzling, I warrant you,

the dame will not stoop her crest. She will presently

soar beyond reach of my whistle, Master Varney.

I promise you, she holds me already in slight

regard,"

"It is thine own fault, thou sullen uninviting

companion," answered Varney, "who know'st

no made of control, save downright brute-force.

Canst thou not make home pleasant to her, with

music and toys? Canst thou not make the out-

doors friendly to her, with tales of golds? Thou

livest here by the churchyard, and hast not even

wit enough to raise a ghost, to scare thy

females into good discipline."

"Speak not thus, Master Varney," said Foster; "the

living I fear not, but I trifle not trost with my
dead neighbours of the churchyard. I promise

you, it requires a good heart to live so near it:

worthy Master Holforth, the afternoon's

lecturer of Saintholin's, had a sore fright

there the last time he came to visit me."

"Hold thy superstitious tongue!" answered

Varney, "and whilst thou talk'st of visiting,

answer me, how came Tressilian to be at the

tavern-door?"

"Tressilian! answered Foster; "what know

I of Tressilian?—I never heard his name."

"Why, villain, it was the very Cornish chunk

to whom old Sir Hugh Rebsort destined his

pretty Amy, and either the hot-brained fool

has come to look after his fair runaway: there

must be some order taken with him, for he

thinks he hath wrong, and is not the mean

kind that will sit down with it. Luckily he

knows not of my lord, but thinks he has only

to deal with. But how, in the field's name,
came he hither?"

"Why, with Mike Lambourne, an you must

know," answered Foster.

"And who is Mike Lambourne? demanded

Varney. By Heaven! thou wert best set up

a bush over thy door, and invite every stroker
who passes by, to see what thou shouldst keep sacred even from the sun and sky. "

"Ay! ay! this is a court-like requital of my service to you, Master Richard Varney," replied Foster; "but thou hast no right to me to seek out this fellow who has a bad sword, and an unscrupulous conscience—and was I not buying myself to find a fit man—for, thank Heaven, my acquaintance lies not amongst such companions—when, as Heaven will have it, this tall fellow, who is in all his qualities the very shuffling knave thou didst wish, came hither to fix acquaintance upon me in the plenitude of his impudence, and I admitted his claim, thinking to do you a pleasure—and now see what thanks I get for disgracing myself by converse with him!"

"And did he," said Varney, "being such a fellow as himself, only lacking, I suppose, thy present humour of hypocrisy, which lies as thin over thy head ruffianly heart as gold lacquer upon rusty iron—be he, I say, bring the saintly, sighing Tressilian in his train?"

"They came together, by Heaven!" said Foster; "and Tressilian—to speak Heaven's truth—obtained a moment's interview with our present guest, while I was talking apart with Lambourne."

"Improbable villain! we are both undone," said Varney. "She has of late been casting many a backward look to her father's halls, where her lordly lover leaves her alone. Should this preaching fool whisper to her back old perches, we were but lost then.

"No fear of that, my master," replied Anthony Foster; "she is in no mood to stoop to his lure, for she yelled out on seeing him as if an adder had stung her."

"That is good.—Canst thou get from thy daughter an inkling of what passed between them, good Foster?"

"I tell you plain, Master Varney," said Foster, "my daughter shall not enter our purposes, or walk in our paths. They may suit me well enough, who know how to repent of my misdoings; but I will not have my child's soul committed to peril either for your pleasure or my lord's. I may walk among snakes and pitch myself, because I have discretion, but I will not trust the poor lamb among them."

"Why, thou suspicious fool, I were as averse as thou art that thy baby-faced girl should enter into my plans, or walk to hell at her father's elbow. But indirectly thou mightst gain some intelligence of her."

"And so did I, Master Varney," answered Foster; "and she said her lady called out upon the sickness of her father."

"Good!" replied Varney; "that is a hint worth catching, and I will work upon it. But the country must be rid of this Tressilian—I would have cumbered no man about the matter, for I hate him like strong poison—his presence is hateful to me—and this day I had been rid of him, but that my feet slipped, when, to speak truth, had not thy comrade yonder come to my aid, and held his hand, I should have known by this time whether you and I have been treading the stain of heaven or hell."

"And you can speak thus of such a risk!" said Foster. "You keep a stout heart, Master Varney—for me, if I did not hope to live many years, and to have time for the great work of repentance, I would not go forward with you."

"O, thou shalt live as long as Methuselah," said Varney, "and amass as much wealth as Solomon; and thou shalt repent devoutly, that thy repentance shall be more famous than thy villany,—and that is a bold word. But for all this, Tressilian must be looked after. Thy ruffian yonder is gone to dog him. It concerns our fortunes, Anthony."

"Ay, ay," said Foster sullenly, "this it is to be leagued with one who knows not even much of Scripture, as that the labourer is worthy of his hire. I must, as usual, take all the trouble and risk."

"Risk! and what is the mighty risk, I pray you!" answered Varney. "This fellow will come prowling again about your demesne or into your house, and if you take him for a house-breaker, or a park-breaker, is it not most natural you should welcome him with cold steel or hot lead? Even a mastiff will pull down those who come near his kennel; and who will blame him?"

"Ay, I have mastiff's work and mastiff's wage among you," said Foster. "Here have you, Master Varney, secured a good freehold estate out of this old superstitions foundation; and I have but a poor lease of this mansion under you, voidable at your honours' pleasure."

"Ay, and thou wouldst fain convert thy leasehold into a copyhold—the thing may change to happen, Anthony Foster, if thou dost good service for it. But softly, good Anthony—it is not the lending a room or two of this old house for keeping my lord's pretty harpy—say, it is not the shutting thy doors and windows to keep her from flying off, that may deserve it. Remember, the manor and tithes are rated at the clear annual value of seventy-nine pounds five shillings and fivepence halfpenny, besides the value of the wood. Come, come, thou must be sensible; great and secret service may deserve both this and a better thing.—And now let thy knife come and pack off my hoots.—Get us some dinner and go pack off my hoots. I must visit this navi, brave in apparel, unruffled in aspect, and gay in temper."

They parted, and at the hour of noon, which was then that of dinner, they again met at their meal, Varney gaily dressed like a courtier of the time, and even Anthony Foster improved in appearance as far as dress could amend an exterior so unfavourable.

This alteration did not escape Varney. When the meal was finished, the cloth removed, and they were left to their private discourse—"Thou art gay as a goldfinch, Anthony," said Varney, looking at his host; "methinks, thou wilt whistle a jig anon—but I crave thy pardon, that would secure your ejection from the congregation of the zealous hochwits, the puerile-heard weavers, and the sanctified bakers of Abington, who let their ovens cool while their brains get heated."

"To assure you in the spirit, Master Varney," said Foster, "were I as wise as to fling sacred and precious things before sacrifice. Say, I will speak to thee in the language of the world, which he who is King of the World hath
tought thee to understand, and to profit by in no common measure.'

'Say that thou wilt, honest Toby,' replied Varney; 'for be it according to thine absurd
faith, or according to thy most villainous
practice, it cannot excuse but be rare matter to
carry this up of Allicant. This conversation
is relishing and poignant, and beats my ear;
dried meat's tongue, and all other provocatives
that give savour to good liquors.'

'Well, then, tell me,' said Anthony Foster,
'is not our good lord and master's turn better
served, and his antechamber more suitably filled
with decent, God-fearing men, who will work
his will and their own private quiet, and with
out worldly scandal, than that he should be
maned, and attended, and followed by such
open debauchers and ruffianly swordsmen as
Tideley, Killigrew, this fellow Lambique, whom
you have procure me to seek out for you, and other
such who bear the gallowes in their face and
murder in their right hand—who are a terror
to peaceable men, and a scandal to my lord's
service!'

'O, content you, good Master Anthony,' answered Varney; 'he flies that at all
manner of game must keep all kinds of hawks,
both short and long winged. The course upon
his hold is no easy one, and he must provide
himself at all points with,trusty retainers to
meet each sort of service. He must have his
gay courtier, like myself, to ride in the
presence-chamber, and to lay hand on the
hint when any disapparegment of my lord's
honour.'

'Ah,' said Foster, 'and to whisper a word for
him into a fair lady's ear, when he may not
approach her himself.'

Then,' said Varney, going on without appearing
to notice the interruption, 'he must have
his lawyers—deep subtle pioneers—to draw his
contracts, his pre-contracts, and his post-contracts,
and to find the way to make the most of
grants of church-lands and commons, and licences
for monopoly—and he must have physicians
who can spic a cup or a caudle—and he must have
his cabbalists, like Dee and Allan, for
courting up the devil—and he must hold
of cunning swordsmen, who would fight the devil when
he is raised and at the wildest—and, above all,
without prejudice to others, he must have such
godly, innocent, partisan souls as thou, honest
Anthony, who defy Satan, and do his work at
the same time.'

'You would not say, Master Varney,' said Foster,
'that our good lord and master, whom I hold
to be fulfilled in all nobleness, would use
such base and sinful means to rise, as thy speech
points at!'
She should consider," said Varney, smiling, "the true faith I owed my lord and master prevented me at first from counselling marriage—and yet I did counsel marriage when I saw she would not be satisfied without the—the sacrament, or the ceremony—which callest thou it, Anthony?

"Still she has you at need on another score," said Foster; "and I tell you that you may look to yourself in time. She would not hide her splendour in this dark lantern of an old monastic house, but would, with a kind smile, count her empresses as many.

"Very natural, very right," answered Varney; "but what have I to do with that?—she may shine through horn or through crystal at my lord's pleasure, I have ought to say against it.

"She seems that you have an ear upon that side of the beat, Master Varney," replied Foster, "and that you can pull it or not, at your good pleasure. In a word, she ascribes the secrecy and obscurity in which she is kept, to your secret counsel to my lord, and to my strict agency; and so she loves us both as a sentinelled man loves his judge and his jailor.

"She must love us better ere she leave this place," answered Varney. "If I have counselled for weighty reasons that she remain here for a season, I can also advise her being brought forth in the full bloom of her dignity. But I have need to do so, holding so near a place to my lord's person; were she mine enemy. Bear the truth in upon her as occasion offers, Anthony, and let me alone for extolling you in her ears, and exalting you in her opinion—ke me, ke thee—it is a proverb all over the world! The lady must know her friends, and be made to judge of the power they have of being her enemies—meanwhile, watch her strictly, but with all the outward observance that thy rough nature will permit. To an excellent thing that sullen look and bull-dog humour of thine; thou shouldest thank God for it, and so should my lord; for when there is aught harsh or hard-natured to be done, thou dost it as if it flowed from thine own natural doggedness, and not from orders, and so my lord escapes the scandal.—but hard—one knocks at the gate—Look out of the window—let no one enter—this were an ill night to be interrupted.

"It is we whom he spoke of before dinner," said Foster, as he looked through the casement: "it is Michael Lumbourne."

"O, admit him, by all means," said the courtier; "he comes to give some account of his guest—it imports us much to know the movements of Edmund Trevislan—Admit him, I say, but bring him not hither—I will come to you presently in the Abbott's library."

Foster left the room, and the courtier, who remained behind, paced the parlour more than once in deep thought, his arms folded on his bosom, until he saw his way to his meditations being broken by words, which he has somewhat enlarged and connected, that his soliloquy may be intelligible to the reader.

"This true," he said, suddenly stopping, and resting his right hand on the table at which they had been sitting, "this base churl hath fathom'd the very depth of my heart, and I have been unable to disguise it from him. She loves me not—I would it were as true that I loved not!—Idiot that I was, to move her in my own behalf, when wisdom bade me be a true broker to my lord!—And this fatal error has placed me more at her discretion than a wise man would willingly be at that of the best piece of painted Eve's flesh of them all. Since the hour that my policy made so perilous a slip, I cannot look at her without fear, and hate, and fondness, so strangely mingled, that I know not whether, were it at my choice, I would rather possess or ruin her. But she must not leave this retreat until I am assured on what terms we are to stand. My lord's interest is the thing of it, and mine is little if mine.

Foster and Varney remained in deep and secret conversation, when Varney was led to leave the house, and with a last look back, and a smile, he walked away.

CHAPTER VI.

The dew of summer night did fall, Silver'd the walls of Cominor Hall, And many an oak that groweth there, Mickie.

Four apartments, which occupied the western side of the old quadrangle at Cominor Hall, had been fitted up with extraordinary splendour. This had been the work of several days prior to that on which our story opened. Workmen sent from London were employed large and not permitted to leave the premises until the work was finished, and converted the apartments in that side of the building, from the dilapidated appearance of a dissolved monastic house, into the semblance of a royal palace. A mystery was observed in all these arrangements: the workmen came thither and returned by night, and all measures were taken to prevent the prying curiosity of the villagers from observing or speculating upon the changes which were taking place in the mansion of their one indigent, but new wealthy neighbour, Anthony Foster. Accordingly, the power of the ADVANCE was so far preserved that nothing got abroad but vague and uncertain reports, which were received and repeated, but without much credit being attached to them.

On the evening of which we treat, the new and highly decorated suite of rooms were, for the first time, illuminated, and that with a brilliancy*

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* This verse is the commencement of the ballad already quoted, as what suggested the novel.
which might have been visible half a dozen miles off, had not oaken shutters, carefully secured with bolt and padlock, and furnished with long curtains of silk and of velvet, deeply fringed with gold, prevented the slightest gleam of radiance without.

The principal apartment, by rents, as we have seen, were four in number, each opening into the other. Access was given to them by a large scale staircase, as they were then called, of unusual length and height, which had its landing-place at the door of an antechamber, shaped somewhat like a gallery. This apartment the abbot had used as an occasional council-room, but it was now beautifully wainscoted with dark foreign wood of a brown colour, and bearing a high polish, said to have been brought from the Western Isles, and to have been wrought in London with infinite difficulty, and much damage to the tools of the workmen. The dark colour of this finishing was relieved by the number of lights: in silver sconces, which hung against the walls, and by six large and richly-framed pictures, by the first masters of the age. A massy oak table, placed at the lower end of the apartment, served to accommodate such as chose to play at the then fashionable game of open-board; and there was at the other end an elevated gallery for the musicians or minstrels, who might be summoned to increase the festivity of the evening.

From this antechamber opened a banqueting-room of moderate size, but brilliant enough to dazzle the eyes of the spectator with the richness of its furniture. The walls, lately so bare and ghastly, were now clothed with hangings of sky-blue velvet and silver; the chairs were of ebony, richly carved, with cushions corresponding to the hangings; and the place of the silver sconces which enlightened the antechamber was supplied by a large chandelier of the same precious metal. The floor was covered with a Spanish foot-cloth, or carpet, on which flowers and fruits were represented in such glowing and natural colours, that you hesitated to place such a carpet, or such an exquisitely-workmanship. The table, of old English oak, stood ready covered with the finest linen, and a large plate. The court cupboard was placed with the leaves of its embossed folding-doors displayed, showing the shelves within, decorated with a full display of plate and porcelain. In the midst of the table stood a salt-cellar of Italian workmanship—a beautiful and splendid piece of plate about two feet high, moulded into a representation of the giant Briareus, whose hundred hands of silver presented to the guests various sorts of spiced, or condiments, to season their food within.

The third apartment was called the withdrawing-room. It was hung with the finest tapestry, representing the fall of Thetis; for the looms of Flanders were now much improved on classical subjects. The principal seat of this apartment was a chair of state, raised a step or two from the floor, and large enough to contain two persons. It was surmounted by a canopy, which, as well as the cushions, side-curtains, and even the footcloth, was composed of crimson velvet, embroidered with seed-pearl. On the top of the canopy were two coronets, resembling those of an earl and an earl. Stools covered with velvet, and some cushions disposed in the Moorish fashion, and ornamented with Arabesque needlework, supplied the place of chairs in this apartment, which contained musical instruments, embroidery frames, and other articles for ladies' pastime. We had been shown round the withdrawing-room was illuminated by four tall torches of crimson wax, each of which was placed in the grasp of a statue, representing an armed Moor, who held in his left arm a round buckler of silver, highly polished, interspersed between his breast and the light, which was thus brilliantly reflected as from a crystal mirror.

The sleeping chamber belonging to this splendid suite of apartments was decorated in a taste less showy, but not less rich, than had been displayed in the others. Two silver lamps, fed with perfumed oil, diffused at once a delicate odour and a trembling twilight seeming to shimmer through the quiet apartment. It was carpeted so thickly, that the heaviest step could not have been heard; and the bed, richly heaped with down, was spread with an ample coverlet of silk and gold; from under which peeped forth crimson sheets, and blankets as white as the lilies, which had unravelled the tassel that made them. The curtains were of blue velvet, lined with crimson silk, deeply brocaded with gold, and embroidered with the roses of Cupid and Psyche. On the table was a beautiful Venetian mirror, in a frame of silver liegiver, and beside it stood a gold plate dished to contain the night-draught. A pair of pistols and a dagger, mounted with gold, were displayed near the head of the bed, being the arms for the night, which were presented to honoured guests, rather, it may be supposed, in the way of ceremony, than from any apprehension of danger. We must not omit to mention, what was more to the credit of the manners of the time, that, in a small recess, illuminated by a taper, were disposed two caskets of silver and gold, corresponding with the bed furniture, before a desk of carved ebony. This recess had formerly been the private oratory of the abbot, but the crucifix was removed, and instead, there were placed on the desk two Books of Common Prayer, richly bound and embroidered with silver. With this curvilinear sleeping apartment, which was so far removed from every sound, save that of the wind sighing among the oaks of the park, that Morpheeus might have coveted it for his own proper repose, corresponded two wardrobes, or dressing-rooms, as they are now termed, suitably furnished, and in a style of the same magnificence which we have already described. It ought to be added, that a part of the building in the adjoining wing was occupied by the kitchen and its offices, and served to accommodate the personal attendants of the great and wealthy nobility, for whose use these magnificent preparations had been made.

The divinity for whose sake this temple had been decorated was well worthy the cost and pains which had been bestowed. She was seated in the withdrawing-room, and, as we have described, surveying with the pleased eye of a mother, and innocent vanity the splendour which had been so suddenly created, as it were, in her honour. For, her own residence at Common Hall was already famous for the first and its brilliancy; and she was now for the first time arrayed in her festival attire, and surrounded by the splendour of her oriental court.
ments, it was sedulously arranged that, until she took possession of them, she should have no notions of knowing what was going forward in that part of the ancient building, or of exposing herself to be seen by the workmen engaged in the decorations. She had been, therefore, introduced on that evening to a part of the mansion which she had never yet seen, so different from all the rest that it appeared, in comparison, like an enchanted palace. And when she first examined and occupied those splendid rooms, it was with the wild and unrestrained joy of a rustic beauty, who finds herself suddenly invested with a splendour which her most extravagant wishes had never imagined, and at the same time with the keen feeling of an affectionate heart, which knows that all the enchantment that surrounds her the work of the great magician Love.

The Countess Amy, therefore,—for to that rank she was exalted by her private but solemn union with England's proudest Earl,—had for a time fitted hastily from room to room, admiring each new proof of her lover and her bridegroom's taste and feeling that admiration enhanced, as she recollected that the last meal she gazed upon was one continued proof of his art and devoted affection. How beautiful are those hangings — how natural those paintings, which seem to surround the life! How richly wrought is that plate, which looks as if all the galleons of Spain had been interested in the broad seas to furnish it forth! — and O! Janet! she exclaimed repeatedly to the daughter of Anthony Foster, the close attendant, who, with equal curiosity, but somewhat less ecstatic joy, followed on her mistress's footsteps. — O! Janet! how much more delightful to think that all these fair things have been assembled by his love, for the love of me! and that this evening — this very evening, which grows darker every instant, shall thank him more for the love that has created such an unimaginated paradise, than all the wonders it contains!

'The Lord is to be thanked first,' said the pretty maid, — 'who gave thee, lady, the kind and courteous husband, whose love has done so much for thee. I, too, have done my poor share. But if you thus run wildly from room to room, the toil of my cramping and my curling pins will vanish like the frost-work on the window when the sun is high.'

'Thou sayest true, Janet,' said the young and beautiful countess, stopping suddenly from her tripping as of enraptured delight, and looking at herself from head to foot in a large mirror, such as she had never before seen, and which, indeed, had few to match it even in the queen's palace — Thou sayest true, Janet! she answered, as she saw, with pardonable self-applause, the noble mirror reflect such charms as were seldom presented to its fair and polished surface; — I have more of the milkmaid than the countess, with these cheeks flushed with haste, and all these brown curls, which you laboured to bring to order, striving as wild as the tendrils of an unpinned wreath. — My falling ruff is cloaked too, and shows the neck and bosom more than is modest and seemly. Come, Janet, we will practise state; we will go to the withdrawing-room, m, good girl, and then shall put these

pled in order, and imprison within lace and crimson the bosom that beats too high.' They went to the withdrawing apartment accordingly, where the compostes playfully stretched herself upon the pile of Moirish cushions, half sitting, half reclining, half rapt in her own train of thought, half listening to the prattle of her attendant.

While she was in this attitude, and with a corresponding expression between listlessness and expectation on her face and expressive features, you might have searched sea and land without finding anything half so expressive, or half so lovely. The wreath of brilliant, which mixed with her dark brown hair, did not match in lustre the hazel eye which a light brown eyelash, pencilled with exquisite delicacy, and long eyelashes of the same colour, relieved and shaded. The exercise she had just taken, her excited expectation and gratified vanity, spread a glow over her fine features, which had been sometimes coloured (as beauty has at work her minute critics) for the rogues, rather too pale. The milk-white pearls of the neck, which she wore, the same which she had just received as a true love token from her husband, shone in purity by her teeth, and by the colour of her skin, saving where the blush of pleasure and self-satisfaction had stained the neck with a shade of light crimson. — Now, have done with these busy fingers, Janet,' she said to her handmaiden, who was still officiously employed in bringing her hair and her dress into order. — Have done, I say, I must see your father ere my lord arrives, and also Master Richard Varney, whom my lord has highly in his esteem — but I could tell that of him would lose him favour. —

'O, do not do so, good my lady,' replied Janet; 'leave him to God, who punishes the wicked in his own time; but do not you cross Varney's path, for so thoroughly hath he my lord's ear, that few have whom he has ever thwarted his courses.'

'And from whom had you this so most righteous Janet?' said the countess; 'for why should I keep terms with so mean a gentleman as Varney, being, as I am, his wife to master and patron?'

'Nay, madam,' replied Janet Foster, 'your ladyship knows better than I. But I have heard my father say, he would rather cross a hungry wolf, than thwart Richard Varney in his projects. And he has often charged me to have a care of holding commerce with him.'

'Thy father said well, girl, for thou,' replied the lady, 'and I dare swear meant well. It is a pity, though, his face and manner do little match his true purpose — for I think his purpose may be true.'

'Doubt it not, my lady,' answered Janet, 'Doubt not that my father purposes well, though he is a plain man, and his blunt looks may belle his heart.'

'I will not doubt it, girl, were it only for thy sake; and yet he has one of those faces which men tremble when they look on — I think of thee, thy mother, Janet, nay, have done with that poking-iron — could hardly look upon him without quaking.'
If it were so, madam," answered Janet Foster, 'my mother had those who could keep her in honourable countenance, if she, even you, my lady, both trembled and blushed when Vanrey brought the letter from your lord.'

"Are bold, damsel," said the countess, rising from the cushions on which she sat half-reclined in the arms of her attendant—"Know that there are causes of trembling which have nothing to do with fear. —But, Janet," she added, "immediately relapsing into the good-natured and familiar tone which was natural to her, 'believe me, I will do what credit I can to your father, and the rather that you, sweet-heart, are his child. —Alas! alas! she added, a sudden sadness passing over her fine features, and her eyes filling with tears, 'I ought the rather to hold sympathy with thy kind heart, that my own poor father is uncertain of my fate, and they say lies sick and sorrowful for my worthless sake! —But I will soon cheer him—the news of my happiness and advancement will make him young again. —And that I may cheer him the sooner—' she wiped her eyes as she spoke—'I must be cheerful myself—My lord must not find me insensible to his kindness, or sorrowful when he snatches a visit to his reclusion, after so long an absence. —Be merry, Janet —the night wears on, and my lord must soon arrive. —Call thy father hither, and call Vanrey also. —I wish to say—' she added, a sudden frivolity of countenance. —'I wish to say—It runs so well, and arrears of years which seemed to become yet more remarkable, from his clumsy attempts to conceal the mixture of anxiety and dislike with which he looked on her, over whom he had hitherto exercised so strict a control, now so splendidly attired, and decked with so many pledges of the interest which she possessed in his husband's affections. The blundering reverence which he had made, rather at than to the countess, had consolation in it—It was like the reverence which the criminal makes to the judge, when he at once owns his guilt and implores mercy,—which is at the same time an impertinent and embarrassed attempt at defence or extenuation, a confession of a fault, and an entreaty for lenity.

Vanrey, who, in right of his gentle blood, had pressed into the room before Anthony Foster, knew better what to say than he, and said it with more assurance and a better grace.

The countess greeted him indeed with an appearance of cordiality, which seemed a complete amnesty for whatever he might have to complain of. She rose from her seat, and advanced two steps towards him, holding forth her hand, as she said, 'Master Richard Vanrey, you brought me this morning such welcome tidings, that I fear surprise and joy made me neglect my lord and husband's charge to receive you with distinction. We offer you our hand, sir, in reconciliation.'

'I am unworthy to touch it,' said Vanrey, 'dropping on one knee, 'save as a subject honours that of a prince.'

He touched with his lips those fair and slender fingers, so richly bedecked with rings and jewels; then, rising with graceful gallantry, was about to hand her to the chair of state, when she said, 'No, good Master Richard Vanrey, I take not my place there until my lord himself conducts me. I am for the present but a disguised countess, and will not take dignity on me until authorized by him whom I derive it from.'

'I trust, my lady,' said Foster, 'that in doing the command of my lord your husband, in your restraint and so forth, I have not incurred your displeasure, seeing that I did but my duty towards your lord and mine; for Heaven, as Holy Writ saith, hath given the husband supremacy and dominion over the wife—I think it runs so, or something like it.'

'_RECV at this moment so pleasant a surprise, Master Foster,' answered the countess, 'that I cannot but excuse the rigid futility which seceded from these apartments, until they had assumed an appearance so new and so splendid.'

'Ah, lady,' said Foster, 'it hath cost many a fair crown; and that more need not be wasted than is absolutely necessary. I leave you till my lord's arrival with good Master Richard Vanrey, who, as I think, hath somewhat to say to you from your most noble lord and husband.'—Janet, follow me, to see that all be in order.

'No, Master Foster,' said the countess, 'we will your daughter remains here in our apartment; out of earshot, however, in case Varrey hath ought to say to me from my lord.'

Foster made his shallow reverence, and departed, with an aspect which seemed to grudge the profuse expense, which had been bestowed upon changing his house from a bare and ruinous grange to an Asiatic palace. When he was gone, his daughter took over her embroidery frame, and went to establish herself at the bottom of the apartment, while Richard Vanrey, with a profoundly humble courtesy, took the lowest stool he could find, and, placing it by the side of the pile of cushions on which the countess had now again seated herself, sat with his eyes for a time fixed on the ground, and in profound silence.

'I thought, Master Varrey,' said the countess, when she saw he was not likely to open the conversation, 'that you had something to communicate from my lord and husband; so at least I understood Master Foster, and therefore I removed my waiting-maid. If I am mistaken, I will recall her to your side; for her needle is not so absolutely perfect in tent and cross-stitch, but that my superintendence is advisable.'

'Lady,' said Varrey, 'Foster was partly mistaken in my purpose. It was not from, but of you noble husband, and my approved and most noble patron, that I am led, and indeed bound, to speak.'

'The theme is most welcome, sir,' said the countess, 'whether it be of or from my noble
husband. But be brief; for I expect his hasty
approach.

‘Briefly, then, madam,’ replied Varney, ‘and
boldly, for my argument requires both haste and
courage—You have this day seen Tressilian?’

I have, sir; and what of that? answered
the
lady, somewhat sharply.

‘Nothing that concerns me, lady,’ Varney replied,
with impudence. ‘But think you, hon-
oured madam, that your lord will hear it with
equal equanimity?’

‘And therefore should he not—to me alone
was Tressilian’s visit embarrassing and painful,
for he brought news of my good father’s ill-
ness.

‘Of your father’s illness, madam!’ answered
Varney. ‘It must have been sudden, then—very
sudden, for the messenger whom I despatched,
at my lord’s instance, found the good knight on
the hunting-field, cheering his liege with his
wished loyal fold-fear. I trust Tressilian has
but, I forgot this news—He hath his reasons,
madam, as you well know, for disguising your
present happiness.

‘You do him injustice, Master Varney,’ re-
p lied the countess, with animation—‘you do
him in much injustice. He is the freest, the most
open, the most gentle heart that breathes—My
honourable lord ever excepted, I know not one
to whom falsehood is more odious than to
Tressilian.

‘I crave your pardon, madam,’ said Varney; ‘I
meant the gentleman no injustice—I knew
not how nearly his cause affected you. A man
may, in some circumstances, disguise the truth
for fair and honest purpose; for were it to be
always spoken, and upon all occasions, these
were no words to live in.

‘You have a courteously, Master Var-
ney,’ said the countess, ‘and your veracity will
not, I think, interrupt your preferment in the
world, such as it is.—But touch Tressilian—
I must do him justice, for I have done him wrong,
as none know better than I. Tressilian’s con-
science is of another mould—the world then
spakest of has not that which could balance
him from the way of truth and honour; and for
living in it with a soiled fame, the eminence
would as soon seek to lodge in the den of the foul
polecat. For this my father loved him.—For this
I would have loved him—if I could. And yet in
this case he had what seemed to him, unknow-
ably alike of my marriage, and to whom I was united,
such powerful reasons to withdraw me from this
place, that I would trust be exaggerated much of
my father’s indisposition, and that thy better
news may be the truer.

Believe me they are, madam,’ answered Var-
ney: ‘I pretend not to be a champion of that
same naked virtue called truth, to the very
entrance, I can consent that her charms be
hidden with a veil, were it but for decency’s
sake. But you must think lower of my head
and heart, that is due to one whom my noble
lord deigns to call his friend, if you suppose
I could willfully and unnecessarily put upon your
ladyship a falsehood, so soon to be detected,
in a matter which concerns your happiness.

Your master Varney,’ said the countess, ‘I know
that my lord esteems you, and holds you a

faithful and a good pilot in those seas in which he
has spread so high and so venturous a sail. Do
not suppose, therefore, I mean Caradoc by
you, when I spoke the truth in Tressilian’s
vindication—I am, as you well know, country-
bred, and like plain rustic truth better than
courtly complaisancy, but I must change my
fashions with my sphere, I presume.’

‘True, madam,’ said Varney, smiling; ‘and
though you speak now in jest, it will not be
amiss that in earnest your present speech had
some connection with your real purpose. A
court-dame—take the most noble—the most
virtuous—the most unapproachable, that stands
around our Queen’s throne—would, for example,
have sworn to me, in a phrase of a disdained suitor,
before the dependent and confidant of her noble
husband.

And therefore, said the countess, colouring
impatiently, I should not do justice to Tressi-
lian’s worth, before my husband’s friend—before
my husband himself—before the whole world.

‘And with the same openness,’ said Varney,
‘your ladyship will this night tell my noble
lord your husband, that Tressilian has discovered
your place of residence, so anxiously concealed
from the world, and that he has had an inter-
view with you.

‘Unquestionably, said the countess. ‘It will
be the first thing I tell him, together with every
word that Tressilian said, and that I answered.
I shall speak my own shame in this, for Tres-
ussian’s reproaches, less just than he esteemed
them, were not altogether unmerited—I will
speak, therefore, with pain, but I will speak,
and speak all.’

‘Your ladyship will do your pleasure,’ an-
swered Varney; ‘but methinks it were as well,
since nothing calls for so frank a disclosure, to
waste yourself this pain, and my noble lord
the disquiet, and Master Tressilian, since belike
he must be thought of in the matter, the danger
which is to ensue.’

‘I can see nought of all these terrible con-
squences,’ said the lady compositely, ‘unless
by imputing to my noble lord unworthy thoughts
which I am sure never harboured in his generous
heart.

‘Far be it from me to do so,’ said Varney.

And then, after a moment’s silence, he added,
with a real or affected plainness of manner, very
different from his usual smooth courtesy.—Come,
madam, I will show you that a counter dare
speak truth as well as another, when it concerns
the weal of those whom he honours and regards
affairs, and although it may infer his own danger.

—He waited as if to receive commands, or at
least permission, to go on, but, as the lady
remained silent, he proceeded, but obviously with
craniation.—Look around you,’ he said, ‘noble
lady, and observe the barriers with which this
place is surrounded—by his numerous and mys-
tery with which the brightest jewel that England possesses
is seceded from the admiring gaze. What
vigour your walks are circumscribed, and
your moments restrained, at the beck of
yesthril Fooster. Consider all this, and judge
for yourself what can be the cause.'
"My lord's pleasure," answered the countess; "and I am bound to seek no other motive."

"His pleasure is out indeed," said Varney, "and his pleasure arises out of a love worthy of the object which inspires it. But he who possesses a treasure, and who values it, is oft anxious, in proportion to the value he puts upon it, to secure it from the temptations of others."

"What needs all this talk, Master Varney?" said the lady, in reply; "you would have me believe that my noble lord is jealous—Suppose it true, I know a cure for jealousy."

"It is," replied the lady, "to speak the truth to my lord at all times; to hold up my mind and my thoughts before him as pure as that polished mirror; so that when he looks into my heart, he shall only see his own features reflected there."

"I am mute, madam," answered Varney; "and as I have no reason to grieve for Tresilian, who would have my heart's blood were he able, I shall reconcile myself easily to what may befall the gentleman, in consequence of your frank disclosure of his having presumed to intrude upon our solitude. You, who know my lord so much better than I, will judge if he be likely to hear the insult unavenged."

"Nay, if I could think myself the cause of Tresilian's ruin, said (the countess), I who have already occasioned him so much distress, I might be brought to be silent. And yet what will it avail, since he was seen by Foster, and I think by some one else? No, no, Varney, argue it no more. I will tell the whole matter to my lord; and with such pleading for Tresilian's folly, as shall dispose my lord's generous heart rather to serve than to punish him."

"Your judgment, madam," said Varney, "is far superior to mine, especially as you may, if you will, prove the ice before you step on it, by mentioning Tresilian's name to my lord, and observing how he endures it. For Foster and his attendant, they know not Tresilian by sight, and I can easily give them some reasonable excuse for the appearance of an unknown stranger.

"The lady paused for an instant, and then replied, If, Varney, it be indeed true that Foster knows not yet that the man he saw was Tresilian, I own I was unwilling he should learn what nowise concerns him. He bears himself already with austerity enough, and I wish him not to be judge or privy-councillor in my affairs."

"Tush," said Varney; "what has the eminently grooms to do with your ladyship's concerns? No more, surely, than the lan-dog which watches a court-yard. If he is in aught distasteful to your ladyship, I have interest enough to have him exchanged for a semichasal that shall be more agreeable to you."

"Master Varney," said the countess, "let us drop this theme—when I complain of the attendants when my lord has placed around me, it must be to my lord himself. See what I have passed, and what distress, by no wonder and judge

"Stop me not, Varney—my ears are keener than thine—it is he!"

"But, madam!—but, madam!" exclaimed Varney anxiously, and still placing himself in her way. "I trust that what I have spoken in humble duty and service will not be turned to my ruin! I hope that my faithful advice will not be betrayed to my prejudice! I implore that—"

"Content thee, man—content thee!" said the countess, and quit my skirt—you are too bold to detain me. Content thyself, I think not of thee."

At this moment the folding doors flew wide open, and a man of majestic mien, muffled in the folds of a long dark riding-cloak, entered the apartment."

CHAPTER VII.

"This is he Who rides on the court gate; controls its tide; He knows all their secret shrines and fatal eddies; Who gives the alms, and whose smile exalts— He shines like any rainbow—and, perchance, His colours are as transient."

OLD PLAY.

There was some little displeasure and confusion on the countess's brow, owing to her struggle with Varney's pertinacity; but it was exchanged for an expression of the purest joy and affection, as she threw herself into the arms of the noble stranger who entered, and clasping him to her bosom, exclaimed, At length—at length thou art come!"

Varney directly withdrew as his lord entered, and Janet was about to do the same, when her mistress signed to her to remain. She took her place at the farther end of the apartment, and continued standing, as if ready for attendance.

Meanwhile the earl, for he was of no inferior rank, returned his lady's caresses with the most affectionate ardor, but affected to resist when she strove to take his cloak from him."

"Nay," she said, "but I will unmantle you—I must see if you have kept your word to me, and come as the great earl not an yet call thee, and not as heretofore like a private cavalier."

"Thou art like the rest of the world, Amy," said the earl, suffering her to prevail in the playful contest; "the jewels, and feathers, and silk are more to them than the man whom they adorn—many a poor blade looks gay in a velvet seabard."

"But so cannot men say of thee, then noble Earl," said his lady, as she dropped her cloak on the floor, and showed him her dress as princes when they ride abroad; "then art thou good and well-tried steel, whose ily worth deserves, yet disdains, its outward ornaments. Do not think Amy can love thee better in this glorious garb than she did when she gave her heart to him who wore the russet-brown cloak in the woods of Devon."

"And then too," said the earl, as gracefully and majestically he led his beautiful countess towards the chair of state which was prepared for them both, "and then too, my love, last donned a dress which becomes thy rank, though it cannot
improve thy beauty. What think'st thou of our court taste?

The lady casts a sidelong glance upon the great mirror as they passed it by, and then said, 'I know not, and must not say it, but I think not of my own person, while I look at the reflection of thee. Sit thou there,' she said, as they approached the chair of state, 'like a thing for men to worship and to wonder at.'

'Ay, lass,' said the earl, 'if thou wilt share my state with me,'

'Not so,' said the countess; 'I will sit on this foot-stool at thy feet, that I may spew over thy splendour, and learn, for the first time, how princes are attired.'

And with a childish wonder, which her youth and rude education rendered not only excusable but becoming, mixed as it was with a delicate show of the most tender conjugal affection, she examined and admired from head to foot the noble form and princely attire of him who formed the proudest ornament of the court of England's Maiden Queen, renounced as it was for splendid courtesies, as well as for wise counsellors, regarding affectionately his lovely bride, and gratified by her unpresssed admiration, the dark eye and noble figure of the earl expressed passions more gentle than the commanding and aspiring look which usually sat upon his broad forehead and in the piercing brilliancy of his dark eye; and he smiled at the simplicity which dictated the questions she put to him concerning the various ornaments with which he was decorated.

The embroidered strap, as thou callest it, around my knee,' he said, 'is the English Garter, an ornament which kings are proud to wear. See, here is the star which belongs to it, and here the Diamond George, the jewel of the Order. You have heard how King Edward and the Countess of Salisbury-

'O, I know all that tale,' said the countess, slightly blushing, 'and how a lady's garter became the proudest badge of English chivalry.'

'Even so,' said the earl; 'and this most honourable Order I had the good luck to receive at the same time with three most noble associates, the Duke of Norfolk, the Marquis of Northampton, and the Earl of Rutland. I was the lowest of the four in rank—but what then—the lad who climbs a ladder must begin at the first rung.'

'But this other fair collar, so richly wrought, with some jewel like a sheep hung by the middle attached to it, what,' said the young countess, 'does that emblem signify?'

'This collar,' said the earl, 'with its double furbelows interchanged with these knots, which are suspended to the jewel you inquire about, is the badge of the noble Order of the Golden Fleece, once appertaining to the House of Burgundy. It hath high privileges, my Amy, belonging to it, this most noble Order; for even the King of Spain himself, who hath now succeeded to the honours and demesnes of Burgundy, may not sit in judgment upon a knight of the Golden Fleece, unless by assistance and consent of the Great Chapter of the Order.'

'And is this an order belonging to the cruel

King of Spain?' said the countess. 'Alas! my noble lord, that you will debar your noble English breast from bearing such an emblem! Behold you in the midst of your Queen Mary's days, when this same Philip held sway with her in England, and of the prices which were built for our nobility and our wisest, and our most truly sanctified prelates and divines—and Will you, whom men call the standard-bearer of the true Protestant faith, be contented to wear the emblem and mark of such a Roman tyrant as he of Spain?'

'O, content you, my love,' answered the earl; 'we who spread our sails to gates of court favour, cannot always display the ensigns we love the best, or at all times refuse sailing under colours which we like not. Believe me, I am not the less good Protestant, that for policy I must accept the honour offered me by Spain, in admitting me to this his highest Order of knighthood. Besides, it belongs properly to Flanders; and Egmont, Orange, and others have pride in seeing it displayed on an English bosom.'

'No, my lord, you know your own path best,' replied the countess. 'And this other collar, to what country does this fair jewel belong?'

'To a very poor one, my love, replied the earl; 'this is the Order of Saint Andrew, revived by the last James of Scotland. It was bestowed upon me when it was thought the young widow of Flanders and Scotland would gladly have wedded an English baron; but a free cornet of England is worth a crown's maecenial held at the humour of a woman, and oeing only the poor rocks and bogs of the north.'

The countess paused, as if her earl had excited some painful but interesting train of thought; and, as she still remained silent, her husband proceeded.

'And now, loveliest, your wish is gratified, and you have seen your vassal in such of his trim array as accords with riding vestments; for robes of state and coronets are only for princely halls.'

'Well, then,' said the countess, 'my gratified wish has, as usual, given rise to a new one.

'And what is that, if thou canst ask that I can deny?' said the fond husband.

'I wished to see my earl visit this obscure and secret bower,' said the countess, 'in all his princely array; and now, methinks, I long to sit in one of his princely halls, and see him enter dressed in sober russet, as when he won Amy Robart's heart.'

'That is a wish easily granted,' said the earl, 'the sober russet shall be donned to-morrow, if you will.'

'But shall I,' said the lady, 'go with you to one of your castles, to see how the richness of your dwelling will correspond with your peasant habit?'

'Why, Amy,' said the earl, looking around, 'are not these apartments decorated with sufficient splendour? I gave the most gorgeous order, and methinks it has been inefficiently well obeyed—but if thou canst tell me aught with remains to be done, I will instantly give direction.'

'Nay, my lord, now you mock me,' replied the countess; 'the gaiety of this rich lodging
exceeds my imagination as much as it does my deserts. For, shall not your wife, my love,—at least one day week—be surrounded with the honour which arises neither from the toils of the mechanic who decks her apartment, nor from the silks and jewels with which you generosity adorns her, but which is attached to her place among the matronage, as the avowed wife of England's eldest earl?

'One day?' said her husband.—'Yes, Amy, my love, one day this shall surely happen; and, believe me, thou canst not wish for that day more fondly than I. With what rapture could I retire from toil and care, and toils of ambition, to spend my life in dignity and honour on my own broad domain, with thee, my lovely Amy, for my friend and companion? But, Amy, this cannot yet be; and these dear and stolen intervals are all I can give to the loveliest and the best beloved of my sex.

'But why can it not be?' urged the lady, in the softest tones of persuasion.—'Why can it not immediately take place—this more perfect, this unintermeditated union, for which you say you wish, and which the laws of God and man alike command?—Ah! did you but desire it half as much as you say, mighty and favoured as you are, who, or what, should bar your attaining your wish?'

The earl's brow was overcast.

'Amy,' he said, 'you speak of what you understand not. That toil in courts are like those who climb a mountain of loose sand—we dare not make a halt until some projecting rock affords us a secure footing and resting-place—if we pause sooner, we slide down by our own weight, an object of universal derision. I stand high, but I stand not secure enough to follow my own inclination. To declare my marriage were to be the architect of my own ruin. But believe me, I will reach a point, and that speedily, when I can do justice to thee and to myself. Meanwhile, poison not the bliss of the present moment by desiring that which cannot at present be. Let me rather exhort you all where this new friend is to find your manor, and to follow your friend. Mind, the lady hearken to my words!—in all things respectful, I trust, else the fellow shall dearly rue it.'

'He reminds me sometimes of the necessity of this privacy,' answered the lady, with a sigh;—'but that is to make me the wish of your wishes, and therefore I am rather bound to him than disposed to blame him for it.'

'I have told you the stern necessity which is upon us,' replied the earl. 'Foster is, I note, somewhat fallen of mood, but Varney warrants me to his fidelity and devotion to my service. If thou hast aught, however, to excuse of the mode in which he discharges his duty, he shall abide by it.'

'O, I have sought to nobly answer,' answered the lady, 'he so discharges his task of fidelity, and his daughter Janet is the kindest and best companion of my solitude—her little air of precision sits so well upon her!'

'Is she indeed?' said the earl; 'she who gives you pleasure, and not pass unreward.'—Come hither, damsel.'

'Janet,' said the lady, 'come hither to my lord.'

Janet, who, as we already noticed, had discreetly retired to some distance, that her presence might be no check upon the private conversation of her lord and lady, now came forward, and, as she made her reverential curtsey, the earl could not help smiling at the contrast which the extreme simplicity of her dress and the prim demeanour of her looks made with a very pretty comeliness and a pair of black eyes, that laughed in spite of their mistress's desire to look grave.

'I am bound to you, pretty damsel,' said the earl, 'for the contentment which your service hath given to this lady.' As he said this, he took from his finger a ring of some price, and offered it to Janet Foster, adding, 'Wear this for her sake and for mine.'

'I am well pleased,' said the lord! answered Janet docily, 'that your poor service hath gratified my lady, whom no one can draw nigh to without desiring to please; but we of the precious Master Holborn's congregation seek not, like the gay daughters of luxury, to twine gold around our fingers, or wear stones upon our necks, like the vain women of Tyre and of Sidon.'

'O, what you are a grave professor of the precise sisterhood, pretty Mistress Janet,' said the earl, 'and I think your father is of the same congregation in sincerity. I like you both the better for it; for I have been prayed for, and wished well to, in your congregations. And you may the better afford the lack of ornament, Mistress Janet, because your fingers are slender, and your neck white. But here is what neither paper nor paint, latitudinarian nor precision, ever boggles or makes mouths at. Even take it, my girl, and employ it as you list.'

So saying, he put into her hand five broad gold pieces of Philip and Mary.

'J would not accept this gold neither,' said Janet, 'but that I hope to find a use for it, which will bring a blessing on us all.'

'Even please thyself, pretty Janet,' said the earl, 'and I shall be well satisfied—and I promisethethou hast almost the evening collation.'

'I have hidden Master Varney and Master Foster to sup with us, my lord,' said the countess, as Janet retired to obey the earl's commands; 'has it your approbation?'

'What do you ever must have so, my sweet Amy,' replied her husband; 'and I am the better pleased than hast done them this grace, because Richard Varney is my sworn man, and a close brother of my secret council; and for the present I must needs repose much trust in this Anthony Foster.'

'I had a bood to beg of thee, and a secret to tell thee, my dear lord,' said the countess, with a faltering accent.

'Let both be for to-morrow, my love,' replied the earl. 'I see they open the folding-doors into the banqueting-parlour, and have ridden far and fast, a cup of wine will not be unacceptable.'

So saying, he led his lovely wife into the next apartment, where Varney and Foster received them with the deepest reverences, which the first paid with the fashion of the court, and the second after that of the congregation. The earl returned their salutation with the negligent
court of one long used to such homage; while the countess repaid it with a punctilious solicitude, which showed it was not quite so familiar to her.

The banquet at which the company seated themselves corresponded in magnificence with the splendour of the apartment in which it was served up, but no domestic gave his attendance. Jane alone stood ready to wait upon the company; and, indeed, the board was so well supplied with all that could be desired, that little or no assistance was necessary. The earl and his lady occupied the upper end of the table, and Varney and Foster sat beneath the salt, as was the custom with inferiors. The latter, overawed perhaps by society to which he was altogether unused, did not utter a single syllable during the repast; while Varney, with great tact and discernment, sustained just as much of the conversation, without the appearance of intrusion on his part, prevented it from languishing, and maintained the good humour of the earl at the highest pitch. This man was indeed highly qualified by nature to discharge the part in which he found himself placed, being discreet and cautious on the one hand, and on the other, quick, keen-witted, and imaginative; so that even the countess, prejudiced as she was against him on many accounts, felt and enjoyed his powers of conversation, and was more disposed than she had ever hitherto found herself, to join in the praises which the earl lavished on his favourite. The hour of rest at length arrived; the earl and countess retired to their apartment; and all was silent in the castle for the rest of the night.

Early on the ensuing morning, Varney acted as the earl's chamberlain, as well as his master of horse, though the latter was his proper office in that magnificent household, where knights and gentlemen of good descent were well contented to hold such social situations, as no des themselves held in that of the sovereign. The duties of each of these charges were familiar to Varney, who, sprung from an ancient but decayed family, was the earl's page during his earlier and more obscure fortunes, and, faithful to him in adversity, had afterwards contrived to render himself so less useful to him in his rapid and splendid advance to fortune; thus establishing in him an interest, resting both on present and past services, which rendered him an almost indispensable source of his confidence.

"Help me to do on a plainer riding suit, Varney," said the earl, as he laid aside his morning-gown, flowered with silk, and lined with sables; and put these chains and fetters there" (pointing to the collar of the various Orders which lay on the table) "into their place of security—my neck last night was well-nigh broke with the weight of them. I am half of the more that they shall gull me no more. They are bonds which I have not invented to fetter fools. How think'st thou, Varney?"

"Faith, my good lord," said his attendant, "I think letters of gold are like no other letters—the are ever the weightier the welcomer."

"For all that, Varney," replied his master, "I am well-nigh resolved they shall bind me to the court no longer. What can further service and higher favour give me, beyond the high rank and large estate which I have already secured?—What brought my father to the block, but that he could not find his wishes within right and reason?—I have, you know, had to my own ventures and mine own escapes; I am well-nigh resolved to tempt the sea no further, and sit down in quiet on the shore."

"And gather cockle-shells, with Dan Cupid to aid you," said Varney.

"How mean you by that, Varney? I said the earl, somewhat hastily.

"Nay, my lord," said Varney, "be not angry with me. If your lordship is happy in a lady so rarely lovely, that, in order to enjoy her company with somewhat more freedom, you are willing to part with all you have hitherto lived for, some of your poor servents may be sufferers, but your bounty will place me so high, that I shall ever have enough to maintain a poor gentleman in the rank of sitting at the high office he has held in your lordship's family."

Yet you seem discontented when I propose throwing off a dangerous game, which may end in the ruin of both of us."

"I, my lord?" said Varney; "surely I have no cause to regret your lordship's retreat. It will not be Richard Varney who will incur the displeasure of Majesty, and the ridicule of the court, when the sharpest fabric that ever was founded upon a prince's favour melts away like a morning frost-work. I would only have you to yourself to be assured, my lord, ere you take a step which cannot be retracted, that you consult your family and happiness in the course you propose."

"Speak on, then, Varney," said the earl; I tell thee I have determined nothing, and will weigh all considerations on either side."

"Well, then, my lord," replied Varney, "we will suppose the step taken, the crown frowned, the laugh laughed, and the moon mooned. You have retired, we will say, to some one of your most distant castles, so far from court that you hear neither the sorrow of your friends nor the glee of your enemies. We will suppose, too, that your successful rival will be satis'd (a thing greatly to be doubted) with abluring and cutting away the branches of the great tree which so long kept the sun from him, and that he does not insist upon tearing you up by the roots. Well; the late prime favourite of England, who wielded her general's staff, and controlled her parliament, is now a royal baron, hunting, hawking, drinking fat ale with country esquires, and mastering his men at the command of the High Sheriff."

"Varney, forbear!" said the earl.

"Nay, my lord, you must give me leave to conduct my picture. Sussex governs England—the Queen's health fails—the succession is to be settled—a queen is opened to ambition more splendid than ambition ever dreamed of. You hear all this as you sit by the hol, under the shade of your hall-chimney? You then begin to think what hopes you have fallen from, and what insignificances you have embraced—and all that you might look ladsies in the eye of your fair wife often than once a fortnight."

"I say, Varney," said the earl, "no more of
said the countess. 'Ah, false knight! did ever lady, with bare foot in slipper, seek boon of a brave knight, and return with denial!' 

'Anything, Amy, anything thou canst ask I will grant,' answered the earl, 'excepting, he said, that which might ruin both. Nay, said the countess, 'I urge not my wish to be acknowledged in the character which would make me the countess of England—as the wife, that is, of my brave and noble lord, the first as the most finally beloved of English maidens. Let me but share the secret with my dear father! Let me but obtain mine unworthy account—say he is ill, the good old kind-hearted man.' 

'They say!' asked the earl hastily: 'Who says! Did not Varney convey to Sir Hugh all we dare at present tell him concerning your happiness and welfare? and has he not told you that the good old knight was following, with good heart and health, his favourite and wonted exercise? Who has dared put other thoughts into your head?'

'O, no, one, my lord, no one!' said the countess, something startled in the tone in which the words were put; 'but yet, my lord, I would fain be assured by mine own eyesight that my father is well.' 

'Be contented, Amy—thou canst not now have communication with thy father or his house. Were it not deep course of policy to commit no secret unnecessarily to the custody of more than must needs be, it were sufficient reason for secrecy, that yeander Cornish man, yeander Trevarion, or Tressilian, or whatever his name is, beasts the old knight's house, and must necessarily know whatever is communicated there.'

'My lord, answered the countess, 'I do not think it so. My father has been long noted a worthy and honourable man; and for Tressilian, if we can pardon ourselves the ill we have wrought him, I will wage the coronet I am to share with you one day, that he is incapable of returning evil for injury.'

'I will not trust him, however, Amy,' said her husband: 'by my word, I will not trust him. I would rather the foul fiend intermingle in our secret than this Tressilian!'

'And why, my lord?' said the countess, though she shuddered slightly at the tone of determination in which he spoke; 'let me but know why you think thus hardly of Tressilian!'
"Madam," replied the earl, "my will ought to be a sufficient reason. If you desire me, consider how this Tressilian is leagued, and with whom. He stands high in the opinion of this Rackliffe, this Sussex, against whom I am barely able to sustain my ground in the opinion of our suspicious mistresses; and if he had me at such advantage, Amy, as to become acquainted with the tale of our marriage, before Elizabeth were fitly prepared, I was an outcast from her grace for ever—a bankrupt at once in favour and in fortune, perhaps, for she hath in her a touch of her father Henry,—a victim, and it may be a bloody one, to her offended and jealous resentment."

"But why, my lord," again urged his lady, "should you deem thus injuriously of a man of whom you know so little? What you do know of Tressilian is through me, and it is I who assure you that in no circumstances will he betray your secret. If I did wrong in your behalf, my lord, I am now the more concerned you should do him justice. You are offended at my speaking of him, what would you say had I actually myself seen him?"

"If you had," replied the earl, "you would do well to keep that interview as secret as that which is spoken in a confessional. I seek no one's ruin; but he who thrusts himself on my secret privacy, were better look well to his future walk. The bear* brooks no one to cross his aweful path."

"Awful, indeed!" said the countess, turning very pale. "You are ill, my love," said the earl, supporting her in his arms; "stretch yourself on your couch again; it is but an early day for you to leave it.—Have you sought else, involving less than my name, my fortune, and my life, to ask of me?"

"Nothing, my lord and love," answered the countess faintly; "something there was that I would have told you, but your anger has driven it from my recollection."

"Reserve it till our next meeting, my love," said the earl fondly, and again embracing her; "I am hearing only those respects which I cannot and dare not grant, thy wish must be more than England and all its dependencies can fulfil, if it is not gratified to the letter."

Thus saying, he at length took farewell. At the bottom of the stairs he received from Varney an ample lively cloak and slouched hat, in which he wrapped himself so as to disguise his person, and completely conceal his features. Horses were ready in the court-yard for himself and Varney;—for one or two of his train, entrusted with the secret so far as to know or guess that the earl was in the mansion, though her name and quality were unknown to them, had already been dismissed over-night.

Anthony Foster himself had in hand the rein of the earl's palfrey, a stout and able nag for the road; while his old serving-man held the bridle of the more showy and gallant steed which Richard Varney was to occupy in the character of master.

As the earl approached, however, Varney advanced to hold his master's bridle, and to prevent Foster from paying the horse outto the earl, which he probably considered as belonging to his own office. Foster scowled at an interference which seemed intended to prevent his paying his court to his patron, but gave place to Varney; and the earl, mounting without further observation, and forgetting that his assumed character of a domestic threw him into the rear of his supposed master, rode pensively out of the quadrangle, not without waving his hand repeatedly in answer to the signals which were made by the countess with her kerschief, from the windows of her apartment.

While his sately form vanished under the dark archway which led out of the quadrangle, Varney muttered, "There goes fine policy—the servant before the master!" then, as he disappeared, seized the moment to speak a word with Foster. "Thou look'st dark on me, Anthony," he said, "as if I had deprived thee of a parting nod of my love; but I have moved him to leave thee a better remembrance for thy faithful service. See here! a purse of as good gold as ever chinked under a miser's thumb and finger. Ay, count them, lad," said he, as Foster received the gold with a grim smile, "and add them to the goodly remembrance he gave last night to Janet."

"How's this! how's this!" said Anthony Foster hastily, "gave he gold to Janet?"

"Ay, man, wherefore not?—does not her service to his fair lord require reward?"

"She shall have none on't," said Foster; "she shall return it. I know his dotage on one face is as brief as it is deep. His affections are as fickle as the moon."

"Why, Foster, thou art mad—thou dost not hope for such good fortune as that my lord would set an eye on Janet?—Who, in the fiend's name, would listen to the thrush when the nightingale is singing?"

"Thrush or nightingale, all is one to the fowler; and, Master Varney, you can sound the quiquille most daintily to wise wontons into his nets. I desire no such devil's preference for Janet as you have brought many a poor maiden to. Dest thou laugh! I will keep one limb of my family, at least, from Satan's clutches, that thou mayest rely—she shall restore the gold."

"Ay, or give it to thy keeping, Tony, which will serve as well," answered Varney; "but I have that to say which is more serious. Our lord is returning to court in an evil humour for us."

"How soonest thou?" said Foster, "is he tired already of his pretty toy—his playing-thing yonder? He has purchased her at a monarch's ransom, and I warrant me he runs her bargain."

"Not a whit, Tony," answered the master of the horse; "she dotes on her, and will forsake the court for her—then down go hopes, possessions, and safety—church-lands are resumed, Tony, and well you tell the holders be not called to account in Exchequer."

* The Leicester cognisance was the ancient device adopted by his father, when Earl of Warwick, the bear and ragged staff.
That were ruin," said Foster, his brow darkening with apprehensions; "and all this for a woman! Had it been for his son's sake, it were something; and I sometimes wish I myself could fling away the world that cleaves to me, and be as one of the poorest of our church.

"Thou art like enough to be so, Tony," answered Varney: "but I think the devil will give thee little credit for thy compelled poverty, and so thou least on all hands. But follow my counsel, and Cumnor Place shall be thy copyhold yet. Say nothing of this Tressilian's visit—not a word until I give thee notice."

"And wherefore, I pray you?" asked Foster suspiciously.

"Dull beast!" replied Varney: "in my lord's present humour it was the ready way to confirm him in his resolution of retirement, should he know that his lady was haunted with such a spectre in his absence. He would be playing for the demon himself over his golden fruit, and then, Tony, thy occupation is ended. A word to the wise—Farwell—I must follow him."

He turned his horse, struck him with the spurs, and rode off under the archway in pursuit of his lord, and the horsemen would have crowded under the boughs of the quadrangle, had not the jockey policy—the very genius, as he descried, of the noble mansion—suggested to him to speak a word in the ear of the dark man, who would deprive thee of all thy happiness, and I have moved thine arm in vain in the course of all good fortune."

"But thou dost not know, lad," said he, with a grin, smiling at the remembrance he was about to speak.

"Lambourne, said Anthony Foster, "—does not her disappearance grieve thee?"

"Of course, replied Varney; "she was the pride of my family, and I, too, am beguiled."

"Yet it is not thy case, my lord—Who, in the end, can a poor creature be worth to a lord?"

"But one to one, said Varney; "he can sound the judgments into our hearts, and it is a poor comfort, after all, a poor comfort to a poor man."

"And I will keep it to myself, from Satan's curse on—She shall not know in the world."

"Varney, Tony, which of the two is the richer man?"

"I say not, Varney; but I say the richer man is not the sinner. Our own soul is an evil humour and judgmentless."

"Foster, is not thy—in short, his angel—hered of his playmate, he possessed her at a very young age, when he rues her now."

"Varney, when the master of Tressilian's will forsake his bank, his ships, possessions, he shall be reckoned, not called to

lordship at Woodstock before you are out of bed."

"Why, I am asleep there, thou knowest, at this moment," said the earl; "and I pray you to spare horse-play, that you may be with me at my levee."

"So saying, he gave him the horse's spur, and proceeded on his journey, while Varney rode back to Cumnor by the public road, avoiding the park. The latter alighted at the door of the bonnie Black Bear, and desired to speak with Master Michael Lambourne. That respectable character was not long of appearing before the earl, but it was with downcast looks.

"Thou hast lost the scent," said Varney, "of thy comrade Tressilian—I know it by thy hangdog visage. Is this thy alacrity, thou impudent knave?"

"Cogswounds!" said Lambourne, "there was never a trail so finely hunted. I saw him to earth at mine uncle's here—stuck to his like beef-wax—saw him at supper—watched him to his chamber, and presto—he is gone next morning. The great hosier knows not where!"

"This sounds like practice upon me, sir," replied Varney; "and if it proves so, by my soul you shall repent it!"

"Sire, the best homed will be sometimes at fault," answered Lambourne; "how should it serve me that this fellow should have thus vanished? You may ask mine host, Giles Godding—ask the tapster and hosier—ask Cicely, and the whole household, how I kept eyes on Tressilian while he was on foot. On my soul, I could not be expected to watch him like a sick-nurse, when I had seen him fairly a-bed in his chamber. That will be allowed me, surely?"

Varney did, in fact, make some inquiry among the household, which confirmed the truth of Lambourne's statement. Tressilian, it was unanimously agreed, had departed suddenly and unexpectedly, betwixt night and morning.

"But I will wrong no one," said mine host; "he left on the table in his lodging the full value of his reckoning, with some allowance to the servants of the house, which was the less necessary, that he saddled his own gelding, as it seems, without the hosier's assistance."

Thus satisfied of the rectitude of Lambourne's conduct, Varney began to talk to him upon his future prospects, and the mode in which he meant to bestow himself, intimating that he understood from Foster he was not disinclined to enter into the household of a nobleman.

"Have you," said he, "ever been at court?"

"No," replied Lambourne; "but ever since I was ten years old, I have dreamt once a week that I was there, and made my fortune.

"It may be your own fault if your dream comes not true," said Varney. "Are you needy?"

"Um!" replied Lambourne; "I love pleasure."

"That is a sufficient answer, and an honest one," said Varney. "Know you not from the requisites expected from the retainers of a riding court?"

"I have imagined them to myself, sir," answered Lambourne; "as, for example, a quick eye—a close mouth—a ready and bold hand—a sharp wit, and a blunt conscience."
'And thine, I suppose,' said Varney, 'has had its edge blunted long since!'

'I cannot remember, sir, that its edge was ever keen,' replied Lambourne. 'When I was a youth, I had some whiskeys, but I rubbed them quite out of my recollection on the rough grindstone of the wars, and what remained I washed out in the broad waves of the Atlantic.'

'Thou hast served, then, in the Indies?'

In both East and West,' replied the candidate for court service, 'by both sea and land; I have served both the Portuguese and the Spaniard — both the Dutchman and the Frenchman, and have made war on our own account with a crew of jolly fellows, who held there was no peace beyond the line.'

'Thou mayest do me, and my lord, and thyself, good service,' said Varney, after a pause, 'but observe, I know the world — and answer me truly, canst thou be faithful?'

'Did you not know the world,' answered Lambourne, 'it were my duty to say ay, without further circumstance, and to swear it with life and honour, and so forth. But as it seems to me that your worship is one who desires rather honest truth than politic falsehood — I reply to you, that I can be faithful to the galloways foot; ay, to the loop that dangles from it, if I am well used and well recompensed; — not otherwise.'

'To thy other virtues thou canst add, no doubt,' said Varney, in a jeering tone, 'the knack of seeking serious and religious when the moment demands it.'

'IT would cost me nothing,' said Lambourne, 'to say yes; — but, to speak on the square, I must needs say no. If you want a hypocrize, you may take Anthony Foster, who, from his childhood, had some sort of phantom haunting him, which he called religion, though it was that sort of godliness which always ended in being great gain. But I have no such fault.'

'Well,' replied Varney, 'if thou hast no hypocrisy, hast thou not a nag here in the stable?'

'AY, sir,' said Lambourne, 'that shall take hedge and ditch with my lord duke's best hunters; so soon I made a little mistake on Shoot Hill, and stopped an ancient grazer whose pockets were better lined than his braypara., the bonnie bay nag carried me sheer off in spite of the whole line and ery.'

'Saddle him, then, instantly, and attend me,' said Varney. 'Leave thy clothes and baggage under charge of mine host, and I will conduct thee to a service, in which, if thou dost not better thyself, the fault shall not be fortune's, but thine own.'

'Brave and hearty!' said Lambourne, 'and I am mounted in an instant. — Knave hostler, saddle my nag without the loss of one instant, as thou dost value the safety of thy noddle.— Pretty Cicely, take half this purse to comfort thee in my sudden departure.'

'Gegusious?' replied the father, 'Cicely wants no such token from thee. — Go away, Mike, and gather grace if thou canst, though I think thou goest not to the land where it grows.'

Sir Francis Drake, Morgan, and many a bold buccaneer of those days, were, in fact, little better than pirates.

'Let me look at this Cicely of thine, mine host,' said Varney; 'I have heard much talk of her beauty.'

'It is a sunburnt beauty,' said mine host, 'well qualified to stand out rain and wind, but little calculated to please such critical gallants as yourself. She keeps her chamber, and cannot encounter the glance of such sunny-day couriers as my noble guest.'

'Well, peace be with her, my good host,' answered Varney; 'our horses are impatient — we bid you good day.'

'Does my nephew go with you, so please you?' said Gosling.

'AY, such is his purpose,' answered Richard Varney,

'You are right — fully right,' replied mine host, 'you are, I say, fully right, my kinsman. Thou hast got a gay horse, see; thou light not unaware upon a hatter — or, if thou wilt needs be made immortal by means of a rope, which thy purpose of following this gentleman renders not unlikely, I charge thee to find a gallowas as far from Camnor as thou conveniently mayest, and so I commend you to your saddle.'

The master of the house and his new retainer mounted accordingly, leaving the landlord to conclude his ill-omened farewell to himself and at leisure, and set off together at a rapid pace, which prevented conversation until the ascent of a steep sandy hill permitted them to resume it.

'You are contented, then,' said Varney to his companion, 'to take court service?'

'AY, most worshipful sir, if you like my terms as well as I like yours.'

'And what are your terms?' demanded Varney.

'If I am to have a quick eye for my patron's interest, he must have a dulle one towards my faults,' said Lambourne.

'AY,' said Varney, 'so they lie not so grossly open that he must needs break his shins over them.'

'Agreed,' said Lambourne. 'Next, if I run down game, I must have the picking of the houses.'

'That is a reason,' replied Varney, 'so that your better's are served before you.'

'Good,' said Lambourne; 'and it only remains to be said, that if the law and I quarrel, my patron must bear me out, for that is a chief point.'

'Reason again, said Varney, 'if the quarrel hath happened in your master's service.'

'For the wage and so forth, I say nothing,' proceeded Lambourne; 'it is the secret garderone that I must live by.'

'Never fear,' said Varney; 'thou shalt have clothes and spending money to ruffle it with the best of thy degree, for thou goest to a household where you have gold, as they say, by the eye.'

'That jumps all with my humour,' replied Michael Lambourne; 'and it only remains that you tell me my master's name.'

'My name is Master Richard Varney,' answered his companion.

'But I mean,' said Lambourne, 'the name of the noble lord to whose service you are to prefer me.'

'How, knave, art thou too good to call me master?' said Varney hastily; 'I would have thee bold to others, but not saucy to me.'
I crave your worship's pardon,' said Lambourne; 'but you seemed familiar with Anthony Fosder; now I am familiar with Anthony myself.'

'Thou art a shrewd knife, I see,' replied Varney. 'Mark me—I do indeed propose to introduce thee into a nobleman's household; but it is on my own person thou wilt chiefly wait, and upon my countenance that thou wilt depend. I am his master of horse—Thou wilt soon know his name—It is one that shakes the council and wields the state.'

'By this light, a brave spell to conjure with,' said Lambourne; 'if a man would discover hidden treasures!'

'Used with discretion, it may prove so,' replied Varney; 'but mark—if thou conjure with it at thine own hand, it may raise a devil who will tear thee into fragments.'

'Enough said,' replied Lambourne; 'I will not exceed my limits.'

The travellers then resumed the rapid rate of travelling which their discourse had interrupted, and so soon arrived at the royal park of Woodstock. This ancient possession of the crown of England was then very different from what it had been when it was the residence of the fair Rosamond, and the scene of Henry the Second's secret and illicit amours; and yet more unlike the scene which it exhibits in the present day, when Blenheim House commemorates the victory of Marlborough, and no less the genius of Vanbrugh, though decreed in his own time by persons of taste far inferior to his own. It was, in Elizabeth's time, an ancient mansion in bad repair, which had long ceased to be honoured with the royal residence, to the great impoverishment of the adjacent village. The inhabitants, however, had made several petitions to the queen to have the favour of the sovereign's countenance occasionally bestowed upon them; and upon this very business, ostensibly at least, was the noble lord, whom we have already introduced to our readers, a visitor at Woodstock.

Varney and Lambourne galloped without ceremony into the courtyard of the ancient and dilapidated mansion, which presented on that morning a scene of bustle which it had not exhibited for two reigns. Officers of the earl's household, liverymen and retainers, went and came with all the insolent fricas which attaches to their profession. The neigh of horses and the laying of hounds were heard; for my lord, in his occupation of inspecting and surveying the manor and demesne, was of course provided with the means of following his pleasure in the chase or park, said to have been the earliest that was enclosed in England, and which was well stocked with deer, that had long roamed there unmolested. Several of the inhabitants of the village, in anxious hope of a favourable result from this unwonted visit, listened about the courtyard, and awaited the great master forth. Their attention was excited by the hasty arrival of Varney, and a murmur ran amongst them, 'The Earl's master of the horse!' while they hurried to present favour by hastily unbuttoning, and proffering to hold the bridle and stirrup of the favoured retainer and his attendant.

'Stand somewhat aloof, my masters!' said Varney hautly, and let the domestics do their office.

The mortified citizens and peasants fell back at the signal; while Lambourne, who had cast his eye upon his superior's deportment, repelled the services of those who offered to assist him with yet more courtesy. 'Stand back, Jack peasant, with a murrain to ye,' and let these knave-footed men do their duty!' While they gave their nags to the attendants of the household, and walked into the mansion with an air of superiority which long practice and consciousness of birth rendered natural to Varney, and which Lambourne endeavoured to imitate as well as he could, the poor inhabitants of Woodstock whispered to each other, 'Well-a-day—God save us from all such misprond princes! As the master be like the men, why, the feud will take all, and yet have no more than his due.'

'Silence, good neighbours!' said the bailiff, 'keep tongue betwixt teeth—we shall know more by and by. But never will a lord come to Woodstock so welcome as bluff old King Harry! He would horsewhip a fellow one day with his own royal hand, and then fling him an handful of silver groats, with his own broad face on them, to point the sore within.'

'AY, rest be with him!' echoed the auditors; 'it will be long ere this Lady Elizabeth horsewhips any of us.'

'There is no saying,' answered the bailiff. 'Meanwhile, patience, good neighbours, and let us comfort ourselves by thinking that we deserve such notice at her Grace's hands.'

Meanwhile, Varney, closely followed by his new dependent, made his way to the hall, where men of more note and consequence than those left in the court-yard awaited the appearance of the earl, who as yet kept his chamber. All paid court to Varney, with more or less deference, as suited their own rank, or the urgency of the business which brought them to his lord's levee. To the general question of 'When comes my lord forth, Master Varney?' he gave brief answers, as, 'See you not my boots? I am just returned from Oxford, and know nothing of it, and the like, until the same query was put in a higher tone by a personage of more importance. 'I will inquire of the chamberlain, Sir Thomas Copeley,' was the reply. The chamberlain, distinguished by his silver key, answered, that the earl only waited Master Varney's return to come down, but that he would first speak with him in his private chamber. Varney, therefore, bowed to the company, and took leave, to enter his lord's apartment.

There was a murmur of expectation which lasted a few minutes, and was at length hushed by the opening of the folding-doors at the upper end of the hall, through which the earl made his entrance, marshalled by his chamberlain and the steward of his family, and followed by Richard Varney. In his noble person and princely features, men read nothing of that insolence which was practised by his dependants. His countenances were, indeed, measured by the rank of those to whom they were addressed, and even the meanest person present had a share of his gracious notice. The inquiries which he
made respecting the condition of the manor, of the queen's rights there, and of the advantages and disadvantages which might attend her occasional residence at the royal seat of Woodstock, seemed to show that he had most earnestly investigated the matter of the petition of the inhabitants, and with a desire to forward the interest of the place.

"Now, the Lord love his noble countenance," said the bailiff, who had thrust himself into the presence-chamber; "he looks somewhat pale. I warrant him he hath spent the whole night in perusing our memorial. Master Toughyarn, who took six months to draw it up, said it would take a week to understand it; and see if the Earl hath not knocked the marrow out of it in twenty-four hours."

The Earl then acquainted them that he should move their sovereign to honour Woodstock occasionally with her residence during her royal progresses, that the town and its vicinity might derive, from her countenance and favour, the same advantages as from those of her predecessors. Meanwhile he rejoiced to be the exponent of her gracions pleasure, in assuring them that, for the increase of trade, and encouragement of the worthy burgesses of Woodstock, her Majesty was mended to erect the town into a staple for wool.

This joyful intelligence was received with the acclamations not only of the better sort who were admitted to the audience-chamber, but of the commons who awaited without.

The freedom of the corporation was presented to the Earl upon his knee by the magistrates of the place, together with a purse of gold pieces, which the Earl handed to Varney, who, on his part, gave a share to Lambourne, as the most acceptable earnest of his new service.

The Earl and his retinue took horse soon after, to return to court, accompanied by the shouts of the inhabitants of Woodstock, who made the old oaks ring with re-echoing, 'Long live Queen Elizabeth, and the noble Earl of Leicester!' The urbanity and courtesy of the Earl even threw a gleam of popularity over his attendants, as their haughty deportment had formerly obscured that of their master; and men shouted, 'Long life to the Earl, and to his gallant followers!' as Varney and Lambourne, each in his rank, rode proudly through the streets of Woodstock.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Hast, I will hear you, Master Fenstan; and I will, at least, keep your counsel."—MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.

It becomes necessary to return to the detail of those circumstances which accompanied, and indeed occasioned, the sudden disappearance of Tressilian from the sign of the Black Bear at Cumnor. It will be recollected that this gentleman, after his encounter with Varney, had returned to Giles Gosling's caravansary, where he had bethought himself in his own chamber, demanded pen, ink, and paper, and announced his purpose to remain private for the day; in the evening he appeared again in the public room, where Michael Lambourne, who had been on the watch for him, agreedly to his engagement to Varney, endeavoured to renew his acquaintance with him, and hoped he retained no unfriendly recollection of the part he had taken in the morning's scuffle.

But Tressilian repelled his advances forcibly, though with civility—"Master Lambourne," said he, "I trust I have recompensed you for your pleasure the time you have wasted on me. Under the show of wild huntness which you exhibit, I know you have sense enough to understand me, when I say frankly, that, the object of our temporary acquaintance having been accomplished, we must be strangers to each other in future."

"1569," said Lambourne, twirling his whiskers with one hand, and grasping the hilt of his weapon with the other; "if I thought that this usage was meant to insult me."

"You would bear it with discretion, doubtless," interrupted Tressilian, "as you must do at any rate. You know too well the distance that betwixt us, to require me to explain myself further—Good evening."

So saying, he turned his back upon his former companion, and entered into discourse with the landlord. Michael Lambourne felt strongly disposed to bully; but his wrath was damped away in a few inelegant oaths and ejaculations, and he sank unresistingly under the ascendency which superior spirits possess over persons of his habits and description. He remained moody and silent in a corner of the apartment, paying the most marked attention to every motion of his late companion, against whom he began now to nourish a quarrel on his own account, which he trusted to averge by the execution of his new master Varney's directions. The hour of supper arrived, and was followed by that of repose, when Tressilian, like others, retired to his sleeping apartment.

He had not been in bed long, when the train of sad events, which supplied the place of rest in his disturbed mind, was suddenly interrupted by the jar of a door on its hinges, and a light was seen glimmer in the apartment. Tressilian, who was as brave as steel, sprang from his bed at this alarm, and had laid hand upon his sword, when he was prevented from drawing it by a voice which said, 'Be not too rash with your rapier, Master Tressilian—It is I, your host, Giles Gosling.'

At the same time, unshrouding the dark lantern, which had hitherto only emitted an indistinct glimmer, the poetically aspect and figure of the landlord of the Black Bear was visibly presented to his astonished guest.

"What manner this is, mine host?" said Tressilian: 'have you supped as jollily as last night, and so mistaken your chamber? or is midnight a time for masquerading it in your guest's lodging?"

"Master Tressilian," replied the host, 'I know my place and my time as well as e'er a merry landlord in England. But here has been my hand-dog kinsman watching you as though you ever caught a mouse; and here have we, on the other hand, quarrelled and fought either with him or with some other person, and I fear that danger will come of it.'
Go to, thou art but a fool, man," said Trespilian: "thy kinsman is beneath my resentment; and hence, why shouldst thou think I had quarrelled with any one whomsoever?"

"O, sir," replied the innkeeper, "there was a red spot on thy very cheek-bone, which bode[d] of a late brawl, as sure as the conjunction of Mars and Saturn threatens misfortune—and when you returned, the huckles of your girdle were brought forward, and your step was quick and lusty, and all things showed your hand and your hilt had been lately acquired."

"Well, good mine host, if I have been obliged to draw my sword," said Trespilian, "why should such a circumstance fetch thee out of thy warm bed at this time of night? Thou seest the mischief is all over."

"Under favour, that is what I doubt. Anthony Foster is a dangerous man, defended by strong court patronage, which hath borne him out in matters of very deep concernment. And then, my kinsman—why, I have told you what he is; and if these two old enemies have made up their old acquaintance, I would not, my worshipful guest, that it should be at thy cost. I promise you, Mr. Lamboune has been making very particular inquiries at mine hostler, when and which way you ride. Now, I would have you think, whether you may not have done or said something for which you may be waylaid, and taken at disadvantage."

"Thou art an honest man, mine host," said Trespilian, after a moment's consideration, "and I will deal frankly with thee. If these men's malice is directed against me—as I deny not but it may—it is because they are the agents of a more powerful villain than themselves."

"You mean Master Richard Varney, do you not?" said the landlord; "he was at Cumnor Place yesterday, and came not thither so private but what he was espied by one who told me."

"I mean the same, mine host."

"Then, for God's sake, worshipful Master Trespilian," said honest Gosling, "look well to yourself. This Varney is the protector and patron of Anthony Foster, who holds him under, by his favour, some lease of yonder manor and the park. Varney got a large grant of the lands of the Abbey of Abingdon and Cumnor Place, amongst others, from his master, the Earl of Leicester. Men say he can do everything that is needful to employ him as some men talk of. And then the Earl can do anything (that is, anything right or fitting) with the Queen, God bless her! so you see what an enemy you have made to yourself."}

"Well—it is done, and I cannot help it," answered Trespilian.

"Ush precious, but it must be helped in some manner," said the host. "Richard Varney—why, what between his influence with my lord, and his pretensions in so many old and vexations claims in right of the abbot here, men fear almost to mention his name, much more to set themselves against his practices. You may judge by our discourse the last night. Men said their pleasure of Tony Foster; but not a word of Richard Varney, though all men judge him to be at the bottom of yonder mystery about the pretty wench. But perhaps you know more of that matter than I do, for women, though they wear not swords, are occasion for many a blade's exchanging a sheath of neat's leather for one of flesh and blood."

"I do indeed know more of that poor unfortunate lady they have denot, my friendly host; and so bankrupt am I, at this moment, of friends and advice, that I will willingly make a counsellor of thee, and tell thee the whole history, the rather that I have a favour to ask when my tale is ended."

"Good Master Trespilian," said the landlord, "I am but a poor innkeeper, little able to adjust or counsel such a guest as yourself. But as sure as I have risen decently above the world, by giving good measure and reasonable charges, I am an honest man; and as such, if I may not be able to assist you, I am at least not capable to abuse your confidence. Say away, therefore, as confidentially as if you spoke to your father; and thus far at least be certain, that my curiosity—for I will not deny that which belongs to my calling—is joined to a reasonable degree of discretion."

"I doubt it not, mine host," answered Trespilian; and while his auditor remained in anxious expectation, he was left to an instant for his own invention, not confined in any degree. Anthony Foster, who, in that battle, valiantly took part with Henry VII., the Queen's grandfather, and routed the Earl of Lincoln, Lord Galloway and his wild Irish, and the Flemings whom the Duchess of Burgundy had sent over, in the quarrel of Lambert Simnel?"

"I remember both one and the other," said Giles Gosling; "it is sung of a dozen times a week on my ale-bench below. Sir Roger Robsart of Devon—O, ay,—tis him of whom minstrels sing to this hour,—

He was the flower of Stoke's red field,
When Martin Swart was on ground by lain;
In raging rout he never rejoyc'd
But like a rock did firm remain.

Ay, and then there was Martin Swart I have heard my grandfather talk of, and of the jolly Almains whom he commanded, with their slashed doublets and quaint hose, all fringed with ribbons above the nether stocks. Here's a song goes of Martin Swart, too, and I had but memory for it:—

Martin Swart and his men,
Saddle them, saddle them;
Martin Swart and his men,
Saddle them well."

"True, good mine host—the day was long talked of; but if you sing so loud, you will awake more listeners than I care to commit my confidence unto."

"I crave pardon, my worshipful guest," said

This verse, or something similar, occurs in a long ballad, or poem, on Fledden Field, reprinted by the late Henry Weber, Esq. in the Bodleian Library, vol. 2.

This verse of an old song, actually occurs in an old poem (by Skelton), where the singer boasts—

"Conspiring of me can they mock Of Martin Swart and all his merry men."

[See Weber's notes, in the above vol. p. 182.]
mine host; 'I was oblivious. When an old song comes across us merry old knights of the spigot, it runs away with our discretion.'

'Well, mine host, my grandfather, like some other Cornish men, kept a warm affection to the House of York, and espoused the quarrel of this Sinnel, assuming the title of Earl of Warwick, as the country afterwards, in great numbers, condescended the cause of Perkin Warbeck, calling himself the Duke of York. My grandfather joined Sinnel's standard, and was taking desperate steps at Stoke, where most of the officers of that unhappy army were slain in their harness. The good knight to whom he rendered himself, Sir Roger Robsart, protected him from the immediate vengeance of the king, and dismissed him without ransom. But he was unable to guard him from other penalties of his rashness, being the heavy fines by which he was impoverished, according to Henry's mode of weakening his enemies. The good knight did what he might to mitigate the distresses of my ancestor; and their friendship became so strict, that my father was bred up as the sworn brother and intimate of the present Sir Hugh Robsart, the only son of Sir Roger, and the heir of his house and generous and hospitable temper, though not equal to him in martial achievements.'

'I have heard of good Sir Hugh Robsart,' interrupted the host, 'many a time and oft. His huntsman and sworn servant, Will Badger, hath spoken of him an hundred times in this very house—a jovial knight he is, and hath loved hospitality and open housekeeping more than the present fashion, which lays as much gold lace on the seams of a doublet as would feed a dozen of tall fellows with beef and ale for a twelvemonth, and let them have their evening at the alehouse once a week, to do good to the publican.'

'If you have seen Will Badger, mine host,' said Tressilian, 'you have heard enough of Sir Hugh Robsart; and therefore I will but say, that the hospitality you boast of hath proved somewhat detrimental to the estate of his family, which is perhaps of the less consequence, as he has but one daughter to whom to bequest it. And here begins my share in the tale. Upon my father's death, now several years since, the good Sir Hugh would willingly have made me his constant companion. There was a time, however, at which I felt the kind knight's excessive love for field-sports detained me from studies by which I might have profited more; but I ceased to regret the leisure which gratitude and hereditary friendship compelled me to bestow on these rural avocations. The exquisite beauty of Mistress Amy Robsart, as she grew up from childhood to woman, could not escape one who circumstanced was obliged to be so constantly in her company—I loved her, in short, my host, and her father saw it.'

'And crossed your true loves, no doubt?' said mine host; 'it is the way in all such cases; and I judge it must have been so in your instance, from the heavy sigh you uttered even now.'

'The case was different, mine host. My suit was highly approved by the generous Sir Hugh Robsart—it was his daughter who was cold to my passion.'

'She was the most dangerous enemy of the two,' said the innkeeper. 'I fear your suit proved a cold one.'

'She yielded me her esteem,' said Tressilian, 'and seemed not unwilling that I should hope it might ripen into a warmer passion. There was a contract of future marriage executed betwixt us upon her father's intercession; but to comply with his anxious request, the execution was deferred for a twelvemonth. During this period, Richard Varney appeared in the country, and, availing himself of some distant family regard with Sir Hugh Robsart, spent much of his time in his company, until, at length, he almost lived in the family.'

'That could bode no good to the place he honoured with his residence,' said Gascoigne.

'No, by the road?' replied Tressilian. 'Misunderstanding and misery followed his presence, yet so strangely, that I am at this moment at a loss to trace the gradations of his encroachment upon a family, which had, till then, been so happy. For a time Amy Robsart received the attentions of this man Varney with the indifference that followed a period in which she seemed to regard him with dislike, and even with disgust; and then an extraordinary species of competition appeared to grow up betwixt them. Varney dropped those airs of pretension and gallantry which had marked his former approach; and Amy, on the other hand, seemed to renounce the ill-disguised disgust with which she had regarded them. They seemed to have more of privacy and confidence together than I fully liked; and I suspected that they were in private, where there was less restraint than in our presence. Many circumstances, which I noticed but little at the time—for I deemed her heart as open as her angelic countenance—have since arisen on my memory, to convince me of their private understanding. But I need not detail them—the fact speaks for itself. She vanished from the house of her father's house—Varney disappeared at the same time—and this very day I have seen in the character of his paramour, living in the house of his sordid dependant Foster, and visited by him, muffled, and by a secret entrance. And this, then, is the cause of your quarrel? Methinks, you should have been sure that the fair lady either desired or deserved your interference.'

'Mine host,' answered Tressilian, 'my father, such as I must ever consider Sir Hugh Robsart, sits at home struggling with his grief, or, if so far recovered, vainly attempting to drown, in the practice of his field-sports, the recollection that he had once a daughter—a recollection which ever and anon breaks from him under circumstances the most pathetic. I could not forget the idea that he should live in misery, and Amy in guilt; and I endeavoured to seek her out, with the hope of inducing her to return to her family. I have found her, and when I have either succeeded in my attempt, or have found it altogether unavailing, it is my purpose to embark for the Virginia voyage.'

'Be not so rash, good sir,' replied Giles Gosling, 'and cast not yourself away because a woman—to be brief—to a woman, and changes
his enemy of the country, and fear your suit.

'And I will profit by your advice, and leave you to-morrow early,' said the landlord. 'I never prayed for a guest's arrival more eagerly than I do to have you safely gone. My kinsman's destiny is most likely to be hanged for something, but I would not that the cause were the murder of an honoured guest of mine. 'Better ride safe in the dark,' says the proverb, "than in daylight with a cut-throat at your elbow." Come, sir, I move you for your own safety. Your horse and all is ready, and here is your horse.'

'I am somewhat under a noble,' said Tressilian, giving one to the host; 'give the balance to pretty Cicely, your daughter, and the servants of the house.'

'They shall taste of your bounty, sir,' said Gosling, and you should taste of my daughter's lips in grateful acknowledgment, but at this hour she cannot grace the porch to greet your departure.'

'Do not trust your daughter too far with your guests, my good landlord,' said Tressilian,

'O, sir, we will keep measure; but I wonder not that you are jealous of them all. May I leave to know with what aspect the fair lady at the Place yesterday received you?'

'I own,' said Tressilian, 'it was angry as well as confused, and affords me little hope that she is yet awakened from her unhappy delusion.'

'In that case, sir, I see not why you should play the champion of a wenches that will none of you, and incur the resentment of a favourite's favourite, as dangerous a monster as ever a knight adventurer encountered in the old story-books.'

'You do me wrong in the supposition, mine host—gross wrong,' said Tressilian; 'I do not desire that you should ever turn thought upon me more. Let me be but restored to her father, and all I have to do in Europe—perhaps in the world—is over and ended.'

'A wiser resolution were to drink a cup of sack, and forget her,' said the landlord. 'But live and twenty and fifty look on those matters with different eyes, especially when one case of peppers is set in the skull of a young gallant, and the other in that of an old publican. I pity you, Master Tressilian, but I see not how I can aid you in the mean while.'

'Only thus far, mine host,' replied Tressilian.

'Keep a watch on the motions of those at the Place, which thou canst easily learn without suspicion, as all men's news fly to the ale-bench; and be pleased to communicate the tidings in writing to such person and see other, who shall bring you this ring as a special token—look at it—it is of value, and I will freely bestow it on you.'

'Nay, sir,' said the landlord, 'I desire no recompense—but it seems an unadvised course in me, being in a public place, to connect myself in a matter of this dark and perilous nature. I have no interest in it.'

'You, and every father in the land who would have his daughter released from the snares of
shame, and sin, and misery, have an interest deeper than ought concerning earth only could create.

'Well, sir,' said the host, 'these are brave words; and I do pity from my soul the frank-hearted old gentleman, who has mishandled his estate, and lost his handsome farmstead for the honour of his country, and now has his daughter, who should be the stay of his age, and so forth, whisks up by such a kite as this Varney. And though your part in the matter is somewhat of the wildest, yet I will even be a madcap for company, and help you in your honest attempt to get back the good man's child, so far as being your faithful intelligence can serve. And as I shall be true to you, I pray you to be true to me, and keep my secret; for it were bad for the custom of the Black Bear should it be said the bear-wailer interfered in such matters. Varney has interest enough with the justices to dismount my noble ebon from the post on which he swings so gallantly, to call in my licence, and ruin me from garret to cellar.'

'Do not doubt my secrecy, mine host,' said Tressilian; 'I will retain, besides, the deepest sense of thy service, and of the risk thou dost run—remember the ring is my sure token.—And now, farewell—for it was thy wise advice that I should tarry here as short a time as may be.'

'Follow me, then, Sir Guest,' said the landlord, 'and tread as gently as if eggs were under your foot, instead of deaf boards.—No one must know when or how you departed.'

By the aid of his dark lantern he conducted Tressilian, as soon as he had made himself ready for his journey, through a long intricacy of passages, which opened to an outer court, and from thence to a remote stable, where he had already placed his guest's horse. He then added him to fasten on the saddle the small portmanteau which contained his necessaries, opened a postern-door, and, with a hearty shake of the hand, and a reiteration of his promise to attend to what went on at Cannor Place, he dismissed his guest on his solitary journey.

CHAPTER IX.

Far in the lane a lonely hut he found,
No tenant ventured on the unwholesome ground;
Here smokes his forge, he hews his swiney arm,
And early strokes the sounding anvil warm;
Around his shop the steely sparks flew,
As for the stool he shaped the wending shoe.

Gay's Trivia.

As it was deemed proper by the traveller himself, as well as by Giles Gosling, that Tressilian should avoid being seen in the neighbourhood of Cannor by those whom accident might make early risers, the landlord had given him a route, consisting of various byways and lanes, which he was to follow in succession, and which, all the turns and shortcuts duly observed, was to conduct him to the public road to Marlborough.

But, like counsel of every other kind, this species of direction is much more easily given than followed; and what betwixt the intricacy of the way, the darkness of the night, Tressilian's ignorance of the country, and the sad and perplexing thoughts with which he had to contend, his journey proceeded so slowly, that morning found him only in the vale of Whitehorse, memorable for the defeat of the Danes in former days, with his horse deprived of a forefoot shoe, an accident which threatened to put a stop to his journey, by bating the animal. The residence of a smith was his first object of inquiry, in which he received little satisfaction from the darkness or stillness of one or two peons, early bound for their labour, who gave brief and indifferent answers to his questions on the subject. Anxious, at length, that the partner of his journey should suffer as little as possible from the unfortunate accident, Tressilian dismounted, and led his horse in the direction of a little hamlet, where he hoped either to find or hear tidings of such an artificer as he now wanted. Through a deep and muddy lane, he length walked to the place, which proved only an assemblage of live or six miserable huts, about the doors of which one or two persons, whose appearance seemed as rude as that of their dwellings, were beginning the toils of the day. One cottage, however, seemed of rather superior aspect, and the old dame, who was sweeping her threshold, appeared something less rude than her neighbours. To her Tressilian addressed the oft-repeated question, whether there was a smith in this smithy, or any one who could render his horse serviceable. The dame looked him in the face with a peculiar expression, as she replied, 'Smith! ay, truly is there a smith—what wouldst ha' wi' un, mon?'

'To shoe my horse, good dame,' answered Tressilian; 'you may see that he has thrown a forefoot shoe.'

'Master Holiday!' exclaimed the dame, without returning any direct answer—'Master Hermon Holiday, come and speak to mon, and please yon.'

'Favele linguis,' answered a voice from within; 'I cannot now come forth, Gammer Sludge, being in the very sweetest part of my morning studies.'

'Nay but, good now, Master Holiday, come ye out, do ye—Here's a man would to Wayland Smith, and I care not to show him way to devil—his horse hath cast shoe.'

'Quid uti mui et aliis?' replied the man of learning from within; 'I think there is but one wise man in the hundred, and they cannot shoe a horse without him.'

And forth came the honest pedagogue, for such his dress bespoke him. A long, lean, shambling, stooping figure was surmounted by a head thatched with lank black hair somewhat inclining to grey. His features were the cast of habitual authority, which I suppose Dionysius carried with him from the schoolmaster's pulpit, and bequeathed as a legacy to all of the same profession. A black buckram cassock was gathered at his middle with a belt, at which hung, instead of knife or weapon, a goodly leather pen-and-ink case. His ferula was stuck on the other side, like Harlequin's wooden sword; and he carried in his hand the tattered volumes which he had been busily perusing.

On seeing a person of Tressilian's appearance, which he was better able to estimate than the
country folks had been, the schoolmaster unhobbled, and accosted him with *Salve, domine, Latinam lingua Latinam?*

Tressilian mustered his learning to reply, *"Lingua Latina hanc invenite unam variam, dominus, Libellum legis tamen."*

The Latin reply had upon the schoolmaster the effect which the monas's sign was said to produce on the brethren of the order, listened, with gravity interested in his story of a tumbled horse and a lost shoe, and then replied with solemnly, *It may appear a much simpler thing, most worshipful, to reply to you that these dwellers, within a brief mile of these turgor, the most accomplished blacksmith that ever nailed iron upon horse. Now, were I to say so, I want not you would think yourself compos endi, or, as the folk have it, a made man.*

*I should at least, said the man, 'have a direct answer to a plain question, which seems difficult to be obtained in this country.'*

"It is a mere sending of a sinful soul to the evil that may say the old women, 'the sending a living creature to Wayland smith.'*

"Peace, Ganner Sludge!" said the pedagogue; *"paucor verba, Ganner Sludge; look to the finitude, Ganner Sludge; earctum jactantur, Ganner Sludge; this gentleman is none of thy gossips."*

Then turning to Tressilian, he resumed his lofty tone, *'And so, most worshipful, you would really think yourself felix his troia, should I point out to you the dwelling of this same smith!"*

"Sir," replied Tressilian, 'I should in that case have all that I want at present—a horse fit to carry me forward—out of hearing of your learning. The last words he muttered to himself.

"O certe neque mortalitatem?" said the learned man; *'well was it sung by Junius Jurennal, "mortalis eum conditio nolatigam,"'"*

"Learned Magister," said Tressilian, 'your erudition so greatly exceeds my poor intellectual capacity, that you must excuse my seeking elsewhere for information which I can better understand.'

"There again now," replied the pedagogue, 'how fondly you fly from him that would instruct you! Truly said Quintilian'—

"I pray, sir, let Quintilian be for the present, and answer, in a word and in English, if your learning can descend so far, whether there is any place here where I can have opportunity to refresh my horse, until I can have schooling.'

"Thus much courteously," said the schoolmaster, "reply to this, I would readily render you, that although there is in this very spot (ostrea pensa regina) no regular hospitium, as my namesake Erasmus calleth it, yet forasmuch as you are somewhat imbued, or at least tinged as it were, with good letters, I will use my interest with the good woman of the house to accommodate you with a platter of finitude—an wholesome food, for which I have found no Latin phrase—your cow, sanum habet, nuncatur, and if it please you to bestow on me the pleasure of your company, the banquet shall cost you ne sentiens status, so much as Gummer Sludge bound to me for the pains I have bestowed on the top and bottom of her hopeful heir Dickie, whom I have painfully made to travel the accursed, *'Now, God yield ye for it, Master Hermes, I said the good Ganner, 'and grant that little Dickie may be the better for his accident—and for the rest, if the gentleman list to stay, breakfast shall be on the board in the morning of a dishcloth; and for horse-meat, and man's meat, I bear no such base mind as to ask a penny.'"

Considering the state of his horse, Tressilian, upon the whole, saw no better course than to accept the invitation thus learnedly made and hospitably confirmed, and take chances that when the good pedagogue had exhausted every topic of conversation, he might possibly consent to tell him where he could find the smith they spoke of. He entered the hut accordingly, and sat down with the learned Magister Erasmus Holiday, partook of his finitude, and listened to his learned account of himself for a good half-hour, ere he could possibly persuade himself to talk upon any other topic. The reader will readily expect the master accompanying this man of learning into all the details with which he favoured Tressilian, of which the following sketch may suffice.

He was born at Hogsorton, where, according to popular saying, the pigs play upon the organ; a proverb which he interpreted allegorically, as having reference to the legend of Epiphanius, of which jailer Horace confessed himself a poki. His name of Erasmus he derived partly from his father having been the son of a renowned washerwoman, who had held that great scholar in clean linen all the while he was at Oxford; a task of some difficulty, as he was only possessed of two shirts, the 'one,' as she expressed herself, to wear the other. The vestiges of one of these musters, er Master Holiday boasted, were still in his possession, having fortunately been retained by his grandmother to cover the balance of her bill. But he thought there was a still higher and overbearing cause for his having had the name of Erasmus conferred on him, namely, the secret presentation of his mother's mind, that, in the bale to be christened, was a hidden genius, which should one day lead him to rival the name of the great scholar of Amsterdam. The schoolmaster's surname led him as far into dissertation as his Christian appellation. He was inclined to think that he bore the name of Holiday quasi haec a non baccate, because he gave such few holidays to his school. *'Hence," said he, 'the schoolmaster is termed, classically, Ludii Magister, because he deprives the boys of their play.' And yet, on the other hand, he thought it might bear a very different interpretation, and refer to his own exquisite art in arranging pageants, morris dances, May-day festivities, and such-like holiday delights, for which he assured Tressilian he had positively the purest and the most inventive brain in England; insomuch that his cunning in framing such pleasures had made him known to many honourable persons both in country and in court, and especially to the noble Earl of Leicester. And although he may now seem to forget me,' he said, 'in the multitude of state affairs, yet I
am well assured that, had he some pretty pastime to array for entertainment of the Queen's Grace, and man would be seeking the humble cottage of Erasmus Holiday. Pierre contente, in the meanwhile, I hear my pupils parse, and construe, worshipful sir, and drive away my time with the air of the Muses. And I have at all times, when in correspondence with foreign scholars, subscribed myself Erasmus ab Die Fauve, and have enjoyed the distinction due to the learned under that title; witness the erudite Hieronymus Bockenschoenius, who dedicated me under that title his treatise on the letter Titus. In fine, sir, I have been a happy and distinguished man.'

'Long may it be so, sir!' said the traveller; 'but permit me to ask, in your own learned phrase, Quae hoc ad Iudicium lores—what has all this to do with the showing of my poor mag!'

Festina levi,' said the man of learning, 'we will presently come to that point. You must know that some two or three years past, there came to these parts just one who called himself Doctor Dobobio, although it may be he never wore even Magister artium, save in right of his hungry belly. Or it may be that, if he had any degrees, they were of the devil's giving; for he was what the vulgar call a white witch—a cunning man, and such like. Now, good sir, I perceive you are impatient; but if a man tell not his tale his own way, how have you warrant to think that he can tell it in yours?'

'Well, then, learned sir, take your way,' answered Tressilian; 'only let us travel at a sharper pace, for my time is somewhat of the shortest.'

'W ell, sir,' resumed Erasmus Holiday, with the most provoking perseverence, 'I will not say that this same Demetris, for so he wrote himself when in foreign parts, was an actual conjuror, but certain it is that he professed to be a brother of the mystical Order of the Rosy Cross, a disciple of Geber (or r.ionior cnbus ruilum verbum verissimundum, gibbonis). He cured wounds by salving the weapon instead of the sore—tolled fortunes by palmistry—discovered stolen goods by the sieve and shears—gathered the right mallow and the mullein seed, through use of which men walk invisible—pretended some advances towards the panacea, or universal elixir, and affected to convert good lead into sorry silver.'

'In other words,' said Tressilian, 'he was a quack-salver and common cheat; but what has all this to do with my mag, and the shoe which he has lost?'

'With your worshipful patience,' replied the diffusive man of letters, 'you shall understand that presently—patiently, then, right worshipful, which word, according to our Marcus Tullius, is "difficultium verum durum perpetuum." This same Demetris Dobobio, after dealing with the country, as I have told you, began to acquire fame, that is, after he had gone about, as according to vulgar name, (for I aver not the thing as according to my certain knowledge), the devil claimed his right, one dark night, and flown off with Demetris, who was never seen or heard of afterwards. Now here comes the modula, the very narrow of my tale. This Doctor Dobobio had a servant, a poor snake, whom he employed in trimming his furnace, regulating it by just measure—cooking his drugs—tracing his circles—enabling his patients, on <i>de</i> <i>cateris</i>—Well, right worshipful, the Doctor being brought thus strangely, and in a way which struck the whole country with terror, this poor Zany thinks to himself, in the words of Maro, "<i>En aculeus, una detect alter;</i>" and, even as a tradesman's apprentice sets himself up in his master's shop when he is dead, or hath retired from business, so doth this Wayland assume the dangerous trade of his defunct master. But although, most worshipful sir, the world is ever prone to listen to the pretensions of such unworthy men, who, are indeed, mere <i>scutum vanitatem</i> and <i>charlatans,</i> though usurping the style and skill of doctors of medicine, yet the pretensions of this poor Zany, this Wayland, were too gross to pass on them, nor was there a rule which the renegades, who was not ready to accost him in the sense of Persius, though in their own rugged words—

Dilbis bellaborum, certo compose pecto,

which I have thus rendered in a poor paraphrase of mine own—

Wil thou mix h.licehere, who doth not know
How many grains should to the mixture go?
The art of medicine this forbids, I know.

Moreover, the evil reputation of the master, and his strange and doubtful end, as, or, at least, sudden disappearance, prevented any, excepting the most desperate of men, to seek any advice or opinion from the savant: wherefore the poor vermin was likely at first to starve for very hunger. But the devil that serves him, since the death of Demetris or Dobobio, put him on a fresh device. This knave, whether from the inspiration of the devil, or from early education, shoes horses better than the man between us and Ireland—and so he gives up his practice on the bladders, the two-legged and unfeigned species called mankind, and betakes himself entirely to shoeing of horses.'

'Indeed! and where does he lodge all this time?' said Tressilian. 'And does he shoe horses well?—show me his dwelling presently.'

'The interpolation pleased not the Magister, who exclaimed, 'O <i>opus meum mortuatum!</i> though, by the way, I used that quotation before. But I would the classics could afford me any sentiment of power to stop those who are so willing to rush upon their own destruction. Hear but, I pray you, the conditions of this man,' said he, in continuation 'ere you are so willing to place yourself within his danger.'

'A takes no money for as's work,' said the dame, who stood by, enraptured as it were with the fine words and learned apologisms which gilded so gloriously from her erudite inmate, Master Holiday. But this interruption pleased not the Magister, more than that of the traveller. 'Peace,' said he, 'Gammer Sledge; know your place, if it be your will. <i>Suffulminis,</i> Gammer Sledge, and allow me to expound this matter to our worshipful guest.'—Sir,' said he, again addressing Tressilian, 'this old woman
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a pricked it with her needle's point.—This Wayland
takes no money, indeed, nor doth he show himself to any one.

And this manush, for such I hold him,
said the traveller, 'know might like good skill of his trade!'

'O, sir, in that let us give the devil his due —Mulherb himself, with all his Cyclops, could hardly amuse him. But assuredly there is little wisdom in taking counsel or receiving aid from one who is but too plainly in league with the author of evil.'

'I must take my chance of that, good Master Holiday,' said Trossilian, rising; 'and my horse must now have eaten his provender, I must have need for you thy good cheer, and pray you to show me this man's residence, that I may perhaps have the means of proceeding on my journey.'

'Ah, ah, do ye show him, Master Herasman,' said the old dame, who was, perhaps, desirous to get her house freed of her guest; 'a must needs go when the devil drives.'

'Do me good,' said the Magister, 'I submit—taking the world to witness, that I have possessed this honorable gentleman with the full injustice which he has done and shall do to his own soul, if he becomes thus a trinket with Satan. Neither will I go forth with our guest myself, but rather send my pupil. — Ricardus! ades nebula!' Under your favour, not, so,' answered the old

woman: 'you may peril your own soul, if you list, but my son shallEDGE on no such errand; and I wonder at you, Master Dominie, to propose such a piece of service for little Dickie.'

'Nay, my good preceptor,' answered the Traveller, 'then I shall go both to the top of the hill, and indicate with his digit to the stranger the dwelling of Wayland Smith. Believe not that any evil can come to him, he having read this evening, fasting, a chapter of the Septuagint, and, moreover, having had his lesson in the Greek Testament.'

'Ah,' said his mother, 'and I have sown a spring of witch's dun in the neck of unm's doublet, ever since that foul thief has begun his practices on man and beast in these parts.'

'And as he goes off (as I hugely suspect) towards this conjuror for his own pastime, he may for once go thinker, or near it, to pleasure ns, and to assist this stranger.'—Ergo, homen Ricardus! ades, queso, mi didasteus.'

The pupil, thus affectionately invited, at length came stumbling into the room; a queer, shambling, ill-faced urchin, who, by his stunted growth, seemed about twelve or thirteen years old, though he was probably a real youth of a year or two older, with a caroty pate in huge dis-order, a freckled sunburnt visage, with a snub nose, a long chin, and two peary grey eyes, which had a dull obliquity of vision, approach-

ing to a squint, though perhaps not a decided one. It was impossible to look at the little man without some disposition to laugh; especially when Trossilian seized upon and kissed him, in spite of his struggling and kicking in reply. His garments, termed him her own precious pearl of beauty.

'Ricardus,' said the preceptor, 'you must forthwith (which is proprio) set forth so far as the top of the hill, and show this man of worship Wayland Smith's workshop.

'A proper errand of a morning,' said the boy, in better language than Trossilian expected; 'and who knows but the devil may fly away with me before I come back?'

'Ah, marry may u,' said Dame Stidge, 'and you might have thought twice, Master Dominie, ere you sent my dainty darling on such an errand. It is not for such doings I feel your body and cloth your back, I warrant you!'

'Such an errand, good Stidge-Sander,' answered the preceptor; 'I promise you that Satan, if he be in Satan's case, shall not touch a thread of his garment; for Dickie can say his psalter with the best, and may defy the foul head —Kamnecul, Sigillumque nefis.'

'Ah, and I, as I said before, have sewed a sprig of the mountain-ash into his collar,' said the good woman, 'which will avail more than your clerkship, I was: but for all that, it is ill to seek the devil or his mates either.'

'My good boy,' said Trossilian, who saw, from a grotesque sneer on Dickie's face, that he was more likely to act upon his own bottom than by the instructions of his elders, I will give thee a silver great, my pretty fellow, if you will guide me to the man's forge.'

The boy gave him a knowing side look, which seemed to promise acquiescence, while at the same time he exclaimed, 'I be your guide to Wayland Smith's! Why, man, did I not say that the devil might fly off with me, just as the kite there (looking to the window) is flying off with one of grandam's chicks.'

'The kite! the kite!' exclaimed the old woman in return, and, forgetting all other matters in her alarm, hastened to the rescue of her chicken as fast as her old legs could carry her.

'Now for it,' said the urchin to Trossilian; 'snatch your beans, get out your horse, and have at the silver great you spoke of.'

'Nay, but marry, marry,' said the preceptor.

'Sufflantia, Ricardus.'

'Tarry yourself,' said Dickie, 'and think what answer you are to make to granny for sending me post to the devil.'

The teacher, aware of the responsibility he was incurring, bustled up in great haste to lay hold of the urchin, and to prevent his departure; but Dickie slipped through his fingers, bolted from the cottage, and sped him to the top of a neighbouring rising ground; while the preceptor, despairing, by well-taught experience, of recovering his pupil by speed of foot, had recourse to the most honeyed epithets the Latin vocabulary affords, to persuade his return. But to mi animae, coramque DIO, and all such classical endeavours, the truant turned a deaf ear, and kept frisking on the top of the rising ground like
a goblin by moonlight, making signs to his new acquaintance. Tressilian, to follow him.

The traveller lost no time in getting out his horse, and departed to join his clavish guide, after half forcing on the poor deserted teacher a rescompense for the entertainment which he had received, which partly allayed the terror he had for facing the return of the old lady of the mansion. Apparently this took place soon afterwards; for ere Tressilian and his guide had proceeded far on their journey, they heard the screams of a cracked female voice, intermingled with the classical objections of Master Erasmus Holiday. But Dickie Sledge, equally deaf to the voice of maternal tenderness and of magisterial authority, skipped on unceasingly before Tressilian, only observing that, if they cried themselves hoarse, they might go lick the honey-pot, for he had eaten up all the honey-comb himself on yesterday even.

CHAPTER X.

There entering in, they found the gentleman self Full payable into his work aye, If he had been long in prison that, The Fairy Queen.

"Are we far from the dwelling of this smith, my pretty lad?" said Tressilian to his young guide.

"How is it you call me?" said the boy, looking astounded at him with his sharp grey eyes.

"I call you my pretty lad—is there any offence in that, my boy?"

"No;—but were you with my grandam and Dominie Holiday, you might sing chorus to the old song of We three Tom-folks be."

"And why so, my little man?" said Tressilian.

"Because," answered the ugly usher, "you are the only three ever called me pretty lad.—Now, my grandam does it because she is parcel blind by age, and whole blind by finding—and my master, the poor dominie, does it to curry favour, and to have the fullest platter of hurnity, and the warmest seat by the fire. But what you call me pretty lad for, you know best yourself."

"Then art a sharp wag at least, if not a pretty one. But what do thy playfellows call thee?"

"Hobgoblin," answered the boy readily; "but for all that, I would rather have my own ugly visamity than any of their jottleheads, that have no more brains in them than a brickbat."

"Then you fear not this smith, whom you are going to see?"

"Me fear him! answered the boy; "if he were the devil folk think him. I would not fear him; but though there is something queer about him, he's no more a devil than you are, and that's what I would not tell to every one."

"And why do you tell it to me, son, my boy?" said Tressilian.

"Because you are another guess gentleman than those we see here every day," replied Dickie;

"and though I am as ugly as sin, I would not have you think me an ass, especially as I may have a bon to ask of you one day."

"And what is that, my lad, whom I must not call pretty?" replied Tressilian.

"Oh, if I were to ask it just now," said the boy, "you would deny it me—but I will wait till we meet at court."

"At court, Richard! are you bound for court?" said Tressilian.

"Ay, ay, that's just like the rest of them," replied the boy; "I warrant we you think, what should such an ill-favoured, scrambling usher do at court? But let Richard Sledge alone: I have not beenock of the roost here for nothing. I will make sharp wit mend foul feature."

"But what will your grandam say, and your tutor, Dominie Holiday?"

"'E'en what they like," replied Dickie; "the one has her chickens to reckon, and the other has his boys to whip. I would have given them the candle to hold long since, and shown this trumpery basket a fair pair of heels, but the dominie promises I should go with him to bear share in the next pageant he is to set forth, and they say there are to be great revels shortly."

"And whereabouts are they to be held, my little friend?" said Tressilian.

"O, at some castle far in the north," answered his guide—all the world's breath from Berkshire. But our old dominie holds that they cannot go forward without him; and it may be he is right, for he has put in order many a fair pageant. He is not half the fool you would take him for, when he gets to work he understands; and so he can spout verses like a play-actor, when, God wot, if you set him to steal a goose's egg, he would be drubbed by the gander."

"And you are to play a part in his next show?" said Tressilian, somewhat interested by the boy's boldness of conversation, and shrewd estimate of character."

"In faith," said Richard Sledge, in answer, "he hath so promised me; and if he break his word, it will be the worse for him: for let me take the bit between my teeth, and turn my head down hill, and I will shake him off with a fall that will harm no bone. And I should not like such to hurt him neither," said he, "for the tiresome old fool has painfully laboured to teach me all he could.—But enough of that—here are we at Wayland Smith's forge-door."

"You just, my little friend," said Tressilian; "here is nothing but a bare moor, and that ring of stones, with a great one in the midst, like a Cornish barrow."

"Ay, and that flat stone in the midst, which lies across the top of these uprights," said the boy, "is Wayland Smith's counter, that you must tell down your money upon."

"What do you mean by such folly?" said the traveller, beginning to be angry with the boy, and vexed with himself for having trusted such a hand-trained guide as me.

"Why," said Dickie, with a grin, "you must tie your horse to that upright stone that has the ring in it, and then you must whistle three times, and lay me down your silver great on that other flat stone walk out of the circle, sit down on the west side of that little thicket of bushes, and
in, I would not especially as I may from this I must not

I would not wait till we

sound for court?'

the rest of them,' said you think, what

missing urchin

slidge alone; I

not do anything, I

ay, when you catch me!' said the boy; and presently took to his heels across the heath, with a velocity which baffled every attempt of Tressilian to overtake him, loaded as he was with his heavy load. Nor was it the least provoking part of the urchin's conduct, that he did not exert his utmost speed, like one who finds himself in danger, or who is frightened, but preserved just such a rate as to encourage Tressilian to continue the look, and then darted away from him with the swiftness of the wind, until his pursuer supposed he had nearly run him down, doubling, at the same time, and wishing, so as always to keep near the place from which he started.

This lasted until Tressilian, from very weariness, stopped still, and was about to abandon the pursuit, with a hearty curse on the ill-favoured urchin, who had engaged him in an exercise so ridiculous. But the boy, who had, as formerly, planted himself on the top of a hillock close in front, began to clap his long thin hands, pelted with his skinny fingers, and twist his silly features into such an extravagant expression of laughter and derision, that Tressilian began half to doubt whether he had not in truth a actual hackogold.

Provoked exceedingly, yet at the same time feeling an irresistible desire to laugh, so very odd were the boy's grimmaces and gestures, the Cornish man returned to his horse, and mounted him with the purpose of pursuing Dickie at more advantage.

The boy no sooner saw him mount his horse, than he hollered out to him, rather than he should spoil his white-footed nag, he would come to him, on condition he would keep his fingers to himself.

'I will make no condition with thee, thou naughty varlet!' said Tressilian; 'I will have thee at my mercy in a moment.'

'Aha, Master Traveller,' said the boy, 'there is a march hard by would swallow all the horses of the Queen's Guard—I will into it, and see where you will go then. You shall hear the bitter bump, and the wild-drake quack, ere you get hold of me without my consent, I promise you.'

Tressilian looked out, and, from the appearance of the ground behind the hillock, believed it might be as the boy said, and accordingly determined to strike up a piece with so light-footed and ready-witted an enemy. — Come down, sir,' he said, 'thou mischievous varlet! leave the moping and mowing, and come hither; I will do thee no harm, as I am a gentleman.'

The boy answered his invitation with the utmost confidence, and danced down from his

stance with a gallant sort of step, keeping his eye at the same time fixed on Tressilian's, who, once more mounted, stood with his horse, bridled in his hand, breathless, and half exhausted with his fruitless exercise, though not one drop of moisture appeared on the freckled forehead of the urchin, which looked like a piece of dry and discoloured parchment, drawn tight across the brow of a fleshless skull.

'And tell me,' said Tressilian, 'why you use me thus, thou mischievous imp! or what your meaning is by telling me so absurd a legend as you wished but now to put on me? Or rather show me in good earnest this smith's forge, and I will give thee what will bue thee apples through the whole winter.'

'Were you to give me an orchard of apples,' said Dickie Sludge, 'I can guide thee no better than I have done. Lay down the silver token on the flat stone—whistle three times—then come sit down on the western side of the thicket of gorse; I will sit by you, and give you free leave to wring my head off, unless you hear the smith at work within two minutes after we are seated.

'I may be tempted to take thee at thy word,' said Tressilian, 'if you make me do aught half so ridiculous for your own mischievous sport—however, I will prove your spell. — Here, then, I tie my horse to this upright stone—I must lose my silver great hare, and whistle three times, sayest thou is my next show?'

'As indicated by the boy's intended estimate of your age,' answered Tressilian; 'and that ring round that ring of smoke I must, like a

in the midst, a thousand blue lights—now, and the boy, that is fire with a fire, and so forth, and so

'1 are jesting with you,' said the boy, 'and that has the

times, and on that other
down on the

bushes, and


dickie, said Dickie, 'I see that I must summon him for you; and therewith, that he whistled sharp and shrill, with an acuteness of sound that almost thrilled through Tressilian's brain—that is what I call whistling, said he, after he had repeated the signal thrice; and now to cover, to cover, or Whitefoot will not be shed this day.'

Tressilian, musing what the upshot of this mimicry was to be, yet satisfied there was to be some serious result, by the confidence with which the boy had put himself in his power, suffered himself to be conducted to that side of the little thick of gorse and brushewood, which was farthest from the circle of stones, and there sat down; and as it occurred to him that, after all, this might be a trick for stealing his horse, he kept his hand on the boy's collar, determined to make him hostage for its safety.

'Now, listen and hear,' said Dickie, in a low whisper; 'you will soon hear the knock of a hammer that will never forged of earthly iron, for the stone it was made of was so from the moon.' And in effect Tressilian did immediately hear the light stroke of a hammer, as when a farrier is at work. The singularity of such a sound, in so very odd a place, made him involuntarily start; but, looking at the boy, and discovering, by the arch, malicious expression of
his countenance, that the urchin saw and enjoyed his slight tremor, he became convinced that the whole was a concerted stratagem, and determined to know by whom, or for what purpose, the trick was played off.

Accordingly, he remained perfectly quiet all the time that the hammer continued to sound, being about the space usually employed in fixing a hose-shoe. But the instant the sound ceased, Tressilian, instead of interposing the space of time which his guide had requested, started up with his sword in his hand, ran round the thicket, and confronted a man in a farrier's leathern apron, but otherwise fantastically attired in a bear-skin dressed with the fur on, and a cap of the same, which almost hid the sooty and begrimed features of the wearer—"Come back, come back! cried the boy to the smith; or you will be torn to pieces—no man lives that looks on him."—In fact, the invisible smith (now fully visible) heaved up his hammer, and showed symptoms of doing battle.

But when the boy observed that neither his own entreaties, nor the menace of the farrier, appeared to change Tressilian's purpose, but that, on the contrary, he confronted the ham- mer with his drawn sword, he exclaimed to the smith, in turn, 'Wayland, touch him not, or you will come by the worse!—the gentleman is a true gentleman, and a bold.'

"So thou hast betrayed me, Flibbertigibbet! said the smith; 'it shall be the worse for thee!'

'So whoso wilt,' said Tressilian, 'thou art in no danger from me, so thou tell me the meaning of this practice, and why thou drivest thy trade in this mysterious fashion.'

The smith, however, turning to Tressilian, exclaimed, in a threatening tone, 'Who questions the Keeper of the Crystal Castle of Light, the Lord of the Green Lion, the Rider of the Red Dragon?—Hence!—avoid thee, ere I summon Talpuck with his fiery lance, to quell, crush, and consume!' These words he uttered with violent gesticulation, mumbling, and flourishing his hammer.

'Peace, thou vile cozen, with thy gipsy cant!' replied Tressilian scornfully, 'and follow me to the next magistracy, or I will cut thee over the pate.'

'Peace, I pray thee, good Wayland!' said the boy; 'credit me, the swagging vein will not pass here, you must untie boids!''

'I think, worshipful sir,' said the smith, sinking his hammer, and assuming a more gentle and submissive tone of voice, 'that when so poor a man does his day's job, he might be permitted to work it out after his own fashion. Your horse is shod and your farrier paid—What need youumber yourself further than to mount and pursue your journey?'

'Nay, friend, you are mistaken,' replied Tressilian, 'every man has the right to make the mask from the face of a cheat and a juggler; and your mode of living raises suspicion that you are both.'

'If you are so determined, sir,' said the smith, 'I cannot help myself save by force, which I was unwilling to use towards you, Master Tressilian:

*Give good words."—Slang dialect.
puppy— I see from your worship's countenance, dark as this place is, that my memory has not done me wrong.

Then hast said enough, said Tressilian, turning away, as wishing to hide from the speaker the painful train of recollections which his discourse had unconsciously awakened.

The juggler, said the smith, played his part so bravely, that the clowns and clown-like squires in the company held his art to be little less than magical; but there was one maiden of fifteen, or thereby, with the fairest face I ever looked upon, whose rosy cheek grew pale, and her bright eyes dim, at the sight of the wonders exhibited.

'Peace, I command thee, peace!' said Tressilian.

'I mean your worship no offence,' said the follow; 'but I have cause to remember how, to relieve the young maiden's fears, you condescended to point out the mode in which these deceptions were practised, and to baffle the poor juggler by laying bare the mysteries of his art, as ably as if you had been a brother of his order.'—She was indeed so fair a maiden, that to win a smile from her man might well—

'Not a word more of her, I charge thee!' said Tressilian; 'I do well remember the night you speak of—one of the few happy evenings my life has known.'

'The is gone, then,' said the smith, interpreting after his own fashion the sigh with which Tressilian uttered these words—She is gone, young, beautiful, and beloved as she was!—I crave your worship's pardon—I would have hammered on another theme— I see I have unwarily driven the nail to the quick.

This speech was made with a mixture of rude feeling which inclined Tressilian favourably to the poor artisan, of whom before he was inclined to judge very harshly. But nothing can so soon attract the unfortunate, as real or seeming sympathy with their distresses.

'I think,' proceeded Tressilian, after a minute's silence, 'thou went in those days a jovial fellow, who could keep a company merry by song and tale, and rebuke, as well as by thy juggling tricks, why do I find thee a laborious handi- craftsmen, plying thy trade in so melancholy a demeanour, and under such extraordinary circumstances?'

'My story is long,' said the artist; 'but your honour had better sit while you listen to it.' So saying, he approached the fire a three-legged stool, and took another herself, while Dickie Sludge, or Flibbertigibbet, as he called the boy, drew a cricket to the smith's feet, and looked up in his face with features which, as illuminated by the glow of the forge, seemed convoluted with intense converse. Thou too, said the smith to him, shalt learn, as thou well didst at my hand, the brief history of my life; and, in truth, it were as well to tell thee as leave thee to ferret it out, sir. Nature never packed a shrewd wit into a more ungracious cask. Well, sir, if my poor story doth please you, it is at your command:—But will you not taste a smoking pipe? I promise you that even in this poor cell I have some in store.

'Speak not of it,' said Tressilian, but go on with thy story, for my leisure is brief.'

'You shall have no cause to rue the delay,' said the smith, 'for your horse shall be better fed in the meantime than he hath been this morning, if he made litter for travel.'

With that the artist left the vault, and returned after a few minutes' interval. Here, also, we pause, that the narrative may commence in another chapter.

CHAPTER XI.

I say, my lord, can such a sublity, (But all his craft we must not wet of me, And somewhat help I yet to his working,) That all the ground on which we be riding, Till that we come to Canterbury town, He can all clean turne up so up and down, And paves it all in silver and of gold. The Canon's Prologue—Canterbury Tales.

The artist commenced his narrative in the following terms:

'I was bred a blacksmith, and knew my art as well as a black-thumbed, feathered-armed swart-faced knave of that noble mystery. But I tired of ringing hammer-tunes on iron stitites, and went out into the world, where I became acquainted with a celebrated juggler, whose fingers had become too stiff for legible- men, and who wished to have the aid of an apprentice in his noble mystery. I served him for six years, until I was master of my trade. I refer myself to your worship, whose judgment cannot be disputed, whether I did not learn to ply the craft indifferently well!

'Excellently,' said Tressilian; 'but he brief.

'It was not long after I had performed at Sir Hugh Rosbart's in your worship's presence,' said the artist, 'that I took myself to the stage, and have swagged with the bravest of them all, both at the Black Bull, the Globe, the Fortune, and elsewhere; but I know now how- to walk were so plenty that year, that the lads in the two penny gallery never took more than one bite out of them, and threw the rest of the jippin at whatever scoter chanced to be on the stage. So I tired of it—renounced my half in the company—gave my foal to my comrade—my horse to the stable, and showed the theatre a clean pair of heels.

'Well, friend, and what,' said Tressilian, 'was your next shift?'

'I became,' said the smith, 'half partner, half domestic, to a man of much skill and little substance, who practised the trade of a physician.'

In other words,' said Tressilian, 'you were Jack Pudding to a quackdoxer.

'Something beyond that, let me hope, my good Master Tressilian,' replied the artist; and yet, to say truth, our practice was of an adventur- ous description, and the pharmacy which I had acquired in my first studies for the benefit of horses was frequently applied to our human patients. But the seeds of all maladies are the same; and if terrible, tar, pitch, and beef- stew, mingled with turmeric, gum-mastic, and one head of garlic, can cure the horse that hath been grieved with a nail, I see not but what it may benefit the man that hath been pricked.
with a sword. But my master’s practice, as well as his skill, went far beyond mine, and dealt in more dangerous concerns. He was not only a bold and adventurous practitioner in physic, but also, if your pleasure so chose me to be, an adept, who read the stars, and expounded the fortunes of mankind, genethically, as he called it, or otherwise. He was a learned distiller of simples, and a profound chemist—made several efforts to fix mercury, and judged himself to have made a fair hit at the philosopher’s stone. I have yet a parchment of his on that subject, which, if your honour understandeth, I believe you have the better, not only of all who read, but also of him who wrote it.

He gave Tressilian a scroll of parchment, bearing at top and bottom, and down the margin, the signs of the seven planets, curiously intermingled with calligraphical characters and slips of Greek and Hebrew. In the midst were some Latin verses from a cabalistical author, written out so fairly, that even the gnomes of the place did not pretend Tressilian from reading them.

The tenor of the original ran as follows:

*Si famum solvas, faciasque volare solutum,
Et deduces figuram, faciesque vivere taum;
Sed dixit a te sui vetustate dixit, sui
Ventus ubi volit spiritus, de capere pecos.*

“I protest to you,” said Tressilian, “all I understand of this jargon is, that the last words seem to mean, ‘Catch who catch can.’

“That,” said the smith, “is the very principle that my worthy friend and master, Doctor Debooth, always acted upon; until, being besotted with his own imaginations, and conceited of his high chemical skill, he began to spend, in cheating himself, the money which he had acquired in cheating others, and either discovered or built for himself. I could never know which, this secret laboratory, in which he used to seclude himself both from patients and disciples, who doubted thought his long and mysterious absences from his ordinary residence in the town of Parrington, were occasioned by his progress in the mystic sciences, and his intercourse with the invisible world. Me also he tried to deceive; but though I contradicted him not, he saw that I knew too much of his secrets to be any longer a safe companion. Meanwhile, his name waxed famous, or rather infamous, and of many of those who resorted to him did so under persuasion that he was a sorcerer. And yet his supposed advances in the occult sciences drew to him the secret resort of men too powerful to be named, for purposes too dangerous to be mentioned. Men cursed and threatened him, and beswore me, the innocent assistant of his studies, the nickname of the Devil’s foot-post, which procured me a vol.

*This rhythmic gibberish refers to *Tuir Philosopher’s Stone. See the sequel and Ben Jonson’s *Alchemist.*

extinguished and the utensils in confusion, with a note from the learned Debooth, as he was wont to style himself, acquainting me that we should never meet again, bequeathing me his chemical apparatus and the parchment which I have just put into your hands, advising me strongly to prosecute the secret which it contained, which would infallibly lead me to the discovery of the grand magisterium.

“And didst thou follow this sage advice?” said Tressilian.

‘Worshipful sir, no,’ replied the smith; ‘for, being by nature cautious and suspicious, from knowing with whom I had to do, I made so many perquisitions before I ventured even to light a fire, that I at length discovered a small barrel of gunpowder, carefully hid beneath the furnace, with the purpose, no doubt, that, as soon as I should commence the grand work of the transmutation of metals, the explosion should transform the vault and all in it into a heap of ruins, which might serve at once for my slaughterhouse and my grave. This cured me of all hopes, and if I would I have returned to the honest hammer and anvil; but who would bring a horse to be shod by the Devil’s post? Meantime I had worn the reflux of my honest Flibbertigibbet, by being then at Parrington with his master, the sage Erasmus Holiday, by teaching him a few secrets such as please youth at his age; and, after I much counselled together, we agreed that, since I could do no practice in the ordinary way, I should try how I could work out business among those ignorant boors, by practising upon their silly fools; and, thanks to Flibbertigibbet, who hath spread my renown, I have not wanted custom. But it is won at too great a risk, and I fear I shall be at length taken up for a wizard; so that I seek but an opportunity to leave this vault when I can have the protection of some worshipful person against the fury of the populace, in case they chance to recognise me.

‘And more than this,’ said Tressilian, ‘perfectly acquainted with the roads in this country,’ answered Wayland Smith, which was the name this adept had assumed.

‘Then last no horse to ride upon,’ said Tressilian.

‘Pardon me,’ replied Wayland; ‘I have as good a title as ever yeoman bestowed; and I forgot to say it was the best part of the medicina’s legacy to me, excepting one or two of the choicest of his medical secrets, which I picked up without his knowledge and against his will.’

‘Get thyself washed and shaved, then,’ said Tressilian; ‘reform thy dress as well as thou canst, and cling away those grotesque trappings; and, so thou wilt be secret and faithful, thou shalt follow me for a short time, till thy pranks here are forgotten. Thou hast, I think, both address and courage, and I have matter to do that may require both.

Wayland eagerly embraced the proposal, and professed his devotion to his new master. In a very few minutes he had made so great an alteration in his original appearance, by change of dress, trimming his beard and hair, and so forth, that Tressilian could not help remarking, that he thought he would stand in little need of

*Shakespeare and other distinguished men of the age not only brought to the stage and to romantic literature many characters, but their own weak points were turned into a weapon for the highest purposes of art.*

‘It is well said, my master,’ said Wayland Smith, ‘yet the devil is in the dark-hair;—and the best of all to the best.’

They then entered into a full discussion, and Tressilian began to put into the mind of Wayland Smith the instruction he had received from his master.
a protector, since none of his old acquaintance were likely to recognize him.

'My doctors would not pay me money,' said Wayland, shaking his head; 'but my creditors of every kind would be less easily blinded. And, in truth, I hold myself not safe, unless under the protection of a gentleman of birth and character, as is your worship.'

So saying, he led the way out of the cavern. He then called loudly for Hobgoblin, who, after lingering for an instant, appeared with the horse furniture, when Wayland closed and sedulously covered up the trap-door, observing, it might again serve him at his need, besides that the tools were worth somewhat. A whistle from the owner brought to his side a bag that fed quietly on the common, and was accustomed to the signal. While he accented him for the journey, Tressilian drew his own girlish faster, and in a few minutes both were ready to mount.

At this moment Sludge approached to bid them farewell.

'You are going to leave me, then, my old playfellow!' said the boy; 'and there is an end of all our games at ho-jeep with the cowardly baboons whom I brought hither to have their broad-footed nags shod by the devil and his imps?'

'It is even so,' said Wayland Smith; 'the best friends must part. But I shall regret to leave behind me.'

'Well, I bid thee not farewell,' said Dickie Sludge, 'for you will be at these revels, I judge, and so shall I; for if Dominic Holiday take not this with the light of day, which we see not in yonder dark hole, I will take myself there!'

'In good time,' said Wayland; 'but I pray you to do nought rashly.'

'Nay, now you would make a child—a common child of me, and tell me of the risk of walking without leading-strings. But before you are a mile from these stones, you shall know, by a sure token, that I have more of the Hobgoblin about me than you credit; and I will so manage that, if you take advantage, you profit by my practice."

'What dost thou mean, boy?' said Tressilian; but Hobgoblin only answered with a grin and a caper, and bidding them both farewell, and at the same time exhorting them to make the best of their way from the place, he set them the example by running homeward with the same uncommon velocity with which he had baffled Tressilian's former attempts to get hold of him.

'It is in vain to chase him,' said Wayland Smith; 'for unless your worship is expert in hark-hunting, we should never catch hold of him—and besides, what would it avail? Better make the best of our way hence, as he advises.'

They mounted their horses accordingly, and began to proceed at a round pace, as soon as Tressilian had explained to his guide the direction in which he desired to travel.

After they had trotted nearly a mile, Tressilian could not help observing to his companion that his horse felt more lively under him than even when he mounted in the morning.

'Are you advised of that?' said Wayland Smith, smiling. 'That is owing to a little secret of mine. I mixed that with an handful of oats which shall save your worship's heels the trouble of spurring those six and six hours at least. Nay, I have not sti l led medicine and pharmacy for nought.'

'I trust,' said Tressilian, 'your drugs will do your horse no harm?'

No more of the mare's milk which foaled him, answered the artist; and was proceeding to dilate on the excellence of his recipe, when he was interrupted by an explosion as loud and tremendous as the mine which blew up the rampart of a beleaguered city. The horses started, and the riders were equally surprised. They turned to gaze in the direction from which the thunder-clap was heard, and beheld, just over the spot they had left so recently, a huge pillar of dark smoke rising high into the clear atmosphere.

'Why is the thing gone to wrack,' said Wayland, immediately conjecturing the cause of the explosion. 'I was a fool to mention the doctor's kind intention. I had in my mind before that limb of mischief Hobgoblin—I might have guessed he would long to set rare fancies into execution. But let us hasten on, for the sound will collect the country to the spot.'

So saying, he spurred his horse, and Tressilian also quickening his pace, they rode briskly forward.

'This, then, was the meaning of the little imp's token which he promised us,' said Tressilian, 'had we lingered near the spot, we had found it a love-token with a vengeance.'

'Oh, he would have given us warning,' said the smith; 'I saw him look back more than once to see if we were off,—it is a very devil for mischief, yet not an ill-natured devil either. They were long to tell your honour how I became first acquainted with him, and how many tricks he played me. A very grand turn he did me too, especially in bringing me customers; for his great delight was to see them sit shivering behind the bushes when they heard the click of my hammer. I think Dame Nature, when she lodged a double quantity of brains in that misshapen head of his, gave him the power of enjoying other people's distresses, as she gave them the pleasure of laughing at his ugliness.'

'It may be so,' said Tressilian; 'those who find themselves severed from society by peculiarities of form, if they do not hate the common baulk of mankind, are at least not altogether indisposed to enjoy their misshapes and calamities.'

But Hobgoblin answered Wayland, 'hath that about him which may redeem his turn for mischievous frolic; for he is as faithful when attached, as he is tricky and malignant to strangers; and, as I said before, I have cause to say so.'

Tressilian pursued the conversation no further; and they continued their journey towards Devonshire without further adventure, until they alighted at an inn in the town of Marlborough, since celebrated for having given title to the greatest general (excepting one) whom Britain ever produced. Here the travellers received, in the same breath, an example of the truth of two old proverbs, namely, that ill news fly fast,
and that *Listeners seldom hear a good tale of themselves.*

The inn-yard was in a sort of combustion when they alighted; insomuch that they could scarce get man or boy to take care of their horses, so full were the whole household of some news which flew from tongue to tongue, the import of which they were for so a time unable to discover. At length, indeed, they found it respected matters which touched them nearly."

"What is the matter, say you, master?" answered, at length, the head hostler, in reply to Tressilian’s repeated questions—"Why, truly, I scarce know myself. But here was a rider but now, who says that the devil hath flown away with him they called Wayland Smith, that won’d about three miles from the Whitehorse of Berkshire, this very blessed morning, in a flash of fire and a pillar of smoke, and rooted up the place he dwelt in, near that old cockpit of upright stones, as cleanly as if it had all been delved up for a cropping."

"Why, then," said an old farmer, "the more is the pity— for that Wayland Smith (whether he was the devil’s errand or no I skill, nor a good notion open an horse diseases, and it’s to be thought the bots will spread in the country far and near, and Satan has not gien an hour to leave his secret behind up."

"You may say that, Gaffer Grimesby," said the hostler in return; "I have carried a horse to Wayland Smith myself, for he passed all farriers in this country."

"Did you see him?" said Dame Alison Crane, mistress of the inn bearing that sign, and designing to term husband the owner thereof, a mean-looking, hop-o’-my-thumb sort of person, whose halting gait and long neck, and muddling, hen-pecked insignificance, are supposed to have given origin to the celebrated old English tune of ‘My dame hath a lame tame Crane."

On this occasion he chipped out a repetition of his wife’s question, ‘Diddis see the devil, Jack Hostler, I say?"

"And what if I did see him, Master Crane?" replied Jack Hostler,—for, like all the rest of his household, he paid as little respect to his master as his mistress herself did."

"Nay, nought, Jack Hostler," replied the pacific Master Crane; "only if you saw the devil, methinks I would like to know what un’s like."

"You will know that one day, Master Crane," said his hostmate, "an’ ye mend not your manners, and mind your business, leaving off such idle palaver.—But truly, Jack Hostler, I should be glad to know myself what like the fellow was."

"Why, dame," said the hostler, more respectfully, "as for what he was like I cannot tell, nor no man else, for why I never saw un."

"And how did thou then get thine errand done," said Gaffer Grimesby, "if thou seest him not?"

"Why, I had schoolmaster to write down all that was said," said Jack Hostler: "and I went wi’ the ugliest slip of a boy for my guide as ever man out o’ lime-tree root to please a child withal."

"And what was it—and did it cure your nag, Jack Hostler?" was uttered and echoed by all who stood around.

"Why, how can I tell you what it was?" said the hostler; "simply it smelled and tasted—for I did make hold to put a pea’s substance into my mouth—like hartshorn and savin mixed with vinegar—but then no hartshorn and savin ever wrought so speedily a cure—and I am dreaming that if Wayland Smith be gone, the bots will have more power over horse and cattle."

The pride of art, which is certainly not inferior in its influence to any other pride whatever, here so far operated on Wayland Smith, that, notwithstanding the obvious danger of his being recognised, he could not help winking to Tressilian, and smiling mysteriously, as if triumphing in the undoubted evidence of his veterinary skill. In the meanwhile the discourse continued."

"E’en let it be so," said a grave man in black, the companion of Gaffer Grimesby; ‘e’en let us perish under the evil God sends us, rather than the devil be our doctor."

"Very true," said Dame Crane; ‘and I marvel at Jack Hostler that he would peril his own soul to cure the bowels of a nag."

"Very true, mistress," said Jack Hostler; ‘but the nag was my master’s; and had it been yours, I think ye would ha’ held me clean enough, an’ I had feared the devil when the poor beast was in such a taking.—For the rest, let the clergy look to it. Every man to his craft, says the proverb, the parson to the prayer-book, and the groom to his curry-comb."

"I vow," said Dame Crane, ‘I think Jack Hostler speaks like a good Christian and a faithful servant, who will spare neither body nor soul in his master’s service. However, the devil has lifted him in time, for a Constable of the Hundred came hither this morning to get old Gaffer Pinnicwinks, the trier of witches, to go with him to the Vale of Whitehorse to complech Wayland Smith, and put him to his probation. I helped Pinnicwinks to sharpen his pincers and his poking-awl, and I saw the warrant from Justice Blindside."

"Pooh—pooh—the devil would laugh both at Blindside and his warrant, constable and witch-finder to boot," said old Dame Crane, the papist laundress; ‘Wayland Smith’s flesh would mind Pinnicwinks’ awl no more than a carbo-ruff mind a hot pickelillo-needle. But tell me, gentlefolk, if the devil ever had such a hand among ye, as to snatch away your smiths, and their holy water, and their relics, and what not, could send the foulest fiends a-packing—Go ask a heretic parson to do the like. But ours were a comfortable people."

"Very true, Dame Cranck," said the hostler; ‘so said Simpkins of Sibemurn when the unruly kissed his wife. ‘They are a comfortable people,’ said he.

"Silence, thou foul-mouthed vermin," said Dame Cranck; ‘is it fit for a heretic horse-boy like thee to handle such a text as the Catholic clergy?"

"In truth, no, dame," replied the man of oats; ‘and as you yourself are now no text for their handling, dame, whatever may have been the case in your day, I think we had e’en better leave un alone."
At this last exchange of sarcasm, Dame Crank set against her throat, and began a horrible examination, in which Tressilian and his attendant escaped into the house.

They had no sooner entered a private chamber, to which Goodman Crane himself had condescended to usher them, and despatched their worthy and obscure host on the round of procuring wine and refreshment, than Wayland Smith began to give vent to his self-importance.

'Though, sir,' said he, addressing Tressilian, 'that I nothing boded in asserting that I possessed fully the mighty mystery of a farrier, as the French more honourably term us. These dog-hostlers, who, after all, are the better judges in such a case, know what credit they attach to my meditations. I call you to witness, worshipful Master Tressilian, that nought, save the voice of calumny and the hand of malicious violence, hath driven me forth from a station in which I held a place alike useful and honored.'

'I swear, my friend, but will resolve my listening,' answered Tressilian, 'for a safer time; unless, indeed, you deem it essential to your reputation, to be translated, like your late dwelling, by the assistance of a flash of fire. For you see your best friends reckon you no better than a mere sorcerer.'

'Now, Heaven forgive them,' said the artist, 'who confound learned skill with unhallow magic! I trust a man may be as skilful, or more so, than the best chirurgeon ever meddled with horse-flesh, and yet may be upon the matter little more than other ordinary men, or at the worst no conjuror.'

'God forbid else!' said Tressilian. 'But he shall just for the present, since here comes mine host with an assistant, who seems something of the least.'

Everybody about the inn, Dame Crank herself included, had been indeed so interested and agitated by the story they had heard of Wayland Smith, and by the new, varying, and more marvellous editions of the incident, which arrived from various quarters, that mine host, in his righteous determination to accommodate his guests, had been able to obtain the assistance of none of his household, saving that of a little boy, a junior tapster, of about twelve years old, whom he called Sampson.

'I wish,' he said, apologising to his guests, as he set down a flagon of sack, and promised some food immediately,—'I wish the devil had flown away with my wife and my whole family instead of this Wayland Smith, who, I dare say, after all said and done, was much less worthy of the distinction which Satan has done him.'

'I hold opinion with you, good fellow,' replied Wayland Smith; 'and I will drink to you upon that argument.'

'Not that I would justify any man who deals with the devil,' said mine host, after having pledged Wayland in a rousing draught of sack; 'but that—Saw ye ever better sack, my masters?—but that, I say, I had better deal with a dozen cheats and scurvy fellows, such as this Wayland Smith, than with a devil incarnate, that takes possession of house and home, bed and board.'

The poor fellow's detail of grievances was here interrupted by the shrill voice of his helpmate, screeching from the kitchen, to which he instantly hobbled, crying pardon of his guests. He was no sooner gone than Wayland Smith expressed, by every contumacious epithet in the language, his utter scorn for a nincompoop who struck his head under his wife's apron-string; and intimated that, saving for the sake of the horses, which required both rest and food, he would advise his worshipful Master Tressilian to push on a stage farther, rather than pay a reckoning to such a mean-spirited, crow-trodden, humped-cocked oxen as Gaffer Crane.

The arrival of a large大批 of good corn-used and bacon something soothed the asperity of the artist, which wholly vanished before a choice capon, so deliciously roasted, that the hard frothed on it, said Wayland, like May-dew on a lily; and both Gaffer Crane and his good dame became, in his eyes, very painstaking, accommodating, obliging persons.

According to the manners of the times, the master and his attendant sat at the same table, and the latter observed, with regret, how little attention Tressilian paid to his meal. He resolutely, indeed, the pain he had given by mentioning the alabaster maiden in whose company he had first seen him; but fearful of touching upon a topic too tender to be tampered with, he chose to ascribe his abstinence to another cause.

'This fare is perhaps too coarse for your worship,' said Wayland, as the limbs of the capon disappeared before his own exertions; 'but had you dwelt as long as I have done in yonder dungeon, which Filberttibet had translated to the upper element, a place where I dared hardly break my food, lest the smoke should be seen without, you would think a fair capon a more welcome dainty.'

'If you are pleased, friend,' said Tressilian, 'it is well. Nevertheless, hasten thy meal if thou canst, for this place is unfriendly to thy safety, and my concerns crave travelling.'

Allowing, therefore, that the horses no more rest than was absolutely necessary for them to pursue their journey by a forced march as far as Bradford, where they repose themselves for the night.

The next morning found them early travellers. And, not to fatigue the reader with unnecessary particulars, they traversed without adventure the counties of Wilts and Somerset, and, about noon of the third day after Tressilian's leaving Cumnor, arrived at Sir Hugh Rolph's seat, called Lidcote Hall, on the frontiers of Devonshire.

CHAPTER XII.

Ah me! the flower and blossom of thy house, the wind hath blown away to other towers.

JOANNA BALILLIE'S FAMILY LEGEND.

The ancient seat of Lidcote Hall was situated near the village of the same name, and adorned the wild and extensive forest of Exmoor, plentiful.
fully stocked with game, in which some ancient rights, belonging to the Robart family, attired Sir Hugh to pursue his favourite amusement of the chase. The old mansion was a low, venerable building, occupying a considerable space of ground, which was surrounded by a deep moat. The approach and drawbridge were defended by an octagonal tower, of ancient brick-work, but so clothed with ivy and other creepers, that it was difficult to discover from what material it was constructed. The angles of this tower were each decorated with a turret, whimsically various in form and in size, and therefore very unlike the monotonous stone pepper-boxes, which, in modern Gothic architecture, are employed for the same purpose. One of these turrets was square, and occupied as a clock-house. But the clock was now standing still; a circumstance unusually striking to Tressilian, because the good old knight, among other harmless peculiarities, had a hideous anxiety about the exact measurement of time, very common to those who have a great deal of that commodity to dispose of, and find it heavy upon their hands,—just as we see shopkeepers amuse themselves with taking an exact account of their stock at the time there is least demand for it.

The entrance to the court-yard of the old mansion lay through an archway, surrounded by the aforesaid tower, but the drawbridge was down, and one leaf of the iron-studded folding doors stood carelessly open. Tressilian hastily rode over the drawbridge, entered the court, and began to call loudly on the domestics by their names. For some time he was only answered by the echoes and the howling of the hounds, whose kennel lay at no great distance from the mansion, and was surrounded by the same moat. At length Will Badger, the old and favourite attendant of the knight, who acted alike as a livery of his body and superintendent of his sports, made his appearance. The stout, weather-beaten forester showed great signs of joy when he recognised Tressilian.

"Lord love you," he said; "Master Edmund, be it in flesh and fell?—Then thou mayest do some good on Sir Hugh, for it passes the wit of man, that is of mine own, and the curate's, and Master Mumbrazan's, to do aught wi' un."

"Is Sir Hugh then worse since I went away, Will?" demanded Tressilian.

"For worse in body,—no— he is much better," replied the domestic; "but he is clean mazed as it were—eats and drinks as he was wont—but sleeps not, or rather wakes not, for he is ever in a sort of twilight, that is neither sleeping nor waking. Dame Swineford thought it was like the dead palsy.—But no, no, dame, said I, it is the heart, it is the heart."

"Can ye not stir his mind to any pastime?" said Tressilian.

"He is clean and quite off his sports," said Will Badger; "hath neither touched backgammon or shovel-board,—nor looked on the big book of hardrowty wi' Master Mumbrazan. I let the clock run down, thinking the missing the bell might somewhat move him, for you know, Master Edmund, he was particular in counting time; but he never said a word on't, so I may en set the old chime twailing again. I made bold to tread on Bungay's tall too, and you know what a round rating that would hit cost one a-day—but he minded the poor tyke's whine no more than a madge howlet whooping down the chimney—so the case is beyond me."

"Thou shalt tell me the rest within doors, Will.—Meanwhile, let this person be taken to the battery, and used with respect—he is a man of art."

"White art or black art, I would," said Will Badger, "that he had any art which could help us. Here, Tom Butler, look to the man of art—and see that he steals none of thy spoons, lad,' he added in a whisper to the butler, who showed himself at a low window. 'I have known as honest a faced fellow have art enough to do that."

He then ushered Tressilian into a low parlour, and went, at his desire, to see in what state his master was, lest the sudden return of his darling pupil, and proposed son-in-law, should affect him too strongly. He returned immediately, and said that Sir Hugh was doing in his own chair, but that Master Mumbrazan would acquaint Master Tressilian the instant he awoke.

"But it is chance if he knows you," said the huntsman, "for he has forgotten the name of every hound in the pack. I thought about a week since he had gotten a favourable turn—"

"Saddle me old Sorrel," said he suddenly, after he had taken his usual night-draught out of the great silver grace up, "and take the hounds to Mount Hazelhurst to-morrow." Glad men were we all, and out we had him in the morning, and he rode to cover as usual, with never a word spoken but that the wind was south, and the scent would lie. But ere we had unoccupied the hounds he began to stare round him, like a man that wakes suddenly out of a dream—turns bridle and walks back to Hall again, and leaves us to hunt at leisure by ourselves, if we listed."

"You tell a heavy tale, Will," replied Tressilian; "but God must help us—there is no aid in man."

"Then you bring us no news of young Mistress Amy?—But what need I ask,—your brow tells the story. Ever I hoped, that if any man could or would truck her, it must be you. All's over and lost now. But if ever I have the Varney within reach of a flight-shot, I will bestow a forked shaft on him; and that I swear by salt and bread."

As he spoke the door opened, and Master Mumbrazan appeared; a withered, thin, elderly gentleman, with a cheek like a winter apple, and his grey hair partly concealed by a small high hat, shaped like a cone, or rather like such a strawberry-basket as London fruitiers exhibit at their windows. He was too sententious a person to waste words on mere salutation; so, having welcomed Tressilian with a nod and a shake of the hand, he beckoned him to follow to Sir Hugh's great chamber, which the good knight usually inhabited. Will Badger followed, unmasked, anxious to see whether his master was relieved from his state of apathy by the arrival of Tressilian.

In a low long parlour, amply furnished with implements of the chase, and with aviary trophies, by a massive stone chimney, over which hung a
sward and suit of armour, somewhat obscured by neglect, sat Sir Hugh Rolles the Lord, a man of large size, which had been only kept within moderate compass by the constant use of violent exercise.

It seemed to Tressilian that the behavity under which his old friend appeared to labour, had, even during his few weeks' absence, added bulk to his person, at least it had obviously diminished the vivacity of his eye, which, as they entered, first followed Master Mumbazl in slowly to a large oaken desk, on which a ponderous volume lay open, and then rested, as if in uncertainty, on the stranger who had entered along with him. The curate, a grey-headed clergyman, who had been a confessor in the days of Queen Mary, sat with a book in his hand in another recess of the apartment.

He too signed a mournful greeting to Tressilian, and laid his book aside, to watch the effect his appearance should produce on the affllicted son.

As Tressilian, his own eye filling fast with tears, approached more and more towards the father of his betrothed lute, Sir Hugh's intelligence seemed to revive. He sighed heavily, as one who awakens from a state of stupor, a slight convulsion passed over his features, he opened his arms without speaking a word, and, as Tressilian threw himself into them, he folded him to his bosom.

There is something left to live for yet,' were the first words he uttered; and, while he spoke, he gave vent to his feelings in a paroxysm of weeping, the tears chasing each other down his sunburnt cheeks and long white beard.

'I ne'er thought to have thanked God to see my master weep,' said Will Badger; 'but now I do, though I am like to weep for company.

'I will ask thee no questions,' said the old knight; 'no questions none, Edmund—thou hast not found her, or so found her, that she were better lost.'

Tressilian was unable to reply otherwise than by putting his hands before his face.

'It is enough—enough. But do not then weep for her, Edmund. I have cause to weep, for she was my daughter,—thou hast cause to rejoice, that she do not become thy wife.—Great God! thou knowest best what is good for us—it was my nightly prayer that I should see Amy and Edmund wedded,—had it been granted it had now been galled add bitterness.

'Be comforted, my friend,' said the curate, addressing Sir Hugh; 'it cannot be that the daughter of all our hopes and affections is the vile creature you would bespeak her.'

'O no,' replied Sir Hugh impertinently, 'I was wrong to name broadly the base thing she is become—there is some new count name for it, I warrant me. It is honour enough for the daughter of an old Deshire clown to be the lairdest and gayest courtier,—of Venyce, too,—of Venyce, whose grandeur was reliefe by my father, when his fortune was burned out on the battle of the battle of—where Richard was slain—out on my memory!—and I warrant none of you will

'The battle of Bosworth,' said Master Mumbazl, 'stricken between Richard Crookback and Henry Tudor, grandaure of the Queen that now is, primo Henrici Septimi; and in the year one thousand four hundred and eighty-five post Christmas.'

'AY, even so,' said the old knight, 'every child knows it. But my poor head forgets all it should remember, and remembers only what it would most willingly forget. My brain has been at fault, Tressilian, almost ever since thou hast been away, and even yet it hunts counter.'

'Your worship,' said the good clergyman, 'had better retire to your apartment, and try to sleep for a little space, the physician left a competing draught, and our Great Physician has commanded us to use earthly means, that we may be strengthened to sustain the trials he sends us.'

'Tru, true, old friend,' said Sir Hugh, 'and we will bear our trials manfully. We have lost but a woman. See, Tressilian,'—he drew from his bosom a long ringlet of fair hair,—'see this lock!—I tell thee, Edmund, the very night she disappeared, when she bid me good even, as she was wont, she hung about my neck, and fondled me more than usual; and I, like an old fool, held her by this lock, as she took her scissors, severed it, and left it in my hand,—as all I was ever to see more of her.'

Tressilian was unable to reply, well judging what a complication of feelings must have crossed the bosom of the unhappy fugitive at that cruel moment. The clergyman was about to speak, but Sir Hugh interrupted him.

'I know what you would say, Master Curate,—after all, it is but a lack of woman's tresses,—and by woman shame and sin and death came into an innocent world. And learned Master Mumbazl, too, can say scholarly things of their inferiority.'

'C'est l'homme,' said Master Mumbazl, 'qui se bat, et qui concorde.'

'Tru, true Sir Hugh,' and we will bear us, therefore, like men who have both mettle and wisdom in us,—Tressilian, thou art as welcome as thou hadst brought better news. But we have spoken too long dry-lipped,—Amy, fill a cup of wine to Edmund, and another to me.'

Then, instantly recollecting that he had called upon her who could not hear, he shook his head, and said to the clergyman, 'This grief is to my bewildered mind what the church of Lordeto is to our park; we may lose ourselves among the briers and thicketts for a little space, but from the end of each avenue we see the old grey steeple and the grave of my forefathers. I would I were to travel that road to-morrow.'

Tressilian and the curate joined in urging the exhausted old man to lay himself to rest, and at length prevailed. Tressilian remained by his pillow till he saw that slumber at length sunk down on him, and then returned to consult with the curate, what steps should be adopted in these unhappy circumstances.

They could not exclude from these deliberations Master Michael Mumbazl; and they admitted him the more readily, that, besides what hopes they entertained from his sagacity, they knew him to be so great a friend to taciturnity, that there was no doubt of his keeping counsel. He was an old bachelor of good family, but small fortune,
and distantly related to the House of Robsart: in virtue of which connection, Lidcote Hall had been honoured with his residence for the last twenty years. var company was agreeable to Sir Hugh, chiefly on account of his profound learning, which, though it only related to heraldry and genealogy, with such scraps of history as connected themselves with these subjects, was precisely of a kind to captivate the good old knight; besides the convenience which he found in having a friend to appeal to, when his own memory, as frequently happened, proved imperfect, and played him false concerning names and dates, which, and all similar deficiencies, Master Michael Mumblazen supplied with due brevity and discretion. And, indeed, in matters concerning the modern world, he often gave, in his enigmatical and heraldic phrase, advice which was well worth attending to, or, in Bill Badger's language, started the game while others beat the bush.

'We have had an unhappy time of it with the good knight, Master Edmund,' said the curate. 'I have not suffered so much since I was torn away from my beloved flock, and compelled to abandon them to the Romish wolves.'

'That was in tergo Mariae,' said Master Mumblazen. 'In the name of Heaven,' continued the curate, 'tell us, has your time been better spent than ours, or have you any news of that unhappy maiden, who, being for so many years the principal joy of this broken-down house, is now proved our greatest unhappiness? Have you not at least discovered her place of residence?'

'I have,' replied Tressilian. 'Know you Cunning Place, near Oxford?'

'Surely,' said the clergyman; 'it was a house of removal for the monks of Abingdon.'

'Whose arms,' said Master Michael, 'I have seen on a stone chimney in the hall—a cross patonce between four martlets.'

'There,' said Tressilian, 'this unhappy maiden resides, in company with the villain Varnay. But for a strange mishap, my sword had revenged all our injuries, as well as hers, on his worthless head.'

'Thank God, that kept thine hand from blood-guiltiness, rash young man!' answered the curate. 'Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, and I will repay it. It were better study to free her from the villain's net of infancy.'

'They are called in heraldry, laquei amoris, or lacs d'amour,' said Mumblazen. 'It is in that I require your aid, my friends,' said Tressilian; 'I am resolved to accuse this villain, at the very foot of the throne, of falsehood, seduction, and breach of hospitable laws. The Queen shall hear me, though the Earl of Leicester, the villain's patron, stood at her right hand.'

'Her Grace,' said the curate, 'hath set a comedy example of continence to her subjects, and will doubtless do justice on this inhospitable robber. But we must not better apply to the Earl of Leicester, in the first place, for justice on his servant? If he grants it, thou dost save the risk of making thyself a powerful adversary, which will probably chance, if, in the first instance, you accuse his master of the horse and prime favourite before the Queen.'

'My mind revolts from your counsel,' said Tressilian. 'I cannot brook to plead my noble patron's cause—the unhappy Amy's cause—before any one save my lawful sovereign, Leicester, whom my say, is noble—he is so—he is but a subject like ourselves, and I will not carry my plaint to him, if I can do better. Still, I will think on what thou hast said, but I must have your assistance to persuade the good Sir Hugh to make me his commissioner and faciatory in this matter, for it is in his name I must speak, and not in my own. Since she is so far changed, as to desire upon this empty, profligate courtier, he shall at least do her the justice which is yet in his power.'

'Better she died cœlœs and sine prole,' said Mumblazen, with more animation than he usually expressed, 'than part, per pale, the noble coat of Robsart with that of such a miscreant!'

'If it be your object, as I cannot question,' said the curieyman, 'to save, as much as is yet possible, the credit of this unhappy young woman, I repeat, you should apply, in the first instance, to the Earl of Leicester. He is as absolute in his household as the Queen in her kingdom, and if he expresses to Varnay that such is his pleasure, her honour will not stand so publicly committed.'

'You are right, you are right,' said Tressilian eagerly, 'and I thank you for pointing out what I overlooked in my haste. I little thought ever to have besought grace of Leicester; but I could kneel to the proud Hudley, if doing so could remove one shade of shame from this unhappy damsel. You will assist me, then, to procure the necessary powers from Sir Hugh Robsart?'

'The curate assured him of his assistance, and the herald nodded assent.

'You must hold yourselves also in readiness to testify, in case you are called upon, the open-hearted hospitality which our good patron exercised towards this deceitful traitor, and the unhesitation with which he laboured to seduce this unhappy daughter.'

'At first,' said the clergyman, 'she did not, as it seemed to me, much affect his company, but laterly I saw them often together.'

'Seducer in the parlour,' said Michael Mumblazen, 'and passant in the garden.'

'I once came on them by chance,' said the priest, 'in the Southwood wood, in a spring evening—Varnay was muffled in a russet cloak, so that I saw not his face—they separated hastily, as they heard me rustle among the leaves, and I observed she turned her head and looked long after him.'

'With neck regularend,' said the herald—and on the day of her flight, and that was at Saint Austin's Eve, I saw Varnay's gown, attired in his livery, hold his master's horse and Mistress Amy's palfrey, bridled and saddled proper, behind the wall of the churchyard.'

'And now is she found mowed up in his secret place of retirement,' said Tressilian. 'The villain is taken in the manner; and I well wish he may deny his crime, that I may thrust conviction down his false throat! But I must prepare for my journey. Do you, gentlemen, dispose my patron to grante me such powers as are needful to act in his name.'

So saying, Tressilian left the room.

'He is too hot,' said the curate; 'and I pray

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So saying, Tressilian left the room. "He is too hot," said the curate; "and I pray..."
to plead my noble lady's cause—before the King, at Leicester, so—she is but a woman, and I will not carry myenter. Still, I will try if I can find a good Sir Hugh to fix my position in this business. You must speak, and so far changed, as a new-wink for you would be, I mean, to make him understand, I will not spare the siren with whom I am so intimate.

Yet I doubt much, said the curate, 'whether we can with all right ask from Sir Hugh Robart, being in his present condition, any deed deeding his paternal right in Mistress Amy to whomsoever you.

'Your reverence need not doubt that,' said Will Badger, who entered as he spoke, 'for I will lay my life he is another man when he wakes, than he has been these thirty days past.'

'Ay, Will,' said the curate, 'hast thou then so much confidence in Dr. Diddum's draught?'

'Not a whit,' said Will, 'because master new tasted a drop or two, seeing it was emptied out by the housemaid. But here's a gentleman, whose attendance on Master Tressilian, has given Sir Hugh a draught which is worth twenty of you un. I have spoken cunningly to him, and a better farrier, or one who hath a more just notion of horse and dog ailments, I have never seen, and such a one would never be unjust to a Christian man.'

'A farrier! you saucy grooms—And by whose authority, pray I?' said the curate, rising in surprise and indignation; 'or who will be warrant for this new physician?'

'For authority, an it like your reverence, he had mine; and for warrant, I trust that I have not been five-and-twenty years in this house, without having right to warrant the giving of a draught to beast or body—I who can give a drench and a bawl, and bleed, or blister, if need, to my very self.'

The counsellors of the house of Robart thought it meet to carry this information instantly to Tressilian, who as speedily summoned before him Wayland Smith, and demanded of him (in private, however) by what authority he had ventured to administer any medicine to Sir Hugh Robart.

'Why,' replied the artist, 'your worshipship cannot but remember that I told you I had made more progress as to my master's—I mean the learned Doctor Dobson's, and thus was he willing to own; and indeed half of his quarrel and malice against me was, that, besides that I got something too deep into his secrets, several discerning persons, and particularly a buxom young widow of Abingdon, preferred my prescriptions to his.'

'None of thy hocuspocus, sir,' said Tressilian sternly. 'If thou hast trifled with me—much more, if thou hast done ought that much judge Sir Hugh Robart's health, thou shalt find thy grave at the bottom of a tin-min.'

'I know too little of the great arsenicum to convert the ore to gold,' said Wayland firmly.

'Most fairly and honestly, as the event shall shew,' replied the artist. 'What would it avail me to harm the poor old man for whom you are to die that Gaffer Hunsiewick is not even now reading my flesh and sinews with his accursed piniers, and probing every mole in my body with his slantedawl (a mariner on the hands which forged it) in order to find out the witch's mark? I trust to yoke myself as a humble follower to your worshipship's train, and I only wish to have my faith judg'd of by the result of the good knight's slumber.'

Wayland Smith was right in his prognostication. The sedative draught which his skill had prepared, and Will Badger's confidence had administered, was attended with the most beneficial effects. The patient's sleep was long and healthful; and the poor old knight awoke, humbled indeed in thought, and weak in frame, yet a much humbler judge of whatever was subjected to his intellect than he had been for some time past. He resisted for a while the proposal made by his friends, that Tressilian should undertake a journey to court, to attempt the recovery of his daughter, and the redress of her wrongs, in so far as they might yet be repaired. 'Let her go,' he said; 'she is but a hawk that goes down the wind; I would not bestow even a whistle to reclaim her.' But though he for some time maintained this argument, he was at length convinced it was his duty to take the part to which natural affection inclined him, and consent that such efforts as could yet be made should be used by Tressilian in behalf of his daughter. He subscribed, therefore, a warrant of attorney, such as the curate's skill enabled him to draw up; for in those simple days the clergy were often the advisers of their flock in law as well as in gospel.

All matters were prepared for Tressilian's second departure, within twenty-four hours after he had returned to Lidice Hall; but no material circumstance had been forgotten, which was first called to the remembrance of Tressilian by Master Mumbazed. 'You are going to court, Master Tressilian,' said he; 'you will please remember that your banns must be urgent and are—no other tinctures will pass current.' The remark was equally just and embarrassing. To prosecute a suit at court, ready money was as indispensable even in the golden days of Elizabeth as at any succeeding period; and it was a commodity little at the command of the inhabitants of Lidice Hall.

Tressilian was himself poor; the revenues of good Sir Hugh Robart were consumed, and even anticipated, in his hospitable mode of living; and it was finally necessary that the herald who started the doubt should himself solve it. Master Michael Mumbazed did so by producing a bag of money, containing nearly three hundred pounds in gold and silver of various coinage, the savings of twenty years; which he now, without speaking a syllable upon the subject, dedicated to the service of the patron whose shelter and protection had given him the means of making this little hoard. Tressilian accepted it without affecting
a moment's hesitation, and a mutual grasp of the hand was all that passed betwixt them, to express the pleasure which the one felt in dedicating his all to such a purpose, and that which the other received from finding so material an obstacle to the success of his journey so suddenly removed, and in a manner so unexpected.

While Tressilian was making preparations for his departure early the ensuing morning, Wayland Smith desired to speak with him, and, expressing his hope that he had been pleased with the operation of his medicine in behalf of Sir Hugh Robsart, added his desire to accompany him to court. This was indeed what Tressilian himself had several times thought of; for the shrewdness, alertness of understanding, and variety of resource, which this fellow had exhibited during the time they had travelled together, had made him sensible that his assistance might be of importance. But then Wayland was in danger from the grasp of law; and of this Tressilian reminded him, mentioning something, at the same time, of the pincers of Pinnekwicks, and the warrant of Master Justice Blinda. Wayland Smith laughed both to scorn.

"See you, sir!" said he, "I have changed my goods, and that of a farrier to a serving-man; but were it still as it was, I look at my moustaches—they now hang down—I will but turn them up, and dye them with a tincture that I know of, and the devil will scarce know me again."

He accompanied these words with the appropriate action; and in less than a minute, by setting up his moustaches and his hair, he seemed a different person from him that had but now entered the room. Still, however, Tressilian hesitated to accept his services, and the artist became proportionately urgent.

"I owe you life and limb," he said, "and I would fain pay a part of the debt, especially as I know from Will Badger on what dangerous service your worship is bound. I do not, indeed, pretend to be what is called a man of mettle, one of those ruffling tear-cats, who maintain their master's quarrel with sword and buckler. Nay, I am even one of those who hold the end of a fract better than the beginning of a fray. But I know that I can serve your worship better in such quest as yours than any of these sword-and-dagger men, and that my head will be worth an hundred of their hands."

Tressilian still hesitated. He knew not much of this strange fellow, and was doubtful how far he could repose in him the confidence necessary to render him a useful attendant upon the present emergency. Ere he had come to a determination the trampling of a horse was heard in the court-yard, and Master Mumbalzen and Will Badger both entered hastily into Tressilian's chamber, speaking almost at the same moment.

"Here is a serving-man on the honiest grey tit I ever seed in my life," said Will Badger, "who gets the start—having on his arm a silver equestrian, being a fire-brand holding in his mouth a brick-lash, under a coronet of an earl's degree," said Master Mumbalzen, "and bearing a letter sealed of the same."

Tressilian took the letter, which was addressed 
'To the worshipful Master Edmund Tressilian, our loving kinsman—This—ride, ride, ride—
for thy life, for thy life, for thy life.' He then opened it, and found the following contents:—

'MASTER TRESSILIAN, OUR GOOD FRIEND AND 
COUNSEL,

'We are at present so ill at ease, and otherwise so unhappily circumstanced, that we are desirous to have around us those of our friends on whose loving kindness we can most especially repose confidence; amongst whom we hold our good Master Tressilian one of the foremost and nearest, both in good will and good ability. We therefore pray you, with your most convenient speed, to repair to our poor lodging, at Saye's Court, near Bedforu, where we will treat further with you of matters which we deem it not fit to commit unto writing. And so we bid you heartily farewell, being your loving kinsman to command.

'RATCLIFFE, EARL OF SUSEX.'
CHAPTER XIII.

—Ay, I know you have arsenic, Vitriol, sal-tartre, argile, alkali.

Chirper: I know all. This fellow, Captain, will come in time to be a great distiller, and be a great lord. And give a say (I will not say directly), but very near at the philosopher's stone. The Alchemist.

TRESSILIAN and his attendants pressed their route with all dispatch. He had asked the village smith, indeed, when their departure was resolved on, whether he would not rather choose to avoid the Berkshire, in which he had played a part so conspicuous! But Wayland returned a confident answer. He had employed the short interval they passed at Lideote Hall in transforming himself in a wondrous manner. His wild and overgrown thicket of beard was now restrained to two small moustaches on the upper lip, turned up in a military fashion. A tailor from the village of Lideote (well paid) had exerted his skill, under his customer's directions, so as completely to alter Wayland's outward man, and take off from his appearance almost twenty years of age. Formerly, besmirched with soot and charcoal—overgrown with hair, and bent double with the nature of his labour—disfigured too by his old and fantastic dress, he seemed a man of fifty years old. But now, in a handsome suit of Tressilian's rightful, with a sword by his side, and a buckler on his shoulder, he looked like a gay ruffling serving-man, whose age might be between thirty and thirty-five years, the very prime of human life. His martial, savage-looking demeanour seemed equally charged into a forward, sharp, and impudent alertness of look and action.

When challenged by Wayland, who, desired to know the cause of a metamorphosis so singular and so absolute, Wayland only answered by singing a stanza from a comedy, which was then new, and was supposed, among the more favourable judges, to augur some genius on the part of the author. We are happy to preserve the complete, which ran exactly thus,—

‘Ban, Ban, ca Culben—
Get a new master—Be a new man.’

Although Tressilian did not recollect the verses, yet they reminded him that Wayland had once been a stage-player, a circumstance which, of itself, accounted indifferent well for the readiness with which he could assume the total change of personal appearance. The artist himself was so confident of his disguise being completely changed, or of his having completely changed his disguise, which may be the more correct mode of speaking, that he regretted they were not to pass near his old plantation. I could venture,’ he said, ‘in my present dress, and with your worship’s backing, to face the assurances of Wayland Smith, even on a day of Quarter Sessions; and I would like to know what is the devil in the world, by the body of Holhgibson, who is like to play the part of the Earl of Sussex, in this dress, and in this disguise, the Earl of Sussex!—say, and the sentenced!?’ He said: ‘I would willingly have seen what havoc the explosion of so much gunpowder has made among Dr. Demetrius Dolebree’s retorts and phials. I warrant me, my fame haunts the Vale of the Whitehorse long after my body is rotten; and that many a lout ties up his horse, lays down his silver goat, and pipes like a sailor whistling in a calm, for Wayland Smith to come and shoe his tiff for him. But the horse will call the founders ere the smith answers the call.’

In this particular, indeed, Wayland proved a true prophet; and so easily did fables rise, that no obscure tradition of his extraordinary practice in farriery prevails in the Vale of Whitehorse even unto this day; and neither the tradition of Alured’s Victory, nor of the celebrated Pusey Horn, are better preserved in Berkshire than the wild legend of Wayland Smith.

The haste of the travellers permitted their making no stay upon their journey, save when some refreshing of the horses required; and as many of the places through which they passed were under the influence of the Earl of Leicester, or persons immediately dependent on him, they thought it prudent to disguise their names, and the purpose of their journey. On such occasions the agency of Wayland Smith (by which name we shall continue to distinguish the artist, though his real name was Lanceot Wayland) was extremely serviceable. He seemed, indeed, to have a pleasure in displaying the alertness with which he could baffle investigation, and amuse himself by putting the curiosity of tapsters and innkeepers upon a false scent. During the course of their brief journey, three different and inconsistent reports were circulated by him on their account; namely, first, that Tressilian was the Lord Deputy of Ireland, come over in disguise to take the queen’s pleasure concerning the great rebel, Roy O’Gurly MacCarthy MacMahon; secondly, that the said Tressilian was an agent of Monsieur, coming to urge his suit to the hand of Elizabeth; thirdly, that he was the Duke of Medina, come over, inexpugnated, to adjust the quarrel between Philip and this prince. Tressilian was angry, and expostulated, and the artist on the various inconveniences, and, in particular, the unnecessary degree of attention to which they were subjected by the figures he had assumed; but he was pacified (for who could be proof against such an argument?) by Wayland assuring him that a general importance was attached to his own (Tressilian’s) striking presence, which rendered it necessary to give an extraordinary reason for the rapidity and secrecy of their journey.

At length they approached the metropolis, where, owing to the more general recourse of strangers, their appearance excited neither observation nor inquiry, and finally they entered London itself.

It was Tressilian’s purpose to go down directly
to Deptford, where Lord Sussex resided, in order to be near the court, then held at Greenwich, the favourite residence of Elizabeth, and honoured as her birthplace. Still a brief halt in London was necessary; and it was somewhat prolonged by the earnest entreaties of Wayland Smith, who obtained permission to take a walk through the city.

'Take thy sword and buckler, and follow me,' said Tressilian; 'I am about to wait myself, and we will go in company.'

This he said, because he was not altogether so secure of the fidelity of his new retainer, as to lose sight of him at this interesting moment, when rival factions at the court of Elizabeth were running so high. Wayland Smith willingly acquiesced in the precaution, of which he probably conjectured the motive, but only stipulated, that his master should enter the shops of such chemists or apothecaries as he should point out, in walking through Fleet Street, and permit him to make some necessary purchases. Tressilian agreed, and, obeying the signal of his attendant, walked successively into more than four or five shops, where he observed that Wayland purchased in each only one single drug, in various quantities. The medicines which he first asked for were readily furnished out, in succession, but those which he afterwards required were less easily supplied—and Tressilian observed, that Wayland more than once, to the surprise of the shopkeeper, returned the gum or herb that was offered to him, and compelled him to exchange it for the right sort, or else went on to seek it elsewhere. But one ingredient, in particular, seemed almost impossible to be found. Some chemists plainly admitted they had never seen it—others denied that such a drug existed, excepting in the imagination of crazy chemists—and most of them attempted to satisfy their customer by producing some substitute, which, when rejected by Wayland, as not being what he had asked for, they maintained possessed, in a superior degree, the self-same qualities. In general, they all displayed some curiosity concerning the purpose for which he wanted it. One old, meagre chemist, to whom the artist put a special question, in terms which Tressilian neither understood nor could recollect, answered frankly, there was none of that drug in London, unless Yoggian the Jew chanced to have some of it upon hand.

'I thought as much,' said Wayland. And as soon as they left the shop, he said to Tressilian, 'I crave your pardon, sir, but no artist can work without his tools. I must needs go to this Yoggian's; and I promise you, that if this delays you longer than your leisure seems to permit, you shall, nevertheless, be well repaid, by the use I will make of this rare drug.' Permit me, he added, 'to walk before you, for we are now to quit the broad street, and we will double speed if I lead the way.'

Tressilian acquiesced, and, following the smith down a lane which turned to the left hand towards the river, he found that his guide walked on with great speed, and apparently perfect knowledge of the town, through a labyrinth of by-streets, covered with blind alleys, until at length Wayland paused in the midst of a very narrow lane, the termination of which showed a peep of the Thames looking misty and muddy, which background was crossed saltierwise, as Master Mumpitz might have said, by the masts of two lighters that lay waiting for the tide. The shop under which he halted had not, as in modern days, a glazed window—but a partly canvas screen surrounded such a stall as a cobler now occupies, having the front open, much in the manner of a fishmonger's booth of the present day. A little old smock-faced man, the very reverse of a Jew in composition, for he was very soft-haired as well as beardless, appeared, and with many courtesies asked Wayland what he pleased to want. He had no sooner named the drug, than the Jew started and looked surprised.

'And vat might your worship want with that drug, which is not named, mein господин, in forty years as I have been chemist here!'

The questions it is no part of my commission to answer,' said Wayland; 'I only wish to know if you have what I want, say, and having it, are willing to sell it?'

'Ah, mein господин, for having it, that I have, and for selling it, I am a chemist, and sell every drug.' So saying, he exhibited a powder, and then continued, 'But it will cost much money—Yat I ave cost its weight in gold, truly, gold well retailed—I will say six times—it comes from Mount Sinai, where we had our blessed Law given forth, and the plant blossoms but once in one hundred year. I do not know how often it is gathered on Mount Sinai,' said Wayland, after looking at the drug offered him with great disdain, 'but I will wager my sword and buckler against your gaberdine, that this trash you offer me instead of what I ask for, may be had for gathering any day of the week in the castle-ditch of Aleppo.'

'You are a rude man,' said the Jew; 'and, besides, I are no better than that—or if I ave, I will not sell it without order of a physician—or without you tell me vat you make of it.'

The artist made brief answer in a language of which Tressilian could not understand a word, and which seemed to strike the Jew with the utmost astonishment. He stared upon Wayland, and to his surprise, he had suddenly recognised some mighty hero or doomed potentate, in the person of an unknown and unmarked stranger. He exclaimed, and when he had recovered the first stunning effects of his surprise; and then passing from his former suspicious and surly manner to the very extremity of obeisance, he cringed low to the artist, and besought him to enter his poor house, to bless his miserable threshold by crossing it.

'Vill you not taste a cup with the poor Jew, Zacharias Yoggian?—Vill you toke any ate—vill you Lachrymos taste—vill you—'

'You offend in your proverbs,' said Wayland; 'minister to me in what I require of you, and forbear further discourse.'

The rebuked Israeltik took his bunch of keys, and, opening with circumstance a cabinet which seemed more strongly secured than the other cases of drugs and medicines amongst which it stood, he drew out a little secret drawer, having a glass lid, and containing a small portion of a black powder. This he offered to Wayland, his
manner conveying the deepest devotion towards him, though an aversion and jealous expression, which seemed to grudge every grain of which his customer was about to possess himself, disputed ground in his countenance with the obtrusive deference which he desired it should exhibit.

"Have you scales?" said Wayland.

The Jew pointed to those which lay ready for common use in the shop, but he did so with a puzzled expression of doubt and fear, which did not escape the artist.

"They must be other than these," said Wayland sternly; "know you not that holy things lose their virtue if weighed in an unjust balance?"

The Jew hung his head, took from a steel-plated casket a pair of scales, beautifully mounted, and said, as he adjusted them for the artist's use,—"With these I do mine own experiment — one hair of the high-priest's beard would turn them."

"It suffices," said the artist; and weighed out two drachms for himself of the black powder, which he very carefully folded up and put into his pouch with the other drugs. He then demanded the price of the Jew, who answered, shaking his head and bowing—"No price—nothing at all from such as you. But you will see the poor Jew again! you will look into his laboratory, where, God help him, he hath dried himself to the substance of the withered gourds of Jonah the holy prophet. You will have pity on him, and show him one little step on the great road?"

"Hush!" said Wayland, laying his finger mysteriously on his mouth; "it may be we shall meet again—then hast already the Schakalum, as thine own Rabbi call it—the general creation; watch, therefore, and pray, or thou mayst attain the knowledge of Aiehalanth Elixir, Samech, ere I may commune further with thee."

Then returning with a slight nod the reverential congers of the Jew, he walked gravely up the lane, followed by his master, whose observation on the scene he had just witnessed was, that Wayland ought to have paid the man for his drugs, whereon it was whispered—

"I pay him?" said the artist; "may the foul fiend pay me if I do!—Had it not been that I thought it might displease your worship. I would have had an ounce or two of gold out of him, in exchange for the same just weight of brick-dust."

"I advise you to practise no such knavery while waiting upon me," said Tressilian.

"Did I not say," answered the artist, "that for that reason alone I forbore him for the present?—Kravvay, call you it?—why, yonder wretched skeleton hath wealth sufficient to pave the whole lane he lives in with dollars, and scarce miss them out of his own iron chest; yet he goes mad after the philosopher's stone—and besides, he would have cheated a poor serving-man, as he thought not at first, with trash that was not worth a penny,—Maty for match, quoth the devil to the collier; if his false mercer was worth my good crowns, my true brick-dust is as well worth his good gold."

"It may be that you know," said Tressilian, "in dealing amongst wits and apothecaries; but understand that to have such tricks of lever-

...domain practised by one attending on me, diminishes my honour, and that I will not permit them. I trust thou hast made thy purchases well."

"I have, sir," replied Wayland; "and with these drugs will I, this very day, compound the true orvitan, that noble medicine which so seldom found genuine and effectual within these realms of Europe, for want of that most rare and precious drug which I got but now from Yoghlan."

"But why not have made all your purchases at one shop? said his master; "we have lost nearly in running from one pounder of simples to another."

"Content you, sir," said Wayland. "No man shall learn my secret; and it would not be mine, were I to buy all my materials from one channel."

They now returned to their inn (the famous Bell Tavern), and while the Lord Sussex's servant prepared the horses for their journey, Wayland, obtaining from the cook the service of a mortar, and himself up in a private chamber, where he worked, powdered, and amalgamated the drugs which he had bought, each in its own proportion, with a readiness and address that plainly showed he well practised in all the manual operations of pharmacy.

By the time Wayland's etiquette was prepared the horses were ready, and a short hour's riding brought them to the present habitation of Lord Sussex, an ancient house, called Saye's Court, near Deptford, which had long pertained to a family of that name, but had, for upwards of a century, been possessed by the ancient and honourable family of Evelyn. The present representative of that ancient house took a deep interest in the Earl of Sussex, and had willingly accommodated both him and his numerous retinue in his hospitable mansion. Saye's Court was afterwards the residence of the celebrated Mr. Evelyn, whose memoirs is still the manual of British planters, and whose life, manners, and principles, as illustrated in his Memoirs, ought equally to be the manual of gentle Englishmen."

CHAPTER XIV.

This is rare news they tell me, my good fellow; there are two halfs fierce baring on the green for one fair beholder—if the one go down, the other will be more peaceful, and the herd, which have small interest in their brilliancy, may preserve there in peace."

Old Play.

Saye's Court was watched like a becalmed fort; and so high rose the suspicions of the time, that Tressilian and his attendants were stopped..."
and questioned repeatedly by sentinels, both on foot and horseback, as they approached the abode of the sick earl. In truth, the high rank which Sussex held in Queen Elizabeth's favour, and his known and avowed rivalry of the Earl of Leicester, caused the utmost importance to be attached to his welfare; for, at the period we treat of, men doubted whether he or the Earl of Leicester might ultimately have the higher rank in her regard.

Elizabeth, like many of her sex, was fond of governing by factions, so as to balance two opposing interests, and reserve in her own hand the power of making either predominate, as the interest of the state, or perhaps as her own female caprice (for to that foible even she was not superior), might finally determine. To finesse—
to hold the cards—to oppose one interest to another—to bribe him who thought himself highest in her esteem, by the fears he must entertain of another equally trusted, if not equally beloved, were arts which she used throughout her reign, and which weakened her, though frequently giving way to the weakness of favouritism, to prevent most of its evil effects on her kingdom and government.

The two nobles who at present stood as rivals in her favour, possessed very different pretensions to share it; yet it might be in general terms, that the Earl of Sussex had been most serviceable to the queen, while Leicester was most dear to the woman. Sussex was, according to the phrase of the times, a martialis; had done good service in Ireland and in Scotland, and especially in the great northern rebellion in 1569, which was quelled, in a great measure, by his military talents. He was, therefore, naturally surrounded and looked up to by those who wished to make arms their road to distinction. The Earl of Sussex, moreover, was of more ancient and honourable descent than his rival, uniting in him the representation of the Fitz-Walters, as well as of the Ratcliffes, while the scion of Leicester was stained by the degradation of his grandfather, the oppressive minister of Henry VII., and scarce improved by that of his father, the unhappy Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, executed on Tower Hill, August 22, 1553. But in person, features, and address, weapons so formidable in the court of a female sovereign, Leicester had advantages more than sufficient to counterbalance the military services, high blood, and frank bearing of the Earl of Sussex; and he bore, in the eye of the court and kingdom, the higher share in Elizabeth's favour, though (for such was her uniform policy) by no means so decidedly expressed as to warrant him against the final preponderance of his rival's pretensions. The illness of Sussex, therefore, happened so opportunely for Leicester, as to give rise to strange surmises among the public; while the followers of the one earl were filled with the deepest apprehensions, and those of the other with the highest hopes of its probable issue. Meanwhile,—for in that old time men never forget the probability that the matter might be determined by length of sword,—the retainers of each noble flocked around their patron, appeared well in the centre of the court itself, and disturbed the ear of the sovereign by their frequent and alarming debates, held even within the precincts of her palace. This preliminary statement is necessary, to render what follows intelligible to the reader.

On Trewsallian's arrival at Saye's Court, he found the place filled with the retainers of the Earl of Sussex, and of the gentlemens who came to attend their patron in his illness. Arms were in every hand, and a deep gloom on every countenance, as if they had apprehended an immediate and violent assault from the opposite faction. In the hall, however, to which Trewsallian was ushered by one of the earl's attendants, while another went to inform Sussex of his arrival, he found only two gentlemen in waiting. There was a remarkable contrast in their dress, appearance, and manners. The attitude of the elderly gentleman, a person as it seemed of quality, and in the prime of life, was very plain and soldier-like, his stature low, his limbs stout, his bearing ungraceful, and his features of that kind which express sound common sense, without a grain of vivacity or imagination. The younger, of who seemed about twenty or upwards, was clad in the gayest habit used by persons of quality at the period, wearing a crimson velvet cloak richly ornamented with lace and embroidery, with a bonnet of the same, encircled with a gold chain turned three times round it, and secured by a medall. His hair was adjusted very nearly like that of some fine gentlemen of our own time, that is, it was combed upwards and made to stand as it were on end; and in his ears he wore a pair of silver ear-rings, having each a pearl of considerable size. The countenance of this youth, besides being regularly handsome, and accompanied by a line person, was animated and striking in a degree that seemed to speak at once the firmness of a decided, and the fire of an enterprising character, the power of reflection and the promptitude of determination.

Both these gentlemen reclined nearly in the same posture on benches near each other; but each, seeming engaged in his own meditations, looked straight at the wall which was opposite them without speaking to his companion. The looks of the elder were of that sort which convinced the beholder that, in looking on the wall, he saw no more than the side of an old hall hung around with cloaks, ancles, bucklers, old pieces of armour, parrisons and the similar articles which were usually the furniture of such a place. The look of the younger gallant had in it something imaginative; he was sunk in reverie, and it seemed as if the empty space of air betwixt him and the wall were the stage of a theatre on which his fancy was contemplating his own dramatis personae, and treated him with sights far different from those which his awakened and earthly vision could have offered.

At the entrance of Trewsallian both started from their musing, and bade him welcome; the younger, in particular, with great appearance of animation and cordiality.

* Naunton gives us numerous and curious particulars of the jealous struggle, which took place between Rackaflle, Earl of Sussex, and the rising favourite Leicester. The former, when on his death-bed, predicted to his followers, that, after his death, the spay (so he called Leicester, from his dark complexion) would prove too many for them.
The younger, Tressilian, said the youth; "thy philosophy stole thee from us when this homely maid had objects of ambition to offer—it is an honest philosophy, since it returns thee to us when there are only dangers to be shared."

"Is my lord, then, so dangerously indisposed?" said Tressilian.

"We fear the very worst," answered the elder gentleman, "and by the worst practice."

"Fig," replied Tressilian, "my Lord of Leicester is honourable."

"What doth he with such attendants, then, as hath he said the younger gallant."

"The man who raises the devil may be honest, but he is answerable for the mischief which the deed does, for all that."

"And is this all that are of you, my mates," said Tressilian, "that are about my lord in this utmost strait of peril?"

"No, no," replied the elder gentleman, "there are Tracy, Markham, and several more; but we keep watch here by two at once, and some are weary and are sleeping in the gallery above."

"And soon," said the young man, "are gone down to the dock yard at Deptford, to look out such a hull as they may purchase by clubbing their broken fortunes, and so soon as all is over, we will lay our noble lord in a noble grave, have a dawm at those who have hurried him thither, if opportunity suits, and then sail for the Indies, with heavy hearts and light pulses."

"It may be," said Tressilian, "that I will embrace the same purpose, so soon as I have settled some business at court."

"Thou business at court?" they both exclaimed at once; "and thou make the Indian voyages?"

"Why, Tressilian," said the younger man, "art thou not wedded, and beyond these flaws of fortune, that drive folk out to sea when they ask bears fareest for the haven—What has become of the lovely Indiaman that was to match my Amoret for truth and beauty?"

"Speak not of her!" said Tressilian, averting his face.

"Ay, stands it so with you?" said the youth, taking his hand very affectionately; "then fear not I will again touch the green wound—but it is strange as well as sad news. Are none of our merry fellowship to escape shipwreck of fortune and happiness in this sudden tempest? I had hoped thou wert in harbour, at least, my dear Edmund—but truly says another dear friend of thy name.

What man that sees the ever-whirling wheel
Of Chance, the which all mortal things doth play
But that thereby both find and plainly feel
How Malignity in them doth play
Her cruel sports to many men's decay.

The elder gentleman had risen from his bench, and was pacing the hall with some impatience, while the youth, with much earnestness and feeling, reeled these lines. When he had done, the other withdrew himself in his cloak, and again stretched himself forward, saying, "I marvel, Tressilian, you will feed the lad in such a solemn humour. If there were aught to draw a judgment on a virtuous and honourable household, like my lord's, renowne me if I think not it were this

jumping, whining, childish trick of poetry, that came among us with Master Walter Wittyustain here and his company, resulting into all manner of unchaste and incomprehensible forms of speech the honest plain English phrase which God gave us to express our meaning withal."

"Bloud believes," said his comrade, laughing, "the devil would Eve in rhyme, and that the mystic meaning of the Tree of Knowledge refers solely to the art of clasping rhymes and metting out hexameters."

At this moment the earl's chamberlain entered, and informed Tressilian that his lord required to speak with him.

He found Lord Sussex dressed, but unbarred, and lying on his couch, and was shocked at the alteration disease had made in his person. The earl received him with the most friendly cordiality, and inquired into the state of his courtship. Tressilian evaded his inquiries for a moment, and, turning his discourse on the earl's own health, he discovered, to his surprise, that the symptoms of his disorder corresponded minutely with those which Wayland had pre-ordained concerning it. He hesitated not, therefore, to communicate to Sussex the whole history of his attendant, and the pretensions he set up to care the earl under which he laboured. The earl listened with inexpressible attention until the name of Demetrios was mentioned, and then suddenly called to his secretary to bring him a certain casket which contained papers of importance. 'Take out from thence,' he said, 'the declaration of the rascal cook whom we had under examination, and lock herewith if the name of Demetrios be ever mentioned.'

The secretary turned to the passage at once, and read, "And said declarant being examined, saith, That he remembers having made the sauce to the said sturgeon fish, after eating of which the said noble lord was taken ill; and he put the usual ingredients and condiments therein, namely—'"

"Pass over his trash," said the earl, "and see whether he had not been supplied with his materials by a herbalist called Demetrios."

"It is even so," answered the secretary. "And he adds, he has not seen since the said Demetrios."

This accorded with Wayland's story, Tressilian, said the earl: "Tell him other."

On being summoned to the earl's presence, Wayland Smith told his former tale with firmness and consislency. "It may be," said the earl, "that sent by those who have begun this work, to end it for them; but bethink, if I marriest under thy medicine, it may go hard with thee."

"That were severe measures," said Wayland, "since the issue of medicine, and the end of life, are in God's disposal. But I will stand the risk. I have not lived so long under ground to be afraid of a grave."

"Nay, if thou be'st so confidtant," said the Earl of Sussex, "I will take the risk too, for the learned can do nothing for me. Tell me how this medicine is to be taken.

"That will I do presently," said Wayland; "but allow me to condition that, since I incur

* Note D. Sir Walter Raleigh.
all the risk of this treatment, no other physician shall be permitted to interfere with it."

"That is but fair," replied the earl; "and now prepare your drug."

While Wayland obeyed the earl's commands, his servants, by the artist's direction, undressed their master, and placed him in bed.

"I warn you," he said, "that the first operation of this medicine will be to produce a heavy sleep, during which time the chamber must be kept undisturbed; as the consequences may otherwise be fatal. I myself will watch by the earl, with any of the gentlemen of his chamber."

"Let all leave the room save Stanley and this good fellow," said the earl.

"And saving me also," said Tressilian, "I too am deeply interested in the effects of this potion."

"Be it so, good friend," said the earl; "and now for our experiment; but first call my secretary and chamberlain."

"Hear witness," he continued, when these officers arrived, "hear witness for me, gentlemen, that our honourable friend Tressilian is in no way responsible for the effects which this medicine may produce upon me, the taking it being my own free action and choice, in regard I believe it to be a remedy which God has furnished me by unexpected means, to recover me of my present malady. Commend me to my noble and princely mistress; and say that I live and die her true servant, and wish to all about her throne the same singleness of heart and will to serve her, with more ability to do than hath been assigned to poor Thomas Ratcliffe."

He then folded his hands, and seemed for a second or two absorbed in mental devotion, then took the potion in his hand, and, passing, regarded Wayland with a look that seemed designed to penetrate his very soul, but which caused no anxiety or hesitation in the countenance or manner of the artist.

"Here is nothing to be feared," said Sussex to Tressilian, and swallowed the medicine without further hesitation.

"I am now to pray your lordship," said Wayland, "to dispose yourself to rest as commodiously as you can; and of you, gentlemen, to remain at your posts, in mute as if you waited at your mother's deathbed."

The chamberlain and secretary then withdrew, giving orders that all doors be bolted, and all noise in the house strictly prohibited. Several gentlemen were voluntary watchers in the hall, but some remained in the chamber of the sick earl, save his groom of the chamber Stanley, the artist, and Tressilian. Wayland Smith's predictions were speedily accomplished, and a sleep fell upon the earl, so deep and sound, that they who watched his bedside began to fear that, in his weakened state, he might pass away without awakening from his lethargy. Wayland Smith himself appeared anxious, and felt the temples of the earl slightly, from time to time, attending particularly to the state of respiration, which was full and deep, but at the same time easy and uninterrupted.

**CHAPTER XV.**

You loggerheaded and unpolish'd grooms, What, no attendance, no regard, no duty? Where is the foolish knave I sent before? Taming of the Shrew.

There is no period at which men look worse in the eyes of each other, or feel more uncomfortable, than when the first dawn of daylight finds them watchers. Even a beauty of the first order, after the vigils of a ball are interrupted by the dawn, would do wisely to withdraw herself from the gaze of her fondest and most partial admirers. Such was the pale, insanguine, and ungrateful light, which began to beam upon those who kept watch all night in the hall at Saxe's Court, and which mingled its cold, pale, blue diffusion with the red, yellow, and smoky beams of expiring lamps and torches. The young gallant, whom we noticed in our last chapter, had left the room for a few minutes, to learn the cause of a knocking at the outward gate, and, on his return, was so struck with the forcible and ghastly aspects of his companions of the watch, that he exclaimed, 'L'city of my heart, my masters, how like owls you look! Methinks, when the sun rises, I shall see you flutter off with your eyes dazzled, to stick yourselves into the next ivy-tod or ruined steeple.'

"Hold thy peace, thou gibing fool," said Blount; "hold thy peace. Is this a time for jesting, when the manhood of England is perishing dying within a wall's breadth of thee?"

"There thou liest," replied the gallant.

"How, lie!" exclaimed Blount, starting up; "lie, and to me!"

"Why, so thou didst, thou precious fool," answered the youth; "thou didst lie on that bench even now, didst thou not? But art thou not a lusty corrob, to pick up a weary word so wrathfully? Nevertheless, loving and honouring my lord as truly as thou, or any one, I do say that, should Heaven take him from us, all England's manhood dies not with him."

"Ay," replied Blount, "a good portion will survive with thee, doubtless."

"And a good portion with myself, Blount, and with stout Markham here, and Tracy, and all of us. But I am he will best employ the talent Heaven has given to us all."

"As how, I prithee?" said Blount; "tell us your mystery of multiplying."

"Why, sirs," answered the youth, "ye are like goodly laird, which bears no crop because it is not quickened by manure; but I have that rising spirit in me, which will make my poor faculties labour to keep pace with it. My ambition will keep my brain at work, I warrant thee."

"I pray to God it does not drive thee mad," said Blount; "for my part, if we lose our noble lord, I bid adieu to the court and to the camp both. I have five hundred soul apace in Norfolk, and thither will I, and change the court pastourelle for the country homely."

"O base transmutation!" exclaimed his antagonist; "thou hast already got the true rustico slouch—thy shoulders slouched, as if thin hands were at the stilts of the plough, and thou hast a
kind of earthy smell about thee, instead of being performed with essence, as a gallant and courtier should. On my soul, thou hast stoned out to real thyself on a lay now! Thy only excuse will be to swear by thy looks, that the farmer had a fair daughter.

I pray thee, Walter,' said another of the company, 'cease thy railly, which suits neither time nor place, and tell us who was at the gate just now.

'Alas! what!' exclaimed Tracy, 'that was no slight mark of favour; if the earl can but come through, he will match with Leicester yet. Is Masters with my lord at present?'

'Nay,' replied Walter, 'he is half-way back to Greenwich by this time, and in high dudgeon,' Thou didst not refuse him admittance,' exclaimed Tracy.

'Thou wert not sorely so nath,' ejaculated Blount.

'I refused him admittance as flatly, Blount, as you would refuse a penny to a blind beggar; as obstinately, Tracy, as thou didst never deny access to a dun.

'Why, in the fiend's name, didst thou trust him to the gate? said Blount to Tracy.

'It suited his good fortune better than mine,' answered Tracy; 'but he has undone us all now thoroughly. My lord may live or die, he will never have a look of favour from her Majesty again.'

'Not the means of making fortunes for his followers,' said the young gallant, smiling contemptuously—there lies the sore point, that will brook no handling. My good sir, I sounded my lamentations over your lordship, what less loudly than some of you; but when the point comes of doing him service, I will yield to none of you. Had this learned keck entered, think'st thou not there had been such a coil bewtix him and Tressilian's physician, though not the sleeper only, but the very dead might have worth, I know what quarrels belong to the discord of doctors.

'And who is to take the blame of opposing the Queen's orders?' said Tracy; 'for unadvisable Doctor Masters came with her Grace's positive commands to cure the ear,'

'I, who have done the wrong, will bear the blame,' said Walter.

'Thus, then, oil fly the dreams of court favour thou hast nourished,' said Blount; 'and despite all thy boasted art and ambition, Devonshire will see thee shine a true younger brother, fit to sit low at the board, carve turn about with the chaplain, look that the hounds be fed, and see the square girths drawn when he goes a-hunting.'

'Not so,' said the young man, colouring, 'not while Ireland and the Netherlands have wars, and not while the song of the heath pathless waves. The rich west hath lands unbreathed of, and Britain retains bold hearts to venture on the quest of them—Athena for a space, my masters. I go to walk in the court and look to the sentinels.'

'The lad hath quicksilver in his veins, that is certain,' said Blount, looking at Markham.

'He hath that both in brain and blood,' said Markham, 'which may either make or mar him.'

But, in closing the door against Masters, he had done a daring and loving piece of service; for Tressilian's fellow-each had ever avowed, that to wake the earl were death, and Masters would wake the Seven Sleepers themselves. If he thought they slept not by the regular ordinance of medicine.

Morning was well advanced, when Tressilian, fattened and overwatched, came down to the hall, with the joyful intelligence that the earl had awakened of himself, that he found his internal complaints much mitigated, and spoke with a cheerfulness and looked round with a vivacity, which of themselves showed a material and favourable change had taken place. Tressilian at the same time commanded the attendance of one or two of his followers, to report what had passed during the night, and to relieve the watchers in the earl's chamber.

When the message of the queen was communicated to the Earl of Sussex, he at first smiled at the report which the physician had received from his zealous young follower, but, instantly recollecting himself, he commanded Blount, his master of the horse, instantly to take boat, and go down the river to the Palace of Greenwich, taking young Walter and Tracy with him, and that for a suitable compliment, expressing his grateful thanks to his sovereign, and mentioning the cause why the earl had been enabled to profit by the assistance of the wise and learned Doctor Masters.

'A plague on it!' said Blount, as he descended the stairs; 'had he sent me with a cartel to Leicester, I think I should have done his errand indifferently well. But to go to our gracious sovereign, before whom all words must be hallowed over either with gilding or with sugar, is such a confectionary matter as clean baffles my poor old English brain. —Come with me, Tracy and come you too, Master Walter Wittypate, to art the cause of our having all this ado. Let us see if thy not brain, that frames so many flashy fireworks, can help out a plain fellow at need with some of thy shining devices.'

'Never fear, never fear,' exclaimed the youth, 'it is I will help you through—let me but fetch my cloak.'

'Why, thou hast it on thy shoulders,' said Blount,—'the lad is masked.

'No, this is Tracy's old mantle,' answered Walter; 'I go not with thee to court unless as a gentleman should.'

'Why,' said Blount, 'thy bravery are like to dazzle the eyes of none but some poor groom or porter.'

'I know that,' said the youth; 'but I am resolved I will have my own cloak, ay, and brush my doublet to boot, ere I stir forth with you.'

'Well, well,' said Blount, 'here is a coil about a doublet and a cloak—get thyself ready, a God's name.'

They were soon launched upon the princely bosom of the broad Thames, upon which the sun now shone forth in all its splendour.

'There are two things scarce matched in the universe,' said Walter to Blount—'the sun in heaven, and the Thames on the earth.'

'The one will light us to Greenwich well
enough, said Blount, 'and the other would take us there a little faster, if it were ebb tide.'

'And this is all thou think'st—all thou earnest—all thou dostst the use of the King of Elements, and the King of Rivers, to guide thee, and three such poor lights as thyself, and me, and Traven, an idle journey of courtly ceremony.'

'It is no errand of my seeking, faith,' replied Blount, 'and I could excuse both the sun and the Thames the trouble of carrying me where I have no great mind to go, and where I expect but dog's wages for my trouble—and, by my honour,' he added, looking out from the head of the boat, 'it seems to me as if our message were a sort of labour in vain; for see, the Queen's barge lies at the stairs, as if her Majesty were about to take water.'

It was even so. The royal barge, manned with the queen's watermen, richly attired in the royal liveries, and having the banner of England displayed, did indeed lie at the great stairs which ascended from the river, and along with it two or three other boats for transporting such part of her retinue as were not in immediate attendance on the royal person. The yomen of the guard, the tallest and most handsome men when England could produce, guarded with their halberds the passage from the palace-gate to the river-side, and all seemed in readiness for the queen's coming forth, although the day was very early.

'By my faith, this bodes us no good,' said Blount; 'it must be some perilous cause puts her Grace in motion thus untimely. By my counsel, we were best put back again, and tell the Earl what we have seen.'

'Tell the Earl what we have seen!' said Walter; 'why, what have we seen but a boat, and men with scarlet jerkins, and halberds in their hands? Let us do his errand, and tell him what the Queen says in reply.'

So saying, he caused the boat to be pulled towards a landing-place at some distance from the principal one, which it would not, at that moment, have been thought respectful to approach; and jumped on shore, followed, though with reluctance, by his cautious and timid companions. As they approached the gate of the palace, one of the sergeant porters told them they could not at present enter, as her Majesty was in the act of coming forth. The gentleman used the name of the Earl of Sussex; but it proved no charm to subdue the officer, who alleged in reply, that it was as much as his post was worth, to disobey in the least title the commands which he had received.

'Nay, I told you as much before,' said Blount; 'do, I pray you, my dear Walter, let us take boat and return.'

'Not till I see the Queen come forth,' returned the youth complacently.

'Then art mad, stark mad, by the mass!' answered Blount.

'And thou,' said Walter, 'art turned coward of the sudden. I have seen thee face half a score of shag-headed Irish kerns to thy own share of them, and now thou wouldst blink and go back to shun the frown of a fair lady!' At this moment the gates opened, and ushered them to issue forth in array, preceded and flanked by the band of Gentleman Pensioners. After this, amid a crowd of lords and ladies, yet so disposed around her that she could see and be seen on all sides, came Elizabeth herself, then in the prime of womanhood, and in the full glow of what in a sovereignty was called beauty, and who in the lowest rank of life have been truly judged a noble figure, joined to a striking and commanding physiognomy. She leaned on the arm of Lord Hunsdon, whose relation to her by her mother's side often procured him such distinguished marks of Elizabeth's intimacy.

The young cavalier we have so often mentioned had probably never yet approached so near the person of her sovereign, and he pressed forward as far as the line of warders permitted, in order to avail himself of the present opportunity. His companion, on the contrary, cursing his impudence, kept pulling him back, till Walter shook him off impatiently, and letting his rich cloak drop carelessly from one shoulder; a natural action, which served, however, to display to the best advantage his well-proportioned person. Unbonneted at the same time, he fixed his eager gaze on the queen's approach, with a mixture of respectful curiosity, and modest yet ardent admiration, which suited so well with his fine features, that the warders, struck with his rich attire and noble countenance, suffered him to approach the ground over which the queen was to pass, somewhat closer than was permitted to ordinary spectators. Thus the adventurous youth stood full in Elizabeth's eye—an eye never indifferent to the admiration which she deservedly excited among her subjects, or to the fair proportions of external form which chance to distinguish any of her courtiers. Accordingly, she fixed her keen glance on the youth, as she approached the place where he stood, with a look in which surprise at his boldness seemed to be mingled with resentment, while a trifling accident happened which attracted her attention towards him, yet more strongly. The sky had been rainy, and just where the young gentleman stood, a small quantity of mud interrupted the queen's passage. As she hesitated to pass on, the youth, throwing his cloak from his shoulders, laid it on the muddy spot, so as to step over it dryshod. Elizabeth looked at the young man, who accompanied this act of devoted courtesy with a profound reverence and a blush which overspread his whole countenance. The queen was confused, and blushed in her turn, nodded her head, hastily passed on, and embarked in her large without saying a word.

Come along, Sir Coozeb,' said Blount; 'your gay cloak will need the brush to-day.' The young man had meant to meet any charge of dirt in his mantle, better have worn a man's old dress-gear, which despises all soil. This cloak,' said the youth, 'I would wear it up; and folding it, shall never be brushed with in my possession.'

'And that will not be long, if you learn not a little more economy—we shall have you in court soon, as the Spaniard says.'

Their discourse was here interrupted by one of the band of Pensioners. 'I was sent,' said he, after looking at them attentively, 'to a gentleman who hath no cloak,'
The queen interrupted him; "Sir, young man! I take shame to say that, in our capital, such and so various are the means of thriftless folly, that to give gold to youth is giving fuel to fire, and furnishing them with the means of self-destruction. If I live and reign, these means of unchristian excess shall be abolished, let them mayest be poor, she added, "or thy parents may be;—it shall be gold, if thou wilt, but thou shalt answer to me for the use on!" Walter waited patiently until the queen had done, and then modestly assured her that gold was still less in his wish than the wishment her Majesty had before offered.

"How, boy!" said the queen, "neither gold nor garnet! What is it then? what hast thou of me, then?"

"Only permission, madam—if it is not asking too high an honour—permission to wear the cloak which did you trilling service."

"Permission to wear thine own cloak, thou silly boy!" said the queen.

"It is no longer mine," said Walter; "when your Majesty's son touched it, it became a fit mantle for a prince, but far too rich a one for its former owner."

The queen again blushed: and endeavoured to cover, by laughing, a slight degree of not unpleasant surprise and confusion.

"Heard you ever the like, my lords? The youth's head is turned with reading romances—I must know something of him, that I may send him safe to his friends—What art thou?" A gentleman of the household of the Earl of Sussex, so please your Grace, sent him with his master of horse, upon a message to your Majesty."

In a moment the gracious expression which Elizabeth's face had hitherto maintained, gave way to an expression of haggardness and severity. "My Lord of Sussex!" she said, "has taught us how to regard his messages, by the value he places upon our words. We sent but this morning the physician in ordinary of our chamber, and that at no other time, understanding his lordship's illness to be more dangerous than we had before apprehended. They are both in Europe a man more skilled in this holy and most useful science than Doctor Masters, and he came from Flanders to our subject. Never, he found the gate of Sussex's Court defended by men with crueler, as if it had been on the Borders of Scotland, not in the vicinity of our court; and when he demanded admittance in our name, it was stubbornly refused. For this slight of kindness, which had hurt too much of condescension in it, we will receive, at present at least, no excuse; and some we suppose to have been the purport of my Lord of Sussex's message."

This was uttered in a tone, and with a gesture, which made Lord Sussex's friends who were within hearing tremble. He to whom the speech was addressed, however, trembled not—but with great deference and humility, as soon as the queen's passion gave him an opportunity, he replied,—"Sir, please your most gracious Majesty, I was charg'd, with no apology from the Earl of Sussex.

"With what were you then charg'd, sir?" said the queen, with the impetuousity which,
and noble qualities, strongly marked her character; it was with a justification — or, God's death, with a delusion."

"Madam," said the young man, "my Lord of Sussex has now the confidence towards treason, and could think of nothing short of securing the offender, and placing him in your Majesty's hands, and at your mercy. The noble Earl was fast asleep when your most gracious message reached him, a potion having been administered to that purpose by his physician; and his lordship knew not of the ingratiating repulse your Majesty's royal and most comfortable message had received, until after he awoke this morning."

"And which of his domestics, then, in the name of Heaven, presumed to reject my message, without even admitting my own physician to the presence of him whom I sent to attend?" said the queen, much surprised.

"The offender, madam, is before you," replied Walter, bowing very low: "the full and sole blame is mine; and my lord has most justly sent me to aye the consequences of a fault, of which he is as innocent as a sleeping man, whose dreams call his waking man's actions.

"What! was it thus — thus, madam — that repelled my messenger and my physician from Saye's Court?" said the queen. "What could occasion such boldness in one who seems devoted — that is, whose exterior bearing shows devotion — to his sovereign?"

"Madam," said the youth, — who, notwithstanding an assumed appearance of severity, thought that he saw something in the queen's face that resembled not implausibility, — "we say: in our country, that the physician is for the time the sige sovereign of his patient. Now, my noble master was then under dominion of a leech, by whose advice he had greatly profited, who had bade his commands that his patient should not that might be disturbed, on the very peril of his life."

"Thy master hath trusted some false varet of an empiric," said the queen."

"I know not, madam, but by the fact that he is now, this very morning, awakened much refreshed and strengthened, from the sole sleep he hath had for many hours."

The nobles looked at each other, but more with the purpose to see what each thought of this news, than to exchange any remarks on what had happened. The queen answered hastily, and without affecting to disguise her satisfaction, — By my word, I am glad he is better. But thou hast over bold to deny the access of my Doctor Masters. Know'st thou not that Holy Writ saith, "in the multitude of counselors there is safety.""

"Ay, madam," said Walter; "but I have heard learned men say, that the safety spoken of is for the physicians, not for the patient.

"By my faith, child, thou hast pushed the home," said the queen, laughing: "for Hebrew learning does not come quite at will."

"How say you, my Lord of Lincoln? I heard the lad given a just interpretation of the text?"

"The word safety, my most gracious madam," said the Bishop of Lincoln, "for so hath been translated, it may be somewhat hastily; the Hebrew word, being —"

"My lord," said the queen, interrupting him, "we said we had forgotten our Hebrew. — But for thee, young man, what is thy name and birth?"

"Raleigh is my name, most gracious queen, the youngest son of a large but honorable family of Devonshire."

"Raleigh?" said Elizabeth, after a moment's recollection; "have we not heard of your service in Ireland?"

"I have been so fortunate as to do some service there, madam," replied Raleigh, "saw, however, of consequence sufficient to reach your Grace's ears."

"They hear further than you think of," said the queen gravely, — and have heard of a youth who defended a ford in Shropshire against a whole band of wild Irish rebels, until the stream ran purple with their blood and his own.

"Some blood I may have lost," said the youth, looking down, "but it was where my best is; and that is in your Majesty's service."

The queen paused, and then said hastily, "You are very young to have fought so well, and to speak so well. But you must not escape your penance for turning back Masters — the poor man hath caught cold on the river; for our order reached him when he was just returned from certain visits in London, and he held it in matter of loyalty and conscience instantly to set forth. So hard ye, Master Raleigh, see thou fall not to wear thy modest cloak, in token of penitence, till our pleasure be further known. And here," she added, giving him a jewel of gold, in the form of a chessman, "I give thee this to wear at the collar.

"Raleigh, to whom nature had taught intuitively, as it were, those courtly arts which many scarce acquire from long experience, knelt, and, as he took from her hand the jewel, kissed the fingers which gave it. He knew, perhaps, better than almost any of the courtiers who surrounded her, how to mix the devotion claimed by the queen, with the gallantry due to her personal beauty — and in this, his first attempt to unite them, he succeeded so well, as at once to gratify Elizabeth's personal vanity and her love of power."

His master, the Earl of Sussex, had the full advantage of the satisfaction which Raleigh had afforded Elizabeth on their first interview.

"My lords and ladies," said the queen, looking around to the court by whom she was surrounded, "methinks, since we are upon the river. It were well to renounce our present purpose of going to the city, and surprise this poor Earl of Sussex with a visit. He is ill, and suffering doubtless under the fear of our displeasure, from which he hath been honestly cleared by the free renewal of this malapert boy. What think you of it were not an act of kindness, to give him a recreation, so to say, of his loyal service, to our sweetest best minister?"

It may be readily supposed this none to whom this speech was addressed ventured to oppose his purport.

"Your Grace," said the Bishop of Lincoln, "is — Note E. Court favour of Sir Walter Raleigh.
the breath of our nostrils." The men of war averred that the face of the sovereign was a whetstone to the soldier's sword; while the men of state were not less of opinion that the light of the queen's countenance was a lamp to the paths of her councillors; and the ladies agreed, with one voice, that no Noble in England so well deserved the regard of England's royal mistress as the Earl of Sussex—-the Earl of Leicester's right being reserved entire; so some of the more politic vowed their assent—an exception to which Elizabeth paid no apparent attention. The large had, therefore, ordered to deposit its royal freight at Deptford, at the nearest and most convenient point of communication with Saye's Court, in order that the queen might have satisfaction of her royal and maternal solitude, by making personal inquiries after the health of the Earl of Sussex.

Raleigh, whose wonted spirit foresaw and anticipated important consequences from the most trifling occurrences, hastened to ask the queen's permission to go in the ski, and announce the royal visit to his master, ingeniously suggesting that the joyful surprise might prove prejudicial to his health, since the richest and most generous cordials may sometimes be fatal to those who have been long in a languishing situation. But whether the queen designed it too premeditated in so young a courter to interpose his opinion, was unmasked, or whether she was moved by a reversion of the feeling of jealousy, which had been instilled into her, by reports that the earl kept armed men about his person, she denied Raleigh, sharply, to reserve his counsel till it was required of him, and repeated her former orders, to be landed at Deptford, adding, "We will ourselves see what sort of household my Lord of Sussex keeps about him."

Now the Lord have pity on us!" said the young courter to himself. "Good hearts, the Earl hath many a one round him; but good heads are scarce with us—and he himself is too ill to give direction. And Blount shall be with his morning meal of Yarmouth herring and ale: and they shall have his beastly black puddings and Rheinish;—the thorough-paced Welshmen, Thomas ap Rice and Evan Evans, will be at work on their leek porridge and roasted cheese—and she detects, they say, all coarse meats, evil smells, and strong wines. Could they but think of burning some rosemary in the great hall! but regale me, all must be trusted to chance. Luck hath done indifferent well for me this morning, for I trust I have spared a cloak and made a court fortune—May she do as much for my absent patron!"

The royal barge soon stopped at Deptford, and, amid the loud shouts of the populace, which her presence never failed to excite, the queen, with a carbuncle borne over her head, walked, accompanied by her retinue, towards Saye's Court, where the distant exclamations of the people gave the first notice of her arrival. Sussex, who was in the act of advising with Tritham, how he should make up the supposed breach in the queen's favour, was infinitely surprised at learning her immediate presence—-not that the queen's custom of visiting her more distinguished nobility, whether in health or sickness, could be unknown to him; but the suddenness of the communication left no time for those preparations with which he well knew Elizabeth loved to be greeted, and the readiness and confidence of his military household, much increased by his late illness, rendered him altogether unprepared for her reception.

Cursing internally the chance which thus brought her gracious visitation on him unawares, he hastened down with Tressilian, to whose eventful and interesting story he had just given an attentive ear.

"My worthy friend," he said, "such support as I can give your accusation of Varney, you have a right to expect alike from justice and gratitude. Chance will presently show whether I can do ought with our sovereign, or whether, in very deed, my meddling in your affair may not rather prejudice than serve you."

Thus spoke Sussex, while hastily casting around him in a loose robe of sables, and adjusting his person in the best manner he could to meet the eye of his sovereign. But the hurried attention bestowed on his apparel could remove the ghastly effects of long illness on a countenance which had so handsomely marked with features rather strong than pleasing; besides, he was of low stature, and though broad-shouldered, athletic, and fit for martial achievements, presence in a peaceful hall was not such as ladies love to look upon; a personal disadvantage, which was supposed to give Sussex, though esteemed and honoured by his sovereign, considerable disadvantage when compared with Leicester, who was alike remarkable for elegance of manners and for beauty of person.

The earl's utmost despatch only enabled him to meet the queen as she entered the great hall, and he at once perceived there was a cloud on her brow. Her jealous eye had noticed the martial array of armed gentlemen and retainers with which the mansion-house was filled, and her first words expressed her disapprobation.

"Is this a royal garrison, my Lord of Sussex? that it holds so many pikes and lances? or have we by accident overshot Saye's Court, and landed at our Tower of London?"

Lord Sussex hastened to offer some apology.

"It needs not," she said. "My lord, I would speedily to take up a certain quarrel between your lordship and another great lord of our household, and at the same time to reprehend this uncivilised and dangerous practice of surrounding yourselves with armed, and even with militarily followers, as if, in the neighbourhood of our capital, you could thrive in the very verge of our royal residence, you were preparing to wage civil war with each other. We are glad to see you so well recovered, my lord, though without the assistance of the learned physician whom we sent to you—Urgo no excuse—we know how that matter fell out, and we have corrected for it the wild spirit, young Raleigh. By the way, my lord, we will speedily relieve your household of him, and take him into our own. So much is there about him which merits to be better nurtured than he is like to be amongst your very military followers."

To this proposal Sussex, though scarce understanding how the queen came to make it, could
only bow and express his acquiescence. He then entreated her to remain till refreshment could be offered; but in this he could not prevail. And, after a few compliments of a much colder and more commonplace character than might have been expected from a step so decidedly favourable as a personal visit, the queen took her leave of Saye's Court, having brought confu-

sion thicker along with her, and leaving doubt and apprehension behind.

CHAPTER XVI.

Then call them to your presence. Face to face, And frowning brow to brow, ourselves will bear The accuser, and the accused, freely speak:— High-thom'd are they both, and full of fire, In rage deaf as the sea, hasty as fire.

Richard II.

'I am ordered to attend court to-morrow,' said Leicester, speaking to Varney, 'to meet, as they suppose, my Lord of Sussex. The Queen intends to take up matters betwixt us. This comes of her visit to Saye's Court, of which you must needs speak so lightly.'

'I maintain it was nothing,' said Varney: 'may, I know from a sure intelligence, who was within ear-shot of much that was said, that Sussex has lost rather than gained by that visit. The Queen said, when she stepped into the boat, that Saye's Court looked like a guard-house, and smelt like a hospital. 'Like a cook's shop in Run Alley,' rather," said the Countess of Rutland, who is ever your lordship's good friend. And then my Lord of Leicester must needs put in his holy ear, and say that my Lord of Sussex must be excused for his rude and old-world housekeeping, since he had as yet no wife.'

'And what said the Queen?' asked Leicester hastily.

'She took him up roundly,' said Varney, 'and asked what my Lord Sussex had to do with a wife, or my Lord Bishop to speak on such a subject. If marriage is permitted, she said, I nowhere read that it is enjoined.'

'She likes not marriages, or speech of marriage, among churchmen,' said Leicester.

'Nor among courtiers neither,' said Varney; but, observing that Leicester changed countenance, he instantly added, 'that all the ladies who were present had joined in ridiculing Lord Sussex's housekeeping, and in contrasting it with the reception her Grace would have assuredly received at my Lord of Leicester's.'

'You have gathered much tidings,' said Leicester, 'but you have forgotten or omitted the most important of all. She hath added another to those dangling satillae, whom it is her pleasure to keep revolving around her.'

'Your lordship meaneth that Raleigh, the Devonshire youth,' said Varney, 'the Knight of the Gown, as they call him at court?'

'He may be Knight of the Garter one day, for aught I know,' said Leicester, 'for he advances rapidly. She hath capped verses with him, and such follies. I would gladly abandon of my own free will, the part I have in her fickle favour; but I will not be elbowed out of it by the clown Sussex, or this new upstart. I hear Tressilian is with Sussex also, and high in his favour—I would spare him for considerations, but he will thrust himself on his fate—Sussex, too, is almost as well as ever in his health.'

'My lord,' replied Varney, 'there will be rubs in the smoothest road, specially when it leads up hill. Sussex's illness was to us a god-send, from which I hoped much. He has recovered, indeed, but he is not now more formidable than ever he fell ill, when he received more than one fall in wrestling with your lordship. Let not your heart fail you, my lord, and all shall be well.'

'My heart never failed me, sir,' replied Leicester. 'No, my lord,' said Varney; 'but it has shown itself to you right often. He that would climb a tree, my lord, must grasp by the branches, not by the blossom.'

'Well, well, well!' said Leicester impatiently; 'I understand thy meaning—My heart shall neither fail me nor succumb. I have my return in order—see that their array be so splendid as to put down not only the rude companions of Ratcliff, but the retainers of every other noblemen and courtier. Let them be well armed with all, but without any outward display of their weapons, wearing them as if for more for fashion's sake than for use. Do thou thyself keep close to me, I may have business for you.'

The preparations of Sussex and his party were not less anxious than those of Leicester. 'Thy Supplication, impeaching Varney of seduction,' said the earl to Tressilian, 'is by this time in the Queen's hand—I have sent it through a sure channel. Methinks your suit should succeed, being, as it is, founded in justice and honour, and Elizabeth being the very master of both. But I was not bow—the gipsy (so Sussex was wont to call him)—nor indeed on account of his dark complexion; I have much to say with her in these holy times of peace—Were war at the gates I should be one of her white boys; but soldiers, like their bucklers and Bilbo blades, get out of fashion in peace time, and thin sleeves and walking rapiers bear the bell. Well, we must be gay, since such is the fashion. Bount, hast thou seen our household put into their new armours?—But thou know'st as little of these toys as I do—that wouldst be ready enough at dispatching a stand of pikes.'

'My good lord,' answered Bount, 'Raleigh hath been here, and taken that charge upon him—Your train will glitter like a May morning—Marly, the cost is another question. One might keep an hospital of old soldiers at the charge of ten modern lances.'

'We must not count cost to-day, Nicholls,' said the earl in reply; 'I am beholden to Raleigh for his care—I trust, though, he has remembered that I am an old soldier, and would have no more of these follies than needs must.'

'Nay, I understand nought about it,' said Bount; 'but here are your honourable lordship's brave kinsmen and friends coming in by scores to wait upon you to court, where, methinks, we shall bear the brunt of a front as Leicester, let him ruffle it as he will.'
'Give them the strictest charges,' said Sussex, 'that they suffer no provocation short of actual violence to provoke them into quarrel — they have hot bloods, and I would not give Leicester the advantage over me by any imprudence of theirs.'

The Earl of Sussex ran so hastily through these directions, that it was with difficulty Tressilian at length found opportunity to express his surprise that he should have proceeded so far in the affair of Sir Hugh Rolseth as to lay his petition at once before the queen — 'It was the opinion of the young lady's friends,' he said, 'that Leicester's sense of justice should be first appealed to, as the offence had been committed by his officer, and so he had expressly told Sussex.'

'This could have been done without applying to me,' said Sussex, somewhat haughtily, 'at least, ought not to have been a councillor when the object was a humiliating reference to Leicester, and I am surprised that you, Tressilian, a man of honour and my friend, would assume such a mean course. If you said so, I certainly understood you not in a matter which seemed so unlike yourself.'

'Fool!' said Tressilian, 'the course I would prefer, for my own sake, if that you have adopted; but the friends of this most unhappy lady display their horror for fashion's sake, and may not be relied on.'

'The queen and other nobleman of their party were impatiently; my heart shall stand in the place of my suit.'

'Have my return in your eye, sir,' answered Tressilian, 'and think how his majesty will be so splendidly as to send me your companions of Raleigh. Every other nobleman of the queen will arrive with my rival, and their display of their envy for fashion's sake, and may not be relied on.'

'This could not help suspecting that, in his eagerness to strengthen himself against his rival, Sussex had purposely adopted the course most likely to throw odium on Leicester, without considering minutely whether it were the model of proceeding most likely to be attended with success.'

'Oh, the friends — the friends,' said Sussex, interrupting him; 'they must let us manage this cause in the way which seems best. This is the time and the hour to accumulate every charge against Leicester and his household, and yours the Queen will hold a heavy one. But at all events she hath the complaint before her.'

Tressilian could not help suspecting that, in his eagerness to strengthen himself against his rival, Sussex had purposely adopted the course most likely to throw odium on Leicester, without considering minutely whether it were the model of proceeding most likely to be attended with success. His last step was irrevocable, and Sussex escaped from further obtaining it by re-employing his company, with the command, "Let all lie in order at eleven o'clock; I must be at court, and in the presence by high noon precisely."

While the river parties were thus anxiously preparing for their approaching meeting in the queen's presence, even Elizabeth herself was not without apprehension of what might chance from the collision of two such fiery spirits, each backed by a strong and numerous body of followers, and divided betwixt them, either openly or in secret, the hopes and wishes of most of her court. The band of Gentleman Pensioners were all under arms, and a reinforcement of the Yeomen of the Guard was brought down the Thames from London. A royal proclamation was sent forth, strictly prohibiting the presence of even the humblest of the court, without the express permission of the queen.

As if by previous arrangement, or perhaps by intimation that such was the queen's pleasure, Sussex and his retinue came to the palace from Deptford by water, while Leicester arrived by land; and thus they entered the court-yard from opposite sides. This tribulation of circumstance gave Leicester a certain ascendency in the opinion of the vulgar, the appearance of his cavalcade of mounted followers showing more numerous and more imposing than those of Sussex's party, who were necessarily upon foot. No show or sign of greeting passed between the ears, though each looked full at the other, both expecting perhaps an exchange of courtesies, which neither was willing to commence. Almost in the minute of their arrival the castle-bell tolled, the gates of the palace were opened, and the cards entered, each numerously attended by such gentlemen of their train whose rank gave them that privilege. The yeomen and interior attendants remained in the court-yard, while the opposite parties eyed each other with looks of eager hatred and scorn, as if waiting with impatience for some cause of tumult, or some apology for mutual aggression. But they were restrained by the strict commands of their leaders and overlords, perhaps, by the presence of an armed guard of unequal strength.

In the meanwhile, the more distinguished persons of each train followed their pates to the lofty halls and ante-rooms of the royal palace, and mingled in the same current, like two streams which are compelled into the same channel, yet shun to mix their waters. The parties arranged themselves, as it were instinctively, on the different sides of the lofty apartment, and seemed eager to escape from the transient union which the narrowness of the crowded entrance had for an instant compelled them to submit to. The folding-doors at the upper end of the long gallery were immediately afterwards opened, and it was announced in a whisper that the queen was in her presence-room, to which these gave access. Both ears moved slowly and stately towards the entrance; Sussex followed by Tressilian, Blount, and Raleigh, and Leicester by Varney. The pride of Leicester was obliged to give way to court-forms, and, with a grave and formal intimation of the head, he passed out of his rival a peer of older creation than his own, passed before him. Sussex returned the reverence with the same formal civility, and entered the presence-room. Tressilian and Blount offered to follow him, but were not permitted, the usher of the black rod alleging in excuse, that he had precise orders to look to all admissions that day. To Raleigh, who stood back on the re-pulse of his companions, he said, 'You, sir, may enter,' and he entered accordingly.

'Follow me close, Varney,' said the Earl of Leicester, who had stood aloof for a moment to mark the reception of Sussex; and, advancing to the entrance, he was about to pass on, when Varney, who was close behind him, caught hold of his arm, in the utmost bravery of the day, was stopped by the usher, as Tressilian and Blount had been before him. 'Here is this, Master Bowyer,' said the Earl of Leicester, and Varney a Knave, who I am, and that is my friend and follower.'

'Your lordship will pardon me,' replied Bow-
yer stoutly; 'my orders are precise, and limit me to strict discharge of my duty.'

'This art a partial knife,' said Leicester, the blood mounting to his face, 'to do me this honour, when you but now admitted a fellow of my Lord of Sussex.'

'My lord,' said Bowyer, 'Master Raleigh is newly admitted among a sworn servitor of her Grace, and to him my orders did not apply.

'You art a knife—an ungrateful knife,' said Leicester; 'but he that hath done, can undo—then shall not prunk thee in thy authority long.'

This threat he uttered aloud, with less than his usual policy and delicacy, and, having done so, he entered the presence-chamber, and made his reverence to the queen, who, attired with even more than her usual splendour, and surrounded by those nobles and statesmen whose courage and wisdom have rendered her reign immortal, stood ready to receive the homage of her subjects. She gravely returned the observance of the favourite earl, and looked aloofly at him and at Sussex, as if about to speak, when Bowyer, a man whose spirit could not brook the insult he had so openly received from Leicester in the discharge of his office, advanced with his black rod in his hand, and knelt down before her.

'Why, how now, Bowyer?' said Elizabeth; 'thy courtesy seems strangely timed.'

'My liege sovereign,' he said, while every courtier around trembled at his audacity, 'I come but to ask whether, in the discharge of my office, I am to obey your Highness' commands, or those of the Earl of Leicester, who has publicly menaced me with his displeasure, and treated me with disparaging terms, because I denied entry to one of his followers, in obedience to your Grace's precise orders.

The spirit of Henry VIII. was instantly aroused in the bosom of his daughter, and she turned on Leicester with a severity which appalled him, as well as all his followers. 'God's death, my lord!' such was her emphatic phrase, 'what means this? We have thought well of you, and brought you near to our person; but we will not that you might hide the sun from our faithful subjects. Who gave you licence to contradict our orders or control our officers? I will have in this court, ay, and in this realm, but one mistress, and no master. Look to it that Master Bowyer sustains no harm for his duty to me faithfully discharged; for, as I am Christian woman and crowned queen, I will hold you dearly answerable. —Go, Bowyer, you have done part of an honest man and true subject. We will brook no mayor of the palace here.'

Bowyer kissed the hand which she extended towards him, and withdrew to his post, astonished at the success of his own audacity. A smile of triumph pervaded the faction of Sussex; that of Leicester seemed proportionally dismayed, and the favourite himself, assuming an aspect of the deepest humiliation, did not even attempt a word in his own exclamation.

He acted wisely; for it was the policy of Elizabeth to humble, not to disgrace him, and it was prudent to suffer her, without opposition or reply, to glory in the exertion of her authority. The dignity of the queen was gratified, and the woman began soon to feel for the mortification which she had imposed on her favourite. Her eye also observed the secret looks of congratulation exchanged amongst those who favoured Sussex, and it was not a part of her policy to give either party a decisive triumph.

'What I say to my Lord of Leicester,' she said, after a moment's pause, 'I say also to you, my Lord of Sussex. You also must needs rule in the court of England, at the head of a faction of your own?'

'My follower, gracious princess,' said Sussex, 'have indeed ruffled in your cause, in Ireland, in Scotland, and against your rebellious earls in the north. I am ignorant that—

'Do you hastily look and words with my lord!' said the queen, interrupting him; 'methinks you might learn of my Lord of Leicester the modesty to be silent, at least, under our censure. I say, my lord, that my grandfather and father, in their wisdom, dearer the nobles of this civilised land from travelling with such disorderly retinues, and think that because I wear a veil, their sceptre has in my hand been changed into a distaff! I tell you, no king in Christendom will brook his court to beumbered, his people oppressed, and his kingdom's peace disturbed by the arrogance of overgrown power, than she who now speaks with you. —My Lord of Leicester, and you my Lord of Sussex, I command you both to be friends with each other; or, by the crown I wear, you shall find an enemy who will be too strong for both of you!'

'Madam,' said the Earl of Leicester, 'you who are yourself the fountain of honour, know best what is due to mine. I place it at your disposal, and only say, that the terms on which I have stood with my Lord of Sussex have not been of my seeking; nor had I cause to think me his enemy until he had done me gross wrong. —Go, madam,' said the Earl of Sussex, 'I cannot appeal from your sovereign's pleasure; but I was well content my Lord of Leicester sey in what I have, as he terms it, wronged him; since my tongue never spoke the word that I would not, willingly justify either on foot or horseback.'

'And for me,' said Leicester, 'always under my gracious sovereign's pleasure, my hand shall be as ready to make cool my words as that of any man ever wrote himself Ratcliffe. —My liege, the queen, these are no terms for the prince; and if you cannot keep your temper, I will find means to keep both that and you close enough. Let me see you join hands, my lords, and forget your idle animosities.

The two rivals looked at each other with resolute eyes, each unwilling to make the first advance to execute the queen's will.

'Sussex,' said Elizabeth, 'I entreat—Leicester, I command you.'

Yet, so were her words accented, that the entreaty sounded like command, and the command like entreaty. They remained still and stubborn, until she raised her voice to a height
which argued at once impatience and absolute desperation.

"Sir Henry Lee," she said to an officer in attendance, "I have a guard in present readiness, and a man a large instantly.—My Lords of Sussex and Leicester, I bid you once more to join hands—and, God's health! let that refuses shall last till our Tower face he see our face again. I will lower your proud hearts ere we part, and that I promise, on the word of a queen."

"The prison," said Leicester, "might be borne, but to lose your Grace's presence were to lose light and life at once. —Here, Sussex, is my hand."

"And here," said Sussex, "is mine in truth and honesty; but—"

"Nay, under favour, you shall add no more," she added, looking on them more favourably; and, "when you, the shepherds of the people, unite to protect them, it shall be well with the flock we rule over. For, my lords, I tell you plainly, your follies and your brawl lead to strange disorders among your servants.—My Lord of Leicester, you have a gentleman in your household called Varney!"

"Yes, gracious madam," replied Leicester; "I presented him to kiss your royal hand when you were last at Nonsuch."

"His outside was well enough," said the queen, "but so far, I should have thought, as to have caused a maiden of honourable birth and hopes to wear her name for his good looks, and become his paramour. Yet so it is—his fellow of yours hath seduced the daughter of a good old Devonshire knight, Sir Hugh Roberts of Leicester Hall, and she hath fled with him from her father's house like a runaway.—My Lord of Leicester, are you ill, or do you look so deadly pale?"

"No, gracious madam," said Leicester; and it required every effort he could make to bring forth these few words.

"You are surely ill, my lord," said Elizabeth, going towards him with hasty speech and hurried step, which indicated the deepest concern. "Call Master cart—call our surgeon in ordinary—Where are these lettering tools!—We lose the pride of our court through their negligence.—Or is it possible, Leicester, she continued, looking on him with a very gentle aspect, 'can fear of my displeasure have wrought so deeply on thee? Doubt not for a moment, noble Dudley, that we could blame thee for the folly of thy retainers—thee, whose thoughts we know to be far otherwise employed! He that would climb the eagle's nest, my lord, cares not who are catching lizards at the foot of the precipice."

"Mark you this, sir," said Sussex, aside to Raleigh. "The devil aids him, surely; for all that would sink another ten fathom deep, seems but to make him float the more easily. Had a follower of mine acted thus, I would have blamed him, for God's sake, peace. Wait the change of the tide; it is even now on the turn."

"Peace, my good lord," said Raleigh, "for God's sake, peace."

The acute observation of Raleigh, perhaps, did not strike him; for Leicester's confusion was so great, and, indeed, for the moment, so irresistibly overwhelming, that Elizabeth, after looking at him with a wondering eye, and receiving no intelligible answer to the unusual expressions of grace and affection which had escaped from her, shot her quick glance around the circle of courtiers, and reading, perhaps, in their faces something that accorded with her own awakened suspicions, she said suddenly, "Or is there more in this than we see—or hear you, my lord, wish that we should see? Where is this Varney? Who saw him?"

"An it please your Grace," said Bowyer, "it is the same against whom I this instant closed the door of the presence-room."

"An it please me!" repeated Elizabeth sharply, not at that moment in the humour of being pleased with anything.—"It does not please me that he should pass silently into my presence, or that you should exclude from it one who came to justify himself from an accusation."

"May it please you," answered the perplexed usher, "of which I knew, in such case, how to bear myself, I would take heed."

"You should have reported the fellow's desire to us, Master Usher, and taken our directions. You think yourself a great man, because now you call a nobleman on your account—yet, after all, we hold you but as the lead-weight that keeps the door fast. Call this Varney hither instantly—there is one Tressilian also mentioned in this petition—let them both come before us."

She was obeyed, and Tressilian and Varney appeared accordingly. Varney's first glance was at Leicester, his second at the queen. In the looks of the latter there appeared an approaching storm, and in the downcast countenance of his patron he could read no directions in what way he was to trim his vessel for the encounter—he then saw Tressilian, and at once perceived the peril of the situation in which he was placed. But Varney was as bold-faced and ready-witted as he was cunning and unsuspicious,—a skilful pilot in extremity, and fully conscious of the advantages which he would obtain, could he extricate Leicester from his present peril; and, of the ruin that vanished for himself should he fail in doing so."

"Is it true, sirrah," said the queen, with one of those searching looks which few had the audacity to resist, "that you have assisted to inflame a young lady of birth and breeding, the daughter of Sir Hugh Roberts of Leicester Hall?"

Varney knelt down, and replied, with a look of the most profound contusion, "There had been some love-passages between him and Mistress Amy Roberts."

Leicester's blush quivered with indignation as he heard his dependant make this avowal, and for one moment he managed himself to step forward, and, bidding farewell to the court and the royal favour, confess the whole mystery of the secret marriage. But he looked at Sussex, and the idea of the triumphant smile which would clothe his cheek upon hearing the avowal, sealed his lips. "Not now, at least," he thought, "or in this presence, will I afford him so rich a triumph."

And, pressing his lips close together, he stood fixed, for an instant, affected to each word which Varney uttered and determined to hide to the last the secret on which his court-
favour seemed to depend. Meanwhile, the queen proceeded in her examination of Varney.

"Love passages!" said she, echoing his last words, "what passages, thou knave! and why not ask the wanton's hand from her father, if thou hast any honesty in thy love for her?"

"An it please your Grace," said Varney, still on his knees, "I dare not do so, for her father had promised her hand to a gentleman of birth and honour—I will do him justice, though I know he bears me ill will—sir, Master Edmunt Tressilian, whom I now see in the presence."

"So!" replied the queen; "and what was your right to make the simple fool break her worthy father's contract, through your love passages, as your counsel and assurance term them?"

"Madam," replied Varney, "it is in vain to plead the cause of human frailty before a judge to whom it is unknown, or that of love, to one who never yields to the passion—He paused an instant, and then added, in a very low and timid tone, 'which she inflicts upon all others.'"

Elizabeth tried to frown, but smiled in her own delight, as she answered, 'Thou art a marvellously impudent knave. Art thou married to the girl?'

Leicester's feelings became so complicated and so painfully intense, that it seemed to him as if his life was to depend on the answer made by Varney, who, after a moment's real hesitation, answered, 'Yes.'

"Thou false villain!" said Leicester, bursting forth into rage, yet unable to add another word to the sentence, which he had begun with such emphatic passion.

"Nay, my lord," said the queen, 'we will, by your leave, stand between this fellow and your anger. We have not yet done with him. Knew your master, my Lord of Leicester, of this fair work of yours? Speak truth, I command thee, and I will be thy warrant from danger on every quarter.'

"Gracious madam," said Varney, 'to speak Heaven's truth, my lord was the cause of the whole matter.'

"Thou villain, wouldst thou betray me?" said Leicester.

'Speak on,' said the queen hastily, her cheeks colouring, and her eyes sparkling, as she addressed Varney; 'speak on—here no commands are heard but mine.'

"They are omnipotent, gracious madam," replied Varney; 'and to you there can be no secrets. Yet I would not,' he added, looking around him, 'speak of my master's concerns to other ears.'

"Fall back, my lords," said the queen to those who surrounded her; 'and do you speak on. What hath the Earl to do with this guilty intrigue of thine? See, fellow, that thou believest him not!'

"Far be it from me to traduce my noble patron," replied Varney; 'yet I am compelled to own that some deep, overwhelming, yet secret feeling, hath of late dealt in my lord's mind, hath abstraction him from the cares of the household, which he was wont to govern with such religious strictness, and hath left us opportunities to do follies, of which the shame, as in this case, partly falls upon our patron. Without this, I had not had means or leisure to commit the folly which has drawn me in his displeasure; the heaviest to endure by me, which I could by any means incur—saving always the yet more dreaded resentment of your Grace.'

"And in this sense, and no other, hath he been accessory to thy fault," said Elizabeth.

"Surely, madam, in no other sense," replied Varney; 'but since somewhat hath chanced to him, he can scarce be called his own man. Look at him, madam, how pale and trembling he stands—how unlike his usual majesty of manner—yet what has he to fear from me? I can say to your Highness? Ah, madam! since he received that fatal packet!'

"What packet, and from whence?" said the queen eagerly.

"From whence, madam, I cannot guess; but I am so near to his person, that I know he has ever since worn, suspended around his neck, and next to his heart, that lock of hair which sustains a small golden jewel shaped like a heart—He spoke to it when alone—he parts not from it when he sleeps—no heathen ever worshipped an idol with such devotion."

"Thou art a prying knave to watch thy master so closely," said Elizabeth, blushing, but not with anger; 'and a tattling knave to tell over again his bodee. What colour might the braid of hair be that thou protectest?"

Varney replied, 'A poet, madam, might call it a thread from the golden web wrought by Minerva; but, to my thinking, it was paler than ever the purest gold—more like the last parting sunbeam of the softest day of spring."

"Why, you are a poet yourself, Master Varney," said the queen, smiling; 'but I have not genius quick enough to follow your rare metaphors. Look round these ladies—is there any—(she hesitated, and endeavoured to assume an air of great indifference)—Is there here, in this presence, any lady, the colour of whose hair reminds thee of that braid? Methinks, without prying into my Lord of Leicester's amorous secrets, I would know which kind of locks are like the thread of Minerva's web, or the—what was it?—the last rays of the Mayday sun."

Varney looked round the presence-chamber, his eye travelling from one lady to another, until at length it rested upon the queen herself, but with an aspect of the deepest veneation. "I see no tresses," he said, 'in this presence, worthy of such similes, unless where I dare not look on them.'

"How, sir knave," said the queen, "dare you int denying me?"

"Nay, madam," replied Varney, shading his eyes with his hand, 'it was the beams of the Mayday sun that dazzled my weak eyes."

"Go on to," said the queen; 'thou art a foolish fellow,' and turning quickly from him, she walked up to Leicester.

Intense curiosity mingled with all the various hopes, fears, and passions which influence court faction, had occupied the presence-chamber during the queen's conference with Varney, as if with the strength of an Eastern talisman. Men suspended every, even the slightest external influence of any party, for a decree of the Queen was always the most sacred of all royal formula. He had heard her consent to the marriage of the princess of Wales and the dauphin; to all the other proposals of the ministers and the house of Austria; to the marriage of the princess of Cleves. He had heard her reproach Charles the Second with his ingratitude to the House of Hanover; of her justifiable complaints against the House of Orange, and her inveterate jealousy of the House of Stuart. He had heard that she had sent a palace out to the prince of Wales, and instructed him to show all the regard that his service and his duty would suggest towards her, his mother, his sovereign, his patron, and her friend. And yet, he had not heard her offer the crown to any person; she had adhered to the genius of the House of Stuart, and to the person of the Prince of Wales; and yet she had not heard her speak with any marks of approbation of the match of the princess of Wales and the dauphin. She had made it evident that she was a woman; that her sex was a reason which could not be alleged in the world; and she had been heard to say to the Queen Dowager: 'What a wretched prince! I loathe him, and I despise him; but, however I may detest him, I must love and respect him for the sake of his mother and his nation.' But, from the moment she had heard his name mentioned, she had never spoken of anything which had not reference to this amorous debate. He had heard her reproach the prince of Wales with his ingratitude; and she had given directions to the house of Austria of the corners of the room not to be entered, because the queen dowager was never to be admitted. She had at one time, in his presence, performed the office of her own day, and his own minister, as well as his minister. But the extreme of curiosity which no subject in the presence of the queen could ever feel, as the right of being a subject, has ever been heard to be felt by the son of a subject. He had heard her say to the prince of Wales, "You are the prince of Wales; you are important; you have a kingdom; you are the son of the king; but you are not a king; you have no kingdom; you are not the son of a king; you are a prince of Wales, and nothing more." But, from the moment he had heard his name mentioned, he had never spoken of anything which had not reference to this amorous debate. He had heard her say to the queen dowager: 'What a wretched prince! I loathe him, and I despise him; but, however I may detest him, I must love and respect him for the sake of his mother and his nation.' But, from the moment she had heard his name mentioned, she had never spoken of anything which had not reference to this amorous debate. He had heard her reproach the prince of Wales with his ingratitude; and she had given directions to the house of Austria of the corners of the room not to be entered, because the queen dowager was never to be admitted. He had heard her say to the prince of Wales, "You are the prince of Wales; you are important; you have a kingdom; you are the son of the king; but you are not a king; you have no kingdom; you are not the son of a king; you are a prince of Wales, and nothing more." But, from the moment she had heard his name mentioned, she had never spoken of anything which had not reference to this amorous debate.
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motion, and would have ceased to breathe, had nature permitted such an intermission of her functions. The atmosphere was so contiguous, and Leicester, who saw all around him, was carrying on his advancement or his fall, forgot all that love had previously dictated, and saw nothing for the instant, but the favour or disgrace, which depended on the nod of Elizabeth and the fidelity of Varney. He even made himself servile, and prepared to play his part in the scene which was like to be enacted, when, as he judged from the glances which the queen threw towards him, his communications, be they what they might, were operating in his favour. Elizabeth did not long leave him in doubt; for the more than favour which she accorded him decided his triumph in the eyes of his rival, and of the assembled court of England. Then hast a prating servant of this same Varney, my lord, she said, it is lucky you trust him with nothing that can hurt you in our opinion; for, believe me, he would keep no counsel.

"From your Highness," said Leicester, dropping gracefully on one knee, "it were treason he should, that my heart itself lay before you, rather than the tongue of any villain could strip it.

"What, my lord," said Elizabeth, looking kindly upon him, "is there no little officer over whom you would wish to spread a veil? Ah! I see you are confused at the question, and your queen must not look too deeply into her servants' motives for their faithful duty, lest she see what might, or at least ought to, displease her.

Beloved by these last words, Leicester broke out into a torrent of expressions of deep and passionate attachment, which, perhaps, at that moment, were not altogether fictitious. The mingled emotions which had at first overcome him, had now given way to the energetic vigour with which he had determined to support his place in the queen's council; and, when he did see Elizabeth more eloquent, more affectionate, more interesting, than while kneeling at her feet, he required her to strip him of all his power, but to leave him the name of her servant.

"Take from the poor dull bard," he exclaimed, "all your bounty has made him, and lend him the poor gentleman he must have—your Grace first show on him; leave him no more than his cloak and his sword, but let him still boast he has—what in word or deed he forfeited—the regard of his adored Queen and mistress!"

"No, Dudley," said Elizabeth, raising him with one hand, while she extended the other that he might kiss it; "Elizabeth hath not forgotten that, whilst you were a poor gentleman, despised of your hereditary rank, you were as poor a princess, and that in her case you then ventured all that oppression had left you,—your life, your fortune,—Rise, my lord, and let my hand go!—Rise, and be what you have ever been, the grace of our court, and the support of our throne. Your mistrees must be forced to chide these miscreants, but never without owing your favours.

"And as I am God," she added, turning to the audience, "so with various feelings witnessed this interesting interview. So help me God, gentlemen, as I think never so

regain a truer servant than I have in this noble Earl!

A murmur of assent rose from the Leicestrian faction, which the friends of Sussex dared not oppose. They remained with their eyes fixed upon the ground, dismayed as well as mortified by the polite and absolute triumph of their opponents. Leicester's first use of the familiarity to which the queen had so readily restored him, was to ask her commands concerning Varney's office. "Although," he said, "the duchess serves nothing from me but displeasure, yet, might I presume to intercede?"

"In truth, we had forgotten this matter," said the queen; "and it was ill done of us, who owe justice to our means, as well as to our highest subject. We are pleased, my lord, that you were the first to recall the matter to our memory.

"Where is Tressilian, the accuser?—let him come before me.

Tressilian appeared, and made a low and becoming reverence. His person, as we have nowhere observed, had an air of grace and even of nobleness, which did not escape Queen Elizabeth's critical observation. She looked at him with attention, as he stood before her unmasked, but with an air of the deepest disapprobation.

"I cannot but grieve for this man," she said to Leicester. "I have inquired concerning him, and his presence confirms what I heard, that he is a scholar and a soldier, well accomplished both in arts and arms. We women, my lord, are fain in our choice; I had said now, to judge by the eye, there was no comparison to be held betwixt your follower and this gentleman. But Varney is a well-spoken fellow, and, to say truth, that was far with us of the weaker sex. Look you, Master Tressilian, a bolt lost is not a bow broken. Your true affection, I will hold it to be, hath been, it seems, but ill requited; he has had no scholarship, and you know there have been false troubadours to be found, from the Trojan war downward. Forget, good sir, this Lady Light-o'-love, teach yourself to see with a wise eye. This we say to you, more from the writings of learned men, than our own knowledge. Dudley, being as we are, far removed by station and will from the enlargement of experience in such idle toys of human passion. For this dame's father, we can make his grief the less, by advancing his son-in-law to such station as may enable him to give an honourable support to his bride. Then shall not he be forgiven thyself, Tressilian—follow our court, and then shalt see that a true Troubadour hath some claim on our grace. Think of what that arch-knavish Shakespeare says—a plague on his, his toys come into my head when I should think of other matter—Stay, how goes it?"

Cressid was yours, tied with the bonds of heaven. These bonds of heaven are slight, dissolved, and broken. And with another knot five fingers tie it, let there be no more of this mad matter.

And as Tressilian kept the posture of one who would willingly be heard, though, at the same time, expressive of the deepest reverence, the
queen added with some impatience,—'What would the man have?' The youth cannot well both of you!—She has made her election—but a wise one, perchance—but she is Varney's wedded wife.

'My suit should sleep there, most gracious sovereign,' said Tressilian, 'and with my suit my revenue. But I hold this Varney's word no good warrant for the truth."

'Had that not been elsewhere urged,' answered Varney, 'my sword—'

'Thy sword!' interrupted Tressilian scornfully; with her Grace's leave, my sword shall show—'

'Peace, you knaves both!' said the queen; 'know you where you are?—This comes of your feats, my lords,' she added, looking towards Leicester and Sussex; 'your followers catch your own humour, and must handly and bravely in my court, and in my very presence, like so many Matamoros. Look you, sirs, be that speaks of drawing swords in any other quarrel than yon side or England's, by mine honour, I'll bracket him with iron both on wrist and ankle!' She then paused a minute, and resumed in a milder tone, 'I must do justice between the bold and mutinous knives notwithstanding.—My Lord of Leicester, will you warrant with your honour—that is, to the best of your belief—that your servant speaks truth in saying he hath married this Amy Robsart?'

This was a home-thrust, and had nearly staggered Lord Leicester. But he had now gone too far to recede, and answered, after a moment's hesitation, 'To the best of my belief, indeed, on my certain knowledge—she is a wedded wife.'

'Gracious manner,' said Tressilian, 'may I yet request to know when and under what circumstances this alleged marriage?'

'Out, sirrah,' answered the queen, 'allied marriage!—Have you not the word of this illustrious Earl to warrant the truth of what his servant says? But thou art a loser—thinkst thou thyself such at least—and then shalt have indulgence—we will look into the matter ourselves more at leisure.—My Lord of Leicester, I trust you remember we mean to taste the good cheer of your Castle of Kenilworth on this week ensuing—we will say you to bid our good and valued friend the Earl of Sussex to hold company with us there.

'If the noble Earl of Sussex,' said Leicester, bowing to his rival with the easiest and with the most graceful courtesy, 'will so far honour my poor house, I will hold it an additional proof of the amiable regard it is your Grace's desire we should entertain towards each other.

'Sussex was more embarrassed—'I should,' said he, 'madam, be a cog on your gayer hours since my late severe illness.'

'And have you been indeed so very ill?' said Elizabethe, looking on him with most attention before than after; 'you are in faith strangely altered, and deeply are I grieved to see it. But be of good cheer—we will ourselves look after the health of so valued a servant, and to whom we owe so much. Masters shall order your diet; and that we ourselves may see that he is obeyed, you not attend us in this progress to Kenilworth.'

This was said so peremptorily, and at the same time with so much kindness, that Sussex, however unwilling to become the guest of his rival, had no resource but to bow low to the queen in obedience to her command, and to express to Leicester, with blunt courtesy, though mingled with embarrassment, his acceptance of her invitation. As the earls exchanged compliments on the occasion, the queen said to her high treasurer, 'Methinks, my lord, the courtesies of these our two noble peers resemble those of the two famed classic streams, the one so dark and sad, the other so fair and noble—My old Master Asea would have had child for me for forgetting the author—It is Cæsar, as I think—See what majestic calmness sits on the brow of the noble Leicester, while Sussex seems to greet him as if he did our will indeed, but not willingly.

'The doubt of your Majesty's favour,' answered the lord treasurer, 'may pervade occasion the difference, which does not—as what does—escape your Grace's eye.'

'Such doubt were injurious to us, my lord,' replied the queen; 'We hold both to be near and dear to us, and will with impartiality employ both in honourable service for the weal of our kingdom. But we will break up their further conference at present.—My Lords of Sussex and Leicester, we have a word more with you. Tressilian and Varney are near our persons—you will see that they attend you at Kenilworth. And as we shall then have both Paris and Meldonnes within our call, so we will have this same fair Helen also, whose sickness has caused this broil. Varney, thy wife must be at Kenilworth, and forthcoming at my order.—My Lord of Leicester, we expect you will look to this.'

The earl and his follower bowed low, and raised their heads, without daring to look at the queen, or at each other; for both felt at the instant as if the nets and toils which their own falsehood had worn, were in the act of closing around them. The queen, however, observed not their confusion, but proceeded to say, 'My Lords of Sussex and Leicester, we require your presence at the privy council to be presently held, where matters of importance are to be debated. We will then take the water for our divestiture, and you, my lords, will attend us.—And that reminds us of a circumstance—Do you, Sir Squire of the Soiled Cassock' (distinguishing Raleigh by a smile), 'fail not to observe that you are to attend us on our progress. You shall be supplied with suitable means to reform your wardrobe.'

And so terminated this celebrated audience, in which, as throughout her Life, Elizabeth united the occasional exercise of her sex, with that sense and sound policy, in which neither man nor woman ever excelled her.

CHAPTER XIV.

Well, then—our course is changed—spread the sail—Heave off the lead, and mark the sounding-mark—Look to the helm, good master — many a shallop

Marks this a great coast, and rocks, where sits the Siren, Who, like ambition, lures men to their ruin.

The SHIPWRECK.

During the brief interval that took place betwixt the dismissal of the audience and the
sitting of the privy council, Leicester had time to reflect that he had that morning sealed his own fate. 'It was impossible for him now,' he thought, after having, in the face of all that was honorable in England, pledged his truth (though in an ambiguous phrase) for the statement of a vanity, to contradict or disavow it, without exposing himself not merely to the loss of court favor, but to the highest displeasure of the Queen, his divorced mistress, and to the scorn and contempt at once of his rival and of all his opponents.' This certainly raised at once on his mind, together with all the difficulties which he would necessarily be exposed to in preserving a secret, which seemed now equally essential to his safety, to his power, and to his honour. He was situated like one who walks upon ice, ready to give way around him, and whose only safety consists in moving onwards, by firm and unvarying steps. The queen's favour, to preserve which he had made such sacrifices, must now be secured by all means and at all hazards. It was the only plank which he could cling to in the tempest. He must settle himself, therefore, to the task of not only preserving, but augmenting, the queen's partiality—He must be the favourite of Elizabeth, or a man utterly unrecked in fortune and in honour. All other considerations must be laid aside for the moment, and he repelled the intrusive thoughts which forced on his mind the image of Amy, by saying to himself, there would be time to think hereafter how he was to escape from the labyrinth into which the queen's partiality had carried him. His conduct will be that of the shipwrecked man, who sees a Seylla under his bow, must not for the time think of the more distant dangers of Charybdis.

In this mood the Earl of Leicester that day assumed his chair at the council table of Elizabeth; and when the hours of business were over, in this same mood did he occupy an honoured place near her, during her pleasure excursions on the Thames. And never did he display to more advantage his position as a politician of the first rank, or his parts as an accomplished statesman. It is clear that in that day's council matters of the utmost importance were touched on in the affairs of the unfortunate Mary. The seventh year of whose captivity in England must now be passed. There had been opinions in favour of the unhappy princess laid before Elizabeth's council, and supported with much strength of argument by Essex and others, who dwell more upon the law of nations and the breach of hospitality, than, however softened or qualified, was agreeable to the queen's ear. Leicester adopted the contrary opinion with great animation and eloquence, and described the necessity of continuing the severe restraint of the Queen of Scots, as a measure essential to the safety of the kingdom, and particularly of Elizabeth's sacred person, the lightest hair of whose head, he maintained, ought, in their loyalties' estimation, to be matter of more deep and anxious concern than the life and fortunes of a rival, who, after setting up a vain and unjust pretension to the throne of England, was now, even while in the bosom of her country, the constant hope and theme of revenge to all enemies to Elizabeth, whether at home or abroad. He ended by craving pardon of their lordships, if in the zeal of speech he had given any offence; but the queen's safety was a theme which hurried him beyond his usual moderation of debate.

Elizabeth chid him, but not severely, for the weight which he attached unduly to her personal interest; yet she owned him that since it had been the pleasure of Heaven to combine those interests with the well of her subjects, she did not only her duty when she adopted such measures of self-preservation as circumstances forced upon her; and if the council in their wisdom should be of opinion that it was needful to continue some restraint on the person of her unhappy sister of Scotland, she trusted they would not blame her if she requested of the Council ofSirwardley to use her with as much kindness as might be consistent with her safe keeping. And with this intimation of her pleasure, the council was dismissed.

Never was more anxious and ready way made for 'my Lord of Leicester,' than as he passed through the crowded anteroom, or towards the river-side, in order to attend her Majesty to her large—Never was the voice of the ushers lower, or their whisper softer than the noble Earl. Never were these signals more promptly and reverently obeyed—Never were more anxious eyes turned on him to obtain a glance of favour, or even of mere recognition, while the heart of many a humble follower throbbed with the desire to offer his congratulations, and the fear of intruding himself on the notice of one so infinitely above him. The whole court considered the issue of this day's audience, expect with so much doubt and anxiety, as a decisive triumph on the part of Leicester, and felt assured that through his rival satellite, if not altogether observed by his illustrious mistress, must revolve hereafter in a daimer and more distant sphere. So thought the court and courtiers, from high to low, and they acted accordingly.

On the other hand, never did Leicester return the general greeting with such ready and descending courtesy, or endeavour more assiduously to gather (in the words of one who at that moment stood at no great distance from him) golden opinions in the街道 of men.

For all the favourite earl had now a bow, a smile at least, and even a smile at least, and even at last, most of these were addressed to courtiers whose names have long gone down the tide of oblivion; but some, to such as sound strangely in our ears, which connected with the ordinary matters of human life, above which the ordinariness of posterity has long elevated them. A few of Leicester's interlocutory sentences ran as follows:

"Poyning, good-morrow, and how does your wife and fair daughter? Why come they not to court?—Adams, your suit is naught—the Queen will grant no more monopoles—but I may serve you in another matter.—My good Alderman Aylesbury, in the suit of the city, affecting Queenhithe, shall be forwarded as far as may poor interest can serve.—Master Edmund Knyvett, touching your Irish petition, I would willingly aid you, from my love to the Muses; but thou hast nettled the lord treasurer.'

'My lord,' said the poet, 'were I permitted to explain'—
Come to my lodging, Edmund,' answered the earl—'not to-morrow, or next day, but soon.

He, Will Shakespeare—wild Will!—thou hast given me, Philip Sydney, love-powders; he cannot sleep without thy Venus and Adonis under his pillow! We will have thee hanged for the veriest wizard in Europe. Hark thee, mad wag, I have not forgotten thy matter of the patent, and of the bears.'

The player bowed, and the earl nodded and passed on—so that age would have told the tale—in ours, perhaps, we might say the immortal had done homage to the mortal. The next whom the favourite accosted was one of his own zealous dependents.

'How now, Sir Francis Denning,' he whispered, in answer to his exulting salutation, 'that smile hath made thy face shorter by one-third than when I first saw it this morning. —What, Master Bowyer, stand you back, and think you I bear malice? You did but your duty this morning; and if I remember aright of the behaviour between us, it shall be in thy favour.'

Then the earl was approached, with several fantastic congees, by a person quaintly dressed in a doublet of black velvet, curiously slashed and pinched with crimson satin. A long cock's feather in the velvet bonnet, which he held in his hand, and an enormous ruff, stiffened to the extremity of the absurd taste of the times, joined with a snarly, lively, concated expression of countenance, seemed to body forth a vain, hair-brained coxcomb, and small wit; while the rod he held, and an assumption of royal authority, appeared to express some sense of official consequence, which qualified the natural pertness of his manner. A perpetual blush, which occupied rather the sharp nose than the thin cheek of this personage, seemed to speak more of 'good life,' as it was called, than of modesty; and the manner in which he approached to the earl confirmed that suspicion.

'Good even to you, Master Robert Laneham,' said Leicester, and seemed desirous to pass forward without further speech.

'I have a suit to your noble lordship,' said the figure, boldly following him.

'And what is it, good master keeper of the council chamber door?'

'Suit of the council chamber door,' said Master Robert Laneham, with emphasis, by way of reply and of correction.

'Well, qualify thine office as thou wilt, man,' replied the earl; 'what wouldst thou have with me?'

'Simply,' answered Laneham, 'that your lordship would, as heretofore, my good lord, and procure me licence to attend the Summer Progress into your lordship's most beautiful and all-to-be-enamished Castle of Knebworth.'

'What purpose, good Master Laneham?' replied the earl; 'I think you my guest must needs be many.'

'Not so many,' replied the petitioner, 'but that your nobleness will willingly spare your old servant his liberty, and his need. Think you, my lord, how necessary is this rod of mine, to fright away all those listeners, who else would play at bo-peep with the honourable council, and be searching for key-holes and crannies in the door of the chamber, so as to render my staff as needful as a fly-flap in a butcher's shop.'

'Methinks you have found out a fly-flap comparison for the honourable earl, Master Laneham,' said the earl; 'but seek not about to justify it. Come to Knebworth, if you list; there will be store of fools there besides, and so you will be fitted.'

'Nay, an there he fols, my lord,' replied Laneham, with much glee, 'I warrant I will make sport among them; for no greyhound loves to cote a hare, as us to turn and course a fool. But I have another singular favour to beseech of your honour.'

'Speak it, and let me go,' said the earl; 'I think the Queen comes forth instantly.'

'My very good lord, I would fain bring a bed-fellow with me.'

'How, you reverent rascal!' said Leicester.

'Nay, my lord, my meaning was within the canons,' answered his whispering, or rather his ever-flushing petitioner, 'I have a wife as curious as her grandmother, who ate the apple. Now, take her with me I may not, her Highness's orders being so strict against the officers bringing with them their wives in a progress, and so hampering the court with unsoundness.'

'But what I would crave of your lordship is, to find room for her in some Munumer, or pretty pageant, in disguise, as it were; so that, not being known for my wife, there may be no offence.

'The foul fiend seize ye both!' said Leicester, stung into uncontrollable passion by the recollection which this speech excited—'Why stop you with such follies?'

The terrified clerk of the chamber door, astonished at the burst of resentment he had so unconsciously produced, dropped his staff of office from his hand, and gazed on the incautious earl with a foolish face of wonder and terror, which instantly recalled Leicester to himself.

'I meant but to try if thou hastest the audacity, which belongeth thine office, said he hastily, 'Come to Knebworth, and bring the devil with thee, if thou wilt.'

'My wife, sir, hath played the devil ere now, in a mystery, in Queen Mary's time—but we shall want a triole for properties.'

'Here is a crown for thee,' said the earl,—'make me rid of thee—the great bell rings.'

Master Robert Laneham stared a moment at the agitation which he had excited, and then said to himself, as he stooped to pick up his staff of office, 'The noble Earl runs wild humours to-day; but they who give crowns, expect us witty fellows to wink at their unsettled starts; and, by my faith, if they paid not for mercy, we would linger them tightly.'

Leicester moved hastily on, neglecting the courtesies he had hitherto dispens'd so liberally, and hurrying through the county crowd, until he paused in a small withdrawing-room, into which he plunged to draw a moment's breath unobserved, and in seclusion.

What am I now,' he said to himself, 'that am thus jaded by the words of a mean, weather-beaten, goose-grained gull!—Conscience, thou art not what I was stepping at Bolden's, What a vile medley of the best and worst! At least, thou art best of the bad.'
art a bloodhound, whose growl wakes as readily at the palest stir of a rat or mouse, as at the step of a lion. Can I not quit myself, by one bold stroke, of a state so irksome, so unhonoured! What if I kneel to Elizabeth, and, owning the whole, throw myself on her mercy?

"As he pursued this train of thought, the door of the apartment opened, and Varney rushed in.

"Thank God, my lord, that I have found you!" was his exclamation.

"Thank the devil, whose agent thou art," was the earl's reply.

"Thank whom you will, my lord," replied Varney; "but hasten to the water-side. The Queen is on board, and asks for you.

"Go, say I am taken suddenly ill," replied Leicester; "for, by Heaven, my brain can sustain this no longer!"

"I may well say so," said Varney, with bitterness of expression, "for your place, ay, and mine, who, as your master of the horse, was to have attended your lordship, is already filled up in the Queen's barge. The new minion Walter Raleigh, and our first acquaintance Tressilian, were called for to fill our places thus as I hastened away to seek you."

"Thon art a devil, Varney," said Leicester hastily; "but hast hast the mastery for the present—I follow thee."

Varney replied not, but led the way out of the palace, and towards the river, while his master followed him, as if mechanically; until, looking back, he said, in a tone which savoured of familiarity at least, if not of authority, 'How is this, my lord?—your cloak hangs on one side,—your hose are unbraided—permit me—'

"Thon art a fool, Varney, as well as a knave," said Leicester, shaking him off, and rejecting his officious assistance; "we are best thus, sir—when we require you to order our person, it is well, but now we want you not.

"So saying, the earl resumed at once his air of command, and with it his self-possession—shook his dress into yet wilder disorder—passed before Varney with the air of a superior and master, and in his turn led the way to the water-side. The queen's barge was on the very point of putting off; the seat allotted to the earl at the stern, and that to his master of the horse on the bow of the boat, being already filled up. But on Leicester's approach there was a pause, as if the bargemen anticipated some alteration in their company. The angry spot was, however, on the queen's cheek, as, in that cold tone with which superiors endeavour to veil their internal agitation, while speaking to those before whom it would be derogation to express it, she pronounced the chilling words—'We have waited, my Lord of Leicester—'

"Madam, and most gracious princess," said Leicester, 'you, who can pardon so many weaknesses which your own heart never knows, can best bestow your clemency on the agitations of the bosom, which, for a moment, affect both head and limbs.—I came to your presence a doubting and an accused subject; your goodness penetrated the clouds of defamation, and restored me to your honour, and, what is yet dearer, to your favour—is it wonderful, though for me it is most unhappy, that my master of the horse should have found me in a state which scarce permitted me to make the exertion necessary to follow him to this place, where one glance of your Highness, although, alas! an angry one, has had power to do that for me, in which Esquemps might have failed.'

'How is this?,' said Elizabeth hastily, looking at Varney; 'hat's your lord been ill?'

'Something of a fainting fit,' answered the ready-witted Varney, 'as your Grace may observe from his present condition. My lord's haste would not permit me leisure even to bring his dress into order.'

'It matters not,' said Elizabeth, as she gazed on the noble face and form of Leicester, to which she had been so lately agitated gave additional interest; 'make room for my noble lord.—Your place, Master Varney, has been filled by you; you must find a seat in another barge.'

Varney bowed, and withdrew.

'And you, too, our young Squire of the Cloak,' added she, looking at Varney; 'must, for the time, go to the barge of the ladies of honour. As for Tressilian, he hath already suffered too much by the caprice of women, that I should aggrieve him by my change of plan, so far as he is concerned.'

Leicester seated himself in his place in the barge, and close to the sovereign; Raleigh rose to retire, and Tressilian would have been so ill-timed in his courtesy as to offer to relinquish his own place to his friend, had not the acute glance of Raleigh himself, who seemed now in his native element, made him sensible that so ready a declamation of the royal favour might be misunderstood. He sat silent, therefore, whilst Raleigh, with a profound bow, and a look of the deepest humiliation, was about to quit his place.

A noble courtier, the gallant Lord Willoughby, read, as he thought, something in the queen's face, which seemed to pity Raleigh's real or assumed semblance of mortification.

'It is not for us old courtiers,' he said, 'to hide the sunshine from the young ones.' I will, with her Majesty's leave, relinquish for an hour that which her subjects hold dearest, the delight of her Highness's presence, and merit myself by walking in starlight, Diana's own beams. I will take place in the boat which the ladies occupy, and permit this young cavalier his hour of promised felicity.'

The queen replied, with an expression betwixt mirth and earnest, 'if you are so willing to leave us, my lord, we cannot help the mortification. But, under favour, we do not trust you—old and experienced as you may deem yourself—with the care of our young ladies of honour. Your venerable age, my lord,' she continued, smiling, 'may be better assisted with that of my lord treasurer, who follows in the third boat, and by whose experience even our Lord Willoughby's may be improved.'

Lord Willoughby hid his disappointment under a smile—laughed, was confounded, bowed, and left the queen's barge to go on board my Lord Burleigh's. Leicester, who endeavoured to divert his thoughts from all internal reflection, by fixing them on what was passing around, watched
this circumstance among others. But when the boat put off from the shore—the music sounded from a barge which accompanied them—all the shouts of the populace were heard from the shore, and all reminded him of the situation in which he was placed, he abstracted his thoughts and his feelings by a strong effort from everything but the necessity of maintaining himself in the favour of his patroness, and exerted his talents of pleasing capitivation with such success, that the queen, alternately delighted with his conversation, and alarmed for his health, at length imposed a temporary silence on him, with playful yet anxious care, lest his flow of spirits should exhaust him.

"My lords," she said, "having passed for a time our edict of silence upon our good Leicester, we will call you to counsel on a serious matter, more fitted to be now treated of, amidst mirth and music, than in the gravity of our ordinary deliberations. Which of you, my lords," said she, smiling, "knows aught of a petition from Orono Pinit, the keeper, as he qualifies himself, of our royal bears? Who stands godfather to his request?"

"Marry, with your Grace's good permission, that do I," said the Earl of Sussex. "Orono Pinit was a stout soldier before he was so managed by the hands of the Irish clan MacDonough, and I trust your Grace will be, as you always have been, good mistress to your good and trusty servants.

"Surely," said the queen, "it is our purpose to be so, and in special to our poor soldiers and sailors, who hazard their lives for little pay. We would give," she said, with her eyes sparkling, "your royal palaces to be a hospital for their use, rather than they should call their mistress ungrateful. But this is not the question," she said, her voice, which had been awakened by her patriotic feelings, once more subsiding into the tone of gay and easy conversation; "for this Orono Pinit's request goes something further. He complains that, amidst the extreme delight in which men haunt the play-houses, and in especial their eager desire for seeing the exhibitions of one William Shakespeare (whom, I think, my lords, we have all heard something of), the main amusements of bear-baiting is falling into comparative neglect; since men will rather throng to see these rugged players kill each other in jest, than to see our royal dogs and bears worry each other in bloody earnest.

"What say you to this, my lord of Sussex?"

"Why, truly, gracious madam," said Sussex, "you must expect little from an old soldier like me in favour of battles in sport, when they are compared with battles in earnest; and yet, by my faith, I wish Will Shakespeare no harm. He is a stout man at quarter-staff and single battle, though, as I am told, a halting fellow; and he stood, they say, a tough fight with the rangers of old Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote, when he broke his deer-park and kissed his keeper's daughter."

"I cry ye mercy, my Lord of Sussex," said Queen Elizabeth, interrupting him; "that matter was heard in council, and we will not have this fellow's offence exaggerated—there was no kissing in the matter, and the defendant hath put the denial on record. But what say you to his present practice, my lord, on the stage? for there lies the point, and not in any ways touching his former errors, in breaking parks, or the other follies you speak of."

"Why, truly, madam," replied Sussex, "as I told before, I wish the groomsman and lector no injury. Some of his whoremess poetry (I crave your Grace's pardon for such a phrase) has rung in mine ears as if the lines sounded to boot and saddle. But then it is all froth and folly—no substance or seriousness in it, as your Grace has already well touched. What are half-a-dozen knaves, with rascally foibles and tainted targets, making but a mere mockery of a stout fight to compare to the royal game of bear-baiting, which hath been graced by your Highness's countenance, and that of your royal predecessors, in this your princely kingdom, famous for matchless mastiffs, and bold bearers, over all Christendom?"

"Greatly is it to be doubted that the race of both will decay, if men should throng to hear the lungs of an idle player belch forth nonsense, instead of bestowing their pence in encouraging the bravest image of war that can be shown in peace, and in that is the sports of the bear-garden. There you may see the bear lying at guard with his red pinky eyes, while the onset of the mastiff, like a wily captain, who maintains his defence that an assailant may be tempted to venture within his danger. And then comes Sir Mastiff, like a worthy champion, in full career at the throat of his adversary—" Sir, have you yet to say, in your over-courage, neglect the policies of war, and, catching him in his arms, strait him to his breast like a lusty wrestler, until rib after rib crack like the shot of a pheasant. And then another mastiff, as bold, but with better aim and sounder judgment, catches Sir Brain by the nether-lip, and hangs fast, while he tosses about his head and body, and tugs in vain to shake Sir Talbot from his hold. And then—"

"Say, by my honour, my lord," said the queen, laughing, "you have described the whole so admirably, that, having never seen a bear-baiting, as we have beheld many, and with Heaven's allowance, to see more, your words were sufficient to put the whole bear-garden, before our eyes. But come, who speaks next in this case?—My Lord of Leicester, what say you?"

"Am I then to consider myself as unmuzzled, please your Grace!" replied Leicester.

"Surely, my lord—that is, if you feel hearty enough to take part in our game," answered Elizabeth; "and yet, when I think of your experience of the bear and ragged staff, methinks we had better hear some less partial orator."

"Nay, on my word, gracious princess," said the earl, "though my brother Ambrose of Warwick and I do carry the ancient cognizance your Highness deigns to remember, I nevertheless desire nothing but fair play on all sides; or, as they say, 'fight dog, fight bear.' And in behalf of the plackets, I must uculs say that they are thorny knives, with rams and rackets and keep the mumps of the common from busying themselves with state affairs, and listening to traitorous speeches, idle
rumours, and disloyal insinuations. When men are agape to see how Marlowe, Shakespeare, and other play-artificers, work out their fanciful plots, as they call them, the mind of the spectators is withdrawn from the consideration of our own conduct, my lord,' answered Elizabeth: 'because the more closely it is examined, the true motives by which we are guided will appear the more manifest.'

'I have heard, however, madam,' said the Dean of St. Asaph's, an eminent puritan, 'that these players are wont, in their plays, not only to introduce profane and lewd expressions, tending to foster sin and harlotry, but even to fellow out such reflections on government, its origin and its object, as tend to render the subject discontented, and shake the solid foundations of civil society. And it seems to be, under your Grace's favour, far less safe than to permit these naughty foul-mouthed knaves to ridicule the gods of their daily gravity, and in blazoning Heaven, and thundering its earthly rulers, to set at defiance the laws both of God and man.'

'I could think this were true, my lord,' said Elizabeth, 'we should give sharp correction for such offences. But it is ill arguing against the use of anything from its abuse. And touching this Shakespeare, we think there is in his plays that is worthy twenty bear-gardens; and that this new undertaking of his Chronicles, as he calls them, he may entertain with honest mirth, mingled with useful instruction, not only our subjects, but even the generation which may succeed to us.'

'Your Majesty's reign will need no such feeble aid to make it remembered to the latest posterity,' said Leicester. 'And yet, in his way, Shakespeare hath so touched some incidents of your Majesty's happy government, as may counterbalance what has been spoken by his reverend the Dean of St. Asaph's. There are some lines, my lord,—I would have them read, if you will—'

'You talk of the queen, madam,' said the queen, 'and you omit the whole so well heard of, so well heard of, and heard so well. There is so many more, your Majesty may choose some to the subject to which they bear a bold relation—and Philip murmurs them, I think, even in his dreams.'

'You talizate me, my lord,' said the queen—

'Master Philip Sidney is, we know, a munition of the Muses, and we are pleased it should be so. Valour never shines to more advantage than when united with the true taste and love of letters. But surely there are some amongst our young courtiers who can recollect what your lordship has forgotten amid weightier matters.'

'Master Tressilian, you are described to me as a worshiper in a mad Minerva—remember you ought of these lines?'

'Tressilian's heart was too heavy, his prospect in life too full of dark, to profit by the opportunity which the queen thus offered to him of attracting her attention, but he determined to transfer the advantage to his more ambitious young friend; and, excusing himself on the score of want of recollection, he added that he knew the beautiful verses, of which my Lord of Leicester had spoken, were in the remembrance of Master Walter Raleigh.'

'At the command of the queen, that cavalier repeated, with accent and manner which even added to their exquisite delicacy of tact and beauty of description, the celebrated vision of Oberon—'

'That very time I saw—but thou couldst not—'

'Flying between the cold moon and the earth,'

'Capid aed no: a certain aim he took.'

'At a far distant throne by the west;'

'And heard his love-shaft sprinkle from his bow,'

'As if it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts.'

'But I might see young Capid's fairy shaft,'

'Queen Mab in the chase beams of the watery moon,'

'And the imperial votress passed on.'

'In maiden meditation, fancy free.'

'The voice of Raleigh, as he repeated the last lines, became a little tremulous, as if difficult how the sovereign to whom the homage was addressed might receive it, exquisite as it was. If this difficulty was affected, it was good policy; but if the verse was not really new to the queen, for when was ever such elegant alliteration in reaching the royal ear to which it was addressed? But they were not less the welcome when repeated by such a speaker as Raleigh. And when we asked with the matter, the manner, and the graceful form and animated countenance of the gallant young reciter, Elizabeth kept time to every cadence, with look and with finger. When the speaker had ceased, she murmured over the last lines as if scarce conscious that she was heard, and as she uttered the words,'

'In maiden meditation, fancy free,'

'she dropped into the Thames the replication of Orson Mounton, keeper of the royal bears, to find more favourable acceptance at Sheerness, or wherever the tide might wait it.'

'Leicester was spurred to emulation by the success of the young courtier's exhibition, as the veteran reciter's was raised when a high-minded colt passes him on the way. He turned the discourse on shows, banquets, pageants, and on the character of those by whom these gay scenes were so often frequented. He mixed acute observation with light satire, in that just proportion which was free alike from redundant slander and insipid praise. He mimicked with ready acceptation the manners of the affected or the eloquent, and made his own graceful tone and manner seem doubly such when he resumed it. Foreign countries—their customs—their manners—the rules of their courts—their fashions, and even the dress of their ladies, were equally his theme; and seldom did he conclude without conveying some compliment, always couched in delicacy, and expressed with propriety, to the Virgin queen, her court, and her government. Thus passed the conversation during this pleasure voyage, seconded by the rest of the attendants upon the royal person, in gay discourse, varied by remarks upon ancient classes and modern authors, and enriched by maxims of deep policy and sound morality, by the state'smen's scenes of state around, and mixed wisdom with the lighter talk of a courtier.'

'When they returned to the palace, Elizabeth accepted, or rather selected, the arm of Leicester,
to support her from the stairs where they landed to the great gate. It even seemed to him (though that might arise from the flattery of his own imagination) that during this short passage, she leaned on him somewhat more than the slipperiness of the way necessarily demanded. Certainly her actions and words combined to express a degree of favour, which, even in his proudest days, he had not till then attained. His rival, indeed, was repeatedly graced by the queen's notice; but it was in a manner that seemed to flow less from spontaneous inclination, than as exerted by a sense of his merit. And, in the opinion of many experienced courtiers, all the favour she showed him was overbalanced, by her whispering in the ear of the Lady Derby, that 'now she saw sickness was a better alchemist than she before waited of, seeing it had changed my Lord of Sussan's copper nose into a golden one.'

The jest transpired, and the Earl of Leicester enjoyed his triumph, as one to whom court favour had been both the primary and the ultimate motive of life, while he forgot, in the intoxication of the moment, the perplexities and dangers of his own situation. Indeed, strange as it may appear, he thought less at that moment of the perils arising from his secret union, than of the man of grace which Elizabeth from time to time showed to young Raleigh. They were in- deed transient, but they were conferred on accomplished in mind and body, with grace, gallantry, literature, and valor. An accident occurred in the course of the evening which riveted Leicester's attention to this object.

The nobles and courtiers who had attended the queen on her pleasure expedition, were invited, with royal hospitality, to a splendid banquet in the hall of the palace. The table was not, indeed, graced by the presence of the sovereign; for, agreeable to her idea of what was at once modest and dignified, the Maid-en Que-en, on such occasions, was wont to take in private, or with one or two favourite ladies, her light and temperate meal. After a moderate interval, the court again met in the splendid gardens of the palace; and it was while thus engaged, that the queen suddenly asked a lady, who was near to her both in place and favour, what had become of the young Squire Lack-Clock.

The Lady Paget answered, 'She had seen Master Raleigh but two or three minutes since, standing at the wind of a small pavilion or pleasure-house, which looked on the Thames, and writing on the glass with a diamond ring.'

'That ring,' said the queen, 'was a small token I gave him, to make amends for his spoilt mantle. Come, Paget, let us see what use he has made of it, for I can see through him already. He is a marvellously sharp-witted spirit.'

但他们仍坐在那里，讨论着，讨论着，讨论着，直到那匹黑马被套上马鞍，人被扶上马背，驰骋在无垠的原野上。

The queen smiled, and read it twice over, with deliberation to Lady Paget, and once again to herself. 'It is a pretty beginning,' she said, after the consideration of a moment or two; 'but methinks the Muse hath deserted the young wit, at the very outset of his line. It were good-natured—were it not, Lady Paget—to complete it for him? Try your rhyming faculties.'

Lady Paget, praeit from her cradle upwards, as ever any lady of the bosom chamber or after her, disclaimed all possibility of assisting the young poet.

'Nay, then, we must sacrifice to the Muses ourselves,' said Elizabeth.

The incense of no one can be more acceptable,' said Lady Paget; and your Highness will impose such obligation on the ladies of Parnassus—'

'Hush, Paget,' said the queen, 'you speak sacrilege against the immortals—yet, virgins themselves, they should be exorable to a Vision Queen—and therefore—let me see how runs his verse—'

Fain would I climb, but that I fear to fall.

Might not the answer (for fault of a better) run thus—'

If thine fall thee, do not climb at all.'

The dame of honour uttered an exclamation of joy and surprise at so happy a termination; and certainly a worse has been applauded, even when coming from a less exalted author.

The queen, thus encouraged, took off a diamond ring, and saying, 'We will give this gallant some cause of marvel, when he finds his compliment perfected without his own interference,' she wrote her own line beneath that of Raleigh.

The queen left the pavilion—but retiring slowly, and often looking back, she could see the young cavalier steal, with the flight of a lapping, towards the place where he had seen her make an appearance:'—'She stayed but to observe,' as she said, 'that her train had taken; and then, laughing at the circumstance with the Lady Paget, she took the way slowly towards the palace. Elizabeth, as they returned, cautioned her companion to mention to any one the aid which she had given to the young poet—and Lady Paget promised scrupulous secrecy. It is to be supposed that she made a mental reservation in favour of Leicester, to whom her ladyship transmitted without delay an anecdote so little calculated to give him pleasure.

Raleigh, in the meanwhile, stole back to the window, and read, with a feeling of intoxication, the encouragement thus given him by the queen in person to follow out his ambitious career, and returned to Sussex and his retinue, then on the point of embarking to go up the river, his heart beating high with gratified pride, and with hope of future distinction.

The reverence due to the person of the earl prevented any notice being taken of the reception he had met with at court, until they had landed, and the household were assembled in the great hall at Saye's Court; whilst that lord, exhausted by his late illness, and the fatigues of the day, had retired to his chamber, demanding the attendance of Wayland, his successful physician. Wayland, however, was nowhere to be found; and, while some of the party were, with military impatience, seeking him, and cursing his absence,
he was good taste and judgement: to conceal the decisive circumstance of the combat, to which Elizabeth had designed to find a rhyme; but other circumstances had transpired which plainly intimated that she had made some progress in the queen's favour. All banded to wish him joy on the mandated appearance of his fortune: some from real regard; some, perhaps, from hopes that his pretension might hasten their own; and most from a mixture of these motives, and a sense that the circumstance shown to any one of Sussex's household was in fact a triumph to the whole. Raleigh returned the kindest thanks to them all, disowning, with becoming modesty, that one day's fair reception made a favourite, any more than one swallow a summer. But he observed that Blount did not join in the general congratulation, and, somewhat hurt in his apparent unconcern, he plainly asked him the reason.

Blount replied with equal sincerity: 'My good Walter, I wish thee as well as do any of these flattering gulls, who are whispering and whisking grudgiments in thine ear, because it seems fair weather with thee. But I fear for thee, Walter' (and he wiped his hotest eye), 'I fear for thee with all my heart. The court tricks, and gambols, and flashs of fine women's favours, and the tricks and trinkets that bring fair fortunes to Bartholomew Fair, and fine faces and witty excombs to the acquaintance of dull block and sharp axes,'

So saying, Blount arose and left the hall, while Raleigh looked after him with an expression that blanked for a moment his bold and animating countenance.

Stanley just then entered the hall, and said to Tressilian, 'My lord is calling for your fellow Sayland, and your fellow Wearland is just come hither in a sculler, and is calling for you, nor will he go to my lord till he sees you. The fellow looks as he were mazed, methinks—I would you would see him immediately.'

Tressilian instantly left the hall, and, causing Wearland Smith to be shown into a withdrawing apartment, and lights placed, he conducted the artist thither, and was surprised when he observed the emotion of his countenance.

'What is the matter with you, Smith?' said Tressilian; 'have you seen the devil?'

'Worse, sir, worse,' replied Wearland, 'I have seen a basilk. Thank God, I saw him first, for being so seen, and seeing not me, he will do the less harm.'

'In God's name, speak sense,' said Tressilian, and say what you mean!'

'I have seen my old master,' said the artist—'

'Last night, a friend, whom I had acquired, took me to see the palace clock, judging me to be curious in such works of art. At the window of a turret next to the clock-house I saw my old master.'

'Thou must have been misled,' said Tressilian.

'I was not mistaken,' said Wearland—'He that once hath his features by heart would know him amongst a million. He was usually habited: but he cannot disguise himself from me, God be praised, as I can from him. I will not, however, tempt Providence by remaining within my ken. Tarleton the player himself could not so disguise himself, but that, sooner or later, Dobodie would find him out. I must away to-morrow; for, as we stand togethers, it were death to me to remain within reach of him.'

'But the Earl of Sussex?' said Tressilian.

'He is in little danger from what he has lithero taken, provided he swallow the matter of a bean's size of the orvietan every morning fasting—but let him beware of a relapse.'

And how is that to be guarded against?' said Tressilian.

'Only by such caution as you would use against the devil,' answered Wearland. 'Let my lord's clerk of the kitchen kill his lord's most himself, and dress it himself, using no spice but what he procures from the surest hands. Let the sewer serve it up himself, and let the master of my lord's household see that both clerk and sewer taste the dishes which the one dresss and the other serves. Let my lord use no perfumes which come not from well-accredited persons; no unguents—no pomades. Let him on no account drink with other widowers, or eat fruit with them, either in the way of giving or otherwise. Especially let him observe such caution if he goes to Kenilworth—the excess of his illness, and his being under diet, will, and must, cover the strangeness of such practice.'

'And then,' said Tressilian, 'what dost thou think to make of thyself?'

'France, Spain, either India, East or West, or will not go to neither,' said Wearland, 'I live my life by residing within ken of Dobodie, Dometrius, or whatever else he calls himself for the time.'

'Well,' said Tressilian, 'this happens not perhaps— I had business for you in Berkshire, but in the opposite extremity to the place where thou art known, and ere thou hast found out this new reason for living private, I had settled to send thee thither upon a secret embassage.'

The artist expressed his willing to receive his commands, and Tressilian, knowing he was well acquainted with the outline of his business at court, frankly explained to him the whole, mentioned the agreement which subsisted betwixt Giles Gosling and him, and told what had that day been avouched in the presence-chamber by Varney, and supported by Leicester.

'Thou seest,' he added, 'that in the circumstances in which I am placed, it behoves me to keep a narrow watch on the motions of these unprincipled men, Varney and his compleys, Foster and Lambourne, as well as those of my Lord Leicester himself, who, I suspect, is partly a deceiver, and not altogether the deceived in that matter. Here is my ring, as a pledge to Giles Gosling—here is besides gold, which shall be trebled if thou serve me faithfully. Away down to Cumnor, and see what happens there.'

'I go with double good-will,' said the artist, 'first, because thy honour, who has been so kind to me, and then, that I may escape my old master, who, if not an absolute incarnation of the devil, has at least as much of the demon about him, in will, word, and action, as
ever polluted humanity.—And yet let him take care of me. I fly him now, as heretofore; but if, like the Scottish wild cattle, I am vexed by frequent pursuit, I may turn on him in hate and desperation.—Will your honour command my head to be sold? To sell the medicine to my lord, divided in its proper proportions, with a few instructions. His safety will then depend on the care of his friends and domestics—for the past he is guarded, but let him beware of the future.'

Wayland Smith accordingly made his farewell visit to the Earl of Sussex, dictated instructions as to his regimen, and precautions concerning his diet, and left Saye's Court without waiting for morning.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The moment comes.

It is already come—when thou must write
The absolute total of thy life's vast sum.
The constellations stand victorious over thee,
The planets show good fortune in fair conjunctions,
And tell thee, 'Now's the time.'

SCHILLER'S WALLENSTEIN, BY COLEIDGE.

When Leicester returned to his lodging, after a day so important and so harassing, in which, after riding out more than one gale, and touching on more than one snare, his bark had finally gained the harbour with banner displayed, he seemed to experience as much fatigue as a mariner after a perilous storm. He spoke not a word while his chamberlain exchanged his rich court-mantle for a Surrey night-cap, and when this officer signified that Master Varney desired to speak with his lordship, he replied only by a sullen nod. Varney, however, entered, accepting this signal as a permission, and the chamberlain withdrew.

The earl remained silent and almost motionless in his chair, his head reclined on his hand, and his elbow resting upon the table which stood beside him, without seeming to be conscious of the entrance, or of the presence, of his confidant. Varney waited for some minutes until he should speak; desirous to know what was the finally predominant mood of a mind, through which so many powerful emotions had that day taken their course. But he waited in vain, for Leicester continued still silent, and the confidant saw himself under the necessity of being the first to speak. 'May I congratulate your lordship,' he said, 'on the deserved superiority you have this day attained over your most formidable rival?'

Leicester raised his head, and answered sadly, but without anger, 'Thou, Varney, whose invention has involved me in a web of most mean and perilous falsehood, knowest best what small reason there is for gratulation on the subject.'

'Do you blame me, my lord,' said Varney, 'for not betraying on the first push, the secret on which your fortunes depended, and which you have so often

and so earnestly recommended to my safe keeping? Your lordship was present in person, and might have contradicted me and ruined yourself by an avowal of the truth; but surely it was no part of a faithful servitor to have done so without your command.'

'I cannot deny it, Varney,' said the earl, rising and walking across the room; 'my own ambition has been traitor to my love.'

'Say rather, my lord, that your love has been traitor to your greatness, and barred you from such a prospect of honour and power as the world cannot offer to any other.' To make my honoured lady a countess, you have missed the chance of being yourself.'

He paused, and seemed unwilling to complete the sentence.

'Of being myself what?' demanded Leicester; 'speak out thy meaning, Varney.'

'Of being yourself a KING, my lord,' replied Varney; 'and King of England bootless—it is no true friend to our Queen to say no. It would have been chanced by her obtaining that which all true subjects wish her—a lusty, noble, and gallant husband.'

'Thou raving, Varney,' answered Leicester. 'Besides, our times have seen enough to make men loathe the crown matrimonial which men take from their wives' lap. There was Darnley of Scotland.'

'He!' said Varney; 'a gull, a fool, a three seas-cuckoo, who suffered himself to be fired off into the air like a rocket on a rejoicing day. Had Mary had the hap to have wedded the noble Earl, once destined to share her throne, she had experienced a husband of different metal; and her husband had found in her a wife as complying and loving as the mate of the meanness, who follows the hounds a-horseback, and holds her husband's bridle as he mounts.'

'It might have been as thou sayest, Varney,' said Leicester, a brief smile of self-satisfaction playing over his anxious countenance. 'Henry Darney knew little of women—with Mary, a man who knew her sex might have had some chance of holding his own. But not with Elizabeth, Varney—'for I think God, when he gave her the chance, gave her the head of a man to control its follies.'—No, I know her. She will accept love-tokens, ay, and require them with the like—put sugar-sweet sounds in her bosom, —ay, and answer them too—rush gallantry to the very verge where it becomes exchange of affection—but she writes and alters and all which is to follow, and would not barter one iota of her own supreme power for all the alphabet of both Cupid and Hymen.'

'The better for you, my lord,' said Varney, 'that is, in the case supposed, if such be her disposition; since you think you cannot aspire to become her husband. Her favourite is she, and may remain, if the lady at Cumnor Place continues in her present obscurity.'

'Poor Amy!' said Leicester, with a deep sigh; 'she desires so earnestly to be acknowledged in presence of God and man!'

'Ay, but, my lord,' said Varney, 'is her desire reasonable?—that is the question. Her religious scruples are solved—she is an honoured and beloved wife—enjoying the society of her husband at such times as his weightier duties

* A remnant of the wild cattle of Scotland are preserved at Chillingham Castle, near Wooler, in Northumberland, the seat of Lord Curlew. They fly before strangers; but if disturbed and followed, they turn with fury on those who persist in annoying them. [See also note to Castle Dangerous—Scottish Wild Cattle.]
permitted him to afford her his company—What would she more? I am right sure that a lady so gentle and so loving would consent to live her life through in a certain obscurity—which is, after all, not dumber than when she was at Leiceste Hall—rather than diminish the least jot of her lord's honours and greatness by a premature attempt to share them.

'There is something in what thou sayest,' said Leicester; 'and her appearance here was fatal—yet she must be seen at Kenilworth; Elizabeth will not forget that she has so appointed.'

'Let me sleep on that point,' said Varney; 'I cannot else perfect the device I have on the stilly, which I trust will satisfy the Queen and please my honoured lady, yet leave this fatal secret where it is now buried. Has your lordship further commands for the night?'

'I would be alone,' said Leicester. 'Leave me, and place my steel casket on the table,—be within summons.'

Varney retired—and the earl, opening the window of his apartment, looked out long and anxiously upon the brilliant host of stars which glittered in the splendour of a summer firmament. The words burst from him as at unawares—'

'I had never more need that the heavenly bodies should befriended me, for my earthly path is darkened and confused.'

It was well known that the age reposed a deep confidence in the vain predictions of judicial astrology, and Leicester, though exempt from the general control of superstition, was not in this respect superior to his time; but, on the contrary, was remarkable for the encouragement which he gave to the professors of this pretended science. Indeed, the wish to pry into futurity, so general among the human race, is peculiarly to be found amongst those who trade in state mysteries, and the dangerous intrigues and calumnies that attend courts. With heedfull precaution to see that it had not been foreknown, or its locks tampered with, Leicester applied a key to the steel casket, and drew from it, first, a parcel of gold pieces, which he put into a silk purse; then a parchment inscribed with planetary signs, and the lines and calculations used in framing horoscopes, on which he gazed intently for a few moments; and lastly, took forth a large key, which, lifting aside the tapestry, he applied to a little concealed door in the corner of the apartment, and, opening it, disclosed a stair constructed in the thickness of the wall.

Alasco,' said the earl, with a voice raised, yet no higher raised than by the inhabtant of the small turret to which the stair conducted—'Alasco, I say, descend.'

'I come, my lord,' answered a voice from above. The foot of an aged man was heard slowly descending the narrow stair, and Alasco entered the earl's apartment. The astrologer was a little man, and seemed much advanced in age, for his beard was long and white, and reached over his black doublet down to his silken girdle. His hair was of the same venerable hue; but his eyebrows were as dark as the keen and piercing black eyes which shone so coldly on his melancholy visage.
'Thou dost but jest with me, father,' said the earl, astonished at the strain of enthusiasm in which the astrologer delivered his prediction. 'Is it for him to jest who hath his eye on heaven, who hath his foot in the grave?' returned the old man solemnly.

The earl made two or three strides through the apartment, with his hand outstretched, as one who follows the beckoning signal of some phantasm, waving him on to deeds of high import. As he turned, however, he caught the eye of the astrologer fixed on him, while an observing glance of the most shrewd penetration shot from under the penthouse of his shaggy dark eyebrows. Leicester's haughty and suspicious soul at once caught fire; he darted towards the old man from the farther end of the lofty apartment, only standing still when his extended hand was within a foot of the astrologer's body.

'Wretch!' he said, 'If you dare to play with me, I will have your skin stripped from your living flesh!—Confess thou hast been hired to deceive and betray me—thou art a cheat, and thy silly prey and booty!'

The old man exhibited some symptoms of emotion, but not more than the furious deportment of his patron might have extorted from innocence itself.

'What means this violence, my lord?' he answered, 'or in what can I have deserved it at your hands?'

'Give me proof,' said the earl vehemently, 'that you have not tampered with my enemies.'

'My lord,' replied the old man, with dignity, 'you can have no better proof than that which you yourself elected. In that turn I have spent the last twenty-four hours, under the key which has been in your own custody. The hours of darkness I have spent in gazing on the heavenly bodies with these dim eyes, and during those of light I have toiled this aged brain to complete the calculation arising from their combinations. Earthly food I have not tasted—earthly voice I have not heard—you are yourself aware I had no care of doing so—and yet I tell you—I who have been thus shut up in solitude and study—that within these twenty-four hours your star has become predominant in the horizon, and either the bright book of heaven speaks false, or there has been a proportionate revolution in your fortunes upon earth. If nothing has happened within that space to secure your power, or advance your favour, then am I indeed a cheat, and the divine art, which was first devised in the plains of Chaldea, is a foul imposture.

'It is true,' said Leicester, after a moment's reflection, 'thou wert closely imured; and it is also true that the chance has taken place in my situation which thou sayest the horoscope indicates.'

'Wherefore this distrust, then, my son?' said the astrologer, assuming a tone of admonition; 'the celestial intelligences brook not dilidence, even in their favourites.'

'Peace, father,' answered Leicester, 'I have erred in doubting thee. Not to mortal man nor to celestial intelligence—under that which is supreme—will Dudley's lips say more in condemnation or apology. Speak rather to the present purpose. Amid these bright promises, thou hast said there was a threatening aspect—Can thy skill tell whence, or by whose means, such danger seems to lurk?'

'Thus far only,' answered the astrologer, 'does my art enable me to answer thy query. The influence is threatened by the malignant and adverse aspect, through means of a youth—and, as I think, a rival; but whether in love or in privity's favour, I know not; nor can I give further information respecting him, save that he comes from the western quarter.'

'The Western—ha!' replied Leicester, 'it is enough—the tempest does indeed brew in that quarter!'—Cornwall and Devon—Raleigh and Tressilian—one of them is indicated—I must beware of both. Father, if I have done thy skill injustice, I will make thee a lordly recompense.'

He took a purse of gold from the strong casket which stood before him. 'Have thou double the recompense which Varney promised. Be faithful—be secret—do the directions thou shalt receive from my master of the horse, and grudge not a little sedation or restraint in my cause—it shall be richly considered. Here, Varney—confer this venal man to thine own lodging—seduce him heedfully in all things, but see that he holds communication with no one.'

Varney bowed, and the astrologer kissed the earl's hand in token of adieu, and followed the master of the horse to another apartment, in which were placed wine and refreshments for his use.

The astrologer sat down to his repast, while Varney shut two doors with great precaution, examined the tapestry, lest any listener lurked behind it; and then, sitting down opposite to the sage, began to question him. 'Saw you my signal from the court beneath?'

'I did,' said Alasco, for by such name he was at present called, 'and shaped the horoscope accordingly.'

'And it passed upon the patron without challenge?' inquired Varney.

'In one brief course,' replied the old man, 'but it did not cease; and I added, as before agreed, danger from a discovered secret, and a western youth.'

'My lord's fear will stand sponsor to his, and his conscience to the other, of these prophecies,' replied Varney. 'Sure never man chose to run such a race as his, yet continued to retain those sly scribblers! I am fain to cheat him to his own profit. But touching your matters, sage interpreter of the stars, I can tell you more of your own fortune than plain or figurate can show. You must be gone from henceforward.'

'I will not,' said Alasco prevariciously. 'I have been too much hurried up and down of late—immured for day and night in a desolate turret-chamber—I must enjoy my liberty, and pursue my studies, which are of more importance than the fate of fifty statesmen and favourites, that rise and burst like bubbles in the atmosphere of a court.'

'At your pleasure,' said Varney, with a sneer that had habit rendered familiar to his features, and which forms the principal characteristic which painters have assigned to that of Satan—'

'At your pleasure, Varney,' said the earl, 'you shall be rewarded. The court desires it.'

'Yet you must not think,' replied Varney, 'that the court can place in my power, as it has in your father's, the judgement of a country and the safety of my life. Doubtless you will not be content, if not he himself, then at least his sons, to be the judges of the men who are to govern him.

'Conceit, Alasco,' said the earl, 'what means this? We have no right to project immortal lives. Those who pass into that grand arena of eternity are to be judged by the Supreme.'

'Conceit, Varney!' returned his slave, 'who means this? The court is not for immortals, but for those who are only to govern the mortal world. But this is a question between me and my master, and I shall take no notice of it.'

'No one but thyself,' said the earl, whose heart was now in driving his son out of the kingdom.

'Nay,' replied Varney, 'I am not at law with thy son, but with thee, and thy master, and thy court. Who are they to meddle with me? No one but thyself.'

'Varney,' said the earl, 'I am no longer thy lord, as I once was of the court; and no courtier henceforward, as thou art, shall be permitted to play with my future.'

'One man only, then,' said Varney; 'and that man is I. But thou hast still a court to govern it, and a court to govern thee; and I shall expect to be paid for my services.'

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'One man only, then,' said Varney; 'and that man is I. But thou hast still a court to govern it, and a court to govern thee; and I shall expect to be paid for my services.'
"At your pleasure," he said; "you may enjoy your liberty and your studies until the daggers of Sussex's followers are clashing within your doublet and against your ribs." The old man turned pale, and Varney proceeded. "Wet you not he hath offered a reward for the arch-quack and poison-vender, Demetrius, who did certain precious spices to his lordship's cook. What! turn you pale, old friend? Does Hali already see an infortune in the House of Life?-Why, hark thee, we will have thee down to an old house of mine in the country, where thou shalt live with a hog-nailed slave, whom thy alchemy may convert into duvats, or to such conversion alone is thy art serviceable.

"It is false, thou foul-mouthed raller," said Alasco, shaking with impotent anger; "it is well known that I have approached more nearly to projection than any hermetic artist who now lives. There are not six chemists in the world who possess so near an approximation to the grand arcanum.

"Come, come," said Varney, interrupting him, "what means this, in the name of Heaven? Do we not know one another? I believe thee to be so perfect—a very perfect in the mystery of cheating, that, having imposed upon all mankind, thou hast at length, in some insidious manner, imposed upon myself; and, without ceasing to dup others, hast become a species of dupe to thy own imagination. Blush not for it, man; thou hast and shall have classical comfort:—

Ne quisquvis Alacsum possidetur nisi Alex.

No one but thyself could have gullied thee—and thou hast gullied the whole County of Sussex, the Roosh Cross beside—none so deep in the mystery as thou. But hark thee in thine ear, had the seasonizing which spiced Sussex's broth brought more surely, I would have thought better of the scientific science than dost heast so highly.

"Thou art a hardened villain, Varney," replied Alasco; "many will do those things, which dare not speak of them.

And many speak of them who dare not do them," answered Varney; "but be not wroth—I will not speak to thee—If I did, I were false to live on eggs for a month, that I might feed without fear. Tell me at once, how came thine art to fail thee in this great emergency?"

"The Earl of Sussex's horoscope intimates," replied the astrologer, "the sign of the ascendant being in combustion."

"Away with your gibberish," replied Varney, "think'st thou it is the patron thou spakest with?"

"I crave your pardon," replied the old man, "and swear to you, I know but one medicine that could have saved the Earl's life; and as no man living in England knows that antitoxin save myself—moreover, as the ingredients, one of them in particular, are scarce possible to come by—I must needs suppose his horoscope was owing to such a constitution of lungs and vital parts, as was never before bound up in a body of clay.

"There was some talk of a quack who waited upon him," said Varney, after a moment's reflection. "Are you sure there is no one in England who has this secret of things?"

"One man there was," said the doctor, "once my servant, who might have stolen this of me, with one or two other secrets apart. But content you. Master Varney, it is no part of my policy to suffer such slyly. He prises into no mysteries more, I warrant you; for, as I well believe, he hath been waited with heaven on the wing of a fiery dragon—Persephone! But in this retreat of mine, shall I have the use of mine laboratory?"

"Of a whole workshop, man," said Varney: "for a reverend father, albeit, who was his to give place to bliss King Hal, and some of his couriers, a score of years since, had a chemist's complete apparatus, where he was obliged to leave behind him to his apostles. Thou shalt there occupy, and meltings, gold, and blaze, and multiply, until the Green Dragon become a golden goose, or whatever the newer phrase of the brotherhood may testify.

"Thou art right, Master Varney," said the alchemist, setting his teeth close, and grinding them together—thou art right even in thy very contempt of life and reason. For what thou seest in mockery, may in sober verity chance to happen ere we meet again. If the most venerable ages of ancient days have spoken the truth—if the most learned of our own have rightly received it—if I have been accepted where I then lied in Germany, in Poland, in Italy, and in the farthest extremity, as one to whom nature has revealed her darkest secrets—if I have acquired the most secret signs and passwords of the Jewish Cabbala, so that the greatest head in the synagogue would brush the steps to make them clean for me—if all this is so, and if there remains but one step—one little step—betwixt my long, deep, and dark, and subterranean progress, and the blaze of light which shall show Nature watching her richest and her most glorious productions in the very cradle—one step betwixt dependence and the power of sovereignty—one step betwixt poverty and such a sum of wealth as earth, without that noble secret, cannot minister from all her mines in the old or the new-found world—if this be all so, is it not reasonable to that it this declare my nature life, secure, for a brief period of staidness, to rise above the mean dependence upon favourites, and their favourites, by which I am now enthralled?"

"Now, brave! brave! my good father," said Varney, with the usual sardonic expression of ridicule on his countenance; yet all this approach to the philosopher's stone wringeth not one single crown out of my Lord Leicester's pouch, and far less out of Richard Varney's—'tis I must have earthly and substantial service, man, and care not whom else thou canst debase with thy philosopher's charlatany.

"My lord," said Varney, the alchemist, "of the unbelief, gathered arid and thine like a frost-fog, hath dimmed thine acuteness; thereunto that which is a stinging-block to the wise, and which yet, to him who seeketh knowledge with humility, extends a lesson so clear, that he who mine may read. Hath not Art, think'st thou, the means of completing Nature's imperfect conceptions in her attempts to form the precious metals, even as by art we can perfect those other operations, of incubation, distillation, ferments, etc., etc.
tion, and similar processes of an ordinary description, by which we extract life itself out of a senseless egg, summon purity and vitality out of muddy drugs, or call into vivacity the inert substance of a sluggish liquid?"

"I have heard all this before," said Varney, "and I have been against such cant ever since I sent twenty good gold pieces (marr, it was in the name of my wife) to advance the grand magisterium, all which, God help the while, vanished in fumo. Since that moment, when I paid for my freedom, I defy chemistry, astrology, palmistry, and every other occult art, were it as secret as hell itself, to unloose the strictures of my purse-strings. Marry, I neither defy the manna of Saint Nicholas, nor can I dispense with it. The first task must be to prepare some when thou get'st down to thy little sequetted retreat yonder, and then make as much gold as thou wilt."

"I will make no more of that dose," replied the alchemist resolutely.

"Then," said the master of the horse, "thou shalt be hanged for what thou hast made already, and so were the great secret for ever lost to mankind. — Do not humanity this injustice, good father, but let thy bend to thy destiny, and make us an omens or two of this same stuff, which cannot prejudice above one or two individuals, in order to gain lifetime to discover the universal medicine, which shall clear away all mortal diseases at once. But cheer up, thou grave, learned, and most melancholy jackanape! Hast thou not told me that a moderate portion of thy drug hath mild effects, no ways ultimately dangerous to the human frame, but which produces depression of spirits, nausea, headache, an unwillingness to change of place—even such a state of temper as would keep a bird from flying out of a cage, were the door left open?"

"I have said so, and it is true," said the alchemist; "this effect will it produce, and the bird who parts of it in such proportion, shall sit for a season drooping on her perch, without thinking of the free blue sky, or of the fair greenwood, though the one be lighted by the rays of the rising sun, and the other ringing with the newly-awakened song of all the feathered inhabitants of the forest."

"And this without danger to life!" said Varney, somewhat anxiously.

"Ay, so that proportion and measure be not exceeded; and so that who knows the nature of the mantra be ever near to watch the symptoms, and succour in case of need." said Varney: "thou shalt regulate the whole," said Varney; "thy reward shall be princely, if thou keep at time and touch, and exceedest not the due proportion, to the prejudice of her health—otherwise thy punishment shall be as signal."

"The prejudice of her health!" repeated Alasco: "it is then, a woman I am to use my skill upon?"

"No, thou fool," replied Varney; "said I not it was a bird—a hermit—reigning lumin, whose pipe might soothe a hawk when in mid stoop?—I see thine eyes sparkle, and I know thy beard is not altogether so white as art has made it—that, at least, thou hast been able to transmute to silver. But mark me, this is no mate for thee. This caged bird is dear to one who brooks no rivalry, and far less such rivalry as thine, and her health must over all things be cared for. But she is in the case of being commanded down to yonder Kerwillow revels; and it is most expedient—most needful—most necessary, that she fly not thither. Of these necessities and their causes, I am not needful that she should know any, and it is to be thought that her own wish may lead her to combat all ordinary reasons which can be urged for her remaining a housekeeper."

"That is but natural," said the alchemist, with a strange smile, which yet bore a greater reference to the human character, than the uninterested and abstracted gaze which his physiognomy had hitherto expressed, where all seemed to refer to some world distant from that which was existing around him.

"It is so," answered Varney; "you understand women well, though it may have been long since you were conversant amongst them. —Well, then, she is not to be contradicted—yet is not to be humoured. Understand me—a slight illness, sufficient to take away the desire of removing from thence, and to make such of your wise men of fraternity as may be called in to aid, recommend a quiet residence at home, will, in one word, be esteemed good service, and remunerated as such."

"I am not to be asked to affect the House of Life," said the chemist.

"On the contrary, we will have thee hanged if thou dost," replied Varney.

"And I must," added Alasco, "have opportunity to do my turn, and all facilities for concealment or escape, should there be detection?"

"All, all, and everything, thou infulid in all but the impossibilities of alchemy. Why, man, for what dost thou take me?"

The old man rose, and, taking a light, walked towards the end of the apartment, where was a door that led to the small sleeping room destined for his reception during the night. At the door he turned round, and slowly repeated Varney's question ere he answered it. "For what do I take thee, Richard Varney? Why, for a worse devil than I have been myself! But I am in thy toils, and I must serve thee till thy term be out."

"Well, well," answered Varney hastily, "be stirring with grey light. It may be we shall not need thy medicine. Do not tull till I myself come down. Michael Lambourne shall guide you to the place of your destination."

When Varney heard the adept's door shut and carefully bolted within, he stepped towards it, and with similar precaution carefully locked it on the outside, and took the key from the lock, muttering to himself, "Worse than thee, thou poisoning quack-silver and witch-monger, who, if thou art not a bannable slave to the devil, it is only because he discards such an apprentice! I am a mortal man, and seek by mortal means the gratification of my passions and advancement of my prospects. Thou art a vassal of hell itself. — So, Lambourne! he called at another door, and Michael made his appearance, with a flushed check and an unsteady step."

*Note G. Dr. Julo.
Thou art drunk, thou villain!' said Varney to him.

'Doubtless, noble sir,' replied the unashamed Michael, 'we have been drinking all even to the glorious of the day, and to my noble Lord of Leicester, and his valiant master of the horse. Drunk led phials and portards, he that would refuse to swallow a down healths on such an evening, is a base kneggojo, and a packfast, and shall swallow six inches of my dagger!'

'Hard ye, said Varney, 'I'll sober you instantly.' I command thee. I know thou canst throw off thy drunken folly, like a fool's coat, at pleasure; and if not, it were the worse for thee.'

Lambourne dropped his head, left the apartment, and returned in two or three minutes, with his face composed, his hair adjusted, his dress in order, and exhibiting great as a difference from his former self as if the whole man had been changed.

'Art thou sober now, and dost thou comprehend me,' said Varney sternly.

Lambourne bowed in acquiescence.

'Thou must presently down to Cumnor Place with the revered man of art, who sleeps yonder in the little vaulted chamber. Here is the key, that thou mayst call him by times. Take another trusty fellow with you. Use him well on the journey, but let him not escape you, pistols if he attempt it, and I will be your warrant. I will give thee letters to Foster. The doctor is to occupy the lower apartments of the old quadrangle, with freedom to use the old laboratories and its implements. He is to have no access to the lady but such as I shall point out—only she may be amused to see his philosophical jiggery. Thou wilt await at Cumnor Place my further orders; and, as thou livest, beware of the ale-bleech and the aquavit.f flask. Each breath drawn in Cumnor Place must be kept severely from common air.'

'Enough, my lord—I mean my worshipful master—soon, I trust, to be my worshipful knightly master. You have given me my lesson and my licence; I will execute the one, and not abuse the other. I will be in the saddle by dark.'

'No, and deserve favour. Stay ere thou cost fill me a cup of wine out of that flask, sirrah,' as Lambourne was pouring out from that which Alasco had left half finished, 'fetch me a fresh one.'

Lambourne obeyed, and Varney, after rinsing his mouth with the liquor, drank a full cup, and said, as he took up a huntsman, to retreat to his sleeping apartment. 'It is strange—little the slave of fancy as any one, yet I never speak for a few minutes with this fellow Alasco, but my mouth and lungs feel as if soiled with the fumes of calcined arsenic, with a little.'

So saying, he left the apartment. Lambourne lingered, to drink a cup of the freshly-opened flask. 'It is from Saint-John's-Berg,' he said, as he paused in the draught to enjoy its flavour, 'and the true root of the violet. But I must forbear it now, that I may one day drink it at my own pleasure.' And he quaffed a goblet of water to quench the flames of the Rhenish wine, retired slowly towards the door, made a pause, and then, finding the temptation irresistible, walked hastily back, and took another long pull at the wine flask, without the formality of a cup.

'Were it not for this accursed custom,' he said, 'I might climb as high as Varney himself. But who can climb when the room turns round with him like a parish-top? I would, the distance were greater, or the road rougher, betwixt my hand and mouth! But I will drink nothing to-morrow save water—nothing save fair water.'

CHAPTER XIX.

Pistol. And tidings do I bring, and lucky joys, and happy news of price.

Foster. I pritch, now, deliver them like to men of this world.

Pistol. A farthing for the world, and weddings base! I speak of Africa, and golden joys.

HENRY IV. Part Second.

The public room of the Black Bear at Cumnor, to which the scene of our story now returns, boasted, on the evening which we treat of, no ordinary assemblage of guests. There had been a fair in the neighbourhood, and the cutting mercer of Abingdon, with some of the other personages whom the reader has already been made acquainted with, as friends and customers of Giles Gosling, had already formed their wanted circle around the evening fire, and were talking over the news of the day.

A lively, bustling, arch fellow, whose pack and canes el'd round, astounded only with brass points, deemed him to be of Antolycen's profession, occupied a good deal of the attention, and furnished much of the amusement, of the evening. The pedlar of those days, it must be remembered, were men of far greater importance than the degenerate and degraded hawkers of our modern times. It was by means of these peripatetic vendors that the country trade, in the finer manufactures used in female dress particularly, was almost entirely carried on; and if a merchant of this description arrived at the dignity of travelling with a pack-horse, he was a person of no small consequence, and company for the most substantial yeoman or franklin whom he might meet in his wanderings.

This pedlar of whom we speak bore, according-ly, an active and unrelaxed share in the merriment to which the refrains of the bonnie Black Bear of Cumnor resounded. He had his smile with pretty Mistress Cely, his broad laugh with wine host, and his jest upon dashing Master Goldthwait, who, though indeed without any such benevolent intention on his own part, was the general butt of the evening. The pedlar and he were closely engaged in a dispute upon the preference due to the Spanish nether-stock over the black Gascogne hose, and mine host had just winked to thrice surround him, as who should say, 'You will have must presently, my masters,' when the trampling of horses was heard in the court yard, and the hostler was loudly summoned, with a few of the newest oats then in vogue, to add force to the
invocation. Out tumbled Will Hostler, John Tapster, and all the militia of the inn, who had shirked from their posts in order to collect some scattered crumbs of the mirth which was flying about among the customers. Out into the yard sallied his cousin-host himself also, to do the duty of greeting his new guests; and presently returned, ushering into the apartment his own worthy nephew, Michael Lambourne, pretty tolerably drunk, and having under his escort the astrologer. Alasoe, though still a little old man, had, by altering his gown to a riding-dress, trimming his beard and eyebrows, and so forth, struck at least a score of years from his apparent age, and might now seem an active man of sixty, or little upwards. He appeared at present exceedingly anxious, and had insisted much with Lambourne that they should not enter the inn, but go straight forward to the place of their destination. But Lambourne would not be controlled. By Camel and Casparion, he vociferated, and the whole heavenly host—bells all the stars that these blessed eyes of mine have seen sparkle in the southern heavens, to which these northern blinkers are but farthing candles, I will be unkindly for no one's humour. I will stay and salute my worthy uncle here. Ches! that good blood should ever be forgotten betwixt friends! A gallon of your best, uncle, and let it go round to the health of the noble Earl of Leicester! What! shall we not collogue together, and warm the cookies of our ancient kindness? Shall we not collogue, I say?

'With all my heart, kinsman,' said mine host, who obviously wished to be rid of him: 'but are you to stand shot to all this good liquor?'

This is a question that puzzled many a jovial toper, but it moved not the purpose of Lambourne's soul. 'Question my means, uncle!' he said, producing a handful of mixed gold and silver pieces; 'question Mexico and Peru—question the Queen's exchequer—God save her Majesty!—She is my good lord's good mistress.'

'Well, kinsman,' said mine host, 'it is my business to sell wine to those who can buy it—So, Jack Tapster, do me thine office. But I would know how to come by money as lightly as thou dost, Mike.'

'Why, uncle,' said Lambourne, 'I will tell thee a secret—Dost see this little old fellow here? as old and withered a chip as ever the devil put into his porridge—and yet, uncle, between you and me—he hath Potosi in that brain of his—'Shhool! he can coin ducats faster than I can vent oaths.'

'I will have none of his coinage in my purse, though, Michael,' said mine host; 'I know what belongs to falsifying the Queen's coin.'

'Thou art an ass, uncle, for as old as thou art,—Pull me not by the skirts, doctor, thou art an ass thyself to boot—so, being both ass, I tell ye I spoke but metaphorically.'

'Are you mad!' said the old man; 'is the devil in you? can you not let us begone without drawing all men's eyes on us?'

'Say's thon!' said Lambourne; 'thou art deceived now—no man shall see you an I give thy word.—By heavens, masters, an any one dare to look on this old gentleman, I will slash the eyes out of his head with my poniard!—So sit down, old friend, and be merry—these are nine fingers—nine ancient inmates, and will betray no man.'

'Had you not better withdraw to a private apartment, nephew?' said Giles Tosteold; 'you speak strange matter,' he added, 'and there be intelligencers everywhere.'

'I care not for them,' said the magnumons Michael—intelligencers! phah!'—I serve the noble Earl of Leicester. —Here comes the wine—Fill round, Master Skinker, a carouse to the health of the flower of England, the noble Earl of Leicester! I say, the noble Earl of Leicester! He that does me not reason is a swine of Sussex, and I'll make him kneel to the pledge, if I should cut his hams, and smoke them for bacon.'

None disputed a pledge given under such formidable penalties; and Michael Lambourne, whose drunken humour was not of course diminished by this new petition, went on in the same wild way, renewing his acquaintance with such of the guests as he had formerly known, and experiencing a reception in which there was now something of deference, mingled with a good deal of fear; for the last survivor of the favourite earl, especially such a man as Lambourne, was, for very sufficient reasons, an object of both the one and the other.

In the meanwhile, the old man, seeing his guide in this uncontrollable humour, ceased to remonstrate with him, and, sitting down in the most obscure corner of the room, called for a small measure of sack, over which he seemed, as it were, to shudder, withdrawing himself as much as possible from general observation, and doing nothing which could recall his existence to the recollection of his fellow-traveller, who by this time had got into close intimacy with his ancient comrade, Goldthrift of Abingdon.

'Never believe me, bully Mike,' said the mercur, 'if I am not as glad to see thee as ever I was to see a customer's money!—Why, thou canst give a friend a sly place at a mask or a revel now; Mike; ay, or I warrant thee, thou canst say in my lord's ear, when my honourable lord is down in these parts, and wants a little ruff or the like—canst thou say in his ear, there is mine old friend, young Lawrence Goldthrift of Abingdon, has as good wares, lawn, taffy, embury, and so forth—ay, and as pretty a piece of man's flesh, too, as is in Hertfordshire, and will ruffle it for your lordship with any man of his inches; and thon mayest say—'

'I can say a hundred d—d lies, besides, mercur,' answered Lambourne; 'what, one must not stand upon a good word for a friend!'

'Here is to thee, Mike, with all my heart,' said the mercur; and thou canst tell one the reality of the new fashions too.—Here was a rogue pollard but now, was crying up the old-fashioned Spanish never-stock over the Gascony hose, although thou seest the French hose set off the leg and knee, being adorned with part-coloured garters and garniture in confine mity.'

'Excellent, excellent,' replied Lambourne; 'why, thon limber lot of a thing, thrust through that bunch of slashed backcloth and taffy, shows like a housewife's distaff, when the flax is half spun off!'
'I am not so,' said the mercur, whose shallow brain was now overflowed in his turn; 'where, then, where he be this rascal pedlar?—there was a pedlar here but now, methinks.—Mine heart, where is the soul hid in this pedlar?'

'Where wise men should be, Master Goldthried,' replied Giles Goshling; 'even shut up in his private chamber, telling all the sales of to-day, and preparing for the custom of to-morrow.'

'Hang him, a mechanical chuff!' said the mercur; 'but for shame, it were a good deal to case him of his wares,—a set of peddling knaves, who stroll through the land, and hurt the established trader. There are good fellows in Berkshire yet, mine host—your pedlar may be met withal on Maiden Castle.

'Ay,' replied mine host, laughing, 'and he who meets him may meek his match—the pedlar is a tall man.'

'Is he?' replied the host; 'ay, by cock, and is he—the very pedlar, who maddled Robin Hood so tightly, as the song says.'

Now Robin Hood drew his sword so good,
The pedlar drew his blade,
And he that maddled Robin Hood
Till neither could see nor stand.

'Hang him, foul scroyle, let him pass,' said the mercur; 'if he be such a one, there were smaller worship to be won upon him. And now tell me, Mike,—on my honest, Mike, how wears the Hollands you won of me.'

'Why, well, as you may see, Master Goldthried,' answered Mike; 'I will bestow a pot on thee for the handsel. Fill the flagon, Master Tapster.'

'Thou wilt win no more Hollands, I think,' said the pedlar, 'on such wager, friend Mike.'

To me, for such a one, there were smaller
Hollands you won of me,'

'Doth he say so, the innocent, hyppocratic miser?' vociferated Goldthried; 'Why, then,
We shall go out and receive my commands here, this blessed night, under my uncle's roof! And I will ring thee to such a blast of saucins, that he shall think the devil hath him by the skirts for a month to come, for barely hearing me.'

'Nay, row the bottle-pot is uppermost, with a witness!' said the pedlar. 'Tony Foster obey thy whistle!—Alas! good Mike, go sleep—go sleep.'

'I tell thee well, thou thin-faced gull,' said Michael Lambourne, in high chafe, 'I will wager thee fifty angels against the first five shelves of thy shop, numbering upward from the false light, with all that is on them, that I make Tony Foster come down to this public-house before we have finished three rows.'

'I will lay no bet to that amount,' said the mercur, something solaced by an offer which intimated rather too private a knowledge, on Lambourne's part, of the secret recesses of his shop; 'I will lay no such wager,' he said; 'but I will stake five angels against thy five, thou will, that Tony Foster will not leave his own ale-house after prayer-time, for thee, or any man.'

'Content,' said Lambourne. 'Here, uncle, hold stakes, and let one of your young blood-barrels here—one of your infant tupsters, trip presently up to The Place, and give this letter to Master Foster, and say that I, his uncle, Michael Lambourne, pray to speak with him at nine o'clock this morning, upon business of grave importance.'—Away with thee, child; for it is now sun-down, and the wretched go to bed with the birds to save mutton-suet—laugh!'

Shortly after this messenger was dispatched—an interval which was spent in drinking and buffoonery—he returns with the answer, that Master Foster was coming presently.

'Wcn, won!' said Lambourne, darting on the stake.

'Not till he comes, if you please,' said the mercur, interfering.

'Why, shoo, he is at the threshold,' replied Michael. 'What said he, boy?'

'If it please your worship,' answered the messenger, 'he looked out of the window, with a mistrust before him; and when I delivered your errand, which I did with tears and trembling, he said, with a vinious aspect, that your worship might be gone to the infernal regions.'

'Or to be sure!' I suppose,' said Lambourne; 'it is there he disposes of all that are not of the congregation.'

'Even so,' said the boy; 'I used the other phrase as being the more poetical.'

'An ingenuous youth!' said Michael; 'shall have a drop to what thy poetical whistle. And what said Foster next?'

'He called me back,' answered the boy, 'and bid me say, you might come to him, if you had ought to say to him.'

'And what next?' said Lambourne.

'He read the letter, and seemed in a fluster, and asked if, when your worship was in drink—and I said you were speaking a little Spanish, as one who had been in the Canary Islands.'

'Out, you diminutive pint-pot, whoched of an overgrown reckoning!' replied Lambourne—'out!—But what said he then?'

'Why,' said the boy, 'he muttered, that if he came not, your worship would bolt out what better kept in; and so he took his old flat cap and threadder blue cloak, and, as I said before, he will be here incontinent.'

'There is truth in what he said,' replied Lambourne, 'if speaking to himself.—My brain has played me its old dog's trick—but courage—let him approach!—I have not rolled about in the world for many a day, to fear Tony Foster, be I drunk or sober.—Bring me a flagon of cold water, tochristen my sack withal.'

Lambourne, whose approach of Foster seemed to have recalled to a sense of his own condition, was busy in preparing to receive him, Giles Goshling stole up to the apartment of the pedlar, whom he found traversing the room in much agitation.

'You withdrew yourself suddenly from the company,' said the landlord to the guest.

'It was time, when the devil became one among you,' replied the pedlar.

'It is not courteous in you to term my nephew by such a name,' said Goshling, 'nor is it kindly in me to reply to it; and yet, in some sort, Mike may considered as a limb of Satan,'


CHAPTER XX.

Cloon. You have one of these pedlars, that have more in 'em than you'd think, sister.

WINTER'S TALE. Act IV. Sc. 4.

In his anxiety to obey the Earl's repeated charges of secrecy, as well as from his own unsocial and miserly habits, Anthony Foster was more desirous, by his mode of housekeeping, to escape observation than to resist intrusive curiosity. Thus, instead of a numerous household, to secure his charge and defend his house, he studied, as much as possible, to elude notice by diminishing his attendants; so that, unless when there were attendants of the Earl, or of Varney in the mansion, one old male domestic and two aged crones, who assisted in keeping the countess's apartments in order, were only the servants of the family.

It was one of those old women who opened the door when Wayland knocked, and answered his petition, to be admitted to exhibit his wares to the ladies of the family, with a volley of vituperation, couched in what is there called the jovRing dialect. The pedlar found the means of checking this vociferation, by slipping a silver groat into her hand, and intimating the present of some stuff for a coif, if the lady would buy of his wares.

"God ield thee, for mine is aw in luttacks—Silcott with thy pack into garrn, mon—Her walks in garrn." Into the garden she ushered the pedlar accordingly, and, pointing to an old ruinous garden-house, said, "Yonder he's her, mon—Yonder he's her—Th' will buy changes an' the lukes stuffs."

She has left me to come off as I may," thought Wayland, as he heard the bag shut the garden-door behind him. "But they shall not beat me, and they dare not murder me, for so little trespass, and by this fair twilight. Hang it, I will on—a brave general never thought of his retreat till he was defeated. I see two females in the old garden-house yonder—but how to address them?—Stay—Will Shakespeare, be my friend indeed, I will give them a taste of Antolynes."

He then sung, with a good voice and becoming audacity, the popular playhouse ditty—

"Lawn as white as driven snow,\nCypress black as ever was crow,\nGloves as sweet as damask roses,\nMasks for faces and for noses."

"What hath fortune sent us here for an unwonted sight, Janet?" said the lady.

One of those merchants of vanity, called pedlars, answered Janet demurely, who utters his light wares in lighter measures—I marvel old Doreas let him pass.

"It is a lucky chance, girl," said the countess; "we lead a heavy life here, and this may while off a weary hour."

"Ay, my gracious lady," said Janet; "but my father!"

"He is not my father, Janet, nor, I hope, my master," answered the lady. —"I say, call the man hither—1 want some things."

"Nay," replied Janet, "your ladyship has just to say so in the next packet, and if England can..."
furnish them they will be sent. —There will come mischief on't—I pray, dearest lady, let me bid the man begone!

I will have thee bid him come hither,' said the countess — or stay, thou terrified fool, I will bid him make bow, and spare thee a chilling.'

'Ah! well-a-day, dearest lady, if that were the worst,' said Janet sadly, while the lady called to the pedlar, 'Good fellow, step forward —thy pack—if thou hast good wares, chance has sent thee hither for my convenience and thy profit.'

What may your ladyship please to lack?' said Wayland, unstrapping his pack, and displaying its contents with as much dexterity as if he had been bred to the trade. Indeed, he had occasionally pursued it in the course of his roving life, and now recommenced his wares with all the volubility of a trader, and showed some skill in the main art of placing prices upon them.

What do I please to lack?' said the lady: 'why, considering I have not for six long months bought one yard of lawn or cambric, or one trinket, the most inconsiderable, for my own use, and at my own choice, the better question is, what hast thou got to sell? Lay aside for me that cambric and pair of scissors —and those roundels of gold fringe, drawn out with eypress—and that short cokle of cherry-coloured fine cloth garnished with gold buttons and —is it not of an absolute fancy, Janet?'

'Nay, my lady,' replied Janet, 'if you consult my poor judgment, it is, methinks, over gayly for a graceful habit.'

'Now, out upon by judgment, if it be no brighter, wench, suit the countess; thou shalt wear it thyself for penance sake; and I promise thee the gold buttons, being somewhat massive, will comfort thy father, and reconcile him to the cherry-coloured body. See that he sumpt them not away, Janet, and send them to bear company with the imprisoned angels which he keeps captive in his strong box.'

May I pray your ladyship to spare my poor father?' said Janet.

'Nay, but why should any one spare him that is so sparing of his own nature?' replied the lady.—'Well, but to our gear—That head-garniture for myself, and that silver holm mounted with pearl—and take off two crowns of that russet cloth for Dorcas and Alison, Janet, to keep the old wretches warm against winter comers—And stay, hast thou no perfumes and sweet bags, or any handsome casting bottles, of the newest mode?'

'Were I a pedlar in earnest, I were a made merchant,' thought Wayland, as he basied himself to answer the demands which she thronged one another, with the cagereness of a young lady who has been long seduced from such a pleasing occupation. 'But how to bring her to a moment's serious reflection?' Then, as he exhibited his choicest selection of essences and perfumes, he at once arrested her attention by observing that these articles had almost risen to double price and raise the magnificent preparations made by the Earl of Leicester to entertain the queen and court at his princely Castle of Kenilworth.

'Ha!' said the countess hastily; 'that rumour then is true, Janet.'

'Surely, madam,' answered Wayland; 'and I marvel it hath not reached your noble ladyship's ears. The Queen of England feasts with the noble Earl for a week during the Summer's Progress; and there are many who tell you England will have a king, and England's Elizabeth—God save her!—a husband, ere the progress be over.'

'They lie like villains!' said the countess, bursting forth impatiently.

For God's sake, madam, consider,' said Janet, trembling with apprehension; 'who would counsel themselves about pedlar's tidings?'

'Yes, Janet!' exclaimed the countess; 'right, thou hast corrected me justly. Such reports, brightening the reputation of England's brightest and noblest peer, can only find currency amongst the mean, the deluge, and the infirmous.'

'May I perish, lady,' said Wayland Smith, observing that her violence directed itself towards him, 'if I have done anything to merit this strange passion!—I have said but what many men say.'

By this time the countess had recovered her composure, and endeavoured, alarmed by the anxious hints of Janet, to suppress all appearance of displeasure. 'I were loath,' she said, 'good fellow, that our queen should change the virgin style, so dear to us all,—think not of it.'

And then, as if desirous to change the subject, she added, 'And what is this paste, so carefully put up in the silver box?' as she examined the contents of a basket in which drugs and perfumes were contained in separate drawers.

'It is a remedy, madam, for a disorder of which I trust your ladyship will never have reason to complain. The amount of a small turkey-lean, swallowed daily for a week, fortifies the heart against those black vapours, which arise from solitude and melancholy, unrequited affection, disappointed hope.'

'Are you a fool, friend?' said the countess sharply; 'or do you think, because I have good-naturedly purchased your trumpery goods at your rogueish prices, that you may put any gallowery you will on me? who ever heard that affections of the heart were cured by medicines to the body!'

'Under your honourable favour,' said Wayland, 'I am an honest man, and I have sold my goods at an honest price. — As to this most precious medicine, when I told its qualities, I asked you not to purchase it, so why should I lie to you? I say not it will cure a rooted affection of the mind, which only God and time can do; but I say, that this restorative relieves the black vapours which are engendered in the body of melancholy which broodeth on the mind. I have relieved many with it, both in court and city, and of late one Master Edmund Treanslian, a worshipful gentleman in Cornwall, who, on some slight receipt, it was told me, where he had set his affections, was brought into that state of melancholy, which made his friends alarmed for his life.'

He paused, and the lady remained silent for some time, and then asked, with a voice which she strove in vain to render firm and indifferent,
in its tone, ‘Is the gentleman you have mentioned perfectly recovered?’

‘Possibly, madam,’ answered Wayland; ‘he hath at least no bodily complaint.’

‘I will take some of the medicine,’ Janet, said the countess. ‘I too have sometimes that dark melancholy which overclouds the brain.’

‘You shall not do so, madam,’ said Janet; ‘who shall answer that this fellow veends what is wholesome?’

‘I will myself warrant my good faith,’ said Wayland; and, taking a part of the medicine, he swallowed it before them. The countess now bought what remained, a step to which Janet, by further objections, only determined her the more obstinately. She even took the first dose upon the instant, and professed to feel her heart lightened and her spirits augmented,—a consequence which, in all probability, existed only in her own imagination. The lady then piled the purchases she had made together, hung her purse to Janet, and desired her to compute the amount, and to pay the pedlar; while she herself, as if tired of the announcement she at first found in conversing with him, wished him good evening, and walked carelessly into the house, thus depriving Wayland of every opportunity to speak with her in private. He hastened, however, to attempt an explanation with Janet.

‘What?’ said she, ‘What didst thou last the face of one who should love her mistress. She hath much need of faithful service.’

‘And well deserves it at my hands,’ replied Janet; ‘but what of that?’

‘Maiden, I am not altogether what I seem,’ said the pedlar, lowering his voice.

‘The less like to be an honest man,’ said Janet.

‘The more so,’ answered Wayland, ‘since I am no pedlar.’

‘Get thee gone then instantly, or I will call for assistance,’ said Janet; ‘my father must see this time be returned.’

‘Do not be so rash,’ said Wayland; ‘you will do nothing to my return; I am one of your mistress’s friends; and she had need of more, not that thou shouldst ruin those she hath.’

‘How shall I know that?’ said Janet.

‘Look me in the face,’ said Wayland Smith, ‘and see if thou dost not read honesty in my looks.’

And in truth, though by no means handsome, there was in this physiognomy the sharp, keen expression of inventive genius and prompt intellect, which joined to quick and brilliant eyes, a well-formed mouth, and an intelligent soul, often gives grace and interest to features which are but homely and irregular. Janet looked at him with the sly simplicity of her sect, and replied, ‘Notwithstanding thy boasted honesty, friend, and although I am not accustomed to read and pass judgment on such volumes as thou hast submitted to my perusal, I think I see in thy countenance something of the pedlar—something of the prior.’

‘On a small scale, perhaps,’ said Wayland Smith, laughing. ‘But this evening, or to-morrow, will an old man come hither with thy father, who has the stealthy step of the cat, the shrewd and vindictive eye of the rat, the fawning voice of the spaniel, the determined snatch of the thief—of him beware, for your own sake and that of your mistress. See you, fair Janet, he brings the venom of the asp under the assumed innocence of the dove. What precise mischief he meditates towards you I cannot guess, but death and disgrace have ever dogged his footsteps. Say nought of this to thy mistress—my art suggests to me that in her state the fear of evil may be as dangerous as its operation—but see that you take my specific, for—’ (he lowered his voice, and spoke low but impressively in her ear)—‘it is an antidote against poison—dark, they enter the garden!’

In effect, a sound of noisy mirth and loud talking approached the garden door, alarmed by which Wayland Smith sprung into the midst of a thickent of overgrown shrubs, while Janet withdrew to the garden-house that she might not incur observation, and that she might at the present time, and the purchase made from the supposed pedlar, which lay scattered on the floor of the summer-house.

Janet, however, had no occasion for anxiety. Her father, her old attendant, Lord Leister’s deceased house, and the astrologer, entered the garden in tumult and extreme perplexity, endeavoring to quiet Lambourne, whose brain had now become completely fired with liquor, and who was one of those unfortunate persons, who, being once stirred with the vinosus simulus, do not fall asleep like other drunkards, but remain partially influenced by it for many hours, until at length, by successive draughts, they are elevated into a state of uncontrollable frenzy. Like many men in this state, also, Lambourne neither lost the power of motion, speech, or expression; but, on the contrary, spoke with unwonted emphasis and readiness, and told all that at another time he would have been most desirous to keep secret.

‘What!’ ejaculated Michael, at the full extent of his voice, ‘am I to have no revenge, no recompense, when I have brought fortune to your old ruinous dog-house in the shape of a devil’s ally, that can change slate-shutters into Spanish dollars? Here you, Tony Fire-the-Pagot, papist, puritan, hypocrite, miser, profligate, devil, com- pounder of all men’s sins, bow down and reverence him who has brought into thy house the very mammon whom worshippest.’

‘For God’s sake,’ said Foster, ‘Speak low—come into the house—thou shalt have wine, or whatever thou wilt.’

‘No, old pack-o’-whiskey, I will have it here,’ thundered the incensed ruffian—‘here, at once, as the Italian hath it.—No, no, I will not drink with that poisoning devil within doors, to be choked with the fumes of arsenie and quicksilver; I learned from villain Varney to beware of that.’

‘Fetch him wine, in the name of all the fiends!’ said the alchemist.

‘Ah! and then wouldst spit it for me, old Truempney, wouldst thou not? Ay, I should have coppers, and hell-bears, and viriols, and absolute trifles, and twenty devilish materials, bumbling my brain, like a charm to raise the devil in a witch’s caldron. Hand me the flask

[The conversation continues, but the partial text does not provide a coherent ending.]

[The narrative concludes with the character's resolve to seek revenge on the intruders, setting the stage for further action.]

[The scene shifts, hinting at the preparation for a larger conflict or confrontation.]
thou, old Tony Fire-the-Fagot—and let it be cool—I will have no wine muddled at the pile of the old burnt bishops—Or esteemed, Leicester be villain, grand vizier—why, excellent—what shall I be, then—why, emperor—Emperor Lambourne! I will sell this choice piece of their private pleasures—I will have her this very night to serve my wine-cup, and put on my night-cap. What should a fellow do with two wives, were he twenty times an earl?—answer me that, Tony boy; old reprobate, hypercritical dog, whom God struck out of the book of life, but tormented with the constant wish to be restored to it—You old bishop-burning, blasphemous lout, answer me that! I will stick my knife to the haft in him, master, in a low tone, which trembled with passion.

For the love of Heaven, no violence! said the astrologer. 'It cannot but be looked closely into,—here, honest Lambourne, will thou pledge me the health of the noble Earl of Leicester and Master Richard Varney?'

'I will, mine old Abubazar—I will, my trusty vendor of malachite, who would kiss thee, mine honest inflator of the Jewels (as they say at Leyden), distast thou not flavour of damnable opium, and such impudent apothecary's stuff.'—Here goes it, up seizes—to Varney and Leicester!—two more noble mounting spirits, and more dark-seeking, deep-digging, high-dying, malicious, ambitious miscreants—well, I say no more, but I will whet my dagger on his heart-spone, that relieves to pledge me! and so, my masters.'

Thus speaking, Lambourne extinguished the cup the astrologer had handed to him, and which contained not wine, but distilled spirits. He swore half an oath, dropped the empty cup from his grasp, laid his hand on his sword without being able to draw it, recoiled, and fell without any motion into the arms of the domestick, who dragged him off to his chamber and put him to bed.

In the general confusion, Janet regained her lady's chamber unsawed, trembling like an aspen leaf, but determined to keep the secret from the dreadful suspicions which she could not help entailing from the drunken ravings of Lambourne. Her fears, however, though they assumed no certain shape, kept pace with the advice of the physician; and she confirmed not mistress in her purpose of taking the medicine which he had recommended, from which it is probable she would otherwise have disdained her. Neither had the intimations escaped the ears of Wayland, who knew much better how to interpret them. He felt much compassion at beholding so lovely a creature as the countess, and whom he had first seen in the bosom of domestic happiness, exposed to the machinations of such a gang of villains. His indignation, too, had been highly excited, by hearing the voice of his old master, against whom he felt, in every degree, the passions of hatred and fear. He nourished also a pride in his own art and resources; and, dangerous as the task was, that night formed a determination to attain the bottom of the mystery, and to aid the distressed lady, if it were yet possible. From some words which Lambourne had dropped among his ravings, Wayland now, for the first time, felt inclined to doubt that Varney had entirely on his own account, in woeing and vituperating the affections of this beautiful creature. Fame asserted of this zealous retainer, that he had assassinated his lord in former love intrigues; and it occurred to Wayland Smith, that Leicester himself might be the party chiefly interested. Her marriage with the earl he could not suspect; but even the discovery of such a passing intrigue with a lady of Mistress Amy Robest's rank, was a secret of the deepest importance to the stability of the favourite's power over Elizabeth. 'If Leicester himself should hesitate to stifle such a rumour by very strange means,' said he to himself, 'she has these about without waiting for his consent. If I would meddle in this business, it must be in such guise as my old master uses when he compounds his name of Satan, and that is with a close mask on my face. So I will quit Giles going to-morrow, and change my course and place of residence as often as a hunted fox should like to see this little puritan, too, once more. She looks both pretty and intelligent, to have come of such a cuttiff as Anthony Fire-the-Fagot.'

Giles Goring received the advice of Wayland rather joyfully than otherwise. The honest publican saw so much peril in crossing the course of the Earl of Leicester's favourite, that his virtue was scarce able to support him in the task, and he was well pleased when it was likely to be removed from his shoulders; still, however, professing his goodwill, and readiness, in case of need, to do Master Tressilian or his emissary any service, in so far as consisted with his character of a publican.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Vain ambition, that oversteps itself, and falls on other sides.
Amid such a tide of prosperity, this opinion of fortune, and of the queen's favour, was probably the most unhappy man in the realm, which seemed at his devotion. He had the Fairy King's superiority over his friends and dependents, and saw himself what they could not. The character of his mistress was intimately known to him; it was his minute and studied acquaintance with her humours, as well as her noble faculties, which joined to his powerful mental qualities, and his eminent external accomplishments, had raised him so high in her favour; and it was true that every knowledge of her disposition which led him to apprehend at every turn some sudden and overwhelming disgrace. Leicester was like a pilot possessed of a chart, which points out to him the peculiarities of his navigation, but which exhibits so many shoals, breakers, and reefs of rocks, that his anxious eye reaps little more from observing them, than to be convinced that his final escape can be little else than uncertain.

In fact, Queen Elizabeth had a character strangely compounded of the strongest masculine sense, with those folioes which are chiefly supposed proper to the female sex. Her subjects had the full benefit of her virtues, which far predominated over her weaknesses; but her courtiers, and those about her person, had often to sustain sudden and embarrassing turns of caprice, and the sallies of a temper which was both jealous and despotic. She was the nursing mother of her people, but she was also the true daughter of Henry VIII.; and though early sufferings and an excellent education had repressed and mollified, they had not altogether destroyed, the hereditary temper of that 'hard-ruled king.'—Her mind, says her witty godson, Sir John Harington, who had experienced both the smiles and the frowns which he describes, was oftentimes like the gentle air that cometh from the western point in a summer's morn—was sweet and refreshing to all around her. Her speech did win all affections. And again she could put forth such afflictions, when obedience was lacking, as left no doubting whose court it was. When she smiled, it was as pure sunshine, that every one did choose to bask in, if they could; but anon came a storm, from a sudden gathering of clouds, and the thunder fell in a wondrous manner, on all alike.

The disposition, as Leicester well knew, was chiefly formidably to those who had a share in the queen's affections, and who depended rather on her personal regard, than on the indispensable services which they could render to her councils and her crown. The favour of Burleigh, or of Walsingham, of a description far less striking than that by which he was himself upheld, was founded, as Leicester was well aware, on Elizabeth's solid judgment, not on her partiality; and was, therefore, free from all those principles of change and decay, necessarily incident to that which chiefly arose from personal accomplishments and female predilection. These great and sage statesmen were judged by the queen, only with reference to the measures they suggested, and the reasons by which they supported their opinions in council; whereas the success of Leicester's course depended on all those light and changeable gales of policy, and humour, which swayed or favour the progress of a lover in the favour of his mistress, and she too a mistress who was ever and anon becoming fearful lest she should forget the dignity, or compromise the authority, of the queen, while she indulged the affections of the woman. Of the difficulties which surrounded his power, 'too great to keep or to resign,' Leicester was fully sensible; and as he looked anxiously round for the means of maintaining himself in his precarious situation, and sometimes contemplated those of descending from it in safety, he saw but little hope of either. At such moments, his thoughts turned to dwell upon his secret marriage and its consequences; and it was in bitterness against himself, if not against his unfortunate country, that he ascribed to that hasty measure, adopted in the ardour of what he now called inconsiderate passion, at once the impossibility of placing his power on a solid basis, and the immediate prospect of its precipitate downfall.

'Men say,' thus ran his thoughts, in these anxious and repentant moments, 'that I might marry Elizabeth, and become King of England. All things suggest this. The match is enrolled in ballads, while the rabble throw their caps up—it has been touched upon in the schools—whispered in the presbytery—recommended in the Calvinistic churches abroad—touched upon by the statists in the very council at home. These bold insinuations have been rebutted by no rebuke, no resentment, no chiding, scarce even by the usual female protestation that she would live and die a virgin princess. Her words have been more courteous than ever, though she knows such novenas are abroad—her actions more gracious—her looks more kind—nought seems wanting to make me King of England, and place me beyond the storms of court-favour, excepting the putting forth of mine own hand to take that crown imperial, which is the glory of the universe! And when I might stretch forth the hand of holiness, it is fettered by a secret and inexorable bond! And here I have letters from Amy, he would say, catching them up with a movement of perverseness, persecuting me to acknowledge her openly—to do justice to her and to myself—I was not what. Mithinks I have done less than justice to myself already. And she speaks as if Elizabeth were to receive the knowledge of this matter with the glee of a mother hearing of the happy marriage of a hopeful son—She, the daughter of Henry, who spared neither man in his anger, nor woman in his desire—she to find herself tricked, drawn on with toys of passion to the verge of acknowledging her love to a subject, and he discovered to be a married man!—Elizabeth to learn that she had been dallied with in such fashion, as a gay coutryr might trifle with a country wench!—We should then see to our ruin furora quid furorin!'

He would then pause, and call for Varney, whose advice was now more frequently resorted to than ever, because the earl remembered the

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*Nuncio Antiquus*, vol. i. pp. 355-362.
in a dry tone; and without pausing on that topic, he added, 'Suppose some one were found to represent her? Such traits have been performed in the courts of as sharp-eyed monarchs as Queen Elizabeth.'

'Uter madness, Varney,' answered the earl; 'the counterfeit would be confronted with Tressilian, and discovery become inevitable.'

'Tressilian might be removed from court,' said the hesitating Varney.

'And by what means?'

'There are many,' said Varney, 'by which a statesman in your situation, my lord, may remove from the scene one who pursues into your affairs, and places himself in perilous opposition to you.'

'Speak not to me of such policy, Varney,' said the earl lastly; 'what besides, would avail nothing in the present case. Many others there be at court, to whom Amy may be known; and besides, in the absence of Tressilian, her father or some of her friends would be instantly summoned hither. Urge thine invention once more.'

'My lord,' I know not what to say,' answered Varney, 'but were I myself in such perplexity, I would rise post down to Cumnor Place, and compel my wife to give her consent to such measures as her safety, and mine required."

'Varney,' said Leicester, 'I cannot urge her to ought so repugnant to her noble nature, as a share in this stratagem—it would be a base requital to the love she bears me.'

'Well, my lord,' said Varney, 'your lordship is a wise and an honourable man, and skilled in those high points of romantic scripture, which are current in Aresia, perhaps, as your nephew, Philip Sidney, writes, I am your humble servitor—a man of this world, and only able that my knowledge of it, and its ways, is such as your lordship has not seemed to me myself of. Now I would fain know, whether the obligation lies on my lady or you, in this fortunate union: one which has most reason to show complaisance to the other, and to consider that other's wishes, conveniences, and safety!'

'I tell thee, Varney,' said the earl, 'that all it was in my power to bestow upon her, was not merely deserved, but a hundred times overpaid, by her own virtue and beauty; and never did greatness descend upon a creature so formed by nature to grace and adorn it.'

'It is well, my lord,' said Varney, 'you are so satisfied,' answered Varney, 'with his usual amiable smile, which even respect to his patron could not at all times subdue—you will have time enough to undisturb the society of one so gracious and beautiful—that is, so soon as such confinement in the Tower be over, as may correspond to the crime of deceiving the affection of Elizabeth Tudor. A cheaper penalty, I presume, you do not expect.'

'Malignant fiend,' answered Leicester, 'do you mock me in my misfortune!—Manage it as thou wilt.'

'If you are serious, my lord,' said Varney, 'you must set forth instantly, and post for Cumnor Place.'

'Do thou go thyself, Varney; the devil has given thee that sort of eloquence, which is most
powerful in the worst cause. I should stand self-convicted of villany were I to urge such a deed.— Begone, I tell thee—Must I entreat thee to lose my own dishonour?

'No, my lord,' said Varney—but if you are serious in entrusting me with the task of urging this most necessary measure, you must give me a letter to my lady, as my credentials, and trust to me for backing the advice it contains with all the force in my power. And such is my opinion of my lady's love for your lordship, and of her willingness to do that which is at once to contribute to your pleasure and your safety, that I am sure she will consennly bear to hear for a few brief days the name of so humble a man as myself, especially since it is not inferior in antiquity to that of her own paternal home.'

Leicester seized on writing materials, and twice or thrice commenced a letter to the countess, which he afterwards tore into fragments. At length he dictated a second one, in which he conjured her, for reasons nearly concerning his life and honour, to consent to bear the name of Varney for a few days, during the revels at Kenilworth. He added, that Varney would communicate all the reasons which rendered this deception indispensable; having signed and sealed these credentials, he flung them over the table to Varney, with a motion that he should depart, which his adviser was not slow to comprehend and to obey.

Leicester remained like one stupefied, till he heard the trampling of the horses, as Varney, who took no time even to change his dress, threw himself into the saddle, and, followed by a single servant, set off for Berkshire. At the sound, the earl started from his seat, and ran to the window, with the momentary purpose of recalling the unworthy commission with which he had entrusted one of whom he used to say, he knew no virtuous property save affection to his patron. But Varney was already beyond call—and the bright starry firmament, which the age considered as the Book of Fate, lying spread before Leicester when he opened the casement, diverted him from his better and more manly purpose.

'They roll on their silent but potential course,' said the earl, looking around him, 'without a voice which speaks to our ear, but not without influences which affect, at every change, the inbathers of this vile earthly planet. This, if astronomers fable not, is the very crisis of my fate! The hour approaches of which I was taught to beware—the hour, too, which was encouraged to hope for. A king was the word—but how!—the crown matrimonial—all hopes of that are gone—let them go. The rich Netherland have dammed me for their leader, and would Elizabeth consent, would yield to me their crown. And have I not such a claim, even in this kingdom? That of York, descending from George of Clarence to the House of Huntington, which, this lady falling, may have a fair chance—Huntingdon is of my house. But I will plunge no deeper in these high mysteries. Let me hold my course in silence for a while, and in obscurity like a subterranean river—the time shall come, that I will burst forth in my strength, and bear all opposition before me.'

While Leicester was thus stupefying the remonstrances of his own conscience, by appealing to political necessity for his apology, or losing himself amidst the wild dreams of ambition, his agent left town and tower behind him, on his hasty journey to Berkshire. He also nourished high hope. He had brought Lord Leicester to the point which he had desired, of committing to him the most intimate recesses of his breast, and of using him as the channel of his most confidential intercourse with his lady. Henceforward it would, he foresaw, be difficult for his patron either to dispense with his services, or refuse his requests, however unreasonable. And if this disheveled dame, as he termed the countess, should comply with the request of her husban, Varney, her pretended husband, must needs become so situated with respect to her, that there was no knowing where his audacity might be bounded—perhaps not till circumstances enabled him to gain a triumph, which he thought of with a mixture of disgust and revenge, in which her former servile was foremost and predominant. Again he contemplated the possibility of her being totally inactive, and refusing obstinately to play the part assigned to her in the drama at Kenilworth. I will not forego the chance of being of favour of the want of determined measures, should these be necessary. Forward, good horse, forward!—ambition, and haughty hope of power, pleasure, and revenge, strike their stings as deep through my bosom as I plunge the rowels in thy flanks—On, good horse, on—the devil urges us both forward.'

CHAPTER XXII.

Say that my beauty was but small,
Among court ladies all despised
Why, didst thou rend it from that hall,
Where, scorned earl, 'twas dearly prised?

No more thou comest with wonted speed,
Thy once beloved bride to see;
But be she alive, or be she dead,
I fear, stern earl, 'tis the same to thee.

CUMIN HALL, BY WILLIAM JULIUS MICKEL.

The ladies of fashion of the present, or of any other period, must have allowed that besides her youth and beauty, two qualities which entitled her to a place among women of rank and distinction, she displayed, as we have seen in her interview with the podal, a liberal promptitude to make unnecessary purchases, solely for the pleasure of acquiring useless and showy trifles which ceased to please as soon as they were possessed; and she was, besides, apt to spend a considerable space of time every day in adorning her person, although the varied splendor of her attire could only attract the half satirical praise of the precise Janet, or an approving glance from
the bright eyes which witnessed their own beams of triumph reflected from the mirror.

The Countess Amy had indeed pleaded, for indulgence in these frivolous tastes, that the occasion of the times had done little or nothing for a mind naturally gay and averse to study. If she had not loved to collect finecky and to wear it, she might have woven tapestry or sewed embroidery, till her labours spread in gay profusion all over the walls and seats at Lichfield Hall; or she might have varied Minerva's labours with the task of preparing a mighty pudding against the time that Sir Hugh Boldast returned from the greenwood. But Amy had no natural genius either for the loom, the needle, or the receipt-book. Her mother had died in infancy; her father contributed her in nothing; and Tressilian, the only one that approached her, who was able or desirous to attend to the cultivation of her mind, had much hurt his interest with her; in reasoning too eagerly the task of a preceptor; so that she was tossed by the lively, indulged, idle girl, with some degree of much respect; but with little or nothing of that softer emotion which it had been his hope and his ambition to inspire. And thus her heart lay ready open; and her fancy became easily captivated by the noble exterior, and graceful deportment, and compleat flattery of Leicester, even before he was known to her as the dazzling union of wealth and power.

The frequent visits of Leicester at Cummor, during the earlier part of their union, had reconciled the countess to the solitude and privacy to which she was condemned; but when these visits become rarer and more rare, and when the void was filled up with letters of excuse, not always very warmly expressed, and generally extremely brief, discontent and suspicion began to haunt those splendid apartments which had fitted up for beauty. Her answers to Leicester conveyed these feelings too blantly, and pressed more naturally than prudently that she might be relieved from this obscure and secluded residence, by the Earl's acknowledgment of their marriage; and in arranging their appointments, with all the skill which was mistress of, she turned her mind to the warmth of the entreaties with which he urged them. Sometimes she even ventured to mingle reproaches, of which Leicester conceived he had good reason to complain.

'I have made her countess,' said he to Varney; 'surely she might wait till it consisted with my pleasure that she should put on her coronet.'

The Countess Amy viewed the subject in directly an opposite light.

'What signifies,' she said, 'that I have rank and honor in my heart, if I am to live an obscure prisoner, without either society or observance, and suffering in my character, as one of dullness or disgraced reputation? I care not for all those strings of pearl which you fret me by warping into my breast. Janet, I tell you, at Lichfield Hall, if I put but a fresh rosebud among my hair, my good father would call me to him, that he might see it more closely; and the kind old curate would smile, and Master Malmibazon would say something about roses gales; and now I sit here, decked out like an image with gold and gems, and no one to see my fancy but you, Janet. There was the poor Tressilian, too—but it avails not speaking of him.

'It doth not indeed, madam,' said her prudent attendant; 'and verify you make yourself sometimes wish you would speak of him so often, or so readily.'

'It signifies nothing to warm me, Janet,' said the impatient and incorrigible countess; 'I was born free, though I am now mired up as one fine stone, rather than the wife of an English noble. I hope it all with pleasure while I was sure love him; but now, my tongue and heart shall be free, let them utter these lines as they will.'—Tell thee, Janet, I love my husband—I will love 'in till my latest moment—'I cannot cease to love him, even if I would, or if he— which, God knows, may chance—should cease to love me. But I will say, and loudly, I would have been happy of him now, to have remained in Lichfield Hall, even although I must have married poor Tressilian, with his vulgar, muddy look, and his head full of learning, which I cared not for. He said, if I would read his favourite volumes, there would come a time when I should be glad of having done so—I think it come now.'

'I bought you some books, madam,' said Janet, 'from a lame fellow who sold them in the market-place—and who stood something badly at me, I promise you.'

'Let me see them, Janet,' said the countess; 'but let them not be of your own precise cast. How is this, most righteous gentleman?—A Pair of Satchels for the Golden Casket—A Brand of Myrrel and Hyssop to put a Sick Soul to Perdition—A Draught of Water from the Valley of Bets—Forez and Firebounds—What gear call you this, maiden?'

'Nay, madam,' said Janet, 'it was but fitting and seemingly to put grace in your ladyship's way; but an you will none of them, there are play-books, and poet-books, I troth.'

The countess proceeded carelessly in her examination, turning over such rare volumes as would now make the fortune of twenty book-sellers. There was a Baby's Catechism, In- printed by Richard Laut, and Nichol's—The Pintaffe of the People—The Castle of Knowledge, etc. But neither to this bore did the countess's heart incline, and joyfully she did she start up from the listless task of turning over the leaves of the pamphlets, and hastily did she scatter them through the floor, when the head of an old hue of horses' feet, heard in the count-yard, called her to the window, exclaiming, 'It is Leicester—it is my noble earl!—it is my Dudley!—Every stroke of his horse's hoof sounds like a note of lordly music!'

There was a brief bustle in the mansion, and Foster, with his downward look and slender manner, entered the apartment to say, 'That Master Richard Varney was arrived from my lord, having ridden all night, and craved to speak with her ladyship instantly.'

'Varney!' said the disappointed countess; 'and to speak with me—why! But he comes with news from Leicester—so admit him instantly.'

Varney entered the dressing apartment, where
she sat arrayed in her native loveliness, adorned with all that Janet's art, and a rich and tasteful verdure, could bestow. But the most beautiful part of her attire was her profuse and luxuriant light-brown locks, which floated in such rich abundance around a neck that resembled a swan's, and over a bosom heaving with anxious expectation, which communicated a hurried tinge of red to her whole countenance.

Varney entered the room in the dress in which he had waited on his master that morning to court, the splendour of which made a strange contrast with the disorder arising from hasty riding during a dark night and foul ways. His brow wore an anxious and hurried expression, as one who has that to say of which he doubts the reception, and who hath yet posted on from the necessity of communicating his tidings. The countess's anxious eye at once caught the alarm, as she exclaimed, 'You bring news from my lord, Master Varney—Gracious Heaven! is he ill?'

'No, madam, thank Heaven!' said Varney. 'Consider yourself, and permit me to take breath ere I communicate my tidings."

'No breath, sir,' replied the lady impatiently; 'I know your theatrical arts. Since your breath hath sufficed to bring you hither, it may suffice to tell your tale, at least briefly, and in the gross.'

'Madam!' answered Varney, 'we are not alone, and my lord's mandate was for your ear only;'

'Leave us, Janet and Master Foster,' said the lady; 'but remain in the next apartment, and within call.'

Foster and his daughter retired, accordingly to the Lady Leicester's commands, into the next apartment, which was the withdrawing-room. The door which led from the sleeping-chamber was then carefully shut and bolted, and the father and daughter remained both in a posture of anxious attention, the first with a stern, suspicious, anxious east of countenance, and Janet with folded hands, and looks which seemed divided betwixt her desire to know the fortunes of her mistress, and her prayers to Heaven for her safety.

Anthony Foster seemed himself to have some idea of what was passing through his lord's mind, for he crossed the apartment and took her anxiously by the hand, saying, 'That is right—pray, Janet, pray—we have all need of prayers, and some of us more than others.'

Pray, Janet—I would pray myself, but I must listen to what goes on within—evil has been brewing, love—evil has been brewing. God forgive our sins; but Varney's sudden and strange arrival bodes us no good.'

Janet had never before heard her father exult or even permit her attention to anything which passed in their mysterious family, and now she felt his voice sounded in her ear—she knew not why—like that of a screech-owl denouncing some deed of terror and of woe. She turned her eyes fearfully towards the door, almost as if she expected some sounds of horror to be heard, or some sight of fear to display itself.

All, however, was as still as death, and the voices of those who spoke in the inner chamber were, if they spoke at all, carefully subdued to a tone which could not be heard in the next. At once, however, they were heard to speak fast, thick, and hastily; and presently after the voice of the countess was heard exclamining, at the highest pitch to which indignation could raise it, 'Undo the door, sir, I command you!—Undo the door!'—I shall have no other reply!' she continued, drowning with her vehemence accents the low and muttered sounds which Varney was heard to utter betwixt whistles. 'What ho! without there!' she persisted, accompanying her words with shrieks. 'Janet, alarm the house!—Foster, break open the door! I am detained here by a traitor!—Use axe and lever, Master Foster—I will be your warrant!' It shall not need, madam,' Varney was at length distinctly heard to say. If you please to expose my lord's important concerns and your own to the general ear, I will not be your hindrance.'

The door was unlocked and thrown open, and Janet and her father rushed in, anxious to learn the cause of these reiterated exclamations.

When they entered the apartment, Varney stood by the door grinding his teeth, with an expression in which rage, and shame, and fear had each their share. The countess stood in the midst of her apartment like a juvenile Pythian, under the influence of the prophetic fury. The veins in her beautiful forehead started into swollen blue lines through the hurried impulse of her articulation—her cheek and neck gloved like scarlet—her eyes were like those of an imprisoned eagle, flashing red lightning on the foes whom it cannot reach with its talons. Were it possible for one of the Graces to have been animated by a Fury, the countenance could not have united such beauty with so much hatred, scorn, defiance, and resentment. The gesture and attitude corresponded with the voice and looks, and altogether presented a spectacle which was at once beautiful and fearful; so much of the sublime had the energy of passion united with the Countess Amy's natural loveliness, Janet, as soon as the door was open, ran to her mistress; and more slowly, yet with more haste than he was wont, Anthony Foster went to Richard Varney.

In the Truth's name, what ails your ladyship,' said the former.

'What, in the name of Satan, have you done to her?' said Foster to his friend.

'Who, I—nothing,' answered Varney, but with sunken head and sullen voice; 'nothing but communicated to her lord's commands, which, if the lady list not to obey, she knows better how to answer it than I may pretend to do.'

'Now, by Heaven, Janet,' said the countess, 'the false traitor lies in his throat! He must needs lie, for he speaks to the dishonour of my noble lord—he must needs lie doubly, for he speaks to gain ends of his own, equally execrable and unattainable.'

'You have misapprehended me, lady,' said Varney, with a sulky species of submission and apology; 'let this matter rest till your passion be abated, and I will explain all.'

'Thou shalt never have an opportunity to do so,' said the countess. 'Look at him, Janet. He is fairly dreng-deth, hath the outside of a gentleman, and hither he came to persuade me it was
my lord's pleasure—nay, more, my wedded lord's commands—that I should go with him to Kenilworth, and before the Queen and nobles, and in presence of my own wedded lord, that I should acknowledge him—as there that very churlish, shoe-cleaning fellow—who there, my lord's lackey, for my liege lord and husband, furnishing against myself, great God! whenever I went to vindicate my right and my rank, such weapons as would hew my just claim from the root, and destroy my character to be regarded as an honoured matron of the English nobility.

You hear her, Foster, and you, young maiden, hear this lady,' answered Varney, taking advantage of the pause which the countess had made in her charge, more for lack of breath than for lack of matter—'You hear that her last only objects to me the course which our good lord, for the purpose to keep certain matters secret, suggests in the very letter which she holds in her hands.'

Foster here attempted to interfere with a face of authority, which he thought the charges entrusted to him. 'Nay, lady, I must needs say you are over-hasty in this—Such deceit is not utterly to be employed in such cases as the circumstance for a righteous end; and thus even the patriarch in his command to Sarah to be his sister when they went down to Egypt."

"Ay, sir," answered the countess; 'but God rebuked that deceit even in the father of his chosen people, by the mouth of the heathen Pharaoh. Out upon you, that will read Scripture only to copy those things, which are laid out to us as warnings, not as examples!'

"But Sarah disputed not the will of her husband, an it be your pleasure," said Foster, in reply; 'but did as Abraham commanded, calling herself his sister, that it might be well with her husband for her sake, and that his soul might live because of her beauty.'

"Now, so Heaven pardon me my useless anger," answered the countess, 'thou art as daring a hypocrite as yonder fellow is an impudent deceiver! Never will I believe that the noble Duke gave countenance to so dastardly, so dishonourable a plot. Thus I tread on his infamy, if indeed it be, and thus destroy its remembrance for ever!"

So saying, she tore in pieces Leicester's letter, and stamped, in the extremity of impatience, as if she would have annihilated the minute fragments into which she had put it.

'Bear witness,' said Varney, collecting himself, 'she hath torn my lord's letter, in order to burden me with the scheme of his designing; and although it promises not but danger and trouble to me, she would lay it to my charge, as if I had any purpose of mine own in it."

"Then hest, then treacherous slave," said the countess, in spite of Janet's attempts to keep her silent, in the sad foresight that her vehemence only furished arms against herself,—"Thou liest," she continued,—"Let me go, Janet. —Were it the last word I have to speak, he lied—he had his own ends to seek; and broader he would have displayed them, had my passion permitted me to preserve the silence which at first encouraged him to unfold his vile projects.

'Madam,' said Varney, overwhelmed in spite of his effrontery, 'I entreat you to believe yourself mistaken.'

'As soon will I believe light darkness,' said the enraged countess. 'Have I drank of oblivion! Do I not remember former passages, which, known to Leicester, had given thee the proof of a gallows, instead of the honour of his intimacy! —I would I were a man but for five minutes! It were space enough to make a craven like thee confess his villainy. But go—begone. Tell thy master that, when I take the foul course to which such scoundrels decents as thou hast recommended his behalf must necessarily lead me, I will give him a rival something worthy of the name. He shall not be supplanted by an ignominious lackey, whose best fortune is to catch a gift of his master's last suit of clothes ere it is threadbare, and who is only fit to seduce a suburb-bench by the bravery of new roses in his master's old parliaments. Go, begone, sir—I scorn thee so much, that I am ashamed to have been angry with thee.'

Varney left them with a mute expression of rage, and was followed by Foster, whose apprehension, naturally alarmed, was overpowered by the eager and abundant impatience of indignation, which, for the first time, he had heard from the lips of a being, who had seemed till that moment too languid and too gentle to nurse an angry thought, or utter an intemperate expression. Foster, therefore, pursued Varney from place to place, persecuting him with interrogatories, to which the other replied not, until they were in the opposite side of the quadrangle, and in the old library, with which the reader has already been made acquainted. Here he turned round on his persevering follower, and thus addressed him, in a tone tolerably cool, that brief walk having been sufficient to give one so habituated to command his temper, time to rally and recover his presence of mind.

"Tony," he said, with his usual anecdotizing laugh, 'it avails not to deny it. The Woman and the Devil, who, as thine oracle Holinford will confirm to thee, cheated man at the beginning, have this day proved more powerful than my discretion. You termagant looked so tempting, and had the art to preserve her countenance so naturally, while I communicated my lord's message, that by my faith, I thought I might say something for myself. She thinks she hath my head under her girdle now, but she is deceived. —Where is Doctor Alasco?"

"In his laboratory," answered Foster; 'it is the hour he is spoken not with—we must wait till noon is past, or spoil his important—what said I important—I would say interrupt his divine studies."

"Ay, he studies the devil's divinity," said Varney,—'but when I want him, one hour must suffice as well as another. Lead the way to his pandemonium."

So spoke Varney, and with hasty and perturbed steps followed Foster, who conducted him through private passages, many of which were well-humoured, to the opposite side of the quadrangle, where, in a subterranean apartment, now occupied by the chemist Alasco, one of the Abbots of Abingdon, who had a turn for the occult sciences,
had, much to the scandal of his convent, established a laboratory, in which, like other foils of the period, he spent much precious time, and money besides, in the pursuit of the grand arena.

Anthony Foster paused before the door, which was serenely secured within, and again showed a marked hesitation to disturb the sage in his operations. But Varney, less serenely, roused him, by knocking and voice, until at length, slowly and reluctantly, the inmate of the apartment unfast the door. The chemist appeared, with his eyes beamed with the heat and vapiours of the stove or alchemy over which he brooded, and the interior of his cell displayed the confused assemblage of heterogeneous substances and extraordinary implements belonging to his profession. The old man was muttering, with spiteful impatience, 'Am I for ever to be recalled to the affairs of earth from those of heaven?'

'To the affairs of hell,' answered Varney, 'for that is thy proper element. Foster, we need thee at our conference.'

Foster slowly entered the room. Varney, following, barred the door, and they bestowed themselves to secret council.

In the meanwhile, the countess traversed the apartment, with shame and anger contending on her lovely cheek.

'The villain,' she said, 'the cold-blooded, calculating slave!—But I unmasqued him, Janet,—I made the snake uncurl all his folds before me, and crawl abroad in his naked deformity. I suspended my resentment, at the danger of self-estaining under the effort, until he had let me see the very bottom of a heart more foul than hell's darkest corner.—And thou, Leicester, is it possible thou couldst bid me for a moment deny my wedded right in thee, or thyself ye it to another?—But it is impossible—the villain has lied in all,—Janet, I will not remain here longer—I fear him—I fear thy father—I grieve to say it. Janet—but I fear thy father, and, worst of all, this odious Varney. I will escape from Cumnor.'

'Ah! madam, whither would you fly, or by what means will you escape from these walls?'

'I know not, Janet,' said the unfortunate young lady, looking upwards, and clasping her hands together, 'I know not where I shall fly, or by what means; but I am certain the God I have served will not abandon me in this dreadful crisis, for I am in the hands of wicked men.'

'Do not think so, dear lady,' said Janet; 'my father is stern and strict in his temper, and severely true to his trust—but yet—'

At this moment Anthony Foster entered the apartment, bearing in his hand a glass cup and a small flask. His manner was singular; for, while approaching the countess with the respect due to her rank, he had till this time suffered to become visible, or had been unable to suppress, the odious baselessness of his natural disposition, which, as is usual with those of his unhappy temper, was chiefly exerted towards those over whom circumstances gave him control. But at present he showed nothing of that sullen con-

sciousness of authority which he was wont to conceal under a clumy affectation of civility and deference, as a villain hides his pistols and bludgeon under his ill-fashioned garbline. And yet it seemed as if his smile was more in fear than courtesy, and as if, while he pressed the countess to taste of the choice cordial, which should refresh her spirits after her late alarm, he was conscious of meditating some further injury. His hand trembled also, his voice faltered, and his whole outward behaviour exhibited so much that was suspicious, that his daughter Janet, after she had stood looking at him in astonishment for some seconds, seemed at once to collect herself to execute some hasty resolution, raised her head, assumed an attitude and gait of determination and authority, and, walking slowly betwixt her father and her mistress, took the salver from the hand of the former, and said in a low, but marked and decided tone, 'Father, I will fill for my noble mistress, whom such is her pleasure.'

'Then, my child?' said Foster, eagerly and apprehensively; 'no, my child—it is not thou shalt render the lady this service.'

'And why, I pray you,' said Janet, 'if it be fitting that the noble lady should partake of the cup at all?'

'Why—why?' said the senescent, hesitating, and then bursting into passion as the readiest mode of supplying the lack of all other reason—'Why, because it is my pleasure, minion, that you should not!—Get you gone to the evening lecture.'

'Now, as I hope to hear lecture again,' replied Janet, 'I will not go thither this night, unless I am better assured of my mistress's safety. Give me that flask, father;'—and she took it from his reluctant hand, while he resigned it as if conscience-stricken. 'And now,' she said, 'father, that which shall benefit my mistress cannot do me prejudice. Father, I drink to you.'

Foster, without speaking a word, rushed on his daughter, and wrested the flask from her hand; then, as if embarrassed by what he had done, and totally unable to resolve what he should do next, he stood with it in his hand, one foot advanced and the other drawn back, glaring on his daughter with a countenance in which rage, fear, and convicted villainy formed a hideous combination.

'This is strange, my father,' said Janet, keeping her eye fixed on his, in the manner in which those who have the charge of lunatics are said to overawe their unhappy patients; 'will you neither let me serve my lady, nor drink to her myself?'

The courage of the countess sustained her through this dreadful scene, of which the import was not the less obvious that it was not even hinted at. She preserved even the rush carelessss of her temper, and though her cheek had grown pale at the first alarm, her eye was calm, and almost scornful. 'Will you taste this rare cordial, Master Foster? Perhaps you will not yourself refuse to pledge us, though you permit not Janet to do so—Drink, sir, I pray you.'

'I will not,' answered Foster.

'And for whom, then, is the precious beverage reserved, sir?' said the countess.
For the devil, who brewed it! answered Foster; and, turning on his heel, he left the chamber.

Janet looked at her mistress with a countenance expressive in the highest degree of shame, dismay, and sorrow.

Do weep for me, Janet,' said the countess kindly, and, having paused a moment, she added—"I have no hope of being rescued, and I have no desire to be rescued."

No, madam,' replied her attendant, in a voice broken by sobs, 'it is not for you I weep, it is for myself—it is for that unhappy man. Those who are dishonoured before man—those who are condemned by God, have cause to mourn—not those who are innocent. Farewell, madam!' she said, hastily assuming the mantle in which she was wont to go abroad.

Do you leave me, Janet?' said her mistress—'desert me in such an evil strait?

'Alas! madam!' exclaimed Janet, and, reaching back to her mistress, she imprinted a thousand kisses on her hand—'desert me—may the Hope of my trust desert me when I do so!—No, madam; well you said the God you serve will open you a path for deliverance. There is a way of escape; I have prayed night and day for light, that I might see how to act betwixt my duty to yonder unhappy man, and that I owe to you. Sternly and fearfully that light has not dawned, and I must not shut the door which God has opened. Ask me no more. I will return in brief space.

So speaking, Varney arose, and, taking the flask from the table, he left the room.

I tell thee, my son,' said Alasco to Foster, as soon as Varney had left them, 'that, whatever this hold and prig used to say may of the mighty science, in which, by Heaven's blessing, I have advanced so far, that I would not call the wisest of living artists my better or my teacher—I say, however, you reproduce may scoff at things too holy to be apprehended by men merely of carnal and evil thoughts, yet believe that the City beguiled by Saint John, in that bright vision of the Christian Apocalypse, that New Jerusalem, of which all Christian men hope to partake, sets forth typically the discovery of the GARGOYLE SECRET, whereby the most perfect and precious of nature's works are elicited out of her basest and most crude productions, just as the light and gaudy butterfly, the most beautiful child of the summer's breeze, breaks forth from the dungheap of a sodal chrysalis.'

'Master Holdforth said ought of this exposition,' said Foster doubtfully; 'and moreover, Doctor Alasco, the Holy Writ says the gold and precious stones of the Holy City are in no sort for those who work alonization, or who frame lies.'

'Well, my son,' said the doctor, 'and what is your inference from thence?'

'That those,' said Foster, 'who distil poisouns, and administer them in secrecy, can have no portion in these unspeakable riches.'

'You are to distinguish, my son,' replied the alchemist, 'betwixt that which is necessarily evil in its progress and in its end also, and that which, being evil, is, nevertheless, capable of working forth good. If, by the death of one person, the happy period shall be brought nearer to us, in which all that is good shall be attained, by wishing its presence—all that is evil escaped, by desiring its absence—in which sickness, pain, and sorrow, shall be the obedient servants of human wisdom,—and made to fly at the slightest signal of a sage,—in which that which is now richest and rarest shall be within the compass of every one who shall be obedient to the voice of wisdom,—when the art of healing shall be lost and absorbed in the one universal medicine,—when sages shall become monarchs of the earth, and death itself retreat before their frown,—if this blessed consummation of all things can be hastened by the slight circumstance, that a frail earthly body, which must
needs partake corruption, shall be consigned to the grave a short space earlier than in the course of nature, what is such a sacrifice to the advancement of the holy Millennium?

Millennium is the reign of the Saints, said Foster, somewhat doubtfully,

'Say it is the reign of the Sages, my son,' answered Alasco; 'or rather the reign of Wisdom itself.'

'I touched on the question with Master Holdforth last exercising night,' said Foster; 'but he says your doctrine is heterodox, and a damnable and false exposition.'

'He is in the bonds of ignorance, my son,' answered Alasco, 'and, as yet, burning bricks in Egypt; or, at best, wandering in the dry desert of Sinai. Then didst ill to speak to such a man of such matters. I will, however, give thee proof, and that shortly, which I will defy that peevish divine to confute, though he should strive with me as the magicians strove with Moses before King Pharaoh. I will do projection in thy presence, my son, and in thy very presence, and thine eyes shall witness the truth.'

'Stick to that, learned sage,' said Varney, who at this moment entered the apartment: "If he refuse the testimony of thy tongue, yet shall he deny that of his own eyes?'

'Varney! I say the adept—Varney already returned! Hast thou— he stopped short.

'Have I done mine errand, thou wouldst say,' replied Varney—'I have!—And thou, he added, showing more symptoms of interest than he had hitherto exhibited, art thou sure thou hast poured forth neither more nor less than the just measure?'

'Ay,' replied the alchemist, 'as sure as men can be in these nice proportions; for there is diversity of constitutions.

'Nay, then,' said Varney, 'I fear nothing. I know thou wilt not go a step farther to the devil than thou art justly considered for. Thou wert paid to create illness, and wouldst esteem it frightful proclivity to do murder at the same price. Come, let us each to our chamber—We shall see the event to-morrow.'

'What dost thou do to make her swallow it?' said Foster, shuddering.

'Nothing,' answered Varney, 'but looked on her with that aspect which governs madmen, women, and children. They told me, in Saint Luke's Hospital, that I have the right look for overpowering a refractory patient. The keepers made me their compliments on't; so I know how to win my bread, when my court favour fails me.'

'And art thou not afraid,' said Foster, 'lest the dose be disproportioned?'

'If so,' replied Varney, 'she will but sleep the sounder, and the fear of that shall not break my rest. Good-night, my masters.'

Anthony Foster groaned heavily, and lifted up his hands and eyes. The alchemist intimated his purpose to continue some experiment of high import during the greater part of the night, and the others separated to their places of repose.
Are you strong enough to hear the tidings, and make the effort?" said the maiden.

"Strong!" answered the countess. "Ask the kind lady, when the fangs of the deer-bound are stretched to grip her, if she is strong enough to spring over a chasm. I am equal to every effort that may relieve me from this place."

"Hear me, then," said Janet. "One, whom I deem an observed friend of yours, has shown himself to me in various disguises, and sought speech of me, which—for my mind was not clear on the matter until this evening—I bare ever declined. He was the pedlar who sought your good, the itinerant hawk who sold me books—whenever I stirred abroad I was sure to see him. The event of this night determined me to speak with him. He walks even now at the postern-gate of the park, with means for your flight—but have you strength of body? Have not courage of mind? Can you undertake the enterprise?"

"She that flies from death," said the lady, "finds strength of body—she that would escape from shame, lacks no strength of mind. The thoughts of leaving behind me the villain who menaces both my life and honour, would give me strength to rise from the death-bed."

"Tis God's name, then, lady," said Janet, "I must bid you adieu, and to God's charge I must commit you."

"Will you not fly with me, then, Janet?" said the countess anxiously. "Am I to lose thee? Is this thy faithful service?"

"Ladylady, I would fly with you as willingly as bird ever fled from cage, but my doing so would occasion instant discovery and pursuit. I must remain, and use means to disguise the truth for some time—May Heaven pardon the falsehood, because of the necessity!"

"And am I then to travel alone with this stranger," said the lady. "Believe thee, Janet. Not this proves some deeper and darker scheme to separate me perhaps from you, who are my only friend?"

"No, madam, do not suppose it," answered Janet readily. "The youth is an honest youth in his purpose to you; and a friend to Master Tressillian, under whose direction he has come hither."

"If he be a friend of Tressillian," said the countess, "I will commit myself to his charge, as to that of an angel sent from heaven; for Tressillian, my brother, breathed mortal man for more than whatever he could, false, or selfish. He forgot himself whenever he could be of use to others. Alas! and how was he required!"

With eager haste they collected the few necessities which those thought proper the countess should take with her, and which Janet, with speed and dexterity, formed into a small bundle, not forgetting to add such ornaments of intrinsic value as came most readily in her way, and particularly a casket of jewels, which she wisely judged might prove of service in some future emergency. The Countess of Leicester next changed her dress for one which Janet usually wore upon any brief journey, for they judged it necessary to avoid every external distinction which might attract attention. Ere these preparations were fully made, the moon had arisen in the summer heaven, and all in the mansion had betaken themselves to rest, or at least to the silence and retirement of their chambers. There was no difficulty anticipated in escaping, whether from the house or garden, provided only they could elude observation. Anthony Foster had avowed himself to consider his daughter as a conscious sinner might regard a visible guardian angel, which, notwithstanding his guilt, continued to hover around him, and therefore his trust in her knew no bounds. She commanded her own motions during the day-time, and had a master-key which opened the postern-door of the park, so that she could go to the village at pleasure, either from the mansion-house, which were entirely confined to her management, or to attend her duties at the meeting-house of her sect. It is true, the daughter of Foster was thus liberally entrusted, under the solemn condition that she should not avail herself of these privileges, to anything inconsistent with the safe-keeping of the countess; for so her residence at Comnor Place had been termed, since she began to love the images of her sect, to which she was subjected. Nor is there reason to suppose that anything short of the dreadful suspicions which the scene of that evening had excited, could have induced Janet to violate her word, or deceive her father's confidence. But from what she had witnessed, she now conceived herself not only justified, but imperatively called upon, to make her lady's safety the principal object of her care, setting all other considerations aside. The fugitive countess, with her guide, traversed with hasty steps the broken and interrupted path, which had once been an avenue, now totally darkened by the boughs of spreading trees which met above their head, and now receiving a delightful and deceiving light from the beams of the moon, which penetrated where the axe had made openings in the wood. Their path was repeatedly interrupted by felled trees, or the large boughs which had been left on the ground till time served to make them into fagots and billets. The inconvenience and difficulty attending these interruptions, the lengthless haste of the first part of their route, the hasting sensations of hope and fear, so much affected the countess's strength, that Janet was forced to propose that they should pause for a few minutes to recover breath and spirits. Both therefore stood still beneath the shadowed and huge old guarded oak tree, and both naturally looked back to the mansion which they had left behind them, whose long dark front was seen in the gloomy distance, with its thatched stacks of chimneys, turrets, and clock-house, upon the line of the roof, and distinctly visible against the pure azure blue of the summer sky. One light only twinkled from the extended and shadowy mass, and it was placed so low, that it rather seemed to glimmer on the ground in front of the mansion, than from one of its windows. The countess's terror was awakened. 'They follow us!' she said, pointing out to Janet the light which thus alarmed her. Less agitated than her mistress, Janet perceived that the gleam was stationary, and
informed the countess, in a whisper, that the light proceeded from the solitary cell in which the alchemist pursued his occult experiments.

He is in the place,' she added, 'who sat up and watched by night that they may commit iniquity. Evil was the chance which sent hither a man whose mixed speech of earthly wealth and uncanny or superhuman knowledge, hath in it work, doth so especially captivate my poor father. Well spoke the good Master Holdforth—and, methought, not without meaning, that those of our household should find therein a practical use. "There be those," he said, "and their number is legion, who will rather, like the wicked Ahab, listen to the dreams of the false prophet Zedeehias, than to the words of him by whom the Lord has spoken." And he further insisted—"Ah, my brethren, there be many Zedeehiases among you—men that promise you the light of their own knowledge, so you will surrender to them that of your heavenly understanding. What are they better than the tyrant Naas, who demanded the right eye of those who were subjected to him?" And further he insisted:—

It is uncertain how long the fair puritan's memory might have supported her in the recapitulation of Master Holdforth's discourse; but the countess now interrupted her, and assured her she was so much recovered that she could now reach the postern without the necessity of a second delay.

They set out accordingly, and performed the second part of their journey with more deliberation, and of course more easily, than the first hasty commencement. This gave them leisure for reflection; and Janet now, for the first time, ventured to ask her lady which way she proposed to direct her flight. Receiving no immediate answer—for, perhaps, in the confusion of her mind, this very obvious subject of deliberation had not occurred to the countess—Janet ventured to aid, "Probably to your father's house, where you are sure of safety and protection?"

"No, Janet," said the lady mournfully; 'I left Liliethe Hall while my heart was light and my name was honourable, and I will not return thither till my lord's permission and public acknowledgment of our marriage restore me to my native home, with all the rank and honour which he has bestowed on me."

"And whither will you then, madam?" said Janet.

"To Kenilworth, girl," said the countess, boldly and freely, 'I will see these revels—these princely revels—the preparation for which makes the land ring from side to side. Methinks, when the Queen of England feasts within my husband's halls, the Countess of Leicester should be no unbecoming guest."

"I pray God you may be a welcome one," said Janet hastily.

"You abuse my situation, Janet," said the countess angrily, 'and you forget your own.'

"I do not, dearest madam," said the sorrowful maiden; 'but have you forgotten that the noble Earl has given such strict charges to keep your marriage secret, that he may preserve his court favour? and can you think that your sudden appearance at his castle, at such a juncture, and in such a presence, will be acceptable to him?"

"Thou thinkest I would disgrace him," said the countess; 'nay, let go my arm, I can walk without aid, and work without counsel."

"Be not angry with me, lady," said Janet meekly, 'and let me still support you; the road is rough, and you are little accustomed to walk in darkness."

"If you deem me not so mean as may disgrace my husband," said the countess, in the same resentful tone, 'you suppose my Lord of Leicester capable of abetting, perhaps of giving aim and authority to, the base proceedings of your father and Varney, whose errand I will do to the good Earl."

"For God's sake, madam, spare my father in your report," said Janet; 'let my services, however poor, be some atonement for his errors!"

"I was most unjust, dearest Janet, were it otherwise," said the countess, resuming at once the fondness and confidence of her manner towards her faithful attendant. 'No, Janet, not a word of mine shall do your father prejudice. But thou seest, my love, I have no desire but to throw myself on my husband's protection. I have left the ablest he is assigned for me because of the villany of the persons by whom I was surrounded—but I will disobey his commands in no other particular. I will appeal to him alone—and I will be protected by him alone—To no other, than at his pleasure, have I or will I communicate the secret union which combines our hearts and our destinies. I will see him, and receive from his own lips the directions for my future conduct. Do not argue against my resolution, Janet; you will only confirm it in me, and, to own the truth, I am resolved to know my fate at once, and from my husband's own mouth, and to seek him at Kenilworth is the surest way to attain my purpose."

While Janet hastily resolved in her mind the difficulties and uncertainties attendant on the unfortunate lady's situation, she was inclined to alter her first opinion, and to think, upon the whole, that since the countess had withdrawn herself from the retreat in which she had been placed by her husband, it was her first duty to repair to his presence, and possess him with the reasons for such conduct. She knew what importance the earl attached to the concealment of their marriage, and could not but own that, by taking any step to make it public without his permission, the countess would incur, in a high degree, the indignation of her husband. If she retired to her father's house without an explicit avowal of her rank, her situation was likely greatly to prejudice her character; and if she made such an avowal, it might occasion an irreconcilable breach with her husband. At Kenilworth, again, she might plead her cause with her husband himself, whom, though distrusting him more than the countess did, believed incapable of being accessory to the base and desperate means to which his dependents, from whose power the lady was now escaping, might resort to, in order to stifle her complaints of the treatment she had received at their hands. But at the worst, and were the earl himself to deny
KENILWORTH

her justice and protection, still at Kenilworth, if she chose to make her wrongs public, the countess might have Tressilian for her advocate, and the queen for her judge; for so much Janet had learned in her short conference with Wayland. She was, therefore, on the whole, reconciled to her lady's proposition of going towards Kenilworth, and so expressed herself; recommending, however, to the countess the utmost caution in making her arrival known to her husband.

"Had thou thyself been cautious, Janet!" said the countess; "this guide in whom I must put my confidence, hast not entrusted to him the secret of my condition!"

"From me he has learned nothing," said Janet; "nor do I think that he knows more than what the public in general believe of the situation."

"And what is that!" said the lady.

That you left your father's house—but I shall afford you again if I go on," said Janet, interrupting herself.

"Nay, go on," said the countess; "I must learn to endure the evil report which my folly has brought upon you. They think, I suppose, that I have left my father's house to follow lawless pleasure; an error which I shall have, indeed, it shall, for I will live with spotless fame, or I shall cease to live. I am accounted, then, the paramour of my Leicester!"

"Most men say of Varney," said Janet; "yet some call him only the convenient cloak of his master's pleasures; for reports of the promise expense in garnishing yonder apartments have secretly gone abroad, and such doings far surpass the means of Varney. But this latter opinion is little prevalent; for men dare hardly even hint suspicion when so —gh a name is concerned, lest the Star Chamber should punish them for scandal of the nobility."

"They do well to speak low," said the countess, "who would imagine the illustrious Dudley as the accomplice of such a wretch as Varney.—We have reached the postern—Ah! Janet, I must bid thee farewell! Weep not, my good girl; I said, she, endeavouring to cover her own reluctance to part with her faithful attendant under an attempt at playfulness; 'and against us meet again, reform me, Janet, that precise ruff of thine for an open robe of lace and cut work, that will let men see thou hast a fair neck; and that kirtle of Philips' cheney, with that loose lace which beats only a chamber-maid, into three-piled velvet and cloth of gold—thou wilt find plenty of stuffs in my chamber, and I freely bestow them on you. Thou must have, Janet; for though thou art now but the attendant of a distressed and errant lady, who is both nameless and colourless, yet, when we meet again, thou must be dressed as becomes the gentlewoman nearest in love and in service to the first countess in England."

"Now, may God grant it, dear maid!" said Janet; "not that I may go with gayer apparel, but that I may both wear our kirtles over lighter hearts."

By this time the lock of the postern-door had, after some hard wrenched, yielded to the master-key; and the countess, not without inner shuddering, saw herself beyond the walls which her husband's strict commands had assigned to her as the boundary of her walks. Waiting with much anxiety for their appearance, Wayland Smith stood at some distance, shrouding himself behind a hedge which bordered the high road.

"Is all safe?" said Janet to him anxiously, as he approached them with caution.

"Ah," he replied; "I have been unable to procure a horse for the lady. Giles Gosling, the cowardly hiding, refused me one on any terms whatever; lest, forsooth, he should suffer—but no matter. She must ride on my palfrey, and I must walk by her side until I come by another horse. There will be no pursuit, if you, pretty Mistress Janet, forget not thy lesson."

"No more than the wise widow of Tekoa forgot the words which Job put into her mouth," answered Janet. "To-morrow, I say that my lady is unable to procure a horse."

"Ay; and that she hath aching and heaviness of the head—a throbbing at the heart, and lists not to be disturbed. Fear not; they will take the hint, and trouble thee with few questions—which they understand the disease."

"But," said the lady, "my absence must be soon discovered, and they will murder her in revenge—I will rather return than expose her to such danger."

"Beat once my account, madam," said Janet; "I would you were as sure of receiving the favour you desire from those to whom you must make appeal, as I am that my father, however angry, will suffer no harm to befall me."

The countess was now placed by Wayland upon his horse, around the saddle of which he had placed his cloak, so folded as to make her a commodious seat.

"Adieu, and may the blessing of God attend with you!" said Janet, again kissing her mistress's hand, who returned her benediction with a mute care. They then tore themselves asunder, and Janet, addressing Wayland, exclaimed, "May Heaven deal with you at your need, as you are true or false to this most injured and most helpless lady."

"Amen! dearest Janet," replied Wayland; "and believe me, I will so expound myself in your trust, as may tempt even your pretty eyes, say like as they are, to look less scornfully on me when we next meet."

The latter part of this adieu was whispered into Janet's ear; and although she made no reply to it directly, yet her manner, influenced no doubt by her desire to leave every motive in force which could operate towards her mistress's safety, did not discourage the hope which Wayland's words expressed. She re-entered the postern-door, and locked it behind her, while Wayland, taking the horse's bridle in his hand, and walking close by its head, they began in silence their dubious and moonlight journey.

Although Wayland Smith used the utmost despatch which he could make, yet this mode of travelling was so slow, that, when morning began to dawn through the eastern mist, he found himself no farther than about ten miles distant from Comnor. "Now a plague upon all smooth-spoken hosts!" said Wayland, unable longer to suppress his mortification and uneasiness. "Had
the false boon: Miles Gasling, but told me plainly two days since, that I was to reckon nothing
up on him, I had shifted better for myself. But
your hosts have such a custom of promising
whatever is called for, that it is not till the steed
is to be shelved you find they are out of hand. If
I but knew, I could have made twenty shifts:
my, for that matter, and to go so far apace, I
would have thought little to have prigg'd a
prayerer from the next common — it had but been
sending back the brine to the head-borough.
The lacy and the founders confound every horse
in the stables of the Black Bear!

The lady endeavoured to comfort her guide,
observing that the dawn would enable him to
make more speed.

"True, madam," he replied; "but then it will
enable other folk to take note of us, and that
may prove an ill beginning of our journey. I
had not cared a spark from any about the
matter, had we been farther advanced on our
way, but this Berkshire has been notoriously
haunted ever since I knew the country, with
that sort of malicious eyes, the sharp fat and
rise early, for no other purpose than to try into
other folk's affairs. I have been embarrassed by
them ere now. But do not fear," he added, "good
madam; for wit, meeting with opportunity, will
not miss to find a salve for every sore."

The alarms of her guide made more impression
on the countess's mind than the comfort which
he judged fit to administer along with it. She
looked anxiously around her, and as the shadows
 withdrew from the landscape, and the heightening
glow of the eastern sky promised the speedy
rise of the sun, expected at every turn that the
increasing light would expose them to the view of
the vengeful pursuers, or present some dangerous
and insurmountable obstacle to the prosecution
of their journey. Wayland Smith perceived her
uneasiness, and, displeased with himself for
having given her cause of alarm, strode on with
affected charity, now talking to the horse as one
expert in the language of the stable, now whistling
to himself low and interrupted snatches of tunes,
and now assuring the lady there was no
danger; while at the same time he looked sharply
around to see that there was nothing in sight
which might give the lie to words while they
were issuing from his mouth. Thus did they
journey on, until an unexpected incident gave
them the means of continuing their pilgrimage
with more speed and convenience.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Richard. A horse!—a horse!—my kingdom for a horse!
Cately. —My lord, I'll help you to a horse.
Richard III.

Our travellers were in the act of passing a
small thicket of trees close by the road-side,
when the first living being presented himself
whom they had seen since their departure from
Cumnor Place. This was a capital lot, seem-
ingly a farmer's boy, in a grey jerkin, with his
head bare, his hose about his heels, and huge
startups upon his feet. He held by the bridle
what of all things they most wanted, a palleyre,
namely, with a side-saddle, and all other gar-
niture for a woman's mounting; and he hailed
Wayland Smith with, "Zur, be ye here the party?"

"Ay, that I be, my lad," answered Wayland,
without an instant's hesitation; and it must
be owned that his kindness, trained in a stricter
school of morality, might have given way to an
occasion so tempting. While he spoke, he caught
the rein out of the boy's hand, and almost at
the same time helped down the countess from
his own horse, and aided her to mount on that
which chance had thus presented for her accep-
tance. Indeed, so naturally did the whole take
place, that the countess, as it afterwards appeared,
never suspected but that the horse had been
placed there to meet them by the precaution of
the guide, or some of his friends.

The lad, however, who was thus hastily dis-
possessed of his charge, began to stare hard, and
scratch his head, as if seized with some qualms
of conscience for delivering up the animal on
such brief explanation,—"I be right sure then
be'at the party," said he, muttering to himself,
"but Ion shouldn't ha' said Baxen, thou know'st."

"Ay, ay," said Wayland, speaking at a venture;
"and thon Baxen, thou know'st."

"Noo, noo," said the lad; "hide ye—bide ye—
it was Pen's should ha' said."

"Well, well," answered Wayland, "pens be it,
a God's name! though baxen was the better
password.

And being by this time mounted on his own
horse, he caught the rein of the palleyre from the
uncertain hold of the hesitating young boy,
flinging him a small piece of money, and made
amends for lost time by riding briskly off without
further parley. The lad was still visible from the
hill upon which they were riding, and Wayland,
as he looked back, beheld him standing with his
fingers in his hair, as immovable as a guide-post,
and his head turned in the direction in which
they were escaping from him. At length, just
as they topped the hill, he saw the clown stoop
to lift up the silver great which his benevolence
had imparted.—"Now, this is what I call a God-
soul," said Wayland; "this is a bonnie well-ridden
bit of a going thing, and it will carry us so far
till we get you as well mounted, and then we
will send it back time enough to satisfy the Hue
and Cry."

But he was deceived in his expectations; and
fate, which seemed at first to promise so fairly,
soon threatened to turn the incident, which he
then gloried in, into the cause of their utter
ruin.

They had not ridden a short mile from the
place where they left the lad, before they heard
a man's voice shouting on the wind behind them,
"Robbery! robbery!—Stop this!" and similar
exclamations, which Wayland's conscience readily
assured him must arise out of the transaction
to which he had been just accessory.

"I had better have gone barefoot all my life," he
said; "it is the Hue and Cry, and I am a lost
man. Ah! Wayland, Wayland, many a time
thy father said horse-flesh would be the death of
him. I was once safe among the horse-courser
in Smithfield, or Turnbull Street, they should have leave to hang me as high as Saint Paul's, if ever meddled more with nobles, knights, or gentlemen.

Amidst these dismal reflections, he turned his head repeatedly to see by whose face was chased, and was much comforted when he could only discover a single rider, who was, however, well mounted, and came after them at a speed which left them no chance of escaping, even had the lady's strength permitted her to ride as fast as her palfrey might have been able to gallop.

There may be fair play between us, sure,' thought Wayland, 'there is but one man on each side, and youlner fellow sits on his horse more like a monkey than a cavalier. Esha! if it come to the worst, it will be easy unshoring him. Nay, sirs! I think his horse will take the matter in his own hand, for he has the bridle between his teeth. Oons, what care I for him? said he, and as the other drew yet nearer: 'it is but the little animal of a mercur from Abington, when all is over.

Even so it was, as the experienced eye of Wayland had described at a distance. For the valiant mercur's horse, which was a heap of mettle, feeling himself put to his speed, and succeeding a couple of horses riding fast, at some hundred yards distance before him, betook himself to the road with such alacrity as totally deserted the seat of his rider, who not only came up with, but passed, at full gallop, those whom he had been pursuing, pulling the reins with all his might, and ejaculating 'Stop! stop!' an interjection which seemed rather to regard his own palfrey, than what seemed call 'the che.'

With the same involuntary speed, he shot ahead (to use another unctuous phrase) about a furlong, ere he was able to stop and turn his horse, and then rode back towards our travellers, adjusting, as well as he could, his disordered dress, retreating himself in the saddle, and endeavouring to substitute a bold and martial frown for the confusion and dismay which sat upon his visage during his involuntary career.

Wayland had just time to caution the lady not to be alarmed, adding: 'This fellow is a gull, and I will use him as well as such.'

When the mercur had recovered breath and amableness enough to confront them, he ordered Wayland, in a menacing tone, to deliver up his palfrey.

'How! said the smith, in King Canbyshys' vein, 'are you commanded to stand and deliver on the king's highway?' Then out, Excalibur, and tell this knight of prowess that dire blows must decide between us!'

'Hare and hounds, and hue and cry, every true man!' said the mercur: 'I am watchful in seeking to recover mine own!'

'Thou swearest thy gods in vain, foul paynine,' said Wayland, 'for I will through with my purpose were death at the end on!' Nevertheless, know, thou fool man of frail carcime and ferretike, that I am he, the perilous, whom thou didst boast to meet on Maiden Castle moor,

and despoil of his pack; wherefore letake thee thy weapons presently.'

'I spoke but in jest, man,' said Goldthiird: 'I am an honest shoemaker and citizen, who seems to leep forlorn of any man from behind a hedge.'

'Then, by my faith, most puissant mercur,' answered Wayland, 'I am sorry for thy view, which was, that wherever I met thee I would destroy thy horse palfrey, and beset upon me by my men, unless thou wouldst defend it by blows of force. But the row is pressed and registered, and all that I can do for thee, is to leave the horse at Donnington, in the nearest hostelry.'

"But I tell thee, friend," said the mercur, "it is the very horse on which I was this day to carry Jane Thackham, of Shottesbrooke, as far as the parish church yonder, to become Dame Goldthiird, the horse hath jumped out of the shot-window of old Gallery Thackham's grange; and to ye, yonder she stands at the place where she should have met the palfrey, with her coat of riding-clack and ivory-handled whip, like a picture of Lot's wife, I pray thee, in good terms, let me have back the palfrey.'

"Grieved am I," said Wayland, "as much for the fine damsel as for thee, most noble imp of muslin. But vows must have their course—than will find the palfrey at the Angel yonder at Donnington. It is all I may do for thee with a safe conscience.'

'To the devil with thy conscience," said the dismayed mercur—'Wouldst thou have a bride walk to church on foot?'

"Then mayest take her on thy crupper, Sir Goldthiird," answered Wayland: "it will make them of thy steed's mettle.'

"And how if—ye forget to leave my horse, as you propose?" said Goldthiird, not without hesitation, for his soul was afraid within him.

"My pack shall be pledged for it—yonder it lies with Giles Godling, in his chamber with the damasked braitham hangings, stuffed full with vell's, single, double, treble-plied—rash-tallets, and paras—sack, damask, and moendoza, plush, and program.'

"Hold! hold!" exclaimed the mercur: "may there be, in truth and sincerity, but the half of these wares—but ever I trust lamakin with bonnie Bayard again!'

"As you list for that, good Master Goldthiird—and so good-norrow to you—and well parted," he added, riding on cheerfully with the lady, while the discomfited mercur rode back much slower than he came, pondering what excuse he should make to the disappointed bride, who stood waiting for her gallant groom in the midst of the king's highway.

"Methought," said the lady, as they rode on, "yonder fool stared at me as if he had some remembrance of me; yet I kept my muser as high as I might.'

"If I thought so," said Wayland, "I would ride back, and cut his—over the pate—then would be no fear of my brains, or I never had so much as would make pup to a sucking goosing. We must now push on, however, and at Donnington we will leave the oaf's
horse, that he may have no further temptation to pursue us, and endeavour to assume such a change of shape as may baffle his pursuit, if he should persevere in it.'

The travellers reached Donnington without further alarm, where it became matter of necessity that the party should have a short repose, during which Wayland disposed himself, with equal address and alacrity, to carry through those measures on which the safety of their future journey seemed to depend.

Exchanging his peculiar gauderline for a smock-frock, he carried the paltry of Goldthred to the Angel Inn, which was at the other end of the village from that where our travellers had taken up their quarters. In the progress of the morning, as he travelled about his other business, he saw the steel brought forth and delivered to the cutting mercer himself, who, at the head of a valiant posse of the Nine and Cry, came to rescue, by forces of arms, what was delivered to him without any other ransom than the price of a huge quantity of ale, drunk out by his assistants, thirty, it would seem, with their walk, and concerning the price of which Master Goldthred had a fierce dispute with the head-borough, whom he had summoned to aid him in raising the country.

Having made this act of prudent, as well as just restitution, Wayland promised such change of apparel for the lady, as well as himself, as gave them both the appearance of country people of the better class; it being further resolved that, in order to attract the less observation, she should pass over the road for the sister of her guide. A good, but not a grey horse, fit to keep pace with his own, and gentle enough for a lady's use, completed the preparations for the journey; for making which, and for other expenses, he had been furnished with sufficient funds by Tressilian. And thus, about noon, after the countess had been refreshed by the sound repose of several hours, they resumed their journey, with the purpose of making the best of their way to Kenilworth, by Coventry and Warwick. They were not, however, destined to travel far, without meeting some cause of apprehension.

It is necessary to premise, that the landlord of the inn had informed them that a jovial party, intended, as he understood, to present some of the masques or mummers, which made a part of the entertainment with which the queen was usually welcomed on the royal progresses, had left the village of Donnington an hour or two before them, in order to proceed to Kenilworth. Now it had occurred to Wayland, that, by attaching themselves in some sort to this group, as soon as they should overtake them on the road, they would be less likely to attract notice, than if they continued to travel entirely by themselves. He communicated his idea to the countess, who, only anxious to arrive at Kentworth without interruption, left him free to choose the manner in which this was to be accomplished. They pressed forward their horses, therefore, with the purpose of overtaking the party of intended revelers, and making the journey in their company; and had just seen the little party, consisting partly of riders,
to associate themselves in great disorder. The women, with dishevelled locks, and looks of great importance, ran in and out of Wayland, and the men stood around holding the horses, and looking silly enough, as is usual in cases where their assistance is not wanted.

Wayland's whole charge paused, as if out of curiosity, and then gradually, without making any inquiries, or being asked any questions, they mingled with the group, as if they always made part of it.

They had not stood there above five minutes, anxiously keeping as much to the side of the road as possible, so as to place the other travellers between them and Varney, when Lord Leicester's master of the horse, followed by Lambourne, came riding fiercely down the hill, their horses' flanks and the rosettes of their spurs showing bloody tokens of the rate at which they travelled. The appearance of the stationary group around the cottages, wearing their buckram suits in order to protect their masquing dresses, having their light ears for transporting their scenery, and carrying various fantastic properties in their hands for the more easy conveyance, let the riders at once into the character and purpose of the company.

'You are revellers,' said Varney, 'designing for Kenilworth!'

Pute quidem, Domine spectatissime,' answered one of the party.

'And why the devil you stand there,' said Varney, 'when your utmost despatch will but bring you to Kenilworth in time? The Queen dines at Warwick to-morrow, and you loiter here, ye knaves!'

'In very truth,' sir, said a little diminutive urchin, wearing a wizard with a couple of sprouting horns of an elegant scarlet hue, having moreover a black serje jerkin drawn close to his body by lacing, garnished with red stockings, and shoes so shaped as to resemble clown feet,—'In very truth, sir, and you are in the right on't.

'It is my father the Devil, who, being taken in labour, has delayed our present purpose, by increasing our company with an imp too many.'

The devil he has,' answered Varney, whose laugh, however, never exceeded a sarcastic smile. 'It is even as the judicious hath said,' added the masquer who spoke first; 'our major devil, for this is but our minor one, is even now at: Lucina, fer open, within that ver iurgitum.'

'By Saint George, or rather by the Dragon, who may be a kinsman of the fiend in the straw, a most comical chance!' said Varney. 'How sayest thou, Lambourne, wilt thou stand father for the nonce?—if the devil were to choose a gossipy, I know no one more fit for the office.'

'Saving always when my betters are in presence,' said Lambourne, with the civil insolence of a servant who knows his service to be so indispensable, that his jest will be permitted by his master.'

'And what is the name of this devil or devil's dam, who has timed her turns so strangely?' said Varney. 'We can ill afford to spare any of our actors.'

'Geomet noniam Sibylla,' said the first speaker, 'she is called Sibyl Laneham, wife of Master Robert Laneham.'

'But to get to the council chamber door,' said Varney; 'why, she is insusceptible, having had experience how to have ordered her matter better. But who were those, a man and a woman, I think, who rode so hastily up the hill before we were even now to—do they belong to your company?'

Wayland was about to hazard a reply to this alarming inquiry, when the little dishevelled again thrust in his ear.

'So please you,' he said, coming close up to Varney, and speaking so as not to be overheard by his companions, 'the man was our devil major, who has tricks enough to supply the lack of a hundred such as Dame Laneham; and the woman—if you please, is the sage person whose assistance is most particularly necessary to our distressed company.'

'O, what, you have got the wise woman, then?' said Varney. 'Why, truly, she rode like one baneld to a place where she was needed—

'And you have a spare limb of Satan, besides, to supply the place of Mistress Laneham?'

'Ah, sir, the boy, they are not so scarce in this world as your honour's virtuous eminence would suppose. This master-fellow shall spit a few flashes of fire, and erect a volume or two of smoke on the spot, if it will do your pleasure—

'you would think he had Atma in his vedemmen.'

'I lack time just now, most hopeful imp of darkness, to witness your performance,' said Varney; 'but here is something for you all to drink the lucky hour—and so, as the play says, 

'God be with your labour!'—

This speaking, he struck his horse with the spurs, and rode on his way.

Lambourne hurried a stroke or two behind his master, and rummaged his pouch for a piece of silver, which he bestowed on the communitive imp, as he said, for his encouragement on his path to the infernal regions, some sparks of whose fire, he said, he could discover flashing from him already. Then, having received the boy's thanks for his generosity, he also spurred his horse, and rode after his master as fast as the fire flashes from flint.'

'And now,' said Varney, 'we have the wily imp, sideling close up to Wayland's horse, and cutting a gambol in the air, which seemed to vindicate his title to relationship with the prince of that element, 'T have told them who you are, do you in return tell me who I am?'

'Either Filibbertigibbet,' answered Wayland Smith, 'or else an imp of the devil in good earnest.'

'Thou hast hit it,' answered Dickie Sedge; 'I am thine own Filibbertigibbet, man; and I have broken forth of bounds, along with my learned preceptor, as I told thee I would do, whether he would or not. But what lady hast thou got with thee? I saw thou wert at fault in the first question was asked, and so I drew up for thy assistance; but I must know all who she is, dear Wayland.'

'Thou shalt know fifty finer things, my dear ingle,' said Wayland; 'but a truce to thine inquiries just now; and since you are bound for Kenilworth, thither will I too, even for the love of thy sweet face and wagging company.'

'Thou shouldest have said my waggish face and
sweet company,' said Dickie; 'but how will they travel with me—I mean in what character?'

'Fear not,' said Wayland; 'I can send a juggler for you at any time. I am used to the craft.'

'Yes, and I,' said Wayland.'

'Ah, then, I answer Flibbertigibbet,' said Wayland; 'credit me, I think she is one, and that in a state of trouble about her at this moment, as I can perceive by the knocking.'

'O, she, no—I am a poor sister of mine,' said Wayland; 'she can sing and play the old lute, would win the fish out of the stream.'

'Let me hear her instantly,' said the boy; 'I love the lute rarely; I love it of all things, though I never heard it.'

'Then how canst thou love it, Flibbertigibbet?' said Wayland.

'As knights love ladies in old tales,' answered Dickie; 'on hearsay, then.'

'Then love it on hearsay a little longer, till my sister is sombered from the fatigue of her journey,' said Wayland; 'muttering afterwards betwixt his teeth, 'The devil take the imp's curiosity—I must keep fair weather with him, or we shall fare worse.'

He then proceeded to state to Master Holiday his own talents as a juggler, with those of his sister as a musician. Some proof of his dexterity was demanded, which he gave in such a style of execution, that delighted at obtaining such an accessory to the party, they readily acquiesced in the apology which he offered, when a display of his sister's talents was required. The newcomers were invited to partake of the refreshments; and, with some difficulty that Wayland Smith obtained an opportunity of being apart with his supposed sister during the meal, of which interval he availed himself to entreat her to forget for the present both her rank and her sorrows, and converse, as the most probable chance of remaining concealed, to mix in the society of those with whom she was to travel.

The countess allowed the necessity of the case, and, when they resumed their journey, endeavored to comply with her guide's advice, by addressing herself to a female near her, and expressing her concern for the woman whom they were thus obliged to leave behind them.

'O, she is well attended, madam,' replied the dame whom she addressed, who, from her jolly and laughter-loving demeanour, might have been the very emblem of the Wife of Bath; and my gueste Lanham thinks as little of these matters as any one. By the ninth day, an accident happened which we shall have with us at Kenilworth, even if she should travel with her on her back.

There was nothing in this spot which took away all desire on the Countess of Le., so part to continue the conversation; but, having broken the charm by speaking to her idle wanderer, the first, the good dame, who was to play the part of Flibbertigibbet, went to Croydon, in one of the rides, took care that silence did not again settle on the journey, but entertained her mate companion with a thousand anecdotes of revels, from the days of King Harry downwards, with the reception given them by the great folk, and all the names of those who played the principal characters; but ever concluding with, 'they would be nothing to the simply pleasures of Kenilworth.'

And when shall we reach Kenilworth? I said to the countess, with an agitation which she in vain attempted to conceal.

'We that have horses may, with little riding, get to Warwick to-morrow, and Kenilworth may be distant some four or five miles—but then we must wait till the foot—people come up; although it is like my good Lord of Leicester will have horses or light carriages to meet them, and bring them up without being travel-toiled, which last is no good preparation, as you may suppose, for dancing before your betters—And yet, Lord help me, I have seen the day I would have tramped five leagues of hard land, and turned on my toe the whole evening after, as a juggler spins a pecker platter on the point of a needle. But age has clawed me somewhat in his clutch, as the song says; though, if I like the tune and like my partner, I'll dance the hey with any merry lass in Warwickshire, that writes that unhappy figure four with a round after it.'

If the countess was overwhelmed with the garrulity of this good dame, Wayland Smith, on his part, had enough to do to sustain and parry the constant attacks made upon him by the indefatigable curiosity of his old acquaintance, Richard Sludge. Nature had given that arch younger a prying cast of disposition, which matched admirably with his sharp wit; the former inducing him to plant himself as a spy on other people's affairs, and the latter quality leading him perpetually to interfere, after he had made himself master of that which concerned him not. He spent the livelong day in attempting to peers under the countess's muslin, and apparently what he could there discern greatly sharpened his curiosity.

'That sister of thine, Wayland,' he said, 'has a fair neck to have been born in a smithy, and a pretty taper hand to have been used for twirling a spindle—faith, I'll believe in your relationship when the crown's egg is hatched into a cygnet.'

'Go to,' said Wayland; 'Thou art a prating boy, and should be breeched for thine assurance.'

'Well,' said the imp, drawing off, 'all I say is—'

'remember you have kept a secret from me, and if I give thee not a Roland for thine Oliver, my name is not Dickon Sludge.'

This threat, and the distance at which Hobgoblin kept him from the rest of the way, alarmed Wayland very much, and he suggested to his pretended sister, that, on pretext of weariness, she should express a desire to stop or three miles short of the fair town of Warwick, which Wayland agreed to, and set out to rejoin the troop in the morning. A small village inn afforded them a resting-place; and it was with secret pleasure that Wayland saw the whole party, including Dickon, pass on after a hansom farewell, and leave them behind.

'To-morrow, madam,' he said to his charge, 'we will, with your leave, again start early, and reach Kenilworth before the route which are to assemble there.'

The countess gave assent to the proposal of her faithful guide; but, somewhat to his surprise, said nothing further on the subject, which left Wayland under the disagreeable uncertainty.
whether or no she had formed any plan for her own future proceedings, as he knew her situation demanded circumspection, although he was but imperfectly acquainted with all its peculiarities. Concluding, however, that she must have friends within the castle, whose advice and assistance she could safely trust, he supposed her task would be best accomplished by conducting her thither in safety, agreeably to her repeated commands.

CHAPTER XXX.

Hark, the bells summon, and the barge calls, that she the fairest answer—tide
Of noble, and of ladies through the glass,
But she the loveliest must in secret hide.

What eyes were thine, proud Prince, which in the
Glade of gay meteors but that better sense,
That over the glow-worm doth the star estimate,
And merit's modest blush over country residence.

The Glass Slipper.

The unfortunate Countess of Leicester had, from her infancy upwards, been treated by those around her with indulgence as unbounded as injudicious. The natural sweetness of her disposition had saved her from becoming insolent and ill-humoured; but the cuprice which preferred the handsome and insignificant Leicester before Tressilwan, of whose high honour and unattainable affection she herself entertained so firm an opinion—that fatal error, which ruined the happiness of her life, had its origin in the mistaken kindness that had spared her childhood the painful but necessary lesson of submission and self-command. From the same indulgence, it followed that she had only been accustomed to form and express her wishes, leaving to others the task of fulfilling them; and thus, at the most momentous period of her life, she was alike destitute of presence of mind and of ability to form for herself any reasonable or prudent plan of conduct.

These difficulties pressed on the unfortunate lady with overwhelming force on the morning which seemed to be the crisis of her fate. Overlooking every intermediate consideration, she only desired to be at Kenilworth, and to approach her husband in presence; and now, when she was in the vigour of both, a thousand considerations arose at once upon her mind, starting her with accumulated doubts and dangers, some real, some imaginary, and all exalted and exaggerated by a situation alike helpless and destitute of aid and counsel.

A sleepless night rendered her so weak in the morning, that she was altogether unable to attend Wayland's early summons. The trusty guide became extremely disturbed on the lady's account, and somewhat alarmed on his own, and was on the point of going alone to Kenilworth, in the hope of discovering Tressilwan, and intimating to him the lady's approach, when about nine in the morning he was summoned to attend her. He found her dressed, and ready for resuming her journey, but with a paleness of countenance which alarmed him for her health. She intimated her desire that the horses might be got instantly ready, and resisted with impatience her guide's request, that she would take some refreshment before setting forward. 'I have had,' she said, 'a cup of water—the wretch who is dragged to execution needs no stronger cordial, and may serve me which suffices for him—do as I command you.' Wayland Smith still hesitated. 'What would you have I ' said she—'have I not spoken plainly?'

'Yes, madam,' answered Wayland; 'but may I ask what is your further purpose? I only wish to know, that I may guide myself by your wishes. The whole country is aloof, and streaming towards the Castle of Kenilworth. It will be difficult travelling thither even if we had the necessary passports for safe-conduct and free admittance. Unknown and unfriended, we may come by mishap. Your ladyship will forgive my speaking my poor mind. We will proceed to find out the masquers, and again join ourselves with them.'—The countess shook her head, and her guide proceeded. 'Then I see but one other remedy;'—

'Speak out, then,' said the lady, not displeased, perhaps, that he should thus offer the advice which she was ashamed to ask; 'I believe the faithful—what wouldst thou counsel?'

'Truant, I should warn Master Trussilwan,' said Wayland, 'that you are in this place. I am right certain he would get a horse with a few of Lord Sussex's followers, and insure your personal safety.'

'And is it to you advise,' said the countess, 'to put myself under the protection of Sussex, the unworthy rival of the noble Leicester? Then, seeing the surprise with which Wayland stared upon her, and afraid of having too strongly intimated her interest in Leicester, she added, 'And for Trussilwan, it must not be—mention not to him, I charge you, my unhappy name; it would but double my misfortunes, and involve him in dangers beyond the power of rescue.' She paused; but when she observed that Wayland continued to look on her with that anxious and uncertain gaze, which indicated a doubt whether her brain was settled, she assumed an air of composure, and added, 'Do thou but guide me to Kenilworth Castle, good fellow, and thy task is ended, since I will then judge what further is to be done. Thou hast yet been true to me—here is something that will make thee rich amends.' She offered the artist a ring, containing a valuable stone. Wayland looked at it, hesitated a moment, and then returned it. 'Not,' he said, 'that I am above your kindness, madam, being but a poor fellow, who have been forced, God help me! to live by worse shifts than the necessity of such a person as you. But, as my old master the farrier used to say to his customers, 'No cure, no pay.' We are not yet in Kenilworth Castle, and it is time enough to discharge your guide, as they say, when you take your boots off. I trust in God your ladyship is as well assured of fitting reception when you arrive, as you may hold yourself certain of my best endeavours to conduct you thither safely.' I go to get the horses; meantime, let me pray you once more, as your poor physician as well as guide, to take some consideration of your health.' 'I will—I will,' said the lady hastily. 'Be gone, begone instantly!—It is in vain I assume audacity,' said she, when he left the room; 'even
this poor groom sees through my affectionate of courage, and fathoms the very ground of my fears.'

She then attempted to follow her guide's advice by taking some food, but was compelled to desist, as the effort to swallow even a single morsel gave her so much uneasiness as amounted well-nigh to suffocation. A moment afterwards, the horses appeared at the latticed window—the lady mounted, and found that relief from the free air and change of place which is frequently experienced in similar circumstances.

It chanced well for the countess's purpose, that Wayland Smith, whose previous wandering and unsettled life had made him acquainted with almost all England, was intimate with all the by-roads, as well as direct communications, through the beautiful county of Warwick. For such and so great was the thorough which flanked in all directions towards Kenilworth, to see the entry of Elizabeth into that splendid mansion of her prime favourite, that the principal roads were actually blocked up and intercepted, and it was only by circuitous by-paths that the travellers could proceed on their journey.

The queen's pursuivants had been abroad, sweeping the farms and villages of those articles usually exacted during a royal progress, and for which the owners were afterwards to obtain a tardy payment from the Board of Green Cloth. The Earl of Leicester's household officers had been securing the country for the same purpose; and many of his friends and allies, both near and remote, took this opportunity of ingratiating themselves, by sending large quantities of provisions and delicacies of all kinds, with game in huge numbers, and whole furs of the best leathers, foreign and domestic. Thus the high roads were filled with droves of bullocks, sheep, calves, and hogs, and choked with loaded wains, whose axletrees cracked under their burden of wine-casks and hogheads of ale, and huge hampers of grocery goods, and slaughtered game, and salted provisions, and sacks of flour. Perpetual stoppages took place as these wains became entangled; and their rude drivers, swearing and brawling till their wild passions were fully raised, began to debate with prejudice with their waggon-whips and quarter-staves, whom occasional riots were usually quelled by a paymaster, a deputy-marshall's man, or some person in authority, breaking the heads of both parties.

Here were, besides, players and mummers, jugglers and showmen, of every description, traversing in joyous bands the paths which led to the Palace of Princely Pleasure; for so the travelling minstrels had termed Kenilworth in the songs which they had come forth in anticipation of the revels which were there expected. In the midst of this motley show, minstrels were exhibiting their real or pretended miseries, forming a strange, though common, contrast betwixt the vanities and the sorrows of human existence. All these floated along with the immense tide of population, whom mere curiosity had driven together; and where the mechanic, in his leather apron,ellowed the dink and dainty dame, his city mistress; where clowns, with holbaited shoes, were treading on the kites of substantial Burgesses and gentlemen of worship; and where Joan of the dairy, with robust pace, and red, sturdy arms, rowed her way onward, amongst these grim and pretty noxplets, whose sires were knights and squires.

The throng and confusion was, however, of a gay and cheerful character. All came forth to see and to enjoy, and all laughed at the trifling inconveniences which at another time might have chafed their temper. Excepting the occasional brawls which we have mentioned among that irritating race the carmen, the mingled sounds which arose from the multitude were of light-hearted mirth, and tip-toe jollity. The musicians played on their instruments—the minstrels hummed their songs—the licensed jester whooped betwixt mirth and madness, as he brandished his bauble—the morrice-dancers jangled their bells—the rustic halloo'd and whoosed—men laughed loud, and maidens giggled shilly; while many a jester flew like a shuttlecock from one party, to be caught in the air and returned from the opposite side of the road by another, at which it was aimed.*

No indiction can be so distressing to a mind absorbed in melancholy, as being plunged into a scene of mirth and revelry, forming an accompaniment so dissonant from its own feelings. Yet, in the case of the Countess of Leicester, the noise and tumult of this giddy scene distracted her thoughts, and rendered her this sad service, that it became impossible for her to brood on her own misery, or to form terrible anticipations of her approaching fate. She travelled on, like one in a dream, following implicitly the guidance of Wayland, who, with great address, now threaded his way through the general throng of passengers, now stood still until a favourable opportunity occurred of again moving forward, and frequently turning altogether out of the direct road, followed some circuitous by-path, which brought them into the highway again, after having given them the opportunity of traversing a considerable way with greater ease and rapidity.

It was thus he avoided Warwick, within whose castle (that fairest monument of ancient and chivalrous splendour which yet remains unjured by time) Elizabeth had passed the previous night, and where she was to tarry until next morning, at that time the general hour of dinner throughout England, after which request, she was to proceed to Kenilworth. In the meanwhile, each passing group had something to say in the sovereign's praise, though not absolutely without the usual mixture of satire which qualifies more or less our estimate of our neighbours, especially if they chance to be also our betters.

"Heard you," said one, "how purposely she spoke to Master Balfiff and the Recorder, and to good Master Griffin the preacher, as they knelt down at her coach-window?"

"Ay, and how she said to little Aglionby, "Master Recorder, men would have persuaded me that you were afraid of me, but truly I think, so well did you reckon up to me the"

[1Dr. Beattie, in his Castle of England, says, "It is probable the romance of 'Kenilworth' was brought within the last forty years more pilgrims to this town than never beheld it before, and that those who have not read it have far more enlarged the beauty of its situation than ever figured in its tints and tournaments."]
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of prettily notioned, sQUIRES.
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All came forth to
the thrilling music of the other time might
Excepting the occasional
mentioned among the scenes, the mingled
the multitude were
tiptoe jollity. Among their instruments—
—songs—the licensed
drums—whistles halloo'd and
maharids and had just flew
party, to be caught
the opposite side of
it was aimed.
pressing to a mind
of her plunging
forming an accent
its own feelings.
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dered her this sad
baleful and inable for her to
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Little Aiglonhby,
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of a sovereign, that I have more
reason to be afraid of you."—And then with what grace
she took the fair-wrought purse with the twenty
gold sovereigns, seeming to think she would not
willingly handle it, and yet taking it withal.
' Ay, ay,' said another, ' her fingers closed on it
prettily met with, when all was done and
thought, too, she weighed them
for a second in her hand, as she would say, I
hope they be avoidings.
'She needed not, neighbour,' said a third; ' it
is only when the corporation pays the accounts of
a poor handicraft like me, that they put him off
with elipt coin.—Well, there is a God above all
—Little Master Recorder, since that is the word,
will be greater now than ever.'
'Come, good neighbours,' said the first speaker,
'tis not obvious;—She is a good Queen, and a
generous—She gave the purse to the Earl of
Leicester.'
'I envious—boresw thy heart for the word,'
replied the handicraft—' But she will give all to
the Earl of Leicester anon, methinks.'
'You are turning ill, lady,' said Wayland
to the Countess of Leicester, and proposed that
she should draw off from the road, and halt
till she recovered. But, subduing her feelings
at this, and different speeches to the same
purpose which caught her ear as they passed on, she
insisted that her guide should proceed to Kenil-
worth with the haste which the numerous
impediments of their journey permitted.
Meanwhile, Wayland's anxiety at her repeated fits
of indisposition, and her obvious distraction of
mind, was hourly increasing, and he became
extremely desirous that, according to her
reiterated requests, she should be safely introduced
into the castle, where, he doubted not, she was
secure of a kind reception, though she seemed
unwilling to reveal on whom she reposed her
hopes.
'An I were once rid of this peril, thought he,
and if any man shall find me playing squire
of this holy to a damosel-crant, he shall have
leave to beat my brains out with my own stake-
hammer!' At length the princely castle appeared, upon
improving which, and the domains around, the
Earl of Leicester had, it is said, expended sixty
thousand pounds sterling, a sum equal to a
half of our present money.
The outer wall of this splendid and gigantic
structure encloosed seven acres, a part of which
was occupied by extensive stables, and by
pleasure-garden, with its trim arbours and par-
terres, and the rest formed the large base-court,
or outer yard, of the noble castle. The lovely
structure itself, which rose near the centre of
this spacious enclosure, was composed of a huge
pile of magnificent castellated buildings, appar-
ently of different ages, surrounding an inner
court, and bearing in the names attached to
each portion of the magnificent mass, and in
the monumental bearings which were there inter-
red, the emblems of mighty chiefs who had long
passed away, and whose history, could Ambi-
don have been left to it, might have read a
lesson to the haughty favourites who had now
acquired and was augmenting the fair domain.
A large and massive keep, which formed the
citadel of the castle, was of uncertain though
great antiquity. It bore the name of Caesar,
perhaps from its resemblance to that of
Tower of London so called. Some antiquaries
acquire its foundation to the time of Kenelph,
from whom the castle had its name, a Saxon
King of Mercia, and others to an early era after
the Norman Conquest. On the exterior walls
frowned the sentinels of the Clintons, by whom
they were founded in the reign of Henry I., and
of the yet more renowned Simon de Montfort,
by whom, during the Barons' wars, Kenilworth
was long held out against Henry III. Here
Mortimer, Earl of March, famous alike for his
rise and his fall, had once dwelt in Kenil-
worth, while his dethroned sovereign, Edward II.,
languished in its dungeons. Old John of Gaunt,
'time-honoured Lancaster,' had widely
extended the castle, erecting that noble and
massive pile which yet bears the name of Lan-
caster's Buildings; and Lancaster himself had
outdone the former possessors, princely and
powerful as they were, by erecting another im-
measurable structure, which now lies crumpled
under its own ruins, the monument of its owner's
ambition. The external wall of this royal
castle was, on the south and west sides, adorned
and defended by a lake, partly arid, across
which Leicester had constructed a stately bridge,
that Elizabeth might enter the castle by a path
bitterto untrampled, instead of the usual
entrance to the northward, over which he had
created a gate-house, or barbecue, which still
exists, and is equal in extent, and superior in
to the baronial castle of many a northern chief.
Beyond the lake lay an extensive chasm, full
of reeds, sedge, and moss, and every species of
game, and abounding with lofty trees, from
amongst which the extended front and massive
towers of the castle were seen to rise in majesty
and beauty. We cannot but add, that of this
handsome palace, where princes feasted and
heroes fought, now in the bloody earnest of storm
and siege, and now in the games of chivalry, where
beauty dealt the price which victory won, all is
now desolate. The bed of the lake is but a
rusty swamp; and the massive ruins of the
castle only serve to show what their splendid
once was, and to impress on the passing
the transitory value of human possessions, and
the happiness of those who enjoy a humble lot
in virtuous contentment.
It was with far different feelings that the un-
fortunate Countess of Leicester viewed those grey
and massive towers, when she first beheld them
rise above the waving and richly-shaded
woods, over which they seemed to preside. She,
the unenvied wife of the great Earl, of
Elizabeth's island, and England's mighty favourite,
was approaching the presence of her husband,
and that husband's sovereignty, under his
protection, rather than the guidance, of a
jovial jester; and though unquestioned mistress of
that proud castle, whose lightest word ought
to have had force enough to make its gates leap
from their massive hinges to receive her, yet she
could not conceal from herself the difficulties of
peril which she must experience in gaining ad-
mission into her own halls.
The risk and difficulty, indeed, seemed to in-
crease every moment, and at length threatened altogether to put a stop to her further progress, at the great gate leading to a broad and fair road, which, traversing the breadth of the chase for the space of two miles, and commanding several most beautiful views of the castle and lake, terminated at the newly-constructed bridge, to which it was an appendage, and which was destined to form the queen's approach to the castle on that memorable occasion.

Here the countess and Wayland found the gate at the end of this avenue, which opened on the Warwick road, guarded by a body of the queen's mounted Yeomen of the Guard, armed in corslets richly carved and gilded, and wearing morts instead of bonnets, having their carabines resting with the butt-end on their thighs. These guards, distinguished for strength and stature, who did duty wherever the queen went in person, were here stationed under the direction of a pursuivant, grasping with the Bear and Ragged Staff on his arm, as belonging to the Earl of Leicester, and peremptorily refused all admittance, excepting to such as were guests invited to the festival, or persons who were to perform some part in the mirthful exhibitions which were proposed.

The pretence was of consequence great around the entrance, and persons of all kinds presented every sort of plea for admittance; to which the guards turned an inexorable ear, pleading, in return to fair words, and even to fair offers, the strictness of their orders, founded on the queen's well-known dislike to the rude pressing of a multitude. With these when such reasons did not serve, they dealt more rudely, revelling them without ceremony by the pressure of their powerful barbed horses, and good round blows from the stock of their carabines. These last manoeuvres produced undulations amongst the crowd, which rendered Wayland much afraid that he might perchance be separated from his charge in the throng. Neither did he know what excuse to make in order to obtain admittance, and he was debating the matter in his head with great uncertainty, when the earl's pursuivant having cast an eye upon him, exclaimed, to his no small surprise, 'Yeomen, make room for the fellow in the orange-tawny cloak—Come forward, Sir Coxcomb, and make haste. What, in the head's name, has kept you waiting? Come forward with your tale of woman's gear.'

While the pursuivant gave Wayland this pressing yet unceremonious invitation, which for a minute or two he could not imagine was addressed to him, the young esquire made a free passage for him, while, only cautioning his companion to keep the mufller close around her face, he entered the gate, leading her palfrey, but with such a drooping crest, and such a look of conscious fear and anxiety, that the crowd, not greatly pleased at any rate with the preference bestowed upon them, accompanied their admission with hooting, and a loud laugh of derision.

Admitted thus within the chase, though with no very flattering notice or distinction, Wayland and his charge rode forward, urging what difficulties it would be next their lot to encounter, through the broad avenue, which was sentinelised on either side by a long line of retainers, armed with swords and parasites, richly dressed in the Earl of Leicester's livery, and bearing his cognisance of the Bear and Ragged Staff, each placed within three fetus of each other, so as to line the whole road from the entrance into the park to the bridge. And indeed, when the lady obtained the first commanding view of the castle, with its stately towers rising from within a long sweeping line of outward walls, ornamented with battlements, and turrets, and platforms, at every point of defence, with many a banner streaming from its walls, and such a bustle of gay crests and waving plumes disposed on the terraces and battlements, and all the gay and gorgeous scene, her heart, unaccustomed to such splendour, sank as if it died within her, and for a moment she asked herself what she had offered up to Leicester to deserve to become the partner of this princely splendour. But her pride and generous spirit resisted the whisper which bade her despair.

'I have given him,' she said, 'all that woman has to give. Name and fame, heart and hand, have I given the lord of all this magnificence, at the altar, and England's Queen could give him no more. He is my husband—I am his wife—Whom God hath joined, man cannot sunder. I will be bold in claiming my right; even the holder, that I come thus unexpectedly, and thus forlorn. I know my noble Dudley well! He will be something impatient at my disobeying him, but Amy will weep, and Dudley will forgive her.'

These meditations were interrupted by a cry of surprise from her guide Wayland, who suddenly felt himself grasped firmly round the body by a pair of long thin black arms, belonging to some one who had dropped himself out of an oak-tree upon the course of his horse, amidst the shouts of laughter which burst from the sentinels.

'This must be the devil, or Flibbertigibbet again!' said Wayland, after a vain struggle to disengage himself, and unloose the noose who clung to him. 'Do Kenilworth oaks bear such acorns?'

'In sooth do they, Master Wayland,' said his unexpected adjutant, 'and many others, too hard for you to crack, for as old as you are, without my teaching you. How would you have passed the pursuivant at the upper gate yonder, had I not warned him our principal juggler was to follow us? and here have I waited for you, having clambered up into the tree from the top of the wall, and I suppose they are all mad for want of me by this time.'

'Nay, then, thou art a limb of the devil in good earnest,' said Wayland. 'I give thee way, and imp, and will walk by thy counsel; only, as thou art powerful, be merciful.'

As he spoke, they approached a strong tower, at the south extremity of the long bridge we have mentioned, which served to protect the outer gateway of the Castle of Kenilworth.

Under such disadvantageous circumstances, and in such singular company, did the unfortunate Countess of Leicester approach, for the first time, the magnificent abode of her almost princely husband."

* Note H. Amy Robart at Kenilworth.
CHAPTER XXVI.

Swag. Have you the lion's part written? pray, if it be, give it me, for I am well of study. Quare. You may do it, I suppose, if it be nothing but roasting.

MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM.

When the Countess of Leicester arrived at the outer gate of the Castle of Kenilworth, she found the tower, beneath which an ample portal arch opened, guarded in a singular manner. Upon the battlements were placed gigantic warders, with clubs, battle-axes, and other implements of ancient warfare, designed to represent the soldiers of King Arthur; those primitive Britons, by whom, according to romantic tradition, the castle had been first tenanted, though history carried back its antiquity only to the times of the Heptarchy. Some of these tremendous figures were real men, dressed up with eigars and buskins; others were mere cutrements composed of pasteboard and backram, which, viewed from beneath, and mingled with those that were real, formed a sufficiently striking representation of what was supposed to exist. But the gigantic porter who waited at the gate beneath, and actually discharged the duties of warder, owed none of his terrors to fictitious means. He was a man whose huge stature, thievish, sinews, and bulk in proportion, would have enabled him to enact Colbran, Asarpard, or any other giant of romance, without raising himself nearer to heaven even by the altitude of a chimney. The legs and knees of this son of Anak were bare, as were his arms from a span below the shoulder; but his feet were defended with sandals, fastened with cross straps of scarlet leather, studded with brass knobs. A close jerkin of scarlet velvet, looped with gold, with short breeches of the same, covered his body and part of his limbs; and he wore on his shoulders, instead of a cloak, the skin of a black bear. The head of this formidable person was uncovered, except by his shaggy black hair, which descended on either side around features of that huge, lumpish, and heavy cast, which are often annexed to men of very uncommon size, and which, notwithstanding some distinguishing exceptions, have created a general prejudice against giants, as being a dull and sluggish kind of persons. This tremendous warter was appropriately armed with a heavy club spiked with steel. In fine, he represented excellently one of those giants of popular romance, who figure in every fairy tale, or legend of knighthood.

The demeaneur of this modern Titan, when Wayland Smith bent his attention to him, had in it something arguing much mental embarrassment and vexation; for sometimes he sat down for an instant on a massive stone bench, which seemed placed for his accommodation beside the gateway, and then ever and anon he started up, stretching his huge head, and striding to and fro on his post, like one under a fit of impatience and anxiety. It was while the porter was pacing before the gate in this agitated manner, that Wayland, modestly, yet as a manner of course (not, however, without some mental misgiving), was about to pass him, and enter the portal arch. The porter, however, stopped his progress, bidding him, in a thundering voice, "Stand back! and enforcing his injunction by heaving upon his steel-shod mace, and dashing it on the ground before Wayland's horse's nose with such vehemence, that the pavement flashed fire, and the archway rang to the clannous, Wayland, avoiding himself of Dickie's hints, began to state that he belonged to a band of performers to which his presence was indispensable, that he had been accidentally detained behind, and much to his purpose was beyond him. But the porter was inexorable, and kept muttering and mumurating something betwixt his teeth, which Wayland could make little of; and addressing betwixt whiles a refusing intemperance, couched in language which was but too intelligible, as the Accent of his speech might run thus:—What, how now, my masters? (To himself)—Here's a stir—here's a fight,—then to Wayland—You are a boisterous knave, and shall have no entrée—(Again to himself)—Here's a strong—here's a threatening—I shall never get through with it—Here's a—lump—la.—(To Wayland)—Back from the gate, or I'll break the jate of thee.—(One move to himself)—Here's a—no I shall never get through it.

"Stand still," whispered Flibbertigibbet into Wayland's ear, "I know where the shoe pinches, and will tame him in an instant.

He dropped down from the horse, and, skipping up to the porter, plucked him by the tail of the bear-skin, so as to induce him to decline his huge head, and whisper something in his ear. Not at the command of the lord of some Eastern talisman did Aine alter his toil in form into a look of smooth submission, more suddenly than the gigantic porter of Kenilworth, who made use of the terrors of his looks, at the instant Flibbertigibbet's whisper reached his ears. He flung his club upon the ground, and caught up Dickie Sludge, raising him to such a distance from the earth, as might have proved perilous had he chances to let him slip.

"It is even so," he said, with a thundering sound of exultation—"it is even so, my little dandies—but who the devil could teach it thee?"

"Do not thou care about that," said Flibbertigibbet; but—(he looked at Wayland and the lady, and then such as was to have said in a whisper, which need not be a loud one, as the giant held him for his convenience close to his ear. The porter then gave Dickie a warm caress, and set him on the ground with Dickie's care which a careful housewife uses in replacing a cracked china cup upon her mantelpiece, calling out at the same time to Wayland and the lady,

"In with you—In with you—and take heed how you come too late another day when I chance to be porter."
A4, aA, in with you,' added Flibbertigibbet; I must stay a short space with my honest Philibiste, my Godath of Gath; but I will be with you anon, and at the bottom of all your secrets, were they as deep and dark as the castle dungeon.

'I do believe thou wouldst.' said Wayland; 'but I trust the secret will be soon out of my keeping, and then I shall care less what others may know it.'

They now crossed the entrance tower, which obtained the name of the Gallery Tower from the following circumstance:—The whole bridge, extending from the entrance to another tower on the opposite side of the lake, called Mortimer's Tower, was so disposed as to make a spacious tilt-yard about one hundred and thirty yards in length, and ten in breadth, strewed with the finest sand, and defended on either side by strong and high palisades. The broad and fair gallery, destined for the ladies who were to witness the feats of chivalry presented on this arena, was erected on the northern side of the outer tower, to which it gave name. Our travellers passed slowly along the bridge or tilt-yard, and arrived at Mortimer's Tower, at its fairest extremity, through which the approach led into the outer, or base-court of the castle. Mortimer's Tower bore on its front the scutcheon of the Earl of March, whose daring ambition overthrew the throne of Edward II., and aspired to share his power with the 'She-wolf of France,' to whom the unhappy monarch was wedded. The gate, which opened under this ominous memorial, was guarded by many warders in rich liveries; but they offered no opposition to the entrance of the countess and her guide, who, having passed by licence of the principal porter at the Gallery Tower, were not, it may be supposed, liable to interruption from his deputies. They entered accordingly, in silence, the great outward court of the castle, leaving then fall before them that vast and lordly pile, with all its stately towers, each gate open, as if in sign of unlimited hospitality, and the apartments filled with noble guests of every degree, besides dependents, retainers, domestics of every description, and all the appendages and promoters of mirth and revelry.

Amid this stately and busy scene, Wayland halted his horse, and looked upon the lady, as if waiting her commands what was next to be done, since they had safely reached the place of destination. As she remained silent, Wayland, after waiting a minute or two, ventured to ask her, in direct terms, what were her next commands. She raised her hand to her forehead, as if in the act of collecting her thoughts and resolutions, while she answered him in a low and suppressed voice, like the murmurings of one who speaks in a dream—'Commands! I may indeed claim right to command, but who is there will obey me?'

Then suddenly raising her head, like one who had formed a decisive resolution, she addressed a gaily-dressed domestic, who was crossing the court with importance and stately in his ceremoniousness.—“Stop, sir,' she said, ‘I desire to speak with the Earl of Leicester.'

With whom, an it please you?' said the man, surprised at the demand; and then, looking upon the mean equipage of her who used towards him such a tone of authority, if he added, with insolence, ‘Why, what hast of Bedlam is this, would ask to see my lord on such a day as the present?'

‘Friend,' said the countess, ‘be not insolent—my business with the Earl is most urgent.'

'You must get some one else to do it,' were the words urgent,' said the follow. — 'I should summon my lord from the Queen's royal presence to do your business, should I?—I were like to be thanked with a horse-whip. I marvel our old porter took not measure of such ware with his club, instead of giving them passage; but his brain is addled with getting his speech by heart.'

Two or three persons stopped, attracted by the fleering way in which the serving-man expressed himself; and Wayland, alighting both for himself and the lady, hastily addressed himself to one who appeared the most civil, and, thrusting a piece of money into his hand, held a moment's counsel with him, on the subject of finding a place of temporary retreat for the lady. The person to whom he spoke, being one in some authority, rebuked the others for their incivility, and, commanding one fellow to take care of the stranger's horses, he desired them to follow him. The countess retained presence of mind sufficient to see that it was absolutely necessary she should comply with his request; and, leaving the rude lackeys and grooms to crack their brutal jests about light heads, light heels, and so forth, Wayland and she followed in silence the deputy-sheriff, who undertook to be their conductor.

They entered the inner court of the castle by the great gateway, which extended between the principal keep, or donjon, called Caesar's Tower, and a stately building which passed by the name of King Henry's Lodging, and were thus placed in the centre of the noble pile, which presented, on its different fronts, magnificent specimens of every species of castellated architecture, from the Conquest to the reign of Elizabeth, with the appropriate edifices and ornaments of each.

Across this inner court also they were conducted by their guide to a small but strong tower occupying the northeast angle of the building, adjacent to the great hall, and filling up a space between the immense range of kitchens and the end of the great hall itself. The lowest part of this tower was occupied by some of the household officers of Leicester, owing to its convenient vicinity to the places where their duty lay; but in the upper storey, which was reached by a narrow winding stair, was a small octagonal chamber, which, in the great demand for lodgings, had been on the present occasion fitted up for the reception of guests, though generally said to have been used as a place of confinement for some unhappy person who had been there murdered. Tradition called this prisoner Mervyn, and transferred his name to the tower. That it had been used as a prison was improbable; for the floor of each storey was arched, the walls of tremendous thickness, while the space of the chamber did not exceed fifteen feet in diameter. The window, however, was pleasant, though narrow, and commanded a delightful view of what was called the Pleasure; a space
of ground enclosed and decorated with arches, trophies, statues, fountains, and other architectural monuments, which formed one access from the castle itself into the garden. There was a bed in the apartment, and other preparations for the reception of a guest, to which the countess paid but slight attention, her notice being instantly arrested by the sight of writing materials placed on the table (not very commonly to be found in the bedrooms of those days), which instantly suggested the idea of writing to Leicester, and remaining private until she had received his answer.

The deputy-sheriff having introduced them into this commodious apartment, courteously asked Wayland, whose generosity he had experienced, whether he could do anything further for his service. Upon receiving a gentle hint that some refreshment would be welcome, he accordingly conveyed the smith to the butty-hatch, where dressed provisions of all sorts were distributed, with hospitable profusion, to all who asked for them. Wayland was readily supplied with some light provisions, such as he thought would best suit the fasted appetite of the lady, and did not omit the opportunity of himself making a hasty but hearty meal on more substantial fare. He then returned to the apartment in the tower, where he found the countess, who had finished her letter to Leicester, and, in lieu of a seal and silken thread, had secured it with a bracelet of her own beautiful tresses, fastened by what is called a true-love knot.

"Good friend," said she to Wayland, whom God hath sent to aid me at my utmost need, I do beseech thee, as the last trouble you shall take for an unfortunate lady, to deliver this letter to the noble Earl of Leicester. Be it received as it may," she said, with features agitated betwixt hope and fear, "then, good fellow, shall you have no more trouble with me. But I hope the best; and if ever lady made a poor man rich, thou hast surely deserved it at my hand, should my happy days ever come round again. Give it, I pray you, into Lord Leicester's own hand, and mark how he looks on receiving it.

Wayland, on his part, readily undertook the commission, but anxiously prayed the lady, in his turn, to partake of some refreshment; in which he at length prevailed, more through impartiality, and her desire to see him begone on his errand, than from any inclination the countess felt to comply with his request. He then left her, advising her to lock her door on the inside, and not to stir from her little apartment—and went to seek an opportunity of discharging her errand, as well as of carrying into effect a purpose of his own, which circumstances had induced him to form.

In fact, from the conduct of the lady during the journey—her long fits of profound silence—the vexation and uncertainty which seemed to pervade all her movements, and the obvious inaccuracy of thinking and acting for herself, under which she seemed to labour, Wayland had formed the not improbable opinion, that the dulness of her situation had in some degree injured her understanding. When she had escaped from the seclusion of Common Pleas, and the dangers to which she was there exposed, it would have seemed her most rational course to retire to her father's, or elsewhere, at a distance from the power of those by whom these dangers had been created. When, instead of doing so, she demanded to be conveyed to Kenilworth, Wayland had been only able to account for her conduct, by supposing that she meant to put herself under the tutelage of Treasurer, and to appeal to the protection of the queen. But now, instead of following this natural course, she extricated him with a letter to Leicester, the patron of Varney, and within whose jurisdiction at least, if not under his express authority, all the evils she had already suffered were inflicted upon her. This seemed an unsafe and even a desperate measure, and Wayland felt anxiety for his own safety, as well as that of the lady, should he examine the contents of her missive, and find that he had secured for himself the advice and assistance of a protector. He therefore retired, leaving the letter with Wayland, and communicating to him the arrival of the lady at Kenilworth, and thus at once relieved him of all further responsibility, and divested the task of guiding and protecting this unfortunate lady upon the patron who had at first employed him in her service.

"He will be a better judge than I am," said Wayland, "whether she is to be gratified in this humbler appeal to my Lord of Leicester, which seems like an act of insanity; and, therefore, I will turn the matter over on my hands, deliver him the letter, receive what they list to give me by way of reward, and then show the Castle of Kenilworth a pair of light heels; for, after the work I have been engaged in, it will be, I fear, neither a safe nor wholesome place of residence; and I would rather choose the coldest common in England than share in their gayest revels."

CHAPTER XXVII.

In my time I have seen a boy do wonders. Robin, the red tinder, had a beard. Would he run through a cat-hole. The Coxcomber.

Amid the universal bustle which filled the castle and its environs, it was no easy matter to find out any individual; and Wayland was still less likely to light upon Treasurer, whom he sought so anxiously, because, sensible of the danger of attracting attention, in the circumstances in which he was placed, he dared not make general inquiries among the retainers or domestics of Leicester. He learned, however, by indirect questions, that, in all probability, Treasurer must have been one of a large party of gentlemen in attendance on the Earl of Sussex, who had accompanied their patron that morning to Kenilworth, when Leicester had received them with marks of the most formal respect and distinction. He further learned that both ears, with their followers, and many other nobles, knights, and gentlemen, had taken horse, and gone towards Warwick several hours since, for the purpose of escorting the queen to Kenilworth.
Her Majesty's arrival, like other great events, was delayed from hour to hour; and it was now announced, by a band of trumpets, that, her Majesty being detained by her gracious desire to receive the homage of her lieges who had thronged to wait upon her at Warwick, it would be the hour of twilight ere she entered the castle. The intelligence released for a time those who were upon duty, in the immediate expectation of the queen's appearance, and ready to play their part in the solemnities with which it was to be accompanied; and Wayland, seeing several horses enter the castle, was not without hopes that Tressilian might be of the number. That he might not lose an opportunity of meeting his patron, in the event of this being the case, Wayland placed himself in the base-court of the castle, near Mortimer's Tower, and watched every one who went or came by the bridge, the extremity of which was protected by that building. Thus stationed, nobody could enter or leave the castle without his observation, and most anxiously did he study the garb and countenance of every horseman, as, passing from under the opposite Gallery Tower, they paced slowly, or curvetted, along the tilt-yard, and approached the entrance of the base-court.

But while Wayland gazed thus eagerly to discover him whom he saw not, he was pulled by the sleeve by one by whom himself not willingly would have been seen.

This was Dickie Sludge, or Flibbertigibbet, who, like the imp whose name he bore, and whom he had been accosted in order to resemble, seemed to be ever at the ears of those who thought least of him. Whatever were Wayland's internal feelings, he judged it necessary to express pleasure at their unexpected meeting.

"Ha! is it thou, my minikin—my miller's thumb—my prince of cæcilians—my little mouse!"

"Ay," said Dickie, "the mouse which gnawes under the toils, just when the lion who was caught in them began to look wonderfully like an ass.

"Why, thou little hop-the-gutter, thou art as sharp as vinegar this afternoon! But tell me, how didst thou come off with the yonder jester-headed giant, whom I had left thee with?—I was afraid he would have stripped thy clothes, and so swallowed thee, as men do eat a roasted chestnut.

"Had he done so," replied the boy, "he would have had more brains in his guts than ever he had in his nodle. But the giant is a courteous monster, and more grateful than many other folk wiser. I have helped at a pinch, Master Wayland Smith,"

"Deshrew me, Flibbertigibbet," replied Wayland, "but thou art sharper than a Sheffield whittle! I would I knew by what charm you muzzled yonder old bear."

"Ay, that is in your own manner," answered Dickie; "you think fine speeches will pass muster instead of good-will. However, as to this honest porter, you must know, that when we presented ourselves at the gate yonder, his brain was overburthened with a speech that had been penned for him, and which petted rather an overmatch for his gigantic faculties. Now this same pithy

oration had been indulged, like sundry others, by my learned magister, Erasmus Holiday, so I had heard it often enough to remember every line. As soon as I heard him blundering and floundering like a fish upon dry land through the first verse, and perceived him at a stand, I knew where the shoe pinched, and helped him to the next word, when he caught me up in a ecstasy, even as you saw but now. I promised, as the price of your admission, to hide me under his bearish gaberdine, and prompt him in the hour of need. I have just now been getting some food in the castle, and am about to return to him."

"That's right—that's right, my dear Dickie," replied Wayland; "haste thee, for Heaven's sake! else the poor giant will be utterly disconsolate for want of his dwarfish auxiliary—Away with thee, Dickie!"

"Ay, ay" answered the boy—"Away with Dickie, when we have got what good of him we can. You will not let me know the story of this lady, then, who is as much sister of thine as I am?"

"Why, what good would it do thee, thou silly elf?" said Wayland.

"O, stand ye on these terms?" said the boy; "well, I cannot greatly about the matter,—only, I never smell out a secret, but I try to be either at the right or the wrong end of it, and so good evening to ye."

"Nay, but, Dickie," said Wayland, who knew the boy's restless and intriguing disposition too well not to fear his enemy—"stay, my dear Dickie—part not with old friends so shortly!—thou shalt know all I know of the lady one day."

"Ay! said Dickie; "and that day may prove a me one. Fare thee well, Wayland—I will to my large-jointed friend, who, if he have not so sharp a wit as some professional magistrate, is at least more grateful for the service which other folk render him. And so again, good evening to ye."

"So saying, he cast a somersault through the gateway, and, lighting on the bridge, ran with the extraordinary agility, which was one of his distinguishing attributes, towards the Gallery Tower, and was out of sight in an instant.

"I would to God I were safe out of this castle again," said Wayland internally; "for now that this mischievous imp has put his finger in the pie, it cannot but prove a mess fit for the devil's eating. I would to Heaven Master Tressilian would appear!"

Tressilian, whom he thus anxiously expecting in one direction, had returned to Kenilworth by another access. It was indeed true, as Wayland had conjectured, that, in the earlier part of the day, he had accompanied the ears on their cavalcade towards Warwick, not without hope that he might in that town hear some tidings of his emissary. Being disappointed in this expectation, and observing Varney amongst Leicester's attendants, seeming as if he had a purpose of advancing to and addressing him, he conceived, in the present circumstances, it was wise to avoid the interview. He therefore left the presence-chamber when the high-sheriff of the county was in the midst of his dutiful address to her Majesty; and, mounting his horse, rode back to Kenilworth, by a remote and
circumvented me, and entered the castle by a small sally-port in the western wall, at which he was readily admitted, as one of the followers of the Earl of Sussex, towards whom Leicester had commanded the utmost courtesy to be exercised. It was thus that he met not Wayland, who was impatiently watching his arrival, and whom he himself would have been, at least, equally desirous to see.

Having delivered his horse to the charge of his attendant, he walked for a space in the Pleasance and in the garden, rather to indulge in comparative solitude, than to admire those singular beauties of nature and art which the magnificence of Leicester had there assembled. The greater part of the persons of condition had left the castle for the present, to form part of the earl's cavalcade; and those who remained behind, were on the battlements, outer walls, and towers, eager to view the splendid spectacle of the royal entry. The garden, therefore, while every other part of the castle resounded with the human voice, was silent, but for the whispering of the leaves, the murmurs of the tenants of a large aviary, with their happier companions who remained denizens of the free air, and the splashing of the fountains, which forced into the air from sculptures of fantastic and grotesque forms, fell down with ceaseless sound into the greater basins of Italian marble.

The melancholy thoughts of Tressilian cast a gloomy shade on all the objects with which he was surrounded. He compared the magnificent scenes which he here traversed, with the deep woodland and wild moorland which surrounded Elcho Hall, and the image of Amy Rolsart glided like a phantom through every landscape which his imagination summoned up. Nothing is perhaps more dangerous to the future happiness of men of deep thought and retired habits, than the entertaining an early, long, and unfortunate attachment. It frequently sinks so deep into the mind, that it becomes their dream by night and their vision by day—it mixes itself with every source of interest and enjoyment; and when blighted and withered by final disappointment, it seems as if the springs of the heart were dried up along with it. This aching of the heart, this longed for and unfulfilled shadow which has lost all the gaiety of its colouring, this dwelling on the remembrance of a dream from which we have been long roughly awakened, is the weakness of a gentle and generous heart, and it was that of Tressilian.

He himself at length became sensible of the necessity of forcing other objects upon his mind; and for this purpose he left the Pleasance, in order to mingle with the noisy crowd upon the walls, and view the preparation for the pages. But he left the garden, and heard the busy hum mixed with music and laughter, which floated around him, he felt an uncontrollable reluctance to mix with society, whose feelings were in a tone so different from his own, and resolved, instead of doing so, to retire to the chamber alone. He there employed himself in study until the tolling of the great white bell should announce the arrival of Elizabeth. Tressilian crossed accordingly by the passage betwixt the immense range of kitchens and the great hall, and ascended to the third storey of Mervyn's Tower, and, applying himself to the door of the small apartment which had been allotted to him, was surprised to find it was locked. He then recollected that the deputy chamberlain had given him a master-key, advising him, in the present confused state of the castle, to keep his door as much shut as possible. He applied this key to the lock, the bolt revolved, he entered, and in the same instant saw a female form seated in the apartment, and recognised that form to be Amy Rolsart. His first idea was, that a heated imagination had mislaid the image on which it had fallen to the eye; his second, that he beheld an apparition; the third and aliasing conviction, that it was Amy herself, pale, indeed, and thinner than in the days of heedless happiness, when she possessed the form and line of a wood-nymph, with the beauty of a sylph; but still Amy, unequalled in loveliness by aught which had ever visited his eyes.

The astonishment of the countess was scarcely less than that of Tressilian, although it was of shorter duration, because she had heard from Wayland that he was in the castle. She had started up on his first entrance, and now stood facing him, the paleness of her cheeks having given way to a deep blush.

"Tressilian," she said at length, "why come you here?"

"Nay, why come you here, Amy," returned Tressilian, "unless it be at length to claim that aid, which, as far as one man's heart and arm can extend, shall instantly be rendered to you?"

She was silent a moment, and then answered in a sorrowful tone, rather than an angry one,—"I require no aid, Tressilian, and would rather be injured than benefitted by any which your kindness can offer me. Believe me, I am near one whom law and love oblige to protect me."

"The villain, then, hath done you the poor justice which remained in his power," said Tressilian; "and I behold before me the wife of Varney."

"The wife of Varney!" she replied, with all the emphasis of scorn; "with what base name, sir, does your boldness signish the—the?" She hesitated, dropped her tone of scorn, looked down, and was confused and silent, for she recollected what fatal consequences might attend her completing the sentence with "the Countess of Leicester," which were the words that had naturally suggested themselves. It would have been a betrayal of the secret, on which her husband had assured her that his fortunes depended, to Tressilian, to Sussex, to the queen, and to the whole assembled court. "Never," she thought, "will I break my promised silence. I will submit to every suspicion rather than that."

The tears rose to her eyes, as she stood silent before Tressilian; while, looking on her with mingled grief and pity, he said, "Alas! Amy, your eyes contradict your tongue, and prove you a protector, willing and able to watch over you; but these tell me you are maimed, and deserted by the wretch to whom you have attached yourself."
She looked on him with eyes in which anger sparkled through her tears, but only repeated the word 'retch!' with a mournful emphasis.

"Yes, retch!" said Tressilian; 'for were he not better, why are you here, and alone in my apartment? why was not fitting provision made for your honourable reception?'

'In your apartment?' repeated Amy; 'in your apartment? It shall instantly be relieved of my presence.' She hastened towards the door; but the sad recollection of her deserted state at once pressed on her mind, and, pausing on the threshold, she added, in a tone muterably pathetic, 'Alas! I had forgot—I know not where to go.'

'I see—I see it all,' said Tressilian,springing to her side, and leading her back to the seat, on which she sunk down—"You do need aid—you do need protection, though you will not own it: and you shall not need it long. Leaning on my arm, as the remnant of your excellent and broken-hearted father, on the very threshold of the castle-gate, you shall meet Elizabeth; and the first deed she shall do in the halls of Kenilworth shall be an act of justice to her sex and her subjects. Strong in my good cause, and in the Queen's justice, the power of her union shall not shake my resolution. I will instantly seek Sussex.'

'Not for all that is under heaven!' said the countess, much alarmed, and feeling the absolute necessity of obtaining time, at least, for consideration. 'Tressilian, you were wont to be generous—grant me one request, and believe, if it be your wish to save me from misery and from madness, you will more by making me the promise I ask of you, than Elizabeth can do for me with all her power.'

'Ask me anything for which you can allege reason,' said Tressilian; 'but demand not of me—'

'O, limit not your boon, dear Edmund!' exclaimed the countess—"you once loved that I should call you so—Limit not your boon to reason! for my case is all madness, and frenzy must guide the counsels which alone can aile me.'

'If you speak thus wildly,' said Tressilian, astonishment again overpowering both his grief and his resolution, 'I must believe you indeed incapable of thinking or acting for yourself.'

'No!' she exclaimed, sinking on one knee before him, 'I am not mad—I am but a creature untouably miserable, and, from circumstancse the most singular, dragged on to a precipice by the arm of him who thinks he is keeping me from it—even by yours, Tressilian—by yours, whom I have honoured, respected—all but loved—but who, too—loved, too—Tressilian—though not as you wished to be.'

There was an energy—a self-possession—an abandonment in her voice and manner—a total resignition of herself to his generosity, which, together with the kindness of her expressions to himself, moved him deeply. He raised her, and in broken accents entreated her to be comforted.

'I cannot,' she said, 'I will not be comforted, till you grant me my request! I will speak as plainly as I dare—I am now awaiting the commands of one who has a right to issue them—The interference of a third person—of you in especial. Tressilian, will be ruin—utter ruin to me. Wait but four-and-twenty hours, and it may be that the poor Amy may have the means to show that she values, and can reward your disinterested friendship—that she is happy herself, and has the means to make you so. It is surely worth your patience, for so short a space!'

Tressilian paused, and, weighing in his mind the various probabilities which might render a violent interference on his part more prejudicial than advantageous, both to the happiness and reputation of Amy, considering also that she was within the walls of Kenilworth, and could suffer no injury in a castle honoured with the queen's residence, and filled with her guards and attendants,—he conceived, upon the whole, that he might render her more evil than good service, by intruding upon her his appeal to Elizabeth in her behalf. He expressed his resolution cautiously, however, doubting naturally whether Amy's hopes of extricating herself from her difficulties rested on something stronger than a blinded attachment to Varney, whom he supposed to be her seducer.

'You have fixed his sad and expressive eyes on her, which, in her ecstasy of doubt, terror, and perplexity, she cast up towards him. 'I have ever remarked, that when others called thee gallant and wilful, there lay under that external semblance of youthful and self-willed folly, deep feeling and strong sense. In this I will confide, trusting your own late in your own hands for the space of twenty-four hours, without my interference by word or act.'

'Do you promise me this, Tressilian?' said the countess, 'Is it possible you can yet repose so much confidence in me? Do you promise, as you are a gentleman and a man of honour, to intrude in my matters, neither by speech nor action, whatever you may see or hear that seems to you to demand your interference?—Will you so far trust me!'

'Will, upon your honour,' said Tressilian; 'but when that space is expired,' she said, interrupting him, 'you are free to act as your judgment shall determine.'

'Is there nothing besides which I can do for you, Amy?' said Tressilian.

'Nothing,' she said, 'save to leave me,—that is, if—I blush to acknowledge my helplessness by asking it—if you can spare me the use of this apartment for the next twenty-four hours.'

'This is most wonderful!' said Tressilian; 'what hope or interest can you have in a castle, you cannot command even an apartment.'

'Argue not, but leave me,' she said; and added, as he slowly and unwillingly retired, 'Generous Edmund! the time may come, when Amy may show she deserved thy noble attachment.'
When man, never lack a draught, when the full can
stands at thine own, and cares no more saying:—
Nay, fear not me, for I have no delight
To watch men's vanities, since I have myself
Of virtue taught to boast of—I'm a striker,
Would have the world strike with me, pell-mell, all.

PANDEMIONUM.

Tressilian, in strange agitation of mind, had
hardly stepped down the first two or three steps
of the winding staircase, when, greatly to his
surprise and displeasure, he met Michael Lam-
bourne, wearing an impatient familiarity of
visage, for which Tressilian felt much disposed
to throw him down-stairs; until he remembered
the prejudice which Amy, the only object of his
solitude, was likely to receive from his engaging
in any act of violence at that time, and in that
place.

He therefore cor rected himself with looking
sternly upon Lam bourne, as upon one whom he
deemed unworthy of notice, and attempted to
pass him in his way down-stairs, without any
symptom of recognition. But Lam bourne, who,
amidst the professions of that day's hospitality,
had not failed to take a deep, though not an
overpowering cup of sack, was not in the humour
of humbling himself before any man's looks.
He stopped Tressilian upon the staircase without
the least bashfulness or embarrassment, and
addressed him as if he had been on kind
and intimate terms:—'What, no grudge between
us, I hope, upon old scores, Master Tressilian?
—ay, I am one who remembers former kindness
rather than latter feuds—I'll convince you that
I meant honestly and kindly, ay, and comfortably
by you.'

'I desire none of your intimacy,' said Tres-
silian—'I keep company with your mates.'

'Now, see how hastily he is!' said Lam bourne;

and how these gentry, that are made question-
less out of the porcelain clay of the earth, look
down upon poor Michael Lam bourne! You
would take Master Tressilian now for the most
maid-like, modest, smothering squire of dukes,
that ever made love when candour were long
'the stuff—smuff, call you it?—Why, you would
play the saint on us, Master Tressilian, and
forget that even now thou hast commodity in
thy very belch-chamber, to the shame of my lord's
castle, ha! ha! ha! Have I touched you, Master
Tressilian?'

'I know not what you mean,' said Tressilian,
inferring, however, too surely, that this licen-
sious raillery must have been sensible of Amy's
presence of recognition; but if, he continued,
thur art varlet of the chambers, and laziest
a fce, there is one to leave mine unmolested.'

Lambourne looked at the piece of gold, and
put it in his pocket, saying:—'Now, I know not
but thou might have done more with me by a
kind word, than by this chinning rogue.

And after all he pays well that pays both gold—and
Mike Lambourne was never a make-shift, nor
a spoil-sport, or the like. Een live and let others
live, that is my motto—only, I would not let
some folks mock their beaver at me neither, as if
they were made of silver ore, and I of Dutch
dower. So if I keep your secret, Master Tres-
silian you may look sweet on me at least; and
were I to want a little backing or countenance,
being caught, as you know, the best of us may be,
in a sort of peculiarity—why, you know it too—and
so can make your chamber serve you and
that same bird in bowser beside—it's all one to
Mike Lambourne.'

'Make way, sir,' said Tressilian, unable to
bride his indignation, 'you have bad your feet.'

'Um!' said Lambourne, giving place, however,
while he sulkily muttered between his

Tressilian's words.—'Make way—and you have had you seke—but it matters
not, I will spoil no sport, as I said before; I am
no dog in the manger—mind that.'

He spoke louder and louder, as Tressilian, by
whom he felt himself overawed, got farther and
farther out of hearing, and, by this lucky discovery, that is one thing certain; and
I will try to get a sight of this Lindabrides
of his, that is another.'

CHAPTER XXIX.

Tressilian walked into the outer yard of the
castle, scarce knowing what to think of his late
strange and most unexpected interview with
Amy Rosbart, and dubious if he had done well,
being entrusted with the delegated authority of
her father, to pass his word so solemnly to leave
her to her own guidance for so many hours.
Yet how could he have denied her request, depend-
cing as she had too probably rendered herself
upon Varney? Such was his natural reasoning.
The happiness of her future life might depend
upon his not driving her to extremities, and
now that Amy had no trust to extricate
her from the power of Varney, supposing he was
to acknowledge Amy to be his wife, what title
had he to destroy the hope of domestic peace,
which might yet remain to her, by setting enmity
betwixt them? Tressilian resolved, therefore, scrupulously to observe her word pledged
both, because it had been given, and
because, as he still thought, while he considered
and reconsidered that extraordinary interview,
and guarded with justice or propriety have been
refused.
In one respect, he had gained much towards

SHIPWRECK.

Now fare thee well, my master—if true service
He guardian'd with hard locks, o'en cut the tow-line,
And let our bars across the pathless flood
Hold different courses—
sealing effectual protection for this unhappy
and still beloved object of his early affection.
Any was no longer menaced up in a distant and
solitary retreat, under the charge of persons of
doubtful reputation. She was in the Castle of
Keilworth, within the range of the royal court
for the time, free from all risk of violence, and
liable to be produced before Elizabeth on the
first summons. These were circumstances which
could not but assist greatly the efforts which he
might have occasion to use in her behalf.
While he was thus balancing the advantages
and perils which attended her unexpected pres-
ence in Keilworth, Tressilian was hastily and
anxiously accepted by Wayland, who, after ex-
claiming, 'Thank God, your worship is found
at last!' proceeded, with breathless caution, to
pore into his ear the intelligence that the lady
had escaped from Cumarne Place.

'And is she present in this castle?' said Tres-
silian: 'I know it, and I have seen her.—Was
it by her own choice she found refuge in my
apartment?'

'No,' answered Wayland; 'but I could think
of no other way of safely bestowing her, and was
but too happy to find a deputy-sheriff who knew
where you were quartered—for in jolly society
truly, the ball on the one hand and the kitchen
on the other!'

'Peace, this is no time for jesting,' answered
Tressilian sternly.

'I went but too well,' said the artist, 'for
I have felt these three days as if I had a halter
round my neck. This lady knows not her own
mind—she will have some of your aid—commands
you not to be named to her—and is about to put
herself into the hands of my Lord Leicester,
I had never got her safe into your chamber, but
she knew the owner of it.'

'Is it possible?' said Tressilian. 'But she
may have hopes the Earl will exert his influence
in her favour over his vilexious dependant.'

'I know nothing of that,' said Wayland—but
I believe, if she is to reconcile herself with either
Leicester or Varney, the side of the Castle of
Keilworth which will be safest for us will be
the outside, from which we can fastest fly away.
It is not my purpose to abide an instant after
delivery of the letter to Leicester, which waits
but your commands to find its way to him. See,
hereafter my last—no—a plague on it—I must have
left it in the dog's yard, in the hay-loft yonder,
where I am to sleep.'

'Death and fury!' said Tressilian, transported
beyond his usual patience; 'thou hast not lost
that which may depend a stake more important
than a thousand such lives as thine!'

'Lost it!' answered Wayland readily: 'that
were a jest indeed! No, sir, I have it carefully
put up with my night-sack, and some matters I
have occasion to use—I will fetch it in an
instant.'

'Do so,' said Tressilian; 'the faithful, and thou
shalt be well rewarded. But if I have reason to
suspect thee, a dead dog were in better case than
thou!'

Wayland bowed, and took his leave with
seeming confidence and alacrity; but, in fact,
filled with the utmost dread and confusion. The
letter was lost, that was certain, notwithstanding
the apology which he had made to appease the
impatient displeasure of Tressilian. It was lost
—it might fall into wrong hands—it would then,
certainly, occasion discovery of the whole in-
trige in which he had been engaged; nor, indeed,
did Wayland see much prospect of its remaining
concealed, in any event. He felt much hurt,
besides, at Tressilian's burst of impatience.

'Nay, if I am to be paid in this coin for ser-
dices where my neck is concerned, it is time
I should look to myself. Here have I offended,
for ought I know, to the death, the lord of this
stately castle, whose word were as powerful to
take away my life, as the breath which speaks it
to blow out a farthing candle. And all this for
a mad lady, and a melancholy gallant; who, on
the loss of a four-needled bit of paper, has his
hand on his poignard, and swears death and
fury!—Then there is the doctor and Varney—I
will save myself from the whole mass of them—
life is dearer than gold—I will fly this instant,
though I leave my reward behind me.'

These reflections naturally enough occurred
to a mind like Wayland's, who found himself engaged
far deeper than he had expected in a train of
mysteries and unjustifiable intrigues, in which the
actors seemed hardly to know their own course.
And yet, to do him justice, his personal fears were,
in some degree, counterbalanced by his compassion for the deserted
state of the lady.

'I care not a great for Master Tressilian,' he
said; 'I have done more than bargain by him,
and I have brought his errant-damozel within
his reach, so that he may look after herself; but
I fear the anything is in much danger amongst these stormy spirits. I will to her chamber, and tell her the fate which has befallen
her letter, that she may write another if she list. She cannot lack a messenger, I trow, where there are so many lackeys that can carry a letter to
her lord. And I will tell her also that I leave the castle, trusting it to God, her own guidance,
and Master Tressilian's care and looking after.—
Perhaps she may remember the ring she offered me—it was well sold, I trow; but she is a lovely creature, and—many hang the ring, I will not bear a base spirit for the matter. If
I care ill in this world for my good nature, I shall have better chance in the next.—So now for the
lady, and then for the rest.'

With the stately step and jealous eye of the
cat that steals on her prey, Wayland resumed
the way to the countess's chamber, sliding along
by the side of the courts and passages, alike
observer of all around him, and studious him-
self to escape observation. In this manner he
crossed the outward and inward castle-yard, and
the great arched passage, which, running between
the range of office houses and the hall, led to the
bottom of the little winding stair that gave access
to the chambers of Morvan's Tower.

The artist congratulated himself on having
escaped the various perils of his journey, and
was in the act of ascending by two steps at once,
when he observed that the shadow of a man,
thrown from a door which stood ajar, darkened
the opposite wall of the staircase. Wayland
drew back cautiously, went down to the inner
courtyard, spent about an quarter of an hour,

Stuart.
which seemed at least quadruple its usual duration, in walking from place to place, and then returned to the tower in hopes to find that the laborer had disappeared. He ascended as high as the suspicious spot—there was no shadow on the wall—he ascended a few yards further—the door was still ajar, and he was doubtful whether to advance or retreat, when it was suddenly thrown wide open, and Michael Lambourne bolted out of the abandoned Wayland, and "What the devil art thou? and what seek'st thou in this part of the castle? March into that chamber, and be hanged to thee!"

"I am no dog to go at every man's whistle," said the artist, affecting a confidence which was belied by a timid shake in his voice.

"Stay'st thou me so?—Come hither, Lawrence Staples."

A huge ill-made and ill-bred fellow, upwards of six feet high, appeared at the door, and Lambourne proceeded; "If thou hast so fond of this tower, my friend, thou shalt see its foundations, good twelve feet below the bed of the lake, and tenanted by certain jolly toads, snakes, and so forth, which thou wilt find mighty good company. Therefore, come along, and I'll ask you, in fair play, who thou art, and what thou seest here!"

"If the dungeon-gate once closes behind me," thought Wayland, "I am a gone man."

He therefore answered summarily, "He was the poor juggler whom your honour had met yesterday in Weatherly Bottom."

"And what juggling trick art thou playing in this tower? Thy gang," said Lambourne, "lies over against Clinton's buildings.""

"I came here to see my sister," said the juggler, "who is in Master Tressilian's chamber, just above."

"Ah!" said Lambourne, smiling, "here be truths! Upon my honour, for a stranger, this same Master Tressilian makes himself at home among us, and furnishes out his cell handomely, with all sort of commodities. This will be a previous tale of the saucy Master Tressilian, and will be welcome to some folks, as a paste of bravoes, and people who live with me. —Hark ye, fellow," added Michael, "adversely Welcome Wayland, thou shalt not give a hint to steal away—we must catch her in her form. So, back with that pitiful shop-bitting visage of thine, or I will fling thee from the window of the tower, and try if your juggling skill can save thy bones."

"Your worship will not be so hard-hearted, I trust," said Wayland; "poor folk must live. I trust your honour will allow me to speak with my sister!"

"Sister on Adam's side, I warrant," said Lambourne; "or, if otherwise, the more a knave thou. But, sister or no sister, thou diest on point of fox, if thou comest a-praying to this tower once more! More pleasant will thee out of the castle, for this is a more main concern than thy juggery."

"But, please your worship," said Wayland, "I am to conduct Arion in the pageant upon the lake this very evening."

"I will cut it myself, by Saint Christopher!" said Lambourne, "call'st thou him?—I will act Orion, his belt, and his seven stars to boot. Come along, for a rascal knave as thou—follow me!—or stay—Lawrence, do thou bring him along."

Lawrence led by the collar of the cloak the unresisting juggler, while Wayland, with hasty steps, led the way to that same salt-pan, or secret postern, by which Tressilian had returned to the castle, and which opened in the western wall, at no great distance from Merry's Tower.

While traversing with a rapid foot the space betwixt the tower and the salt-pan, Wayland in vain racked his brain for some device which might avail the poor lady, for whom, notwithstanding his own imminent danger, he felt deep interest. But when he was thrust out of the castle, and informed by Lambourne, with a tremendous oath, that instant death would be the consequence of his again approaching it, he cast up his hands and eyes to heaven, as if to call upon witness he had stood to the utmost in defense of the oppressed; then turned his back on the proud towers of Kenilworth, and went his way to seek a humbler and safer place of refuge.

Lawrence and Lambourne gasped a little while after Wayland, and then turned to go back to their tower, when the former thus addressed his companion: "Never credit me, Master Lambourne, if I can guess why thou hast driven this poor outcast from the castle, just when he was to bear a part in the show that was beginning, and all this about a wench."

"Ah, Lawrence," replied Lambourne, "that art thinking of Black Joan Juggs of Slingshord, and lusty sympathy with human frailty. But courage, most noble Duke of the Dungeon and Lord of Lisle, for thou art as dark in this matter as thine own dominions of Littletower. My most reverent Signior of the Low Countries, Kenilworth, know that our most notable master, Sir Richard Varney, would as much as to have a hole in this same Tressilian's cast, as would make us some fifty midnight carousals, with the full leave of bidding the steward go stick up, if he came to starve us too soon from our goblets."

"Nay, an that be the case, thou last right," said Lawrence Staples, the upper winder, or, in common phrase, the first jailer, of Kenilworth Castle, and of the liberty and honour belonging thereto; "but how will you manage when we are absent at the Queen's entrance, Master Lambourne; for methinks thou must attend thy master there?"

"Why, thou, mine honest prince of princes, must keep ward in my absence—Let Tressilian enter if he will, but see thou let no one come out. If the damsel herself would make a break, as 'tis not unlike she may, scare her back with rough words—she is but a salley player's wench after all."

"Nay, for that matter," said Lawrence, "I might spin the iron wicket upon her, that stands without the door, and so force per force she will be bound to her answer without more trouble."

Then Tressilian will not get access to her," said Lambourne, reflecting a moment. "But 'tis no matter—she will be detected in his chamber, and that is all one. But confesse, thou old hat's-eyed dungeon-keeper, that you fear to keep awake by yourself in that Merry's Tower of thine."

"Why, as to fear, Master Lambourne," said the
fellow, 'I mind it is not the turning of a key; but strange things have been heard and seen in that tower. You must have heard, for about an hour and a half as you have been in Kenilworth, that it is haunted by the spirit of Arthur ap Mervyn, a Welsh chieftain taken by Lord Mortimer, when he was one of the Lords Marchers of Wales, and murdered, as they say, in that same tower which bears his name.'

'O, I have heard the tale five hundred times,' said Lambourne, 'and how the ghost is always most vociferous when they bell ducks and stir dot about, or fry toasted cheese, in the culinary regions. Santo Diavolo, man, hold thy tongue, I know all about it.'

'Gay, but thou dost not, though,' said the turnkey, 'for as wise as thou wouldst make thyself, Ah, it is an awful thing to murder a prisoner in his ward!—Yon, that may have given a man a stab in the dark street, know nothing of it. To give a mutual fellow a knock on the head with the keys, and bid him be quiet, that's what I call keeping order in the ward; but to draw weapon and slay him, as was done to this Welsh lord, that raises you a ghost that will render your prison-house untenanted by any de christen for over a hundred years. And I have that regard, and for my prisoners, poor things, that I have put good squire and men of worship, that have taken a ride on the highway, or slandered in, Lord of Leicester, or the like, fifty feet underlying ground, rather than I would put them into that upper chamber yonder that they call Mervyn's Bower. Indeed, by good Saint Peter of the Petters, I marvel my noble lord, or Master Varney, could think of lodgins guests there; and if the Master Tresilian could get any one to keep him company, and in especial a pretty wenche, why, truly, I think he was in the right on.'

'I tell thee,' said Lambourne, leading the way into the turnkey apartment, 'thou art an ass—go bolt the wicket on the stair, and trouble not thy noddle about ghosts. Give me the winetumb, man; I am somewhat heated with chafing with yonder rascal.'

While Lambourne drew a long draught from a pitcher of claret, which he made use of without any cup, the warder went on vindicting his own belief in the supernatural,

'Thon last been few hours in this castle, and hast been for the whole space so drunk, Lambourne, that thon art deaf, dumb, and blind. But we should hear less of your bragging, were you to pass a night with us at full moon, for then the ghost is busiest; and more especially when a rattling wind sets in from the north-west, with some sprinkling of rain, and now and then a growl of thunder. Bodie o' me, what crackings and clashing, what growlings and what howlings, will there be at such times in Mervyn's Bower, right as it were over our heads, till the matter of two quarts of distilled waters has not been enough to keep my lad and me in some soberness.'

'Pshaw, man!' replied Lambourne, on whom his last draught, joined to repeated violations of the pitcher upon former occasions, began to make some innovation, 'thou spek'st thou know'st not what about spirits. No one knows justly what to say about them; and, in short, least said may in that matter be soonest mended. Some men believe in one thing, some in another—it is all matter of fancy. I have known them all sorts, my dear Lawrence. Look—the dear, and sensible men too. There's a great lord—we'll pass his name, Lawrence—he believes in the stars and the moon, the planets and their courses, and so forth, and that they twinkle exclusively for his benefit; when in sober, or rather in drunken truth, Lawrence, they are only shining to keep honest fellows like me out of the kennel. Well, sir, let his humour pass, he is great enough to indulge it. Then look ye, there is another—a very learned man, I promise you, and can treat Greek and Hebrew as fast as I can thesive.'

Lambourne, having thus taken the wind out of the other's sails, went on to say what he had to say in other words, which he thought more to the purpose, but it was a little too much for his ears, who had been a very profound student in both the sciences just mentioned; and, within an hour, they parted company.

'In faith, if you drink more, Michael,' said the warder, 'you will be in sore case either to play Orion or to wait on your master on such a solemn night; and I expect each moment to hear the great bell toll for the master at Mortimer's Tower to receive the Queen.'

While Staples remonstrated, Lambourne drank; and then, setting down the pitcher, which was nearly emptied, with a deep sigh, he said, in an undertone, which soon rose to a high one as his speech proceeded, 'Never mind, Lawrence—if I drink, I know that shall make Varney uphold me sooner! But, as I said, never mind, I can carry my drink discreetly. Moreover, I am to go on the water as Orion, and shall take cold unless I take something comforting beforehand. Not play Orion! Let us see the best roarer that ever strained his hogs for twelvetwelve-o'clock night! What if they see any man be sober to-night?—answer me that—it is matter of loyalty to be merry—and I tell thee, there are those in the castle, the, who, if they are not merry when drunk, have little chance to be merry when sober—I name no names, Lawrence. But your pocket of sack is a fine shoe-horn to pull on a loyal humour, and a merry one. Huzza for Queen Elizabeth!—for the noble Leicester!—for the valiant Master Varney!—and for Michael Lambourne, that can turn all round his finger!'

So saying, he walked down-stairs, and across the inner court.
The warter looked after him, shook his head, and, while he drew close and locked a wicket, which crossing the staircase, rendered it impossible to ascend higher than the silver immediately beneath. Merivyn's Bower, as Tressilian's chamber was named, he thus saluted with himself—'It's a good thing to be a favourite—I well-nigh lost mine office, because one frosty morning Master Varnay thought I smelled of aquavitae; and this fellow can appear before him drunk as a winoskin, and yet meet no reprove. But then he is a persistant clever fellow withal, and no one can understand above one-half of what he says.'

CHAPTER XXX.

Now bid the steeple ring—she comes, she comes—Speak for us, fellows—speak for us, shield-bearer and tucket. Stand to thy postcock, gunner, let thy cannon Play such a plea, as if a payment for Came stretched in turbard ranks to storm the ramparts. We will have pacnckets too—but that craves will, And I am a rough-skinned soldier.

The VIiNQ VIRGIN—A TRAJE-COMEDY.

TRESSILIAN, when Wayland had left him, as mentioned in the last chapter, remained uncertain what he ought next to do, when Raleigh and Blount came up to him arm in arm, yet, according to their wont, very cagily disputing together. Tressilian had no great desire for their society in the present state of his feelings, but there was no possibility of avoiding them; and indeed he felt, bound by his promise not to approach Amy, or take any step in her behalf, it would be his best course at once to mix with general society, and to exhibit on his knees as little as he could of the anguish and uncertainty which sat heavy at his heart. He therefore made a virtue of necessity, and hailed his comrade with 'All mirth to you gentleman. Whence come ye?''

'From Warick, to be sure,' said Blount; 'we must needs long to change our habits, like poor players, who are fast to multiply their persons to outward appearance by change of suits; and you better do the like, Tressilian.'

'Blount is right,' said Raleigh; 'the Queen loves such marks of deference, and notices, as wanting in respect, those who, not arriving in her immediate attendance, may appear in their soiled and ruffled riding-dress. But look at Blount himself, Tressilian, for the love of laughter, and see how his villainous tailor hath apparelled him—in blue, green, and crimson, with carnation ribbons, and yellow roses in his shoes.'

'Why, what wouldst thou have?' said Blount. 'I told the cross-legged thief to do his best, and spare no cost; and methinks these things are gay enough—gayer than thou own—I'll be judged by Tressilian.'

'I agree—I agree,' said Walter Raleigh. 'Judge betwixt us, Tressilian, for the love of Heaven.'

Tressilian, thus appealed to, looked at them both, and was immediately sensible, at a single glance, that honest Blount had taken on the tailor's warrant the pied garments which he had chosen to make, and were as much embarrassed by the quantity of points and ribbons which garnished his string, as a clown is in his holiday clothes; while the death of Raleigh was a well-fancied and rich suit, which the wearer bore as a garb too well adapted to his elevated person to attract particular attention. Tressilian said, therefore, 'That Blount's dress was finest, but Raleigh's the best fancied.'

Blount was satisfied with his decision. 'I knew mine was finest,' he said; 'if that knave Double-stitch had brought me home such a simple doubt as that of Raleigh's, I would have beat his brains out with his own pressing-iron. Nay, if we must be fools, ever let us be fools of the first head, say I.'

'But why gettest thou not on thy braveries, Tressilian?' said Raleigh. 'I am excluded from my apartment by a silly mistake,' said Tressilian, 'and separated for the time from my luggage. I was about to seek thee, to beseech a share of thy lodging.'

'How welcome!' said Raleigh; 'it is a noble one. My Lady of Leicester has done me that kindness, and lodged me in this prim fashion. If his courtesy he extended reluctantly, it is at least farther. I would advise you to tell your priest to the Earl's chamberlain—you will have instant refreshes.'

'Nay, it is not worth while, since you can spare me room,' replied Tressilian. 'I would not be troublesome.—Has any one come lately with you?'

'O ay,' said Blount; 'Varney and a whole tribe of Leicesters, besides about a score of us honest Sussex folk. We are all, it seems, to receive the Queen at what they call the Gallery Tower, and witness some folegeries there; and then we're to remain in attendance upon the Queen in the Great Hall—God bless the mark—while they who are not receiving upon her grace get rid of their slouch, and doff their riding-suits. Heaven help me, if her grace should speak to me, I shall never know what to answer!'

'And what has detained them so long at Warwick?' said Tressilian, unwilling that their conversation should return to his own affairs.

'Such a succession of folegeries,' said Blount, 'was never seen at Bartholomew fair. We have had speeches and players, and dogs and bears, and men making monkeys, and women moppets, of themselves—I marvel the Queen could endure it. But ever and anon came in something of the lovely light of her gracions countenance, or some such trash. Ah vanity makes a fool of the wise. But come, let us on to this same Gallery Tower—though I see not what thou, Tressilian, canst do with thy riding-dress and boots.'

'I will take my station behind thee, Blount,' said Tressilian, 'who is that his friend's usual figure had taken a strong hold of his imagination; the goodly size and gay dress will cover my defects.'

'And thou shalt, Edmund,' said Blount. 'In faith, I am glad thou thinkst of my garb well-fashioned, for all Mr. Wittpenere here; for, when one does a foolish thing, it is right to do it handsomely.'

So saying, Blount cocked his beaver, threw
out his leg, and marched manfully forward, as if at the head of his brigade of pikemen, ever and anon looking with complaisance on his crimson stockings, and the huge yellow roses which blossomed on his shoes. Tresillian followed, wrapt in his own sad thoughts, and scarce mind- ing Raleigh, whose quick fancy, amused by the awkward vanity of his respectable friend, vented itself in jests, which he whispered into Tres-illian's ear.

In this manner they crossed the long bridge or tilt-yard, and took their station, with other gentlemen of quality, before the outer gate of the Gallery or Entrance Tower. The whole amounted to about forty persons, all selected as of the first rank under that of knighthood, and were disposed in double rows on either side of the gate, like a guard of honour, within the close hedge of pikes and partisans which was formed by Leicester's equestrians, wearing their liveries. The gentlemen carried no arms save their swords and daggers. These gallants were as gaily dressed as imagination could devise; and as the garb of the time permitted a great display of expensive magnificence, the thought was to see but velvet and cloth of gold and silver, ribbons, feathers, gems, and golden chains. In spite of his more serious subjects of distress, Tresillian could not help feeling that he, with his riding-suit, however handsome it might be, made rather an unworthy figure among these 'fierce vanities,' and the rather because he saw that his dishabille was the subject of wonder among his own friends, and of scorn among the partisans of Leicester.

We could not suppress this fact, though it may seem something at variance with the gravity of Tresillian's character; but the truth is, that a regard for personal appearance is a species of self-love from which the wisest are not exempt, and to which the mind clings so instinctively, that not only the soldier advancing to almost inevitable death, but even the doomed criminal who goes to certain execution, shows an anxiety to array his person to the best advantage. But this is a digression.

It was the twilight of a summer night (9th July, 1572), the sun having for some time set, and all were in anxious expectation of the queen's immediate approach. The multitude had remained assembled for many hours, and their numbers were still rather on the increase. A profuse distribution of refreshments, together with roasted oxen, and barrels of ale set abreast in different places of the road, had kept the populace in perfect love and loyalty towards the queen and her favorite, which might have somewhat abated had fasting been added to watching. They passed away the time, therefore, with the usual popular amusements of whooping, halloowing, shrieking, and playing rude tricks upon each other, forming the chorus of discordant sounds usual on such occasions. These prevailed all through the crowded roads and fields, and especially beyond the gate of the chase, where the greater number of the common sort were stationed; when, all of a sudden, a single rocket was seen to shoot into the atmosphere, and at the instant far heard over land and field, the great bell of the castle tolled.

Immediately there was a pause of dead silence, succeeded by a deep hum of expectation, the united voice of many thousands, none of whom spoke above their breath or, to use a singular expression, the whisper of an immense multitude.

'They come now for certain,' said Raleigh.

'Tresillian, that sound is grand. We hear it from this distance as mariners, after a long voyage, hear, upon their night watch, the tide rush upon some distant and unknown shore.'

'Mass!' answered Blount. 'I hear it rather as I used to hear mine own kine loving from the close of Witton Westlowe.'

'He will assuredly graze presently,' said Raleigh to Tresillian; 'his thought is all of fat oxen and fertile meadows—\(\ldots\)\text{illegible}\text{\ldots}.'

'Poor, I!' replied Raleigh. 'An eagle am I, that never will think of dull earth while there is a heaven to soar in, and a sun to gaze upon.'

'Well bragged, by Saint Barnaby!' said Blount; 'but, good Master Eagle, beware the cage, and beware the fowler. Many birds have flown as high, that I have seen stuffed with straw, and hung up to scarce kitchen. But hark, what a dead silence hath fallen on them at once!'

'The procession pauses,' said Raleigh, 'at the gate of the chase, where a sylvâ, one of the 
\textit{futidice}, meets the Queen to tell her fortune. I saw the verses but there is little savour in them, and her Grace has been already crammed full with such poetical compliments. She whispered to me during the Recorder's speech worthy, at 
Ford Mill, as she entered the liberties of Warwick, how she was \textit{parrhus barbarä loquie}.'

'The Queen whispered to him!' said Blount, in a kind of soliloquy; 'Good God, to what will this world come?'

His further meditations were interrupted by a shout of applause from the multitude, so tremendously vociferous, that the country echoed for miles round. The guards, thickly stationed upon the road by the which the queen was to advance, caught up the acclamation, which ran like wildfire to the castle, and announced to all within that Queen Elizabeth had entered the Royal Chase of Kenilworth. The whole music of the chase sounded at once, and a round of artillery, with a salvo of small arms, was discharged from the battlements; but the noise of drums and trumpets, and even of the cannon themselves, was faintly heard amidst the roaring and reiterated welcomes of the multitude.

As the noise began to abate, a broad glare of light was seen to appear from the gate of the park, and, broadening and brightening as it
came nearer, advanced along the open and fair avenue, and led towards the Gallery Tower; and which, as we have already noticed, was lined on each hand by the retainers of the Earl of Leicester. The word was passed along the line.

"The Queen! The Queen! Silence, and stand fast!" On came the cavalcade, illuminated by two hundred thick waxen torches, in the hands of as many horsemen, which cast a light like that of broad day all around the procession, but especially on the principal group, of which the queen herself, arrayed in the most splendid manner, and blazing with jewels, formed the central figure. She was mounted on a milk-white horse, which she reined with peculiar grace and dignity; and in the whole of her stately and noble carriage you saw the daughter of an hundred kings.

The ladies of the court who rode beside her Majesty had taken especial care that their own external appearance should not be more glorious than their rank and the occasion altogether demanded, so that no inferior luminarity might appear to clash the orbit of royalty. But their personal charms, and the magnificence by which, under every prudential restraint, they were necessarily distinguished, exhibited them as the very flower of a realm so far famed for splendour and beauty. The magnificence of the courtiers, free from such restrictions as prudence imposed on the ladies, was yet more unbounded.

Leicester, who glittered like a golden image with jewels and cloth of gold, rode on her Majesty's right hand, as well in quality of her host as of her master of the horse. The black steel which he mounted had not a single white hair on his body, and was one of the most renowned chargers in Europe, having been purchased by the earl at large expense for this royal occasion. As the noble animal chased at the slow pace of the procession, and, arching his stately neck, champed on the silver bits which restrained him, the foam flowed from his mouth, and speckled his well-formed limbs as if with spots of snow. The rider well became the high place which he held, and the proud steed which he bestowed; for no man in England, or perhaps in Europe, was more esteemed than Dudley in his command and all other exercises belonging to his quality. He was bare-headed, as were all the courtiers in the train; and the red torch-light shone upon his long curled tresses of dark hair, and on his noble features, to the beauty of which even the severest critic could only object the lordly fault, as it may be termed, of a forehead somewhat too high. On that proud evening, those features wore all the grateful solvitude of a subject, to show himself sensible of the high honour which the queen was conferring on him, and all the pride and satisfaction which became so glorious a moment. Yet, though neither eye nor features betrayed aught but feelings which suited the occasion, some of the earl's personal attendants remarked that he was unusually pale, and they expressed to each other the fear that he was taking more fatigue than consisted with so healthy a health.

Varney followed close behind his master, as the principal esquire in waiting, and had charge of his lordship's black velvet bonnet, garnished with a clasp of diamonds, and surmounted by a white plume. He kept his eye constantly on his master; and, for reasons with which the reader is not unacquainted, was, among Leicester's numerous dependents, the one who was most anxious that his lord's strength and resolution should carry him successfully through a day so agitating. For although Varney was one of the few—the very few moral monsters, who contrive to hold the remorse of their own bosoms, and are dragged into moral insensibility by atheism, as men in extreme agony are lulled by opium, yet he knew that in the breast of his patron there was already awakened the fire that is never quenched, and that his lord felt, amid all the pomp and magnificence we have described, the gnawing of the worm that dieth not.

It, however, assured as Leicester stood, by Varney's own intelligence, that his steward laboured under an indisposition which formed an unanswerable apology to the queen for her not appearing at Kenilworth, there was little danger, his way was thought, that a man so ambitious would betray himself by giving way to any external weakness.

The train, male and female, who attended immediately upon the queen's person, were of course of the bravest and the fairest—the highest born nobles, and the wisest counsellors, of that distinguished reign, to repeat whose names were but to wear the reader. Behind came a long crowd of knights and gentlemen, whose rank and birth, however distinguished, were thrown into shade, as their persons were into the rear of a procession, whose front was of such august majesty.

Thus marshalled, the cavalcade approached the Gallery Tower, which formed, as we have often observed, the extreme barrier of the castle.

It was now the part of the huge porter to step forward; but the lumber was so overwhelmed with confusion of spirit—the contents of one immense black jack of double ale which he had just drunk to quicken his memory, having treacherously confused the brain it was intended to clear—that he only groaned piteously, and remained sitting on his stone seat; and the queen would have passed without paying heed, if not the giant's warrier's secret ally, Flibbertigibbet, who lay perched behind him, thrust a pin into the rear of the short funereal garment which we elsewhere described.

The porter uttered a sort of yell, which came not amiss into his part, started up with his club, and dealt a sound blow on each side of him; and then, like a coachman, picked by the spur, started off at once into the full career of his address, and by dint of active prompting on the part of Dickie Shulge, delivered, in sounds of gigantic intonation, a speech which may be thus abridged;—the reader being to suppose that the first lines were addressed to the throng who approached the gateway; the conclusion to the approach of the queen, upon which all looked with such some heavenly vision, the gigantic warrier dropped his club, resigned his keys, and gave open way to the godless of the night, and all her magnificent train.
What shrill, what tumult, have we for the nonce? Stand back, my masters, and beware your bones! 
Yours, I am a wanderer, and no man of straw, 
My voice keeps order, and my club gues law. 
Yet soft—may stay—what vision have we here? 
What doth dreaming bring this?—what peerless peer? 
What loveliest face, that having ranks unfold, 
Like brightest diamond chased in purest gold? 
Dressed and blind, mine office I forsake, 
My club, my key, my knee, my homage take. 
Bright paragon; pass on in joy and bliss— 
Beware the one that opes at such a sight as this!

Elizabeth received most graciously the homage of the heroulean porter, and, bending her head to him in requital, passed through his guarded tower, from the top of which was poured a clamorous blast of warlike music, which was replied to by other bands of minstrelsy placed at different points on the castle walls, and by others again stationed in the chase; while the tones of the one, as they yet vibrated on the echoes, were caught up and answered by new harmony from different quarters.

Amidst these bursts of music, which, as if the work of enchantment, seemed now close at hand, now softened by distant space, now wailing so low and sweet as if that distance were gradually prolonged until only the last lingering strain could reach the ear, Queen Elizabeth crossed the Gallery Tower, and came upon the long bridge, which extended from thence to Mortimer's Tower, and which was already as light as day, so many torches had been fastened to the balustrades on either side. Most of the nobles here alighted, and went their horses to the neighbouring village of Kenilworth, following the queen on foot, as did the gentlemen who had stood in array to receive her at the Gallery Tower.

On this occasion, as at different times during the evening, Raleigh addressed himself to Tresilian, and was not a little surprised at his vague and unsatisfactory answers; which, joined to his leaving his apartment without any assigned reason, appearing in an undress when it was likely to be offensive to the queen, and some other symptoms of irregularity which he thought he discovered, led him to doubt whether his friend did not labour under some temporary derangement.

Meanwhile, the queen had no sooner stepped on the bridge than a new spectacle was provided; for as soon as the music gave signal that she was so far advanced, a raft, so disposed as to resemble a small floating island, illuminated by a great variety of torches, and surrounded by floating pageants formed to represent sea-horses, on which sat Tritons, Nereids, and other fabulous deities of the seas and rivers, made its appearance upon the lake, and, issuing from behind a small heronry where it had been concealed, floated gently towards the farther end of the bridge.

On the islet appeared a beautiful woman, clad in a jet-black coloured silken mantle, bound with a broad girdle, inscribed with characters like the

phyllabecties of the Hebrews. Her feet and arms were bare, but her wrists and ankles were adorned with gold bracelets of uncommon size. Amidst her long silky black hair she wore a crown or chaplet of artificial flowers, and bore in her hand a rod of ebony tipped with silver. Two nymphs attended her, dressed in the same antique and mystic guise.

The pageant was so well managed, that this Lady of the Floating Island, having performed her voyage with much picturesque effect, landed at Mortimer's Tower with her two attendants, just as Elizabeth presented herself before that outwork. The stranger then, in a well-penned speech, announced herself as that famous Lady of the Lake, renowned in the stories of King Arthur, who had nursed the youth of the renowned Sir Lancelot, and whose beauty had proved too powerful both for the wisdom and the spells of the mighty Merlin. Since that early period she had remained preserved of her crystal dominions, she said, despite the various men of fame and might by whom Kenilworth had been successively tenanted. The Saxons, the Danes, the Normans, the English, the Clitons, the Mortimers, the Plantagenets, great though they were in arms and magnificence, had never, she said, caused her to raise her head from the waters which hid her crystal palaces. But a greater than all these great names had now appeared, and she came in homage and duty to welcome the peerless Elizabeth to all sport, which the castle and its environs, which lake or land, could afford.

The queen received this address also with great courtesy, and made answer in rapture,

'Ve thought this lake had belonged to our own dominions, fair dame; but since so famed a lady claims it for hers, we will be glad at some other time to have further communing with you touching our joint interests.'

With this gracious answer the Lady of the Lake vanished, and Arion, who was amongst the maritime deities, appeared upon his dolphin. But Lamourne, who had taken upon him the part in the presence of Wayland, being chilled with remaining immersed in an element to which he was not friendly, having never got his speech by heart, and not having, like the porter, the advantage of a prompter, paid it off with impudence, tearing off his vizard, and swearing, 'Cods bones! he was none of Arion or Orin either, but honest Mike Lamourne, that had been drinking her Majesty's health from morning till midnight, and was come to bid her heartily welcome to Kenilworth Castle.'

This unpremeditated buffoonery answered the purpose probably better than the set speech would have done. The queen laughed heartily, and swore (in her turn) that he had made the best speech she had heard that day. Lamourne, who instantly saw his jest had saved his bones, jumped on shore, gave his dolphin a kick, and declared he would never meddle with fish again, except at dinner.

At the same time the queen was about to enter the castle, that memorable discharge of fire-works, called an after-piece, that so many excellent minds, and his two masters, took place, which Master Laneham, formerly introduced to the reader, has strained all his eloquence to describe.
'Such,' says the clerk of the council chamber door, 'was the blaze of burning larks, the gleams of stars contiguous, the streams and hall of fiery sparks, lightnings of wildfire, and flight-shot of thunder-bolts, with continuance, terror, and vehemence, that the heavens thundered, the waters surged, and the earth shook; and, for my part, hardly as I am, it made me very venegably afraid.'

CHAPTER XXXV.

Nay, this is matter for the month of March, When horses are maddest. Either speak in reason, Or I break up the companion.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

It is by no means our purpose to detail minutely all the princely festivities of Kenilworth, after the fashion of Master Robert Laneham, whom we quoted in the conclusion of the last chapter. It is sufficient to say, that, undeterred by the splendour of fireworks, which we have borrowed Laneham's eloquence to describe, the queen entered the base-court of Kenilworth through Mortimer's Tower, and, moving on through pages of heathen gods and heroes of antiquity, who offered gifts and compliments on the bended knee, at length found her way to the Great Hall of the castle, gorgeously hung for her reception with the richest silk tapestry, misty with perfumes, and sounding to strains of soft and delicious music. From the highly-carved oaken roof hung a superb chandelier of gilt bronze, formed like a spread eagle, whose outstretched wings supported three male and three female figures, grasping a pair of branches in each hand. The hall was thus illuminated by twenty-four torches of wax. At the upper end of the splendid apartment was a state canopy, overshadowing a royal throne, and beside a door, which opened to a long suite of apartments, decorated with the utmost magnificence for the queen and her ladies, whenever it should be their pleasure to be private.

The Earl of Leicester, having handed the queen up to her throne, and seated her there, knelt down before her, and, kissing the hand which she held out, with an air in which romance and respectful gallantry was happily mingled with the air of loyal devotion, he thanked her, in terms of the deepest gratitude, for the highest honour which a sovereign could render to a subject. So handsomely did he look when kneeling before her, that Elizabeth was tempted to prolong the scene a little longer than was, strictly speaking, necessary; for, ere she raised him, she passed her hand over his head, so near as to touch his long curled and perfumed hair, and with a movement of fondness that seemed to intimate she would, if she dared, have made the motion a slight caress.

She at length raised him, and, standing beside the throne, he explained to her the various preparations which had been made for her amusement and accommodation, all of which received her prompt and gracious approbation. The Earl then prayed her Majesty for permission, that he himself, and the nobles who had been in attendance upon her during the journey, might retire for a few minutes, and put themselves into a guise more fitting for dutiful attendance, during which space, those gentlemen of worship (pointing to Varney, Blount, Tresilian, and others, who had already put themselves into fresh attire, would have the honour of keeping her presence-chamber.

Be it so, my lord,' answered the queen; 'you could manage a theatre well, who can thus command a double set of actors. For ourselves, we will receive your courtesies this evening but coldly, since it is not our purpose to change our riding attire, being in effect something fatigued with a journey which the concourse of our good people hath rendered slow, though the love they have shewn to your person hath, at the same time, made it delightful.'

Leicester, having received this permission, retired accordingly, and was followed by those nobles who had attended the queen to Kenilworth in person. The gentlemen who had preceded them, and were of course dressed for the solemnity, remained in attendance. But being most of them of rather inferior rank, they remained at an awful distance from the throne which Elizabeth occupied. The queen's sharp eye soon distinguished Raleigh amongst them, with one or two others who were personally known to her, and she instantly made them a sign to approach, and accosted them very graciously. Raleigh in particular, the adventure of whose cloak, as well as the incident of the verses, remained on her mind, was very graciously received; and to him she most frequently applied for information concerning the names and places of those who were in presence. These he communicated candidly, and not without some traits of humorous satire, by which Elizabeth seemed much amused. 'And who is your diamonds fellow?' she said, looking at Tresilian, whose soiled dress on this occasion greatly obscured his good mien.

'A poet, if it please your Grace,' replied Raleigh.

'I might have guessed that from his careless garb,' said Elizabeth. 'I have known some poets so thoughtless as to throw their cloaks into gutters.'

'It must have been when the sun dazzled both their eyes and their judgment,' answered Raleigh.

Elizabeth smiled and proceeded, 'I asked that blackly fellow's name, and you only told me his profession.'

'Tresilian is his name,' said Raleigh, with internal reluctance, for he saw nothing favourable

* Note. I. Entertainments at Kenilworth.

† To justify what is here recorded as a high-coloured picture, the Author quotes the original spoken words. James Melville, being then Queen Mary's envoy at the court of London, p. 119.
to his friend from the manner in which she took notice of him.

'Tressilian!' answered Elizabeth. 'O, the Melenaus of our romance! Why, he has dressed himself in a guise that will go far to exculpate his far-famed father, Helen. And where is Farnham, or whatever his name is—my Lord of Leicester's man, I mean—the Paris of this Devonshire tale?'

With still greater reluctance Raleigh named and pointed out to her Varney, for whom the tailor had done all that art could perform in making his exterior agreeable; and who, if he had not grace, had a sort of tact and habitual knowledge of breeding, which came in place of it.

The queen turned her eyes from the one to the other—'I doubt,' she said, 'this same poetical Master Tressilian, who is too learned, I warrant me, to remember whose presence he was to appear in, may be one of those whom Geoffrey Chaucer says wittily, the wisest clerks are not the wisest men. I remember that Varney is a smooth-tongued varlet. I doubt this fair runaway hath reasons for breaking her faith.'

To this Raleigh durst make no answer, aware how little he should benefit Tressilian by contradicting the queen's sentiments, and not at all certain, on the whole, whether the best thing that could befal him would not be that she should put an end at once by her authority to this affair, upon which it seemed to him Tressilian's thoughts were fixed with invaluable and distressing perniciousness. At these reflections passed through his active brain, the lower door of the hall opened, and Leicester, accompanied by several of his kinsmen, and of the nobles who had harboured his faction, re-entered the castle hall.

The favourite Earl was now apparelled all in white, his shoes being of white velvet; his understockings (or stockings) of knotted silk; his upper stocks of white velvet, lined with cloth of silver, which was shown at the slashed part of the middle thigh; his doublet of cloth of silver, the close jerkin of white velvet, embroidered with silver and seed-pearl, his girdle and the seaboard of his sword of white velvet with golden buckles; his poulard and sword hilted and mounted with gold; and over all a rich loose robe of white satin, with a border of golden embroidery a foot in breadth. The collar of the Garter, and the azure Garter itself around his knee, completed the appointments of the Earl of Leicester; which were so well matched by his fair stature, graceful gesture, fine proportion of body, and handsome countenance, that at that moment he was admitted by all who saw him, as the goodliest person whom they had ever looked upon. Sussex and the other nobles were also richly attired, but in point of splendour and gracefulness of men, Leicester far exceeded them all.

Elizabeth received him with great complacency. 'We have one piece of royal justice,' she said, 'to attend to. It is a piece of justice, too, which interests us as a woman, as well in the character of mother and guardian of the English people.'

An involuntary shudder came over Leicester, as he bowed low, expressive of his readiness to receive her royal commands; and a similar cold fit came over Varney, whose eyes (seldom during that evening, freed from his patron) instantly perceived, from the change in his looks, slight as that was, of what the queen was speaking. But Leicester had wrought his resolution up to the point which, in his crooked policy, he judged necessary; and when Elizabeth added—'It is of the matter of Varney and Tressilian we speak—is the lady here, my lord?' his answer was ready;

'Gracious madam, she is not.'

Elizabeth bent her brows and compressed her lips. 'Our orders were strict and positive, my lord,' was her answer.

'And should have been obeyed, good my liege,' replied Leicester, 'had they been expressed in the form of the lightest wish. But—Varney, step forward—this gentleman will inform your Grace of the cause why the lady (he could not force his rebellions tongue to utter the words—his wife) cannot attend on your royal presence.'

Varney advanced, and pleaded with readiness, what indeed he firmly believed, the absolute incapacity of the party (for neither did he dare, in Leicester's presence, term her his wife) to wait on her Grace.

'Here,' said he, 'are attestations from a most learned physician, whose skill and honour are well known to my good Lord of Leicester; and from an honest and devout Protestant, a man of credit and substance, one Anthony Foster, the gentleman in whose house she is at present bestowed, that she now labours under an illness which altogether units her for such a journey as betwixt this castle and the neighbourhood of Oxford.'

'This alters the matter,' said the queen, taking the certificates in her hand, and glancing at their contents—'Let Tressilian come forward.—Master Tressilian, we have much sympathy for your situation, the rather that you seem to have set your heart deeply on this Amy Hobart, or Varney. Our power, thanks to God, and the willing obedience of a loving people, is worth much; but these are some things which it cannot compass. We cannot, for example, command the affections of a giddy young girl, or make her love sense and learning better than a courtier's fine doublet; and we cannot control sickness, with which it seems this lady is afflicted, who may not, by reason of such infirmity, attend our court here, as we had required her to do. Here are the testimonials of the physician who hath under his charge, and the gentleman in whose house she resides, so setting forth.'

'Under your Majesty's favour,' said Tressilian hastily, and, in his alarm for the consequence of the imposition practised on the queen, forgetting, in part at least, his own promise to Amy, 'these certificates speak not the truth.'

'Now, sir!' said the queen—'Impose my Lord of Leicester's veracity! But you shall have a fair hearing. In our presence the meanest of our subjects shall be heard against the proudest, and the least known against the most favouréd; therefore you shall be heard fairly, but beware you speak not without warrant. Take these certificates in your own hand; look to them carefully, and say manfully if you impugn the truth of them, and upon what evidence.

As the queen spoke, his promise and all its consequences rushed on the mind of the unfortunate Tressilian, and while it controlled his natural inclination to pronounce that a falsehood
was speaking. But
the resolution up to the
did policy, he judged
with wrath — 'It is
Tressilian we speak—
answer was ready;
not.'
and compressed her
intent and positive, my
God, my liege,' she said, 'and of some
as I have heard; yet you seem wondrous slow in reading text hand.' How say you, are
these certificates true or no?
'Madam,' said Tressilian, with obvious
embarrassment and hesitation, anxious to avoid
admitting evidence which he might afterwards
have reason to confute, yet equally desirous to
keep his word to Amy, and to give her, as he had
promised, space to plead her own cause in
her own way—Madam—Madam, your Grace
calls on me to admit evidence which ought to be
proved valid by those who found their defence
upon them.

'Why, Tressilian, thou art critical as well as
poetical,' said the queen, bending on him a brow of
displeasure; 'methinks these writings, being
produced in the presence of the noble earl to
whom this castle pertains, and his honour being
appealed to as the guarantees of their authenticity,
might be evidence enough for thee. But since
thou list to be so formal—Varney, or rather my
Lord of Leicester, for the affai becomes yours
(these words, though spoken at random, thrilled
through the ear's marrow and bones), 'what evidence have we on these touching these certificates?'
Varney hastened to reply, preventing Leicester.
'Ve please your Majesty, my young Lord of
Oxford, who is here in presence, knows Master
Anthony Foster's hand and his character.
The Earl of Oxford, a young and untried
knave, whom Foster had more than once accommodated with
loans on untrustful enterprise, acknowledged, on
this appeal, that he knew him as a wealthy and in-
dependent franklin, supposed to be worth much
money, and verified the certificate produced to be
his handwriting.

And who speaks to the doctor's certificate?'
said the queen. 'Alasco, methinks, is his name.'

Masters, her Majesty's physicians (not the less
willingly that he remembered his repulse from
Soyes's Court, and thought that his present testi-
mony might gratify Leicester, and mortify the
Earl of Sussex and his faction), acknowledged
he had more than once consulted with Doctor
Alasco, and spoke of him as a man of extra-
ordinary learning and hidden acquirements
though not altogether in the regular course of
practice. The Earl of Huntingdon, Lord Leic-
ester's brother-in-law, and the old Countess
of Rutland, next sang his praises, and both re-
membered the thin, beautiful Italian hand in
which he was wont to write his recipes, and which
corresponded to the certificate produced as his.

'And now, I trust, Master Tressilian, this
matter is ended,' said the queen. 'We will do
something ere the night is older to reconcile
Sir Hugh Robart to the match. You have done
done your duty by something more than boldly; but
we were no women if we not compassion for
the wounds which true love deals; so we forgive
your audacity, and your uncleaned boots withal,
which have well-nigh overpowered my Lord of
Leicester's perfumes.'

But Tressilian had by this time collected himself,
astonished as he had at first been by the audacity of the falsehood so feebly supported,
and placed in array against the evidence of his
own eyes. He rushed forward, kneeled down,
and caught the queen by the skirt of the robe.
'As you are Christian woman,' he said, 'madam,
as you are crowned queen, to do equal justice
among your subjects—as you hope yourself to
take hearing (which God grant you) at that
last bar at which we must all plead, grant me
one small request! Decide not this matter so
hastily. Give me but twenty-four hours interval,
and I will, at the end of that brief space,
produce evidence which will shew to demonstration
that these certificates, which state this un-
happy lady to be now ill at ease in Northumberland,
are as false as hell!'

'Let me go my train, sir!' said Elizabeth, who
was startled at his vehemence, though she had
too much courage and fire in her to fear; 'the fellow
must be distraught—wilt thou, my godson
Harrington, must have him in his rimes of
Orlando Furioso!—And yet, by this light,
there is something strange in the vehemence
of his demand. Speak, Tressilian; what wilt thou
do if, at the end of these four-and-twenty hours,
you cannot refute a fact so solemnly proved
as this lady's illness?'

'I will lay down my head on the block,' an-
swered Tressilian.

'Islaw!' replied the queen. 'God's light!
though speak'st like a fool. What head falls in
England but by just sentence of English law?—
I ask thee, man—if thou hast sense to under-
stand me—wilt thou, if thou shalt fail in this
improbable scheme, attempt of thine, render me a good and
sufficient reason why thou dost undertake it?'

Tressilian paused, and again hesitated; be-
cause he felt convinced that if, within the interval
of time demanded, Amy should become reconciled to
her husband, he would in that case do her the
worst offices by again stirring up the whole cir-
cumstances before Elizabeth, and showing how
that wise and jealous princess had been imposed
up on by false testimonies. The consciousness
of this dilemma renewed his extreme embarrass-
ment of look, voice, and manner; he hesitated,
dooked down, and on the queen repeating her
question with stern voice and flashing eye, he
admitted with faltering words, 'That it may be—he could not positively—that is, in certain
events—seemed the reasons and grounds on
which he acted.'

'Now, by the soul of King Henry,' said the
queen, 'this is either meanstruck madness, or
very knavery!—Seest thou, Raleigh, thy friend
is far too pinioned for this presence. Have him
away, and make us quit halt him, or it shall be
the worse for him; for his flights are too un-
bridled for any place but Parma, or Saint
Luke's Hospital. But come back instantly thyself, when he is placed under fitting restraint.—We wish we had seen the beauty which could make such havoc in a wise man's brain.

Tressilian was again endeavouring to address the queen, when Raleigh, in obedience to the orders he had received, interfered, and, with Blount's assistance, half led, half forced him out of the presence-chamber, where he himself indeed began to think his appearance did his cause more harm than good.

When they had attained the antechamber, Raleigh entreated Blount to see Tressilian safely conducted into the apartments allotted to the Earl of Sussex's followers, and, if necessary, recommended that a guard should be mounted on him.

'This extravagant passion,' he said, 'and, as it would seem, the news of the lady's illness, has utterly wrecked his excellent judgment. But it will pass away if he be kept quiet. Only let him break forth again at no rate; for he is and was far in her Highness's displeasure, and should he again provoked, she will find for him a worse place of confinement, and sterners keepers.'

'I judged as much as that he was mad,' said Nicholas Blount, looking down upon his own crimson stockings and yellow roses, 'whenever I saw him wearing yonder damned boots, which stank so in her nostrils,—I will but see him stowed, and be back with you presently.—But, Walter, did the Queen ask who I was?—methought she glanced an eye at me.'

'Twenty-twenty eye-glances she sent, and I told her all how then was a brave soldier, and a—but for God's sake get off Tressilian!'

'I will—I will,' said Blount; 'but methinks this court-haunting is no such bad pastime, after all. We shall rise by it, Walter, my brave lad. Thou saidst I was a good soldier, and a—What besides, dearest Walter?'

'An all unutterable—eodhead. For God's sake, begone!'

Tressilian, without further resistance or expostulation, followed,т or rather suffered himself to be conducted by Blount to Raleigh's lodgings, where he was formally installed into a small truckle-bed, placed in a wardrobe, and designed for a domestic. He saw but too plainly that no remonstrances would avail to procure the help or sympathy of his friends, until the lapse of the time for which he had pledged himself to remain inactive should enable him either to explain the whole circumstances to them, or remove from him every pretext or desire of further interference with the fortunes of Amy, by her having found means to place herself in a state of reconciliation with her husband.

With great difficulty, and only by the most patient and mild remonstrances with Blount, he escaped the disgrace and mortification of having two of Sussex's stoutest yeomen quartered in his apartment. At last, however, when Nicholas had seen him fairly deposited in his truckle-bed, and had bestowed one or two hearty kisses, and as hearty curses, on the boots, which, in his lately acquired spirit of frolicery, he considered as a strong symptom, if not the cause, of his friend's malady, he contented himself with the modified measure of locking the door on the unfortunate Tressilian; whose gallant and disinterested efforts to save a female who had tried him with ingratitude, thus terminated for the present, in the displeasure of his sovereign, and the conviction of his friends that he was little better than a madman.

CHAPTER XXXII.

The wisest sovereigns err like private men,
And royal hand has sometimes laid the sword
Of chivalry upon a worthless shoulder,
Which better had been on the backs of the hangman.
What then?—Kings do their best—and they and we Must answer for the intent, and not the event.

OLD PLAY.

'It is a melancholy matter,' said the queen,
When Tressilian was withdrawn, 'to see a wise
And learned man's wit thus pitifully unsettled.
Yet this public display of his imperfection of brain plainly shows us that his supposed injury and accusation were fruitless; and therefore, my Lord of Leicester, we remember your suit formerly made to us in behalf of your faithful servant Varney, whose good gifts and fidelity, as they are useful to you, ought to have due reward from us, knowing well that your lordship, and all you have, are so earnestly devoted to our service.
And we render Varney the honour more especially that we are a guest, and we fear a chargeable and troublesome one, under your lordship's roof; and also for the satisfaction of the good old knight of Devon, Sir Hugh Robart, whose daughter he hath married; and we trust the especial mark of grace which we are about to confer may reconcile him to his son-in-law.—Your sword, my Lord of Leicester.'

The earl unbuckled his sword, and, taking it by the point, presented on bended knee the hilt to Elizabeth.

She took it slowly, drew it from the scabbard and, while the ladies who stood around turned away their eyes with real or affected shuddering, she noted with a curious eye the high polish and rich damasked ornaments upon the glittering blade.

'Had I been a man,' she said, 'methinks none of my ancestors would have loved a good sword better. As it is with me, I like to look on one, and could, like the fairy of whom I have read in some Italian rhymes—were my godson Harrington here he could tell me the passage—ever trim my hair and arrange my head-gear in such a steel mirror as this.—Richard Varney, come forth, and kneel down. In the name of God and St. George, we dub thee knight! Be Faithful, Brave, and Fortunate.—Aris, Sir Richard Varney.'

Varney arose and retired, making a deep obeisance to the sovereign who had done him so much honour.

'The buckling of the spur, and what other rites remain,' said the queen, 'may wait.' She then finished to-morrow in the chapel; for we intend Sir Richard Varney a companion in his honours.

* Note J. Italian Rhymes.
And as we must not be partial in conferring such distinction, we cannot on this matter confer with our cousin of Sussex.

That noble earl, who, since his arrival at Kenilworth, and indeed since the commencement of this progress, had found himself in a subordinate situation to Leicester, was now wearing a heavy cloud on his brow—a circumstance which did not escape the queen, who hoped to appease his discontent, and to follow out her system of balancing policy by a mark of peculiar favour, the more gratifying as it was tendered at a moment when his rival's triumph appeared to be complete.

At the summons of Queen Elizabeth, Sussex hastily approached her person; and, being asked on which of his followers, being a gentleman of merit, he would wish the honour of knighthood to be conferred, he answered with more sincerity than policy, that he would have ventured to speak for Tressilian, to whom he conceived he owed his own life, and who was a distinguished physician and scholar, besides a man of unattached lineage, 'only,' he said, 'I feared the events of that night.'—And then he stopped.

'Though you are a gentleman of high birth and condition, under your lordship's protection, you are also under our protection, and we trust the goodness of heaven will be about to crown your service,' said the queen, turning his eye to his son-in-law.—And then she stopped.

She, first, and, taking it as though she knelt the hilt of her sword down on the scabbard, then she turned from the scabbard, and, as she turned, she took a gold necklace and a badge of office, cut with a high polish and polished, and, taking it, she placed it on the glittering breast of her son-in-law, saying: 'Methinks none could have rewarded a good sword as this one, and which I have read of, on the life of a godson Har-ven—my ship's captain.'

The queen then turned towards her private men, afraid lest the sword might be taken away, for she had not been aware it was his; and they and she parted the event.

OLD PLAY.
in his mouth, I had much ado to forbear cutting him over the pate, instead of striking his shoulder.

'Your Majesty gave him a smart necolade,' said the duchess; 'we who stood behind heard the blade clatter on his collar-bone, and the poor man fidgeted too as if he felt it.'

'I could not help it, ma'am,' said the queen, laughing; 'but we have this same Sir Nicholas sent to Ireland or Scotland, or somewhere, to rid our court of so antite a chevalier; he may be a good soldier in the field, though a pestiferous ass in a banqueting-hall.'

The discourse became then more general, and soon after there was a summons to the banquet.

In order to obey this signal, the company were under the necessity of crossing the inner court of the castle, that they might reach the new buildings, containing the large banqueting-room, in which preparations for supper were made upon a scale of profuse magnificence, corresponding to the occasion.

The livery cupboards were loaded with plate of the richest description, and the most varied; some articles tasteful, some perhaps grotesque, in the invention and decoration, but all gorgeously magnificent, both from the richness of the work and value of the materials. Thus the chief table was adorned by a salt-ship-fashion, made of mother-of-pearl, garnished with silver and divers warlike ensigns and other ornaments, anchors, sails, and sixteen pieces of ordnance. It bore a figure of Fortune, placed on a globe, with a flag in her hand. Another salt was fashioned of silver, in form of a swan in full sail. That chivalry might not be omitted amid this splendour, a silver Saint George was presented, mounted and equipped in the usual fashion in which he bestrides the dragon. The figures were moulded to be in some sort useful. The horse's tail was managed to hold a case of knives, while the breast of the dragon presented a similar accommodation for oyster knives.

In the course of the passage from the hall of reception to the banqueting-room, and especially in the court-yard, the new-made knights were saluted by the heralds, pursuivants, minstrels, etc., with the usual cry of Largesse, largesse, chevaliers tres hardes; an ancient invocation, intended to awaken the bounty of the seigneurs of chivalry towards those whose business it was to register their armorial bearings, and celebrate the deeds by which they were illustrated. The call was of course liberally and courteously answered by those to whom it was addressed.

Varney gave his largesse with an affection of complaisance and humility. Raleigh bestowed his with the graceful ease peculiar to one who has attained his own place, and is familiar with its dignity. Honesty Blount gave what his tailor had left him of his half-year's rent, dropping some pieces in his hurry, then stooping down to look for them, and then distributing them amongst the various claimants, with the anxious face and tone of the parish beadle dividing a dole among paupers.

These donations were accepted with the usual clamour and civility of applause common on such occasions; but as the parties gratified were chiefly dependents of Lord Leicester, it was Varney whose name was repeated with the loudest acclamations. Lambourne, especially, distinguished himself by his vociferations of 'Long life to Sir Richard Varney!'—Health and honour to Sir Richard!—Never was a more worthy knight dubbed!—then, suddenly sinking his voice, he added,—since the valiant Sir Pandarus of Troy,—a winding-up of his chauvinistic applause, which set all men a laughing who were within hearing of it.

It is unnecessary to say anything further of the festivities of the evening, which were so brilliant in themselves, and received with such obvious and willing satisfaction by the queen, that Leicester retired to his own apartments with all the giddy rapture of successful ambition. Varney, who had changed his splendid attire, and now waited on his patron in a very modest and plain manner, attended to do the honours of the earl's concert.

'How, Sir Richard!' said Leicester, smiling, 'your new rank scarce suits the humidity of this attendance.'

'I would diason that rank, my lord,' said Varney, 'could I think it was to remove me to a distance from your lordship's person.'

'Thou art a grateful fellow,' said Leicester; 'but I must not allow you to do what would abate you in the opinion of others.'

While thus speaking, he still accepted, without hesitation, the offices about his person, which the new-made knight seemed to render as eagerly as if he had really felt, in discharging the task, that pleasure which his words expressed.

'I am not afraid of men's misconception,' he said, in answer to Leicester's remark, 'since there is not,—(permit me to undo the collar)—a man within the castle, who does not expect very soon to see persons of a rank far superior to that which, by your goodness, I now hold, rendering the duties of the bed-chamber to you, and accounting it an honour.'

'It might, indeed, so have been,' said the earl, with an involuntary sigh; and then presently added, 'My gown, Varney—I will look out on the night. Is not the moon near to the full?'

'I think so, my lord, according to the calendar,' answered Varney.

There was an abutting window, which opened on a small projecting balcony of stone, battlemented as is usual in Gothic castles. The earl undid the lattice, and stepped out into the open air. The station to which he had chosen commanded an extensive view of the lake and woodlands beyond, where the bright moonlight rested on the clear blue waters and the distinct masses of oak and elm. The moon rode high in the heavens, attended by thousands and thousands of inferior luminaries. All seemed already to be hushed in the nether world, excepting occasionally the voice of the watch (for the Women of the Guard performed that duty wherever the queen was present in person), and the distant laying of tid-bands, disturbed by the preparations amongst the grooms and pickers for a magnificent hunt, which was to be the amusement of the next day.

Leicester looked out on the blue arch of heaven, with gestures and a countenance expressive of anxious excitement, while Varney, who remained
within the darkened apartment, could (himself unnoted), with a secret satisfaction, see his patron stretch his hands with earnest gesture towards the heavenly bodies.

'Ye distant orbs of living fire,' so ran the muttered invocation of the ambitious earl, 'ye silent wheels while ye wheel your mystic roimds, but wisdom has given to you a voice. Tell me, then, to what end is my high course destined? Shall the greatness to which I have aspired be bright, pre-eminent, and stable as yours; or am I but doomed to draw a brief and glittering train along the nightly darkness, and then to sink down to earth, like the base refuse, of those artificial fires with which men emulate your rays?

He looked on the heavens in profound silence for a minute or two longer, and then again stepped into the apartment, where Varney seemed to have been engaged in putting the earl's jewels into a casket.

'What said Alasco of my horoscope?' demanded Varney. 'You already told me, but it has escaped me, for I think but lightly of that art.'

Many learned and great men have thought otherwise,' said Varney; 'and, not to flatter your lordship, my own opinion leans that way.

'Ah, Saul among the prophets!' said Varney; 'I thought thou wert sceptical in all such matters as thou couldst neither see, hear, smell, taste, or touch, and that thy belief was limited by senses.'

'Perhaps, my lord,' said Varney, 'I may be misled on the present occasion by my wish to find the predictions of astrology true. Alasco says that your favourite planet is culminating, and that the adverse influence—he would not use a plainer term—though not overthrown, was evidently counteracted, I think he said, or retrograde.'

'It is even so,' said Varney, looking at an abstract of astrological calculations which he had in his hand; 'the stronger influence will prevail, and, as I think, the evil hour pass away. Lead me your hand, Sir Richard, to the hearth of my own—and remain an instant, if it is not too burdensome to your knightly, while I compose myself to sleep.' I believe the battle of this day has forevered my blood, for it streams through my veins like a current of molten lead—remain an instant, I pray you—I would fear my eyes heavy ere I closed them.

Varney officiously assisted his lord to bed, and placed a massive silver night-lamp, with a short socket, on a marble table which stood close by the head of the couch. Either in order to avoid the light of the lamp, or to hide his countenance from Varney, Varney drew the curtain, heavy with entwined silk and gold, so as completely to shade his face. Varney took a seat near the bed, but with his back towards his master, as if to intimate that he was not watching him, and quietly waited till Leicester himself led the way to the tope by which his Kaint was interrupted.

And so, Varney, said the earl, after waiting in vain till his dependent should commence the conversation, men talk of the Queen's favour towards me?'

'And, my good lord,' said Varney; 'of what can they else, since it is so strongly manifested?'

'She is indeed my good and gracious mistress,' said Leicester, after another pause; 'but it is written,'

'A good sentence, and a true,' said Varney, 'unless you can unite their interest with yours so absolutely, that they must needs sit on your wrist like hooked hawks.'

'I know what thou meanest,' said Leicester impatiently; 'though thou art to-night so prudentially careful of what thou sayest to me—Thou wouldst intimate, I might marry the Queen if I would.'

'It is your speech, my lord, not mine,' answered Varney; 'but sooever be the speech, it is the thought of ninety-nine out of one hundred men throughout broad England.'

'And, but,' said Leicester, turning himself in his bed, 'the hundredth man knows better. Thou, for example, knowest the obstacle that cannot be overcome.

'It must, my lord, if the stars speak true,' said Varney composedly.

'What, talk'st thou on them,' said Leicester; 'that believest not in them or in ought else?'

'You mistake, my lord,' said Varney, 'under your gracious pardon,' said Varney; 'I believe in many things that predict the future. I believe, if showers fall in April, that we shall have flowers in May; that if the snows melt, grain will ripen; and I believe in much natural philosophy to the same effect, which if the stars swear to me, I will say the stars speak the truth. And in like manner, I will not disbelieve that which I see wished for and expected on earth, solely because the astronomers have read it in the heavens.'

'Thon art right,' said Leicester, again tossing himself on his couch—'Earth! does wish for it. I have had advices from the Reformid Churches of Germany—from the Low Countries—from Switzerland, urging this as a point on which Europe's safety depends. France will not oppose it. The ruling party in Scotland look to it as their best security—Spain fears it, but cannot prevent it—and yet thou knowest it is impossible.'

'I know not that, my lord,' said Varney; 'the countess is indisposed.'

'Villain!' said Leicester, starting up on his couch, and seizing the sword which lay on the table beside him, 'go thy thoughts that way—and thou wilt not do murder!'

'For whom or what do you hold me, my lord?' said Varney, assuming the superiority of an innocent man subjected to unjust suspicion. 'I nothing to deserve such a horrid imputation as your violence infers. I know but that the countess was ill. And countess though she is—loved and beloved as she is—surely your lordship must hold her to be mortal? She may die, and your lordship's hand become once more your own.'

'Away! away!' said Leicester; 'let me have no more of this!'

'Good-night, my lord,' said Varney, seeming to understand this as a command to depart; but Leicester's voice interrupted his purpose.

'Thou scarest me not thus, Sir fool,' said he; 'I think thy knightliness hath addled thy brains. '
Confess thou hast talked of impossibilities, as well as things which may come to pass.

' 'My lord, long live your fair countess,' said Varney; 'but neither your love nor my good wishes can make her immortal. But God grant she live long to be happy herself, and to render you so! I see not but you may be King of England notwithstanding.'

'Nay, now, Varney, thou art stark mad,' said Leicester.

'I would I were myself within the same nearness to a good estate of freehold,' said Varney. 'Have we not known in other countries, how a left-handed marriage might subsist betwixt persons of different degrees—ay, and be no hindrance to prevent the husband from conjuring himself afterwards with a more suitable partner?'

'I have heard of such things in Germany,' said Leicester.

'Avy, and the most learned doctors in foreign universities justify the practice from the Old Testament,' said Varney. 'And, after all, where is the harm? The beautiful partner, whom you have chosen for true love, has your secret hours of relaxation and affection. Her fame is safe—her conscience may slumber securely. You have wealth—provide royally for your issue, should Heaven bless you with offspring. Meanwhile you may give to Elizabeth ten times the leisure, and ten thousand times the affection, that ever Don Philip of Spain spared to her sister Mary; yet you know how she doted on him, though so cold and ungrateful. It requires but a close mouth and an open brow, and you keep your Eleanor and your fair Rosamond far enough separate. Leave me to build you a bower to which no jealous queen shall find a clue.'

Leicester was silent for a moment, then sighed, and said, 'It is impossible.—Good-night, Sir Richard Varney—yet stay—Can you guess what meant Tressilian by showing himself in such a careless guise before the Queen to-day—to strike her tender heart? I should guess, with all the sympathies due to a lover, abandoned by his mistress, not abandoning himself.'

Varney, smothering a sneering laugh, answered, 'I believed Master Tressilian had no such matter in his head.'

'How!' said Leicester; 'what mean'st thou? There is ever knavery in that laugh of thine, Varney.'

'I only meant, my lord,' said Varney, 'that Tressilian has taken the very way to avoid heart-breaking. He hath had a companion—a female companion—a sort of player's wife or sister, as I believe—with him in Mervyn's Bower, where I quittered him for certain reasons of my own.'

'A mistress!—mean'st thou a paramour?'

'Ay, my lord; what female else waits for hours in a gentleman's chamber?'

'By my faith, time and space fitting, this were a good tale to tell,' said Leicester. 'I ever distrusted those bookish, hypocritical, seeming-virtuous scholars. Well, Master Tressilian makes somewhat familiar with my hostess. I look it over, he is indebted to it for certain recollections. I would not harm him more than I can help. Keep eye on him, however, Varney.'

Chapter XXXIII.

Here stands the victim—thee, the grand betrayer, what the hounds pull'd down by straining dogs

Lies at the hunter's feet—who courteous proffers

To some high dame, the Dian of the chase

To whom he looks for guardian, his sharp blade,

To gash the sodden throat.

The Wodieyan.

We are now to return to Mervyn's Bower, the apartment, or rather the prison, of the unfortunate Countess of Leicester, who for some time kept within bounds her uncertainty and her impatience. She was aware that in the tumult of the day, there might be some delay ere her letter could be safely conveyed to the hands of Leicester, and that some time must elapse ere he could extricate himself from the necessary attendance on Elizabeth to come and visit her in her secret bower. 'I will not expect him,' she said, 'till night—her cannot be absent from his royal guest, even to see me. He will, I know, come earlier, if it be possible, but I will not expect him before night.' And yet all the while she did expect him; and, while she tried to argue herself into a contrary belief, each hasty whisper, of the hundred which her heart, soundly like the hurried step of Leicester on the staircase, hastening to fold her in her arms.

The fate of body which Amy had lately undergone, with the agitation of mind natural to so cruel a state of uncertainty, began by degrees strongly to affect her nerves, and she almost feared her total inability to maintain the necessary self-command through the scenes which might lie before her. But, although spoiled by an over-indulgent system of education, Amy had naturally a mind of great power, united with a frame which her share in her father's woodland exercises had rendered uncommonly healthy. She summoned to her aid such mental and bodily resources; and not unconscious how much the issue of her fate might depend on her own self-possession, she prayed internally for strength of body and for mental fortitude, and resolved, at the same time, to yield to no nervous impulse which might weaken either.

Yet when the great bell of the castle, which was placed in Caesar's Tower, at no great distance from that called Mervyn's, began to send its
puling charming abroad, in signal of the arrival of the royal procession, the dim was so painlessly acute to ears rendered nervous by anxiety, that she could hardly forbear shrieking with anguish, in answer to every stunning clash of the relentless peal.

Shortly afterwards, when the small apartment was at once enlightened by the shower of artificial fire with which the air was tumultuously filled, and which crossed each other like fiery spirits, each bent on his own separate mission, or like salamanders executing a sylph dance in the region of the apertures, the countess felt at first as if each rocket shot close by her eyes, and discharged its sparks and flashes so near that she could feel a sense of the heat. But she struggled against these fantastic terrors, and compelled herself to arise, stand by the window, look out, and gaze upon a sight, which at another time would have appeared to her at once, captivating and fearful. The magnificent Towers of the castle were enveloped in garlands of artificial fire, or shrouded with tiers of pale smoke. The surface of the lake glowed like molten iron; while many fireworks (though extremely wonderful, though now common), whose flame continued to exist in the opposing element, divided and rose, hissed and rared, and spouted fire, like so many dragon's of enchantment, sporting upon a burning lake.

But Amy was for a moment interested by what was to be her new a scene. 'I had thought it magical art,' she said, 'but poor Tressilian taught me to judge of such things as they are. Great God! and may not these idle splendours resemble my own hopeless happiness,—a single spark, which is instantly swallowed up by surrounding darkness,—a precarious glow, which rises but for a brief space into the air, that its fall may be the lower! O, Leicester! after all—that thou hast said—hast sworn—that Amy was thy love, thy life—can it be that thou art the magician at whose word all these enchantments arise, and that she sees them, as an outcast, if not a captive?'

The sustained, prolonged, and repeated bursts of music, from so many different quarters, and at so many varying points of distance, which sounded as if not the Castle of Kenilworth only, but the whole country round, had been at once the scene of solemnising some high national festival, carried the same oppressive thought still closer to her heart, while some notes would melt in distant and falling tones, as if in compassion for her sorrows, and some burst close and near upon her, as if mocking her misery, with all the insolence of an unlimited mirth. 'Those sounds,' she said, 'are mine—mine, because they are his; but I cannot say.—Be still, these loud strains suit me not—and the voice of the nearest peasant that mingles in the dance, would have more power to modulate the music, than the command of her who is mistress of all.'

By degrees the sounds of revelry died away, and the countess withdrew from the window at which she had sat listening, to the music. It was night, but the moon afforded considerable light in the room, so that Amy was able to make the arrangement which she judged necessary. There was hope that Leicester might come to her apartment as soon as the revel in the castle had subsided; but there was also risk she might be sought by some unauthorized intruder. She had lost confidence in the key, since Tressilian had entered so easily, though the door was locked on the inside; yet after a time, additional security she could think of, was to place the table across the door, that she might be warned by the noise, should any one attempt to enter. Having taken these necessary precautions, the unfortunate lady withdrew to her couch, stretched herself down on it, muscles in anxious expectation, and counted more than one hour after midnight, till exhausted nature proved too strong for love, for grief, for fear, or, even for uncertainty, and she slept.

Yes, she slept. The Indian slept at the stake, in the intervals between his tortures; and mental torments, in like manner, exhaust, by long continuance the sensibility of the sufferer, so that an interval of lethargic repose must necessarily cause, ere the pangs which they inflict can again be renewed.

The countess slept, then, for several hours, and dreamed that she was in the ancient house at Cannor Place, listening for the low whistle with which Leicester often used to announce his presence in the court-yard; and remembering suddenly on one of his stolen visits. But on this occasion, instead of a whistle, she heard the peculiar blast of a bugle-horn, such as her father used to wind on the fall of the stag, and which huntsmen then called a 'mort.' She ran, as she thought, to a window that looked into the court-yard, which she saw filled with men in mourning garments. The old curate seemed about to read the funeral service. Mummified, tricked out in an antique dress, like an ancient herald, held aloft a scone, with its usual decorations of skulls, cross-bones, and hour-glasses, surrounded of a cost-of-arms, of which she could only distinguish that it was surmounted with an earl's coronet. The old man looked at her with a ghastly smile, and said, 'Amy, are they not rightly quarter'd! Just as he spoke, the horses again sounded on her ear the melancholy yet wild strain of the 'mort,' or death-note, and she awoke.

The countess awoke with a real bugle-note, or rather the combined blast of many bugles, sounding not the 'mort,' but the jolly recollections, as they remind the minions of the Castle of Kenilworth that the pleasures of the day were to commence with a magnificent stag-hunting in the neighbouring chase. Amy started up from her couch, listened to the sound, saw the first beams of the summer morning already twinkle through the lattice of her window, and recolected, with feelings of giddy agony, where she was, and how circumstanced. 'He thinks not of me,' she said—'he will not care for me! A Queen is his guest; and what cares he in what corner of his huge castle a wretch like me lives in doubt, which is fast fading into despair? At once the sound at the door, as of some one attempting to open it, only filled her with an ineffable mixture of joy and fear; and, hastening to remove the obstacle she had placed against the door, and to unlock it, she had the preposterous luck, 'Is it then, my love!' 'Yes, my countess,' murmured a whisper in reply.

KENILWORTH
She threw open the door, and exclaiming, 'Leicester!' flung her arms around the neck of the man who stood without, muffled in his cloak.

'No—quite Leicester,' answered Michael Lambourne, for he was it, returning the caress with vehemence,—'no—quite Leicester, my lovely and most loving duchess, but as good a man.'

With an exertion of force, of which she would at another time have thought herself incapable, the countess freed herself from the profane and profaning grasp of the drunken debaucher, and retreated into the midst of her apartment, where despair gave her courage to make a stand.

As Lambourne, on entering, dropped the lap of his cloak from his face, she knew Varney's profligate servant: the very last person, excepting his detested master, by whom she would have wished to be discovered. But she was still closely muffled in her travelling dress, and as Lambourne had scarce ever been admitted to her presence at Gunner Place, her person, she hoped, might not be so well known to him as was to her, owing to Jane's pointing him frequently out as he crossed the court, and telling stories of his wickedness. So she might have had still greater confidence in her disguise, had her experience enabled her to discover that he was much intoxicated; but this could scarce have concealed her for the risk which she might incur, from such a character, in such a time, place, and circumstances.

Lambourne flung the door behind him as he entered, and folding his arms, as if in mockery of the attitude of distraction into which Amy had thrown herself, he proceeded thus:—'Dark ye, most fair Callipolis—or most lovely countess of clouts, and divine duchess of dark corners—if thou takest all that trouble of skewering thyself together, like a trussed fowl, that there may be more pleasure in the carving, even save thyself the labour. I love thy first frank manner the boat—like thy present as little—he made a step towards her, and staggered—'as little as—such a damned uneven floor as this, where a gentleman may break his neck, if he does not walk with as much as a postmaster on the tight-ropes.'

'Stand back!' said the countess; 'do not approach nearer to me on thy peril.'

'Come peril—stand back!'—Why, how now, madam? Must you have a better mate than honest Mike Lambourne? I have been in America, girl, where the gold grows, and have brought off such a load on?'

'Good friend,' said the countess, in great terror at the ruffian's determined and audacious manner, 'I pray be briefer, and leave me.'

'And so will, pretty one, when we are tired of your other company—not a jot sooner.'—He seized her by the arm, while, incapable of further defence, she uttered shriek upon shriek. 'Nay, scream away, if you like it,' said he, still holding her fast; 'I have heard the sea at the bound, and I mind a squalling woman no more than a mischievous maddening kitten.—D'ye think I—I have heard a hundred screaming at once, when there are a town storms.'

The cries of the countess, however, brought unexpected aid, in the person of Lawrence Staples, who had heard her exclamations from his apartment below, and entered in good time to save her from being discovered, if not from more atrocious violence. Lawrence was drunk, but from the debauch of the preceding night, not fortunately his intoxication had taken a different turn from that of Lambourne.

'What the devil's noise is this in the yard!' he said. —'What! man and woman together in the same cell! that is against rule. I will have decency under my rule, by Saint Peter of the Fetters!'

'Get thee down-stairs, thou drunken beast,' said Lambourne; 'seest thou not the lady and I would be private!'

'Good sir, worthy sir!' said the countess, addressing the jailer, 'do but save me from him, for the sake of mercy!'

'She speaks fairly,' said the jailer, 'and I will take her part. I love my prisoners; and I have had as good prisoners under my key as they have had in Newgate or the Compter. And so, being one of my landlarks, as I say, no one shall disturb her in her penfold.' So, let go the woman, or I'll knock your brains out with my keys.'

'I'll make a blood-sucking of thy midnight first,' answered Lambourne, laying his left hand on his dagger, but still detaining the countess by the arm with his right—'So have at thee, thou ostrich, whose only living is upon a bunch of iron keys.'

Lawrence raised the arm of Michael, and prevented him from drawing his dagger; and as Lambourne struggled and strove to shake him off, the countess made a sudden exertion on her side, and, slipping her hand out of the glove on which the ruffian still kept hold, she gained her liberty, and, escaping from the apartment, ran down-stairs; but at the same moment she heard the two combattants fall on the floor with a noise which increased her terror. The outer victor offered no impediment to her flight, having been opened for Lambourne's admission; so that she succeeded in escaping down the stair, and fled to the Pleasance, which seemed to her hasty glance the direction in which she was most likely to avoid pursuit.

Meanwhile Lawrence and Lambourne rolled on the floor of the apartment, closely grasped together. Neither had, happily, opportunity to draw their daggers; but Lawrence found space enough to dash his heavy keys across Michael's face, and Michael, in return, grasped the trunkey so slyly by the throat, that the blood gushed from nose and mouth; so that they were both gory and filthy spectacles, when one of the other officers of the household, attracted by the noise of the fray, entered the room, and with some difficulty effected the separation of the combattants.

'A warning on you both,' said the charitable mediator, 'and especially on you, Master Lambourne! What the wind? If you here for lighting on the floor like two butcher's cars in the kennel of the shamblies?'

Lambourne arose, and, somewhat soled by the interpretation of third party, looked with something less than his usual censure of visage. 'We fought for a wench, an thou must know,' was his reply.
A wench! Where is she?" said the officer.

'I think, I think,' said Lambourne, looking around him; 'unless Lambourne hath swallowed her. That filthy brat of his devours as many dainties and oppressed dandies as ever graced the King Arthur's history: they are his prime food: he worries them body, soul, and substance.'

'Ah, ay! It's no matter,' said Lawrence, gathering up his huge ungainly form from the floor; 'but I have had your letters, Master Michael Lambourne, under the little turn of my forefinger and thumb; and I shall have the impudence of thy brow will not always save thy shimm-bones from iron, and thy foul thirsty gullet from the hounn cord.' The words were no sooner out of his mouth, than Lambourne again made at him.

'Nay, go not to it again,' said the sewer, 'or I will call for him shall tame you both, and that is Master Varney—Sir Richard, I mean— he is stirring, I promise you—I saw him cross the court just now.'

'Did thee say so?' said Lambourne, seizing on the basin and ever which stood in the apartment; 'nay, then, element, say thy work—I thought I had enough of thee last night when I floated about for Orion, like a cock on a foraminack egg of a.'

So saying, he fell to work to cleanse from his face and hands the signs of the fray, and get his apparel into some order.

'What hast thou done to him?' said the sewer, speaking aside to the jailor; 'his face is fearfully swollen.'

'It is but the imprint of the key of my cabinet—too good a mark for his gallowa-face. No man shall abuse or insult my prisoners; they are my jewels, and I lock them in safe casket accordingly.' And so, mistress, leave off your wailing—Hey! why, surely, there was a woman here— I think you are all mad this morning,' said the sewer; 'I saw no woman here, nor no man neither in a proper sense, but only two beasts rolling on the floor.'

'Nay, then, I am undone,' said the jailor; 'the prison's broken, that is all. Keilworth prison is broken; he continued, in a tone of maudlin lamentation, which was the strongest jail between this and the Welsh marshes—ay, and a house that had had knights, and earls, and kings sleeping in it, as secure as if they had been in the Tower of London. It is broken, the prisoners fled, and the jailor in much danger of being hanged.'

So saying, he retreated down to his own den, to conclude his lamentations, or to sleep himself sober. Lambourne and the sewer followed close, and it was well for them, since the jailor, out of revenge, was about to lock the wicket after him; but they not been within the reach of interfering, they would have had the pleasure of being shut up in the turret-chamber from which the countess had been just delivered.

The unhappy lady, as soon as she found herself at liberty, did, as we have already mentioned, into the Pleasance. She had seen this richly-ornamented space of ground from the window of Mervyn's Tower; and it occurred to her at the moment of her escape, that among its numerous arbours, bowers, fountains, statues, and grotesque, she might find some recess, in which she could conceal herself until she had an opportunity of addressing herself to a protector, to whom she might communicate as much as she dared of her forlorn situation, and through whose means she might supplicate an interview with her husband.

'If I could see my guide,' she thought, 'I would learn if he had delivered my letter. Even did I but see Tressilian, it were better to risk Dudley's anger, by confiding my whole situation to one who is the very soul of honour, than to run the hazard of further insult among the insolent medallions of this ill-ruled place.' She would not again venture into an enclosed apartment. She will wait, I will watch—amidst so many human beings, there must be some kind heart which can judge and compassionately some mine endures.'

In truth, more than one party entered and traversed the Pleasance. But they were in joyous groups of four or five persons together, laughing and jesting in their own fullness of mirth and lightness of heart.

The retreat which she had chosen gave her the easy alternative of avoiding observation. It was but stepping back to the farthest recess of a grove, ornamented with rustic work and moss seats, and terminated by a fountain, and she might easily remain concealed, or at her pleasure discover herself to any solitary wanderer whose curiosity might lead him to that romantic retreat.

Anticipating such an opportunity, she looked into the clear basin, which the silent fountain held up to her like a mirror, and felt shocked at her own appearance; but immediately, at the same time, muffled and disfigured as her disguise made her seem to herself, whether any face (and it was from the composition of her own sex that she chiefly expected sympathy) would engage in conversation with so suspicious an object. Reasoning thus like a woman, to whom external appearance is scarcely in any circumstance a matter of importunity, and like a beauty who had some confidence in the power of her own charms, she laid aside her cap, and placed it beside her, so that she could assume them in an instant, ere one could penetrate from the entrance of the grove to its extremity, in case the intrusion of Varney or of Lambourne should render such disguise necessary. The dress which she wore under these vestments was somewhat of a theatrical cast, so as to suit the assumed personage of one of the many who was to act in the pageant. Wayland had found the means of arranging it thus upon the second day of their journey, having experienced the service arising from the assumption of such a character on the preceding day. The fountain, acting both as a mirror and ever, awarded Amy the means of a brief toilet, of which she availed herself as hastily as possible; then took in her hand her small casket of jewels, in case she might discard them useful intercessors, and, retiring to the darkest and most secret corner, sat down on a seat of moss, and awaited till fate should give her some chance of rescue, or of propitiating an intercessor.
CHAPTER XXXIV.

Have you not seen the partridge quake,
Viewing the hawk approaching nigh?
She cuddles close beneath the brake,
Afraid to sit, afraid to fly.

POEM.

It chanced upon that memorable morning, that one of the earliest of the huntress train, who appeared from her chamber in full array for the chase, was the princess for whom all these pleasures were instituted, England's Maiden Queen. I know not if it were by chance, or out of the befitting courtesy due to a mistress by whom he was so much honoured, that she had scarcely made one step beyond the threshold of her chamber ere Leicester was by her side, and proposed to her, until the preparations for the chase had been completed, to view the Pleasure, and the gardens which it connected with the castle-yard.

To this new scene of pleasures they walked, the earl's arm affording his sovereign the occasional support which she required, where flights of steps, then a favourite ornament in a garden, conducted them from terrace to terrace, and from parterre to parterre. The ladies in attendance, gifted with prudence, or embarrassed perhaps with the amiable desire of acting as they would be done by, did not conceive their duty to the queen's person required them, though they lost not sight of her, to approach so near as to share, or perhaps disturb, the conversation betwixt the queen and the earl, who was not only her host, but also her most trusted, esteemed, and favoured servant. They contented themselves with admiring the grace of this illustrious couple, whose robes of satins were now exchanged for hunting suits, almost equally magnificent.

Elizabeth's sylvan dress, which was of a pale blue silk, with silver lace and aiguillettes, approached in form to that of the ancient Amazons; and was, therefore, well suited at once to her height and to the dignity of her mien, which her features, rank and long habits of authority had rendered in some degree too masculine to be seen to the best advantage in ordinary female weeds. Leicester's hunting-suit of Lincoln-green, richly embroidered with gold, and crossed by the gay baldric, which sustained a single-horn, and a broad knife instead of a sword, became its master, as did his other vestments of court or of war. For such were the perfections of his form and mien, that Leicester was always supposed to be seen to the greatest advantage in the character and dress which for the time he represented or wore.

The conversation of Elizabeth and the favourite earl has not reached us in detail. But those who watched at some distance (and the eyes of couriers and court ladies are right-sharp) were of opinion, that on no occasion did the dignity of Elizabeth, in gesture and motion, seem so decidedly to soften away into a mien expressive of indecision and tenderness. Her step was not only slow, but even unequal, a thing most unwonted in her carriage: her looks seemed bent on the ground, and there was a timid disposition to withdraw from her companion, which external gesture in females often indicates exactly the opposite tendency in the secret mind. The Duchess of Rutland, who ventured nearest, was even heard to say, that she discerned a tear in Elizabeth's eye, and a blush on her cheek; and still further, 'She bent her looks on the ground to avoid mine,' said the duchess; 'she who, in her ordinary mood, could look down a Lion.' To what conclusion these symptoms led is sufficiently evident: nor were they probably entirely groundless. The progress of private conversation, betwixt two persons of different sexes, is often decisive of their fate, and gives it a turn very different perhaps from what they themselves anticipated. Gallantry becomes mingled with conversation, and affection and passion come gradually to mix with gallantry. Nobles, as well as shepherd swains, will, in such a trying moment, say more than they intended; and queens, like village maidens, will listen longer than they should.

Horses in the meanwhile neighed, and champed the bits with impatience in the base-court; hounds yelped in their couples; and yeomen, grooms, and prickers lamented the exhalings of the dew, which would prevent the scent from lying. But Leicester had another chase in view, or, to speak more justly towards him, had become engaged in it without premeditation, as the high-spirited hunter which follows the cry of the hounds that have crossed his path by accident. The queen—a most accomplished and handsome woman—the pride of England, the hope of France and England, and the droll of Spain, had probably listened with more than usual favour to that mixture of romantic gallantry with which she always loved to be addressed; and the earl had, in vanity, in ambition, or in both, thrown in more and more of that delicious ingredient, until his importance became the language of love itself.

'No, Dudley,' said Elizabeth, yet it was with broken accents—'No, I must be the mother of my people. Other ties, that make the marriage maiden happy, are denied to her sovereign—No, Leicester, urge it no more—Wero I, as others, free to seek my own happiness then, indeed—but it cannot be—Delay the chase—delay it for half-an-hour—and leave me, my lord.'

'How, leave you, madam!' said Leicester—'Has my madness offended you?'

'No, Leicester, not so!' answered the queen hastily; 'but it is madness, and must not be repeated. Go—but go not far from hence—and meantime let no one intrude on my privacy.'

While she spoke thus, Dudley bowed deeply, and retired with a slow and melanchooly air. The queen stood gazng after him, and murmured to herself—'Were it possible—were it but possible—but no—Elizabeth must be the wife and mother of England alone.'

As she spoke thus, and in order to avoid some one whose step she heard approaching, the queen turned into the grotto in her hapless, yet but too successful, rival lay concealed.

The mind of England's Elizabeth, if somewhat shaken by the agitating interview to which she had just put a period, was of that firm and decided character which soon recovers its natural
and leave not. It was like one of those ancient druidical monuments, called rocking-stones. The finger of Cupid, boy as he is painted, could put her feelings in motion, but the power of Hercules could not have destroyed their equilibrium. As she advanced with a slow movement, the utmost extremity of the grotto, her conductrice, where she had proceeded half the length, had recovered its dignity of look, and her mien its air of command.

It was then the queen became aware that a female figure was placed beside, or rather partly behind, an alabaster column, at the foot of which arose the pelvis of a fountain, which occupied the utmost recess of the grotto. The classical mind of Elizabeth suggested the story of Numia and Egeria, and she doubted not that some Italian sculptor had here represented the Naiad, whose inspirations gave laws to Rome. As she advanced, she became doubtable whether she beheld a statue or a form of flesh and blood. The unfortunate Amy, indeed, remained motionless, betwixt the desire which she had to make her conception known to one of her own sex, and her awe for the stately form which approached her, and which, though she had never before beheld, she fears instantly suspected to be the personage she really was. Amy had arisen from her seat with the purpose of addressing the lady, who entered the grotto alone, and, as she at first thought, so opportunely; but when she recollected the alarm which Leicester had expressed at the queen's knowing aught of their union, and became more and more satisfied that the person whom she now beheld was Elizabeth herself, she stood with one foot advanced and one withdrawn, her arms, head, and hands perfectly motionless, and her cheek as paled as the alabaster pedestal against which she leaned. Her dress was of pale green silk, little distinguished in that imperfect light, and somewhat resembling the drapery of a Grecian nymph, such an antique disguise having been thought most suitable, to many masquers and revellers were assembled; so that the queen's doubt of her being a living form was well justified by all contingent circumstances, as well as by the bloodless cheek and fixed eye. Elizabeth remained in doubt, even after she had approached within a few paces, whether she did or did not see on a statue so cunningly fashioned, that by the doubtful light it could not be distinguished from reality. She stopped, therefore, and fixed upon this interesting object her princely look with so much keenness, that the astonishment which had kept Amy immovable gave way to awe, and she gradually cast down her eyes and drooping her head under the commanding gaze of the sovereign. Still, however, she remained in all respects, saving this slow and profound motion of the head, motionless and silent. From her dress, and the casket which she instinctively held by her side, Elizabeth naturally conjectured that the beautiful and antique figure which she beheld was a performer in the various theatrical pageants which had been performed at different occasions to surprise her with their homage, and that the poor player, overcome with awe at her presence, had neither forgot the part assigned her, or lacked courage to go through it. It was nature and courteous to give her some encouragement; and Elizabeth accordingly said, in a tone of condescending kindness—'How now, fair nymph of this lovely grotto—art thou bewildered and struck with dumbness by the wicket encounter with whom the queen, let her casket fall from her hand, and clasping her palms together, looked up in the queen's face with such a mixed agony of fear and supplication, that Elizabeth was considerably affected.

'What may this mean?' said she; 'this is a stronger passion than hefts the occasion. Stand up, dame—what wouldest thou have with us?'

'Your protection, madam,' faltered forth the unhappy petitioner.

'Each daughter of England has it while she is worthy of it,' replied the queen; 'but your distress seems to have a deeper root than a forgotten task. Why, and in what, do you crave our protection?'

Amy hastily endeavoured to recall what she was last to say, which might secure herself from the imminent dangers that surrounded her, without endangering her husband; and, plunging from one thought to another, amidst the chaos which filled her mind, she could at length, in answer to the queen's repeated inquiries in what she sought protection, only falter out, 'Alas! I know not.'

'This is folly, madam,' said Elizabeth impatiently; for there was something in the extreme confusion of the suppliants, which irritated her curiosity, as well as interested her feelings. 'The sick man must tell his malady to the physician, nor are we accustomed to ask questions so oft, without receiving an answer. '

'I request—' I implore,' stammered forth the unfortunate countess, 'I beseech your gracious protection—against—one Varney,' She choked with emotion as she uttered the fatal word, which was instantly caught up by the queen.

'What, Varney,—Sir Richard Varney, the servant of Lord Leicester?—What, dame, are you to him, or he to you?'

'No—Sir Richard Varney was my prisoner—and he practised on my life.'

'To throw thyself on my protection, doubtless,' said Elizabeth. 'Thou shalt have it—that is, if thou art worthy; for we will sift this matter to the uttermost. Thou art,' she said, bending on the countess an eye which seemed designed to pierce her very inmost soul, 'Thou art my lady, daughter of Sir Hugh Rolset of Kecteot Hall.'

'Forgive me—I forgive me—most gracious prince,' said Amy, dropping once more on her knee, from which she had arisen.

'For what should I forgive thee, silly wench?' said Elizabeth; 'for being the daughter of thine own father? Thou art brain-sick, surely. Well, I see thee must wring the story from thee by inches—Thou didst decease with one eye and honours father—thou lackest comforts—a cheated Master Tresilian—thy blash avouches it—and married this same Varney.'

Amy sprung on her feet, and interrupted the
queen eagerly with, 'No, madam, no—as there is a God above us, I am not the wretched wretch you would make me! I am not the wife of that contemptible slave—of that most despicable villain! I am not the wife of Varney! I would rather be the Bride of Destruction!'

The queen, overwhelmed by her turn by Amy's vehemence, stood silent for an instant, and then replied, 'Why, God ha mercy, woman!—I see thou canst talk fast enough when the theme likes thee. Nay, tell me, woman,' she continued, for to the impulse of curiosity was now added that of an undefined jealousy that some deception had been practised on her,—'tell me, woman—for by God's day, I will know whose wife or whose paramour art thou! Speak out, and be speedy—Then were better daily with a lonesom than with Elizabeth.'

Urged to this extremity, dragged it were by irresistible force to the verge of a precipice, which she saw but could not avoid,—permitted not a moment's respite by the eager words and menacing gestures of the offended queen, Amy at length uttered in despair, 'The Earl of Leicester knows it all.'

'The Earl of Leicester!' said Elizabeth, in utter astonishment—'The Earl of Leicester!' she repeated, with kindling anger.—'Woman, thou art set on this—thou dost belie him—he takes no keep of such things as thou art. Thou art returned to slander the noblest lord, and the truest hearted gentleman, in England! But were he the right hand of our trust, or something yet dearer to us, thou shalt have thy hearing, and that in his presence. Come with me—come with me instantly!'

As Amy shrank back with terror, which the incensed queen interpreted as that of conscious guilt, Elizabeth rapidly advanced, seized her arm, and fastened with swift and long steps out of the grotto, and along the principal alley of the Pleasure, dragging with her the terrified countess, whom she still held by the arm, and whose utmost exertions could but just keep pace with those of the indignant queen.

Leicester was at this moment the centre of a splendid group of lords and ladies assembled together under an arcade, or porch, which closed the alley. The company had drawn together in that place, to attend the commands of her Majesty when the hunting party should go forward, and their astonishment may be imagined, when, instead of seeing Elizabeth advance towards them with her usual measured dignity of motion, they beheld her walking so rapidly, that she was in the midst of them ere they were aware; and then observed, with fear and surprise, that her features were flushed betwixt anger and agitation, that her hair was loosened by her haste of motion, and that her eyes sparkled as they were wont when the spirit of Henry VIII. mounted highest in his daughter. Nor were they less astonished at the appearance of the pale, attenuated, half-dead, yet still lovely female, whom the queen upheld by main strength with one hand, while with the other she waved aside the ladies and nobles who pressed towards her, under the idea that she was taken suddenly ill.—'Where is my Lord of Leicester?—' she said, in a tone that thrilled with astonishment all the couriers who stood around.—'Stand forth, my Lord of Leicester!'—

If, in the midst of the most serene day of summer, when all is light and laughing around, a thunderbolt were to fall from the clear-blue vault of heaven, and to rend the earth at the very feet of some careless traveller, he could not gaze upon the smouldering chasm, which so unexpectedly yawned before him, with half the astonishment and fear which Leicester felt at the sight that so suddenly presented itself. He had that instant been receiving, with a political affectation of dissuavowing and misunderstanding their meaning, the half uttered, half intimated congratulations of the courtiers, upon the favour of the queen, carried apparently to its highest pitch during the interview of that morning; from which most of them seemed to augur that he might soon arise from their equal in rank to become their master. And now, while the subdued yet proud smile with which he disclaimed those inferences was yet curving his cheek, the queen shot into the circle, her passions excited to the uttermost; and, supporting with one hand, and apparently without an effort, the pale and sinking form of his almost expiring wife, and pointing with the other to her half-dead features, demanded, in a voice that sounded to the ear of the astonished statesman like the last dread trumpet-call, that is to summon body and spirit to the judgment-seat, 'Knowest thou this woman?'

'As, at the blast of that last trumpet, the guilty shall call upon the mountains to cover them, Leicester's inward thoughts invoked the stately arch which he had built in his pride, to burst its strong conjunction, and overwhelm them in its ruins. But the crowned stones, architrave and battlement, stood fast; and it was the proud master himself, who, as if some actual pressure had bent him to the earth, kneeled down before Elizabeth, and prostrated his brow to the marble fragments on which she stood.

'Leicester,' said Elizabeth, in a voice which trembled with passion, 'could I think thou hast practised on me—on me thy sovereign—on me thy confiding, thy too partial mistress—the base and ungrateful deception which thy present crimson surmise—by all that is holy, false lord, that head of thine were in as great peril as ever was thy father's!'—

Leicester had not conscious innocence, but he had pride to support him. He raised slowly his brow and features, which were black and swollen with contending emotions, and only replied, 'My head cannot fall but by the sentence of my peers—to them I will plead, and not to a princess who thus requires my faithful service.'

What! my lord,' said Elizabeth, looking around, 'we are defied, I think—defied in the castle we have ourselves bestowed on this proud man!—My Lord Shrewsbury, you are marshal of England, attach him of high treason.'

Whom does your Grace mean?' said Shrewsbury, much surprised, for he had that instant joined the astonished circle.

'Whom should I mean, but that traitor Dudley, Earl of Leicester!—Cousin of Hunsdon, order out your band of Gentlemen Pensioners,
good around—Stand forth, my lords, and take him into instant custody. — I say, villain, make haste. —

Hunsdon, a rough old noble, who, from his relationship to the Boleyns, was accustomed to move with freedom the queen than almost any other dared to do, replied bluntly, 'And it is like your Grace might order me to the Tower to-morrow, for making too much haste. I do beseech you to be patient.'

'Patient—God's life!' exclaimed the queen, 'name not the word to me— thou know'st not of what he is guilty!'

Amy, who had by this time in some degree recovered herself, and who saw her husband, as she conceived, in the utmost danger from the rage of an offended sovereign, instantly (and also, how many women have done the same!) forgot her own wranglings, and her own danger, in her apprehensions for him, and, throwing herself before the queen, embraced her knees, while she exclaimed, 'He is guiltless, madam, he is guiltless! one can lay aught on the charge of the noble Leicester.'

'Why, minion,' answered the queen, whilst not then thou sayst that the Earl of Hunsdon was privy to thy whole history?

'Did I say so? repeated the minion.' Amy, laying aside every consideration of consistency and of self-interest, 'O, if I did, I falsely believed. May God so judge me, as I did then, that I was never privy to a thought that would harm me!' 'A woman!' said Elizabeth, 'I will know who has moved thee to this; or my wrath—and the wrath of kings is a flaming fire—shall wither and consume thee like a weed in the furnace.'

As the queen uttered this threat, Leicester's better angel called his pride to his aid, and reproached him with the utter extremity of meanness which would overwield him for ever, if he stooped to take shelter under the generous interposition of his wife, and abasement her, in return for her kindness, to the resentment of the queen. He had already raised his head, with the dignity of a man of honour, to avow his marriage, and proclaim himself the protector of his country, when Varney, born, as it appeared, to be his master's evil genius, rushed into the presence with every mark of disorder on his face and apparel.

'What means this saucy intrusion?' said Elizabeth.

Varney, with the air of a man overwhelmed with grief and confusion, prostrated himself before her feet, exclaiming, 'Pardon, my liege, pardon—! or at least let your justice avenge itself on me, where it is due; but spare my noble, my generous, my innocent patron and master!' Amy, who was yet kneeling, started up as she saw the man whom she deemed most odious place himself so near her, and was about to fly towards Leicester, when, checked at once by the uncertainty and even timidity which his looks had assumed as soon as the appearance of his confidant seemed to open a new scene, she hung back, and, uttering a faint scream, bowed of her Majesty to cause her to be imprisoned in the lowest dungeon of the castle—to deal with her as the worst of criminals—'But spare,' she exclaimed, 'my sight and hearing, what will destroy the little judgment I have left—the sight of that unutterable and most shameless villain!'

'And why, sweet earl?' said the queen, moved by a new impulse; 'what hath he, this false knight, since such thou accostest him, done to thee?'

'O, worse than sorrow, madam, and worse than injury—he has sown discourse where most there should be peace. I shall go mad if I look longer on him.'

'Beshrew me, but I think thou art distraught already,' answered the queen. —'My Lord Hunsdon, look to this poor distressed young woman, and let her be safely bestowed and in honest keeping, till we require her to be fortiselled.

'Two or three of the ladies in attendance, either moved by compassion for a creature so interesting, or by some other motive, offered their services to look after her; but the queen briefly answered, 'Ladies, under favour, no.'—You have (give God thanks) sharp ears and nimble tongues—our kinsman Hunsdon has ears of the dullest, and a tongue somewhat rough, but yet of the slowest. — Hunsdon, look to it that none have speech of her.'

'By Our Lady!' said Hunsdon, taking in his strong sinewy form the frowning and almost swooning form of Amy. 'she is a lovely child; and though a rough nurse, your Grace hath given her a kind one. She is safe with me as one of my own lady-birds of daughters.'

So saying, he carried her off, irresistibly and almost unconsiously; his war-worn locks and long grey beard muffling with her light brown tresses, as her head reclined on his strong square shoulder. The queen followed him with her eye—she had already, with that self-command which forms so necessary a part of a sovereign's accomplishments, suppressed every appearance of agitation, and seemed as if she desired to banish all traces of her burst of emotion from the recollection of those who had witnessed it. — 'My Lord of Hunsdon says well,' she observed, 'he is indeed but a rough nurse for so tender a lady.'

'My Lord!' of Hunsdon,' said the Dean of Saint Asaph, 'I speak not in defamation of his more noble quality, hath a broad licence in speech, and garnishes his discourse somewhat too freely with the cruel and superstitious oaths, which savour both of profaneness and of old papistry.'

'It is the fault of his blood, Master Dean,' said the queen, turning sharply round upon the reverend dignitary as she spoke; and you may blame mine for the same disfigurement. The Boleyns were ever a hot and plain-spoken race, more hasty to speak their mind than careful to choose their expressions. And, by my word—I hope there is no sin in that affirmation—I question if it were much cooled by mixing with that of Tudor.'

As she made this last observation she smiled graciously, and stole her eyes almost insensibly round to seek those of the Earl of Leicester, to whom she now began to think she had spoken with hasty harshness upon the unfounded suspicion of a moment. The queen's eye found the earl in no mood to accept the implied offer of conciliation. His own looks had followed, with late and rueful repent-
and we have right to be offended with you. We shall take the lion's part upon us, and be the first to forgive."

Leicester smoothed his brow, as if by an effort, but the trouble was too deep-seated that its placidity should at once return. He said, however, that what fitted the occasion, ‘that he could not have the happiness of forgiving, because she who commanded him to do so, could commit no injury towards him.’

Elizabeth seemed content with this reply, and intimated that the sports of the morning should proceed. The bagels sounded—the hounds bayed—the horses pranced—but the courtiers and ladies sought the amusements to which they were summoned with hearts very different from those which had leaped to the morning’s revel. There was doubt, and fear, and expectation on every brow, and suspense and intrigue in every whisper.

Blount took an opportunity to whisper into Raleigh’s ear, ‘This storm came like a levant in the Mediterranean.’

‘Fortasse et mutabile,’ answered Raleigh, in a similar tone.

‘Nay, I know not what of your Latin,’ said Blount; ‘but I thank God Tressilian took not the sea during that hurricane. He could scarce have had a shipwreck, knowing as he does so little how to trim a vessel to a court gale.’

‘Thou wouldst have instructed him!’ said Raleigh.

‘Why, I have profited by my time as well as thou, Sir Walter,’ replied honest Blount. ‘I am knight as well as thou and of the earlier creation.’

‘Now, God further thy wit,’ said Raleigh; ‘but for Tressilian, I would I knew what were the matter with him. He told me this morning he would not leave his chamber for the space of twelve hours or thereby, being bound by a promise. This lady’s madness, when she shall learn it, will not, I fear, cure his infirmity. The moon is at the fullest, and men’s brains are working like madmen. But hang! they sound to mount. Let us to horse; Blount; we young knights must deserve our spurs.’

CHAPTER XXXV.

Sincerity

Thou fist of virtues! let no mortal leave
Thy onward path, although the earth should gasp,
And from the gulf of hell destruction cry,
To take dissimulation’s winding way.

DOUGLAS.

It was not till after a long and successful morning’s sport and a prolonged repast which followed the return of the queen to the castle that Leicester at length found himself alone with Varney, from whom he now learned the whole particulars of the countess’s escape, as they had been brought to Kenilworth by Foster, who, in his terror for the consequences, had himself posted thither with the tidings. As Varney, in his narrative, took especial care to be silent concerning those practices on the countess’s health which had driven her to so desperate a resolution,
Leicester, who could only suppose that she had adopted it out of jealous impatience, to attain the avowed state and appearance belonging to her rank, was not a little offended at the levity with which his wife had broken his strict command, and exposed him to the resentment of Elizabeth.

'I have given,' he said, 'to this daughter of an obscure Devonshire gentleman, the proudest name in England. I have made her share of my bed and of my fortunes. I ask but of her a little patience, ere she launches forth upon the full current of her grandeur, and the intemperate woman will rather hazard her own shipwreck and mine, will rather involve me in a thousand whirlpools, shoals, and quicksands, and compel me to a thousand devices which shame me in mine own eyes, than to be a little space longer in the obscurity to which she was born. So lovely, so delicate, so fond, so faithful—yet to lack in so grave a matter the prudence which one might hope from the veriest fool—it puts me beyond my patience.'

'We may post it over yet well enough,' said Varney, 'if my lady will be but ruled, and take on the character which the time commands.'

'It is too true, Sir Richard,' said Leicester, 'there is indeed no other remedy. I have heard her termed thy wife in my presence without contradiction. She must be the title she must bear from Kenilworth.'

'And long afterwards, I trust,' said Varney; 'then instantly added, 'For I cannot but hope it will be long ere she bears the title of Lady Leicester—I fear me it may scarce be safe for her to enter I am indeed no other remedy. I have heard her termed thy wife in my presence without contradiction. She must be the title she must bear from Kenilworth.'

'You are right, Varney,' said Leicester; 'I have this morning been both foul and in full; and when Elizabeth hears of my unhappy marriage, she cannot but think herself treated with that premeditated slight which women never forgive. We have one this day stood upon terms long. In full, I do not fear to enter, and again return.'

'Is her resentment, then, so implacable? said Varney.

'Far from it,' replied the earl; 'for, being what she is in spirit and in station, she has even this day been but too condescending, in giving me opportunities to repair what she thinks my faulty heat of temper.'

'Ay,' answered Varney; 'the Italians say right—in lovers' quarrels, to the party that loves most is always most willing to acknowledge the greater fault. So then, my lord, if this union with the lady could be concealed, you stand with Elizabeth as you did.'

Leicester sighed, and was silent for a moment ere he replied.

'Varney, I think thou art true to me, and I will tell thee all. I do not stand where I did. I have spoken to Elizabeth—under what impulsion I know not—on a theme which cannot be abandoned without touching every mode feeling to the quick, and which yet I dare not and cannot expunge. She can never, never forgive me, for having caused and witnessed those yieldings to human passion.'

'We must do something, my lord,' said Varney, 'and that speedily.'

'There is nothing to be done,' answered Leicester despondingly; 'I am like one that has long toiled up a dangerous precipice; and when he is within one perilous stride of the top, finds his progress arrested when retreat has become impossible. I see above me the pinnacle which I cannot reach—beneath me the abyss into which I must fall, as soon as my relaxing grasp and dizzy brain join to hurl me from my present precarious stance.'

'Think better of your experiment, my lord,' said Varney—let us try the experiment, in which you have but now acquiesced. Keep well your marriage from Elizabeth's knowledge, and all may yet be well. I will instantly go to the lady myself—She hates me, because I have been earnest with your lordship, as she truly suspects, in opposition to what she terms her rights. I care not for her prejudices—She shall listen to me; and I will show her such reasons for yielding to the pressure of the times, that I doubt not to bring back her consent to whatever measures these exigencies may require.'

'No, Varney,' said Leicester; 'I have thought upon what shall be done, and I will myself speak with Amy.'

'It was now Varney's turn to feel, upon his own account, the terrors which he affected to participate solely on account of his patron. Your lordship will not yourself speak with the lady?'

'It is my fixed purpose,' said Leicester; 'fetch me one of the lady's maids; I will pass the sentence as thy servant. Thou art to have free access to her.'

'But, my lord—' 'I will have no buts,' replied Leicester; 'it shall be even thus, and not otherwise.'

Hunsdon slept; I think, in Saintlovce's Tower. We can go thither from these apartments by the private passage, without risk of meeting any one. Or what if I do meet Hunsdon? he is more my friend than enemy, and thick-witted enough to adopt any belief that is thrust on him. Fetch me the clerk instantly.'

Varney had no alternative save obedience. In a few minutes Leicester was melted in the bustle, and followed Varney along the secret passage of the castle which communicated with Hunsdon's apartments, in which there was scarce a chance of meeting any inquisitive person, and barely strong enough for any such to have satisfied their curiosity. They emerged at a door where Lord Hunsdon had, with military precaution, placed a sentinel, one of his own northern retainers as it fortuned, who readily admitted Sir Richard Varney and his attendant, saying only, in his northern dialect, 'I would, man, thou couldst make the mad lady be still yonder; for her moans do save me. If thou cannot thyself do save me, if thou cannot—'
The Countess Amy, with her hair and her garments dishevelled, was seated upon a sort of couch, in an attitude of the deepest affliction, out of which she was startled by the opening of the door. She turned hastily round, and, fixing her eye on Varney, exclaimed, 'Wretched! art thou come to frame some new plan of villainy?'

Leicester cut short her reproaches by stepping forward and dropping his cloak, while he said, in a voice rather of authority than of affection, 'It is with me, madam, you have to commune, not with Sir Richard Varney.'

The change effected on the countess's look and manner was like magic. 'Dudley!' she exclaimed; 'Dudley! I am art thou come at last! With the speed of lightning she flew to her husband, clung around his neck, and, unmasking the presence of Varney, overwhelmed him with caresses, while she bathed his face in a flood of tears; muttering, at the same time, but in broken and disjointed monosyllables, the foulest expressions which love teaches its votaries.

Leicester, as it seemed to him, had reason to be angry with his lady for transgressing his commands, and thus placing him in the perilous situation in which he had that morning stood. But what displeasure could keep its ground before these testimonies of affection from a being so lovely, that even the negligence of dress, and the withering effects of fear, grief, and fatigue, which would have impaired the beauty of others, rendered hers but the more interesting? He received and repaid her caresses with fondness, mingled with melancholy, the last of which she seemed scarcely to observe, until the first transport of her own joy was over; when, looking anxiously in his face, she asked if he was ill.

'Not in my body, Amy,' was his answer.

'Then I will be well too.—O Dudley! I have been ill!—very ill, since we last met!—for I call not this morning's horrible vision a meeting. I have been in sickness, in grief, and in danger—but thou art come, and all is joy, and health, and safety!'—Alas, Amy! said Leicester, 'thou hast undone me!'

'I, my lord!' said Amy, her cheek at once losing its transient flush of joy,—how could I injure that which I love better than myself?

'Does it, does it indeed!' she exclaimed eagerly; 'then why am I here a moment longer? O, if you knew by what fears I was urged to quit Cummon Place!—But I will say nothing of myself—only that if it might be otherwise, I would not willingly return thither;—yet if it concern your safety

'We will think, Amy, of some other retreat,' said Leicester; 'and you shall go to one of my northern castles, under the personage—it will be but needful, I trust, for a very few days—of Varney's wife.'

'How, my Lord of Leicester!' said the lady, disengaging herself from his embraces; 'is it to your wife you give the dishonourable counsel to acknowledge herself the bride of another—and of all men the bride of that Varney?'

'Madam, I speak it in earnest—Varney is my true and faithful servant, trusted in my deepest secrets. I had better lose my right hand than his service at this moment. You have no cause to scorn him as you do.'

'I could assign one, my lord,' replied the countess; and I see he shakes even under that assured look of his. But he that is surety as your right hand to your safety, is free from any accusation of mine. May he be true to you; and that he may be true, trust him not too much, or too far. But it is enough to say, that I will not, with him unless by violence, nor would I acknowledge him as my husband, were all.'

'It is a temporary deception, madam,' said Leicester, irritated by her opposition, 'necessary for both our safeties, endangered by you through female captire, or the premature desire to seize on a rank to which I gave you title, only under condition that our marriage, for a time, should continue secret. If my proposal disgusts you, it is yourself has brought it on both of us. There is no other remedy—see you must do what your own impatient folly hath rendered necessary.—I command you.'

'I cannot put your commands, my lord,' said Amy, 'in balance with those of honour and conscience. I will not, in this instance, obey you. You may achieve your own dishonour, to which these crooked policies naturally tend, but I will do nothing that can hemish mine. How could you again, my lord, acknowledge me as a pure and chaste matron, worthy to share your fortunes, when, holding that high character, I had strode the country the acknowledged wife of such a profligate fellow as your servant Varney?'

'My lord,' said Varney, interposing, 'my lady is too much prejudiced against me, unhappily, to listen to what I can offer; yet it may please her better than what she proposes. She has good interest with Master Edmund Tressilian, and could doubtless prevail on him to consent to be her companion to Lidgate Hall, and there she might remain in safety until time permitted the development of this mystery.'

Leicester was silent, but stood looking eagerly on Amy, with eyes which seemed suddenly to grow as much with suspicion as with pleasure.

The countess only said, 'Would to God I were in my father's house!—When I left it, I little thought I was leaving peace of mind and honour behind me!' Varney proceeded with a tone of deliberation.

'Doubtless this will make it necessary to take strangers into my lord's counsels; but surely the countess will be warrant for the honour of Master Tressilian and such of her family as—'

'Peace, Varney,' said Leicester; 'by Heaven, I will strike my dagger into thee, if again thou namest Tressilian as a partner of my counsels!'

And therefore not I said the countess; unless they be counsels fitter for such as Varney, than for a man of stainless honour and integrity. My lord, my lord, bend not an angry brow on me—It is the truth, and I who speak it! I once did Tressilian wrong for your sake—I will not do him the further injustice of being silent when his honour is brought in question. I can forbear,' she said, looking at Varney, 'to pull
the mask of hypocrisy, but I will not permit virtue to be slandered in my hearing.

There was a dead pause. Leicester stood displeased, yet undetermined, and too conscious of the weakness of his cause; while Varney, with a deep and hypocritical affectation of sorrow, mingled with humility, bent his eyes on the ground.

It was then that the Countess Amy displayed, in the midst of distress and difficulty, the natural energy of character, which would have rendered her, had fate allowed, a distinguished ornament of the rank which she held. She walked up to Leicester with a composed step, a dignified air, and looks in which strong affection evinced in vain to shake the firmness of conscious truth and rectitude of principle. 'You have spoke my mind, my lord,' she said, 'in these difficulties, with which, unceasingly, I have found myself unable to comply. This gentleman—this Sir T.'

I said—has hinted at another scheme, to which I object but as it displease you. Will your lordship be pleased to hear what a young and timid woman, but your most affectionate wife, can suggest in the present extremity?'

Leicester was silent, but bent his head towards the countess, as an intimation that she was at liberty to proceed.

'There hath been but one cause for all these evils, my lord,' she proceeded, 'and it revolves itself into the mysterious duplicity with which you have been induced to surround yourself. Extricate yourself at once, my lord, from the tyranny of these disgraceful trammels. He be like a true English gentleman, knight, and earl, who holds that truth is the foundation of honour, and that honour is dear to him as the breath of his nostrils. Take your ill-fated wife by the hand, lead her to the footstool of Elizabeth's throne—Say, that in a moment of infatation, moved by supposed beauty, of which none perhaps can now trace even the remains, I gave my hand to this Amy Rolfsart. You will then have done justice to me, my lord, and to your own honour; and should law or power require you to part from me, I will oppose no objection—since I may then with better grace hide a analysed heart and broken heart in these shades from the gaze of your love withdrew me. Then—have but a little patience, my lord's life will not long darken your brighter prospects.'

There was so much of dignity, so much of tenderness, in the countess's remonstrance, that it moved all that was noble and generous in the soul of her husband. The tears seemed to fall from his eyes, and the duplicity and terrific nature of which he had been guilty, stung him at once with remorse and shame. 'I am not worthy of you, Amy,' he said, 'that could weigh nought which ambition has to give against such a heart as thine. I have a bitter penance to perform, in disentangling, before sneering faces and astonished friends, all the meshes of my own deceitful policy. And the Queen—but let her take my head, as she has the standard.'

'Your head, my lord!' said the countess; 'because you used the freedom and liberty of an English subject in choosing a wife? For shame; it is this distrust of the Queen's justice, this apprehension of danger, which cannot but be imaginary, that, like scarecrows, have induced you to forsake the straightforward path, which, as it is the best, is also the safest.'

'Ah, Amy, thou little knowest!' said Dudley; but, instantly checking himself, he added, 'Yet she shall not find in me a safe or easy victim of arbitrary vengeance. I have friends—I have allies—I will not, like Norfolk, be dragged to the block, as a victim to sacrifice. Fear not, Amy; thou shall see Dudley bewail himself worthy of his name. I must instantly communicate with as many of those friends on whom I can best rely; for, as things stand, I may be mad prisoner in my own castle.'

'O, my good lord,' said Amy, 'make no fiction in a peaceful state! There is no friend can help us so well as our own candid truth and honour. Bring but these to our assistance, and you are safe amidst a whole array of the curious and malignant. Leave these behind you, and all other defence will be fruitless. Truth, my noble lord, is well painted unarmed.'

'But Wisdom, Amy,' answered Leicester, 'is arrayed in panoply of proof. Argue not with me on the means I shall use to re-er my countess—since it must be called so—as safe as may be. I will be fraught with enough of danger, do what we will,—Varney, we must hence. Farewell, Amy, whom I am to vindicate as mine own, at an expense and risk of which thou alone dost be worthy. Thou shalt soon hear further from me.'

He embraced her fervently, muffled himself as before, and accompanied Varney from the apartment. The latter, as he left the room, bowed and, as he raised his body, regarded Amy with a peculiar expression, as if he desired to know how far his own pardon was included in the reconciliation which had taken place between her and his lord. The countess looked upon him with a fixed eye, but seemed no more conscious of his presence than if there had been nothing but vacant air on the spot where he stood.

'She has brought me to the crisis,' he muttered—'She or I are lost. There was something—I wot not if it was fear or pity—that prompted me to avoid this fatal crisis. It is now decided—She or I must perish.'

While he thus spoke, he observed with surprise, that a boy, perplexed by the sentinel, made up to Leicester, and spoke with him. Varney was one of those politicians whom not the slightest appearance escapes without inquiry. He asked the sentinel what the lad wanted with him, and received for answer, that the boy had wished him to transmit a parcel to the maid-lady, but that he cared not to take charge of it, such communication being beyond his commission. His curiosity satisfied in that particular, he approached his patron, and heard him say—'Well, boy, the packet shall be delivered.'

'Thou and my good Master Serving-man,' said the boy, and was out of sight in an instant.

Leicester and Varney returned with hasty steps to the Earl's private apartment, by the same passage which had conducted them to Saint-lowe's Tower.
CHAPTER XXXVI.

—April said.
This is an advow's—I have said with whom;
More, she's a traitor, and Camillo is
A confederate with her, and one that knows
What she should shame to know herself.

Winter's Tale.

They were no sooner in the earl's cabinet, than,
taking his tablets from his pocket, he began to
write, speaking partly to Varney, and partly to
himself:—There are many of them close bounden
to me, and especially those in good estate and
high office; many who, if they look back towards
my benefits, or forward towards the perils which
may befall themselves, will not, I think, be dis-
posed to see me stagger unsupported. Let me see—Knollys is sure, and through his means
Guernsey and Jersey—Horsey commands in the
Isle of Wight—My brother-in-law, Hunting-
don, and Pembroke, have authority in Wales—
Through Bedford I lead the puritans, with their
interest, so powerful in all the boroughs—My
brother of Warwick is equal, well-nigh, to my-
self, in wealth, followers, and dependences—
Sir Owen Hopeton is at my devotion; he com-
mands the Tower of London, and the national
treasure is deposited there—My father and grand-
father needed never to have stopped their heads
to the block, had they thus forecast their enter-
prises.—Why look you so sad, Varney? I tell
thee, a tree so deep rooted is not so easily to be
torn up by the tempest!'—

'Alas, my lord!' said Varney, with well-acted
passion, and then resumed the same look of
despairs which Leicester had before noted.

'Alas!' repeated Leicester; 'and wherefore
alas, Sir Richard? Dost thy new spirit of
chivalry supply no more vigorous exacution,
when a noble struggle is impending? Or, if
alas means thou wilt flinch from the conflict,
thou mayest leave the castle, or go join mine
enemies, whichever thou thinkest best.'

'Not so, my lord,' answered his confidant;
'Varney will be found fighting or dying by your
side. Forgive me, if in love to you, I see more
fully than your noble heart permits you to do,
the inextricable difficulties with which you are
surrounded. You are strong, my lord, and
powerful; yet, let me say it without offence,
you are so only by the reflected light of the
queen's favour. While you are Elizabeth's
favourite, you are all, save in name, like an
actual sovereign. But let her call back the
honours she has bestowed, and the prophet's
gourd did not wither more suddenly. Declare
against the queen, and I do not say that in
the wide nation, or in this province alone, you
would have yourself instantly deserted and out-
numbered: but I will say, that even in this
castle, and in the midst of your vassals,
kinsmen, and dependents, you would be a capti-

tive, nay, a sentenced captive, should she please
to say the word. Think upon Norfolk, my
lord—upon the post at Northumberland—all
of the said Westmoreland—all that have
made head against this sago princess. They
are dead, captive, or fugitive. This is not like other
thrones, which can be overthrown by a combina-
tion of powerful nobles; the broad foundations
which support it are in the extended love and
affections of the people. You might share it
with Elizabeth if you would; but neither you nor
any other power, foreign or domestic, will
avoid to overthrow, or even to shake it.'

He paused, and Leicester threw his tablets
from him with an air of reckless despondency.
'It may be as thou sayest,' he said; 'and, in sooth,
I care not whether truth or cowardice dictate
thy forebodings: but it shall not be said I fell
without a struggle.—Give orders, that those of
my retainers who served under me in Ireland be
gradually drawn into the main keep, and let my
gentlemen and friends stand on their guard,
and go armed, as if they expected an onset from the
followers of Sussex. Possess the townspeople
with some apprehension; let them take arms,
and be ready, at a given signal, to overbear the
Pensioners and Yeomen of the Guard.'

'Let me remind you, my lord,' said Varney,
with the same appearance of deep and melan-
choly interest, 'that you have given me orders to
prepare for disarming the Queen's guard. It
is an act of high treason, but you shall never-
theless be obeyed.'

'I care not,' said Leicester desperately; 'I
care not. Shame is beh. d me, ruin before me; I
must on.'

Here there was another pause, which Varney
at length broke with the following words:—'It
is come to the point I have long dreaded. I
must either witness, like an ingrateful beast,
the downfall of the best and kindest of masters,
or I must speak what I would have buried in
the deepest oblivion, or told by any other mouth
than mine.'

'What is that thou sayest, or wouldst say?'
replied the earl; 'we have no time to waste on
words, when the times call us to action.'

'My speech is soon made, my lord—would to
God it were as soon answered! Your marriage
is the sole cause of the threatened breach with
your sovereign, my lord, is it not?'

'Thou knowest it is!' replied Leicester.

'What needs so fruitless a question?'

'Pardon me, my lord,' said Varney; 'the use
lies here. Men will wager their lands and lives
in defence of a rich diamond, my lord; but were
it not first prudent to look if there is no flaw
in it?'

'What means this?' said Leicester, with eyes
sternly fixed on his dependent; 'of whom dost
thou dare to speak?'

'It is—of the Countess Amy, my lord, of
whom I am unhappily bound to speak; and of
whom I will speak, were your lordship to kill
me for my real.'

' Thou mayest happen to deserve it at my
hand,' said the earl; 'but speak on, I will hear
thee.'

Nay, then, my lord, I will be bold. I speak
for my own life as well as for your lordship's.
I like not this lady's tampering and trickstering
with this same Edmund Treasillian. You know
him, my lord. You know he had formerly an
interest in her, which it cost your lordship; some
pains to supersede. You know the eagerness
which he has pressed on the suit against me
in behalf of this lady, the open object of


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which is to drive your lordship to an avowal of what I must ever call your most unhappy marriage, the point to which my lady also is willing, at any risk, to urge you.

Leicester smiled contemptuously. 'Thou meanest well, Sir Richard, and wouldst, I think, sacrifice thine own honour, as well as that of any other person, to save me from what thou thinkest a step so terrible. But, remember,'—he spoke these words with the most stern decision,—'you speak of the Countess of Leicester.'

'I do, my lord,' answered Varney; 'but it is for the welfare of the Earl of Leicester. My tale is but begun. I do most strongly believe that this Tressilian has, from the beginning of his moving in her cause, been in connivance with her ladyship the Countess.'

'Thou speakest wild madness, Varney, with the sober face of a preacher. Where or how could they communicate together?'

'My lord,' said Varney, 'unfortunately I can show that but too well. It was just before the supplication was presented to the Queen, in Tressilian's name, that I met him, to utter astonishment, at the western gate which leads from the demesne of Cumnor to Tressilian's brick.'

'Thou wilt, him, villain! and why didst thou not strike him dead?' exclaimed Leicester. 'I saw him, my lord, and he on me; and had not my foe slipped, he would not, perhaps, have been again a stumbling-block in your lordship's path.'

Leicester seemed struck dumb with surprise. At length he answered, 'What other evidence hast thou of this, Varney, save thine own assertion? — for, as I will punish deeply, I will examine coldly and warily. Sacred Heaven! but no—I will examine coldly and warily. He repeated these words more than once to himself, as if in the very sound there was a seductive quality; and again compressing his lips, as if he feared some violent expression might escape from them, he asked again, 'What further proof?'

'Enough, my lord,' said Varney, 'and to spare. I would rest it with me alone, for with me it might have been silenced for ever. But my servant, Michael Lambourne, witnessed this whole, and was, indeed, the means of first introducing Tressilian into Cumnor Place; and therefore I took him into my service, and remitted him in it, though something of a debauched fellow, that I might have his tongue always under my own command.' He then acquainted Lord Leicester how easy it was to prove the circumstances of their interview true, by evidence of Anthony Foster, with the corroborative testimonies of the various persons at Cumnor, who had heard the wager laid, and had seen Lambourne and Tressilian set off together. In the whole narrative, Varney hazarded nothing fabulous, excepting that, not indeed by direct assertion, but by inference, he led his patron to suppose that the interview betwixt Amy and Tressilian at Cumnor Place had been longer than the few minutes to which it was in reality limited.

'And wherefore was I not present of all this?' said Leicester sternly. 'Why did all this occur in particular, Varney—keep back from me such material information?'

'Because, my lord,' replied Varney, 'the countess pretended to Foster and to me that Tressilian had intrusted himself upon her; and I concluded their conference had been in all honour, and that she would at her own time tell it to your lordship. Your lordship knows with what unwilling ears we listen to evil surmises against those whom we love; and I thank Heaven, I am no make-bate or informer, to be the first to sow them. You are but too ready to receive them, however, Sir Richard,' replied his patron. 'How knowest thou that this interview was not in all honour, as thou hast said? Methinks the wife of the Earl of Leicester might speak for a short time in such a person as Tressilian, without injury to me or suspicion to herself.'

'Questionless, my lord,' answered Varney; 'I had thought otherwise, I had been no keeper of the secret. But here lies the rub—Tressilian leaves not the place without establishing a correspondence with a poor man, the landlord of an inn in Cumnor, for the purpose of carrying off the lady. He sent thereon an embassy of his, whom I trust soon to have in right sure keeping under Mervyn's Tower. Killigrew and Lambourne are scouring the country in quest of him. The host is weighed with a ring for keeping counsel—your lordship may have noted it on Tressilian's hand—here it is. This fellow was an agent, makes his way to the place as a pedlar, holds conferences with the lady, and they make their escape together by night—rob a poor fellow of a horse by the way, such was their guilty haste; and at length reach this castle, where the Countess of Leicester finds refuge—dare not say in what place.'

'Speak, I command thee,' said Leicester; 'speak while I retain sense enough to hear thee.'

'Since it must be so,' answered Varney, 'the lady resorted immediately to the apartment of Tressilian, where she remained many hours, partly in company with him, and partly alone. I told you Tressilian had a paramour in his chamber—I little dreamed that paramour was—'

'Any, thou wouldst say,' answered Leicester; 'but it is false as the smoke of hell! Ambitious she may be—fickle and impatient—tis a woman's fault; but false to me!—never, never. —The proof—of the proof of this?' he exclaimed hastily.

'Carrol, the deputy marshal, ushered her thither by her own desire, on yesterday afternoon—Lambourne and the warden both found her there at an early hour this morning.'

Was Tressilian there with her? said Leicester, in the same hurried tone.

'No, my lord. You may remember,' answered Varney, 'that he was that night placed with Sir Nicholas Blount, under a species of arrest.'

'Did Carrol, or the other fellows, know who she was?' demanded Leicester.

'No, my lord,' replied Varney; 'Carrol and the warden had never set the countess, and Lambourne knew her not in her disguise, but in seeking to prevent her leaving the cell, he obtained possession of one of her gloves, which, I think, your lordship may know.'
He gave the glove which had the Bear and Ragged Staff, the earl's impress, embroidered upon it in seed pearls.

'I do, I do recognize it,' said Leicester. 'They were my own gift. The follow of it was on the arm which she threw this very day around my neck?—He spoke this with violent agitation.

'Your lordship,' said Varney, 'might yet further inquire of the lady herself, respecting the truth of these passages.'

'It needs not—it needs not,' said the tortured earl; 'it is written in characters of burning light, as if they were branded on my very eyeballs! I see her infamy—I can see nought else; and—gracious Heaven!—for this vile woman was I about to commit 1 longer the lives of so many noble friends—shake the foundation of a lawful throne—carry the sword and torch through the bosom of a peaceful land—wrong the kind mistress who made me what I am—and would, but for that hell-framed marriage, have made me all that man can be! All this I was ready to do for a woman, who twinkled and trifled with my worst foes!—And then, villain, why do you not speak sooner?'

'My lord,' said Varney, 'a tear from my lady would have blotted out all I could have said. Besides, I had not these proofs until this very morning, when Anthony Foster's sudden arrival, with the examinations and declarations, which he had extorted from the innkeeper Gosling, and others, explained the manner of her flight from Gunnor Place, and my own researches discovered the steps which she had taken here.'

'Now, may God be praised for the light he has given! so full, so satisfactory, that there breathes not a man in England who shall call my proceeding rash, or my revenge unjust. And yet, Varney, so young, so fair, so fawning, and so false! Hence, then, her hatred to thee, my trusted, my well-beloved servant, because you withstood her plots, and endanger her paramour's life!'

'I never gave her any other cause of dislike, my lord,' replied Varney; 'but she knew that my conduct was directly to diminish her influence with your lordship; and that I was, and have been, ever ready to peril my life against your enemies.'

'It is too apparent,' replied Leicester; 'yet, with what an air of magmaminity she exhorted me to commit my head to the Queen's mercy, rather than wear the veil of falsehood a moment longer! Methinks the angel of truth himself can have no such tones of high-souled impudence. Can it be so, Varney?—Can falsehood use thus boldly the language of truth?—Can infamy thus assume the guise of purity?—Varney, thou hast been my servant from a child—I have raised thee high—can raise thee higher. Think, Think for me! Thy brain was ever shrewd and piercing—May she not be innocent! Prove her so, and all I have yet done for thee shall be as nothing—nothing—in comparison of thy recompense.'

The sympathy with which his master spoke had some effect even on the hardened Varney, who, in the midst of his own wicked and ambitious designs, really loved his patron as well as much a wretch was capable of loving anything; but he comforted himself, and subdied his self-preservation with the reflection, that if he inflicted upon the earl some immediate and transitory pain, it was in order to pave his way to the throne, which, were this marriage dissolved by death or otherwise, he deemed Elizabeth would willingly share with his benefactor. He therefore persevered in his diabolical policy; and, after a moment's consideration, answered the anxious queries of the earl with a melancholy look, as if he had in vain sought some explanation for the countess; then suddenly raising his head, he said with an expression of hope, which instantly communicated itself to the countenance of his patron—Yet wherefore, if guilty, should she have perilled herself by coming hither? Why not rather have fled to her father's or elsewhere?—though that, indeed, might have interfered with her desire to be acknowledged as Countess of Leicester.'

'True, true, true!' exclaimed Leicester, his transient gleam of hope giving way to the utmost bitterness of feeling and expression; 'then art not fit to fathom a woman's depth of wit. Varney. I see it all. She would not quit the estate and title of the wittol who had wedded her. Ay, and if in my madness I had started into rebellion, or if the angry Queen had taken my head, as she this morning threatened, the wealthy dower which law would have assigned to the Countess Dowager of Leicester, had been no less than that to the haggard Tressilian. Well might she solace me, as danger, which could not end otherwise than profoundly to her.

—Speak not for her, Varney! I will have her blood.'

'My lord,' replied Varney, 'the wildness of your distress breaks forth in the wildness of your language.'

'I say, speak not for her!' replied Leicester; 'she has dishonoured me—she would have ravished me—all ties are burst between us. She shall die the death of a traitress and adulteress, well merited both by the laws of God and man!—And what is this casket, he said, 'which was even now thrust into my hand by a boy, with the desire I would convey it to Tressilian, as he could not give it to the countess? By Heaven! the words were not gone from his mouth as he spoke them, though other matters chased them from his brain; but now they return with double force.—It is her casket of jewels!—Force it open, Varney; force the hinges open with thy ponder.'

'She refused the aid of my dagger once,' thought Varney, as he unsheathed the weapon to cut the string which bound a letter, 'but now it shall work a mightier ministry in her fortune.'

With this reflection, by using the three-cornered atletto-blade as a wedge, he forced open the slender silver hinges of the casket. The earl no sooner saw them give way, than he snatched the casket from Sir Richard's hand, wrenched off the cover, and, tearing out the splendid contents, flung them on the floor in a transport of rage, while he eagerly searched for some letter or billet, which should make the fancied guilt of his innocent countess yet more
CHAPTER XXXVII.

You have displaced the mirth, broke the good meeting
With most admired disorder.

Macbeth.

It was afterwards remembered, that during the banquet and revels which occupied the remainder of this eventful day, the bearing of Leicester and Varney was totally different from their usual demeanour. Sir Richard Varney had been held rather a man of counsel and of action, than a rotatory of pleasure. Business, whether civil or military, seemed always to be his proper station; and while in the form of his faculties, although he well understood how to trick them up and present them, his own part was that of a mere spectator; or if he exercised his wit, it was in a rough, assertTrue, and severe manner, rather as if he scoffed at the exhibition and the guests, than shared the common pleasure.

But upon the present day his character seemed changed. He mixed among the younger courtiers and ladies, and appeared for the moment to be actuated by a spirit of light-hearted gaiety, which rendered him a match for the liveliness. Those who had looked upon him as a man given up to grave and more amusions pursuits, a bitter sneerer and passer of sarcasms at the expense of those who, taking life as they find it, were disposed to snatch at each pastime it presents, now conceived with astonishment that his wit could carry as smooth an edge as their own, his laugh be as lively, and his brow as unbroiled, by what art of droll hyperbolic he could draw this veil of gaiety over the black thoughts of one of the wits of human bosoms, must remain unmentionable to all but his companions, if any such ever existed; but he was a man of extraordinary powers, and those powers were unapplyingly dedicated to all their energy to the very worst of purposes.

It was entirely different with Leicester. However he habitually his mind usually was to play the part of a good courtier, and appear gay, assiduous, and free from all care but that of enhancing the pleasure of the moment, while his bosom internally throbbed with the passions of unquenched ambition, jealousy, or resentment, his heart had now a yet more dreadful guest, whose workings could not be overshadowed or suppressed; and you might read in his vacant eye and troubled brow, that his thoughts were far absent from the scenes in which he was compelling himself to play a part. He looked, moved, and spoke, as if by a succession of continued efforts; and it seemed as if his will had in some degree lost the promptitude of command over the acute mind and goodly form of which it was the servant. His actions and gestures, instead of appearing the consequence of simple volition, seemed, like those of an automaton, to wait the revolution of some internal machinery by which they could be performed; and his words fell from him with such vagueness, interrupted, as if he had first to think what he was to say, then how it was to be said, and as after all, it was only by an effort of continued attention that he completed a sentence without forgetting both the one and the other.

The singular effects which these distractions of mind produced upon the behaviour and conversacion of the most accomplished courtier of England, as they were visible to the lowest and dullest men who approached his person, could not escape the notice of the most intelligent princess of the age. Nor is there the least doubt that the alternate negligence and irregularity of his manner have been called Elizabeth's severe displeasure on the Earl of Leicester, had it not occurred to her to account for it by supposing that the apprehension of that displeasure which she had expressed towards him with such vivacity that very morning, was dwelling upon the spirit of her favourites, and, to spite her efforts to the contrary, disturbed the usual graceful tenor of his mien and the charms of his conversation. When this idea,
so flattering to female vanity, had once obtained possession of her mind, it proved a foil and satisfactory apology for the numerous errors and mistakes of the Earl of Leicester; and the wanton circle around observed with astonishment that, instead of resenting his repeated negligence, and want of even ordinary attention (although these were points on which she was usually extremely punctilious), the queen sought, on the contrary, to afford him time and means to recollect himself, and designed to assist him in doing so, with an ingenuity which seemed altogether inconsistent with her usual character.

It was clear, however, that this could not last much longer, and that Elizabeth must finally put another and more severe construction on Leicester's uncourteous conduct, when the earl was summoned by Varney to speak with him in a different apartment.

After having had the message twice delivered to him, he rose and was about to withdraw, as it were by instinct—then stopped, and, turning round, entreated permission of the queen to absent himself for a brief space upon matters of pressing importance.

'Oh, my lord,' said the queen: 'we are aware our presence must occasion sudden and unexpected occurrences, which require to be provided for on the instant. Yet, my lord, as you would have us believe you sorry your welcome and honoured guest, we entreat you to think less of our good cheer, and favour us with more of your good countenance, than we have this day enjoyed; for whether prince or peasant be the guest, welcome of the host will always be the better part of the entertainment. Go, my lord; and we trust to see you return with an un联合ed brow, and those free thoughts which you are wont to have at the disposal of your friends.'

Leicester only bowed low in answer to this rebuke, and retired. At the door of the apartment he was met by Varney, who eagerly drew him apart, whispered in his ear, 'All is well.'

'Has Masters seen her?,' said the Earl.

'He has, my lord; and as he would neither answer your queries, nor agree on any reason for his refusal, he will give full testimony that she labour's under a mental disorder, and may be here best committed to the charge of her friends. The opportunity is therefore free, to remove her as we proposed.'

'But Tressilian!,' said Leicester.

'He will not know of her departure for some time,' replied Varney; 'it shall take place this very evening, and to-morrow he shall be cared for.'

'No, by my soul,' answered Leicester; 'I will take vengeance on him with mine own hand!'

'You may, and on so inconsiderable a man as Tressilian! No, my lord, he hath long wished to visit foreign parts. Trust him to me—I will take care he returns not hither to tell tales.'

'Not so, by Heaven, Varney!' exclaimed Leicester. 'Inconsiderable do you call an enemy, that hath had power to wound me so deeply, that my whole after life must be one scene of remorse and misery?—No; rather than forego the right of doing myself justice with my hand on that accused villain, I will unfold the whole truth at Elizabeth's footstool, and let her vengeance descend at once on him and on myself.'

Varney saw with great alarm that his lord was wonted up to such a pitch of agitation, that, if he gave not way to him, he was perfectly capable of adopting the desperate resolution which he had announced, and which was instant ruin to the schemes of ambition which Varney had formed for his patron and for himself. The earl's rage seemed at once uncontrollable and deeply concentrated; and while he spoke, his eyes shot fire, his voice trembled with excess of passion, and the light foam stood on his lip.

His confidant made a bold and successful effort to obtain the mastery of him even in this hour of emotion. 'My lord,' he said, leading him to a window, 'behold your reflection in that glass, and think if these agitated features belong to one who, in a condition so extreme, is capable of forming a resolution for himself.'

'Well, then, wouldst thou make me?,' said Leicester, struck at the change in his own physiognomy, though offended at the freedom with which Varney made the appeal. 'But I am thy ward, thy vassal, the property and subject of my servant.'

'No, my lord,' said Varney firmly, 'but master of yourself, and of your own passion. My lord, I, your born servant, am shamed to see how poorly you bear yourself in the storm of fury. Go to Elizabeth's maid, confess your marriage—impeach your wife and her paramour of adultery—and avow yourself, amongst all your peers, the wittol who married a country girl, and was coerced by her and her book-learned gallant. Go, my lord—but first take farewell of Richard Varney, with all the benefits you ever conferred on him. He served the noble, the lord, the high-minded Leicester, and was more proud of depending on him than he would be of commanding thousands; but the abject lord who stoops to every adverse circumstance, whose judicious resolves are scattered like every wind of passion, him Richard Varney serves not. He is as much above him in constancy of mind, as beneath him in rank and fortune.'

Varney spoke thus without hypocrisy, for, though the firmness of mind which he boasted was hardness and impenetrability, yet he really felt the ascendancy which he wanted; while the interest which he actually felt in the fortunes of Leicester gave unusual emotion to his voice and manner.

Leicester was overpowered by his assumed supremacy; it seemed to the unfortunate earl as if his last friend was about to abandon him. He stretched his hand towards Varney, as he uttered the words, 'Do not leave me—What wouldst thou have me do?'

'Be thyself, my noble master,' said Varney, touching the earl's hand with his, and laying his lips, after having respectfully grasped it in his own, superior to those storms of passion which wreck inferior minds. Are you the first who has been coerced in love? The first whom a vain and licentious woman has cheated into an affection, which she has afterwards derided and maliciously?'

'Alas! and amended,' said the earl, I am not. Varney, who was the first who, in the wrong enter, a heart that was as sensible, as Amply different, as he had.
He was speaking, the ear held his hand fast, compressed his lips hard, and frowned, as if he was determined to catch from Vanney a portion of the cold, ruthless, and impassionate firmness which he recommended. When he was silent, the ear still continued to grasp his hand, until, with an effort at calm decision, he was able to articulate, 'Be it so—she dies!—But one tear might be permitted.'

'Not one, my lord,' interrupted Varney, who, by the quivering eye and convulsed cheek of his patron, that was about to give way to a measure of compunction, 'Not a tear—time permits it not—Tressilian must be thought of—'

'That indeed is a name,' said the ear, 'to convert tears into blood. Varney, I have thought of this, and I have determined—not entirely nor instantly shall move me—Tressilian shall be my own victim.'

'It is madness, my lord; but you are too mighty for me to bar your way to your revenge. Yet resolve at least to choose fitting time and opportunity, and to forbear him until these shall be found.'

'Thou shalt order me in what thou wilt,' said Leicester, 'only thwart me not in this.'

'Well, my lord,' said Varney, 'I first request of you to lay aside the wild, suspected, and half-frizzled demeanour, which hath hitherto been drawn the eyes of all the court upon you; and which, but for the Queen's partial indulgence, which she hath extended towards you in a degree far beyond her nature, she had never given you the opportunity to avenge for.'

'Have I indeed been so negligent?' said Leicester, as one who awakes from a dream; 'I thought I had coloured it well; but fear nothing, my mind is well known. I am calm. My horse-shoe shall be fulfilled; and it may be fulfilled, I will tax to the highest every faculty of my mind. Fear me not, I say—I will to the Queen instantly—not shine own looks and language shall be more imperceptible than mine—

'But thou art aught to say.'

'I must crave your signet-ring,' said Varney gravely, 'I am to those of your servants whom I commonly employ, that I possess your full authority in commanding their all.'

Leicester drew off the signet-ring which he commonly used, and gave it to Varney with a haggard and stern expression of countenance, adding only in a low, half-whispered tone, but with terrific emphasis, the words, 'What dost, do quickly.'

Some anxiety and wonder took place, meanwhile, in the presence-hall, at the prolonged absence of the noble lord of the castle, and great was the delight of his friends when they saw him enter, as a man from whose bosom's to all human seeming, a weight of care had been just removed. Ample did Leicester that day redeem the pledge he had given to Vanney, who soon saw himself no longer under the necessity of maintaining a character so different from his own, as that which he had assumed in the earlier part of the day, and gradually relapsed into the same grave, shrewd, unemotional observer of conversation and incident, which constituted his usual part in society.

With Elizabeth, Leicester played his game as one to whom her natural strength of talent, and her weakness in one or two particular points, were well known. He was too wary to exchange on a sudden the sullen personage which he had played before he retired with Vanney; but on approaching her, it seemed softened into a mellowed, more touch of tenderness in it, and while the course of conversing with Elizabeth, red as she dressed in compassion one mark of favour after another to her conscience, passed into a flow of affectionate gallantry, the most amorous, the most delicate, the most insinuating, yet of the same form at the same time the most respectful, with which a queen was ever addressed by a subject. Elizabeth listened, as in a sort of enchantment; her jealousy of power was hushed asleep; her resolution to forsake all social or domestic ties, and dedicate herself exclusively to the care of her people, began to thaw and melt, and once more the star of Dudley culminated in the court horizon.

But Leicester did not enjoy this triumph over nature and over conscience, without its being embittered to him, not only by the internal rebellion of his feelings against the violence which he exercised over them, but also by many accidental circumstances, which, in the course of the banquet, and during the subsequent amusements of the evening, jarred upon that nerve, the least vibration of which was agony.

The counsellors were, for example, in the great hall, after having in the banqueting-room, awaiting the appearance of a splendid masque, which was the expected entertainment of this evening when the queen interrupted a wild career of wit, which the Earl of Leicester was running against Lord councillor, Ashley, and a number of other counsellors, by saying, 'Sir, we shall proceed in this attempt to say us with laughter. And here comes a thing may make us all grave at his pleasure, our learned physician Masters, with news like of our poor apothecary, Lady Varney, nay, my lord, we will not have you leave us, for this being a dispute betwixt married persons, we do not hold our own experience good enough to decide the matter, without good counsel. How now, Masters, what thinkst thou of the runaway bride?'

The smile with which Leicester had been speaking, when the queen interrupted him, remained arrested on his lips, as if it had been carved there by the chisel of Michael Angelo or of Champaign; and he listened to the speech of the physician with the same immovable cast of countenance.

'The Lady Varney, gracious sovereign,' said the court physician Masters, 'is such a one and would hold little conference with me touching the state of her health, talking wildly of being soon to plead her own cause before your own presence, and of answering no meaner person's inquiries,'
"Now, the heavens forswear!" said the queen; "we have already suffered from the misconstructions and broils which seem to follow this poor brain-sick lad wherever he comes.—Think you, not so, any lord!" she added, appealing to Leicester, with something in her look that indicated regret, even tenderly expressive, for their disagreement of that morning. Leicester compelled himself to bow low. The utmost force of her could never be inadequate to the further effort of expressing in words his acquiescence in the queen's sentiments.

"You are vindictive," she said, "my lord; but we will find time and place to punish you. But once in a task is some trouble, this Lady Varney—What of her health, Masters!"

"She is slain, madam," I already said," replied Masters, "and refuses to another in respect, or to be amenable to the authority of the medics, but conceive herself to be possessed with a delirium, which I incline to term rather hypochondria than phrases; and I think she was best cared for by her husband in his own house, and removed from all this bustle of pages, which disurb her weak brain with the most fantastic phantoms. She drops hints as if she were some great person in disguise—some countess or princess perperehan. God help them, such are often the hallucinations of these infernal persons!"

"Nay, then," said the queen, "away with her with all speed. Let Varney care for her with fitting humanity; but let them rid the castle of her forthwith. She will think herself lady of all, I warrant you. It is pity so fair a form, however, should have an idume understanding. What think you, my lord?"

"It is pity indeed," said the earl, repeating the words like a task which was set him.

"But perhaps," said Elizabeth, "you do not join us in our opinion of her beauty; and indeed we have known men prefer a stately one, more June-like form, to that drooping fragile one, that hangs its head like a broken lily. Ay, men are tyrants, my lord, who esteem the animation of the strife above the triumph of an unequalling aristocrat, and, like stumpy chafing, love best those women who can wage combat with them. I could think with you, Rutland, that, give my Lord of Leicester such a piece of painted wax for a bride, he would have wished her dead ere the end of the honeymoon."

As she said this, she looked on Leicester so expressively, that, while his heart revoluted against the egregious falsehood, he did himself so much justice as to reply in the whisper, that Leicester's love was more lively than her Majesty's, since it was settled where he could never command, but must obey.

The queen blushed, and hid him be silent; yet looked as if she expected that he would not obey her commands. But at that moment the flourish of trumpets and kettle-drums from a high balcony which overlooked the hall, announced the entrance of the masquers; and Leicester from the horrible state of conspiracy and dissimulation in which the result of his own duplicity had pleased him.

The masque which entered consisted of four separate bands, which followed each other at brief intervals, each consisting of six principal persons and as many torch-bearers, and each representing one of the various nations by which England had at different times been occupied.

The people from the British, who first entered, were ushered in by two ancient Druids, whose hoary hair was crowned with a chaplet of oak, and who bore in their hands branches of mistletoe. The masquers who followed these venerable figures were succeeded by two bards, arrayed in white, and bearing lyres, which they occasionally touched, singing at the same time certain stanzas of an ancient hymn to Belus, or the Sun. The Norman knights had been selected from amongst the tallest and most robust young gentlemen in attendance in the court. Their masks were accompanied with long shaggy beards and hair; their vestments were of the blue, and turbans and feathers; while their legs, arms, and the upper parts of their bodies, were sheathed in flesh-coloured silk, on which were traced in grotesque lines representations of the several heavenly bodies, and of animals and other terrestrial objects, that gave the lively appearance of our painted ancestors. Freedom was first trenched upon by the Romans.

The sons of Rome, who came to civilise as well as to conquer, were produced next; and the man of the proudest assembly; and the manager of the revels had correctly imitated the high crest and military habits of that celebrated people, accommodating them with the light yet strong, and the short two-edged sword, the use of which is today that of victors of the world. The Roman eagles were held by them, two standard-bearers, who recited a hymn to Mars, and the classical warriors followed with the grave and haughty step of men who aspired at universal conquest.

The third quadrille represented the Saxons, clad in the bear-skins which they had brought with them from the German forests, and bearing in their hands the redoubtable battle-axes which made such a noise among the natives of Britain. They were preceded by two scolds, who chant the praises of Odin.

Last came the knightly Normans, in their mail-shirts and hoods of steel, with all the panoply of chivalry, adorned with vomer, sword, and scabbard, and marshalled by two minstrels, who sang the praises of the great ladies.

These four bands entered the spacious hall with the utmost order, a short pause being made that the spectators might satisfy their curiosity as to each quadrille before the appearance of the next. They then marched completely round the hall, in order the more fully to display themselves, regulating their steps to organs, flutes, hautboys, and virginals, the music of the Lord Leicester's house. At length the four quadrilles of masquers, rendezvoused behind them, drew up in their several ranks, on the two opposite sides of the hall, so that the Romany, representing the Britons, and the Saxons the Normans, and to each other with kind eye of wonder, which presently appeared to kindle into anger, expressed by menacing gestures. At the burst of a strain of martial music from the gallery, the masquers drew their swords on all sides, and advanced against each other in the measured steps of a sort of Tyrride
consisting of six principal torch-bearers, and each of them wearing various mantles by which they were distinguished; and two torches, who first entered, were found to be the bravest Druids, whose hoary heads were adorned with a chaplet of oak, and who advanced with them. The rest of the præcipitants were these venerable figures, who carried the torches in their hands, arrayed in white, which they occasionally threw from time to time certain staves into the air. The Sun was then selected from amongst the most young gentlemen in the place. Their masks were as various as their heads and hair; the hats, and bears and arms, and the upper part of their bodies, being sheathed in flesh-colored figured cloth, were traced in grotesque figures of men, women, and animals, and surrounded with the use of which had been invented. The Roman torch-bearers were represented by two standard-bearers, and twoDBBers, and the Saxons, with the grave and solemn air and bearing aspired at universal admiration.

The Saxons, who had brought along many sort of armed men, and whose possessions consisted of large battle-axes which were the natives of Britain, and indeed the so-called soldiers, who chanted their war-songs.

The Normans, in their splendid steel, with all the symbols of war brought along with their ladies’ love.

Of the circular hall, the roof of which was being put up, to satisfy their curiosity with a view to display them to the public, and to see the appearance of the music, the concerto was composed by the organists of those of the learned world. The music of the Lord, and the four quadrants, each of which was furnished with torch-bearers, and each of which had a certain number of torch-bearers, and each of them had several torch-bearers, on the occasion of this præcipitans, so that the hall, so that the women, and the Saxons and the Normans, who took on each other at the last moment, appeared by their corresponding strain of martial music. The torch-bearers drew their weapons and drew against each other in a sort of Pyrrhic or military dance, clashing their swords against their adversaries’ shields, and clashing them against their blades as they passed each other in the progress of the dance. It was a very pleasant spectacle to see how the various bands, preserving their individual motions which seemed to be totally irregular, yet were kept together, from disengaging themselves, resumed each their own rank as the music varied.

In this symphonic dance were represented the conflicts which had taken place among the various nations which had formerly inhabited Britain.

At length, after many more evolutions, which afforded greater pleasure to the spectators, the scene was changed to a more solemn one. The masks instantly ceased their mimic strife, and collected themselves under their original leaders, or presenters, for such was the appropriate phrase, and looked to the anxious expectation which the spectators experienced concerning what was next to appear.

The doors of the hall were thrown wide, and the first person entered than the fiend-born Merlin, dressed in his accustomed attire, which he had worn in his usual person, requesting that they be permitted to enter the hall, to be seated in the gallery, and to be conducted to the hall, in the castle, that many of them may forget ever the reverence due to the queen’s presence, so far as to thrust themselves into the lower part of the hall.

The Earl of Leicester, seeing his officers had some difficulty to repel these intruders without more disturbance than was fitting where the queen was in presence, arose and went himself to the bottom of the hall, and Elizabeth, at the same time, with her usual feeling for the amusement of the people, requesting that they might be, in order to be unsexed to witness the pageant. Leicester entered this pretense; but his real motive was to gain a moment for himself, and to relieve his mind, were it but for an instant, from the dreadful task of hiding, under the guise of gallantry, the lacerating pang of shame, anger, remorse, and a desire for vengeance. He imposed silence by his loud and urgent appeal upon the vulgar crowd at the lower end of the apartment; but instead of instantly returning to wait upon her Majesty, he wrapped his cloak around him, and, mixing with the crowd, stood in some degree an undistinguished spectator of the progress of the masque.

Merlin having entered, and advanced into the midst of the hall, summoned the presider of the masque, and, in his name, he commanded to be seated by the majesty, and announced, in a private speech, that the island of Britain was now commanded by a Royal Maid, of whom he was the fortunate one, and that he should all do homage, and request of her to pronunce on the various pretensions which each set forth as his candidate for the prescriptive stock from which the present nature, the happy subjects of that angelical princess, derived their lineage. In obedience to this mandate, the bands, each moving to solemn music, passed in succession before Elizabeth; doing her as they passed, each after the fashion of the people whom they represented, the lowest and most devotional homage, which she returned with the same gracious courtesy that had marked her whole conduct since she came to Kenilworth.

The presenters of the several masques or quadrilles then alleged, each in behalf of his own stock, the reasons which they had for claiming the prescriptive precedence over the others; and, as having most contributed to form the English nation, they would not unreasonably derive the rank from each of the virtuous attributes of the character. Thus, she said, ‘The Englishman had from the ancient Briton his bold and fearless spirit of freedom,—from the Roman his discipline practised in war, with his love of letters and civilisation in time of peace,—from the SAXON his wise and equitable laws; and from the chivalrous Norman his love of honour and courtesy, with his generous desire for glory.’

Merlin answered with readiness, that it did indeed require that so many choice qualities should meet in the English nation, as might render them the master of the perfection of other nations, since the rest alone could render them in some degree deserving of the blessings they enjoyed under the reign of England’s Elizabeth.

The music then ceased, and the quadrilles, together with Merlin and his assistants, had begun to remove from the crowded hall, when the Earl of Leicester, who was, as we have mentioned, stationed for the moment near the bottom of the hall, and consequently engaged in some degree in the crowd, felt himself hurried to the deck, while a voice whispered in his ear, ‘Earl, do not rise; I do desire some instant conference with you.’

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

How is’t with me, when every noise appalls me?
MACBETH.

‘I DESIRE SOME CONFERENCE WITH YOU.’ The words were simple in themselves, but Lord Leicester was in that alarmed and feverish state of mind when the most ordinary occurrences seem fraught with alarming import, and who could turn hastily round to survey the person by whom they had been spoken. There was nothing remarkable in the speaker’s appearance, which consisted of a black silk coat and short mantle, with a black mask on his face; for it appeared he had been among the crowd of masks who had thronged into the hall in the retinue of Merlin, through he did not wear any of the extravagant disguises by which most of them were distinguished.
Have you or what do you want with
me?" said Leicester, not without betraying, by his accents, the hurried state of his spirits.

"No evil, my lord," answered the mask; but much good and honour, if you will rightly understand my purpose. But I must speak with you more privately.

"I can speak with no nameless stranger," answered Leicester, dreading he knew not precisely what from the request of the mask, and those who are known to me must seek another and a fitter time to ask an interview.

He would have hurried away, but the mask still detained him.

"Who talk to your lordship of what your own honour demands, have a right over your time, whatever occupations you may lay aside in order to indulge them.

"How! my honour! Who dare impeach it?" said Leicester.

"Your own conduct alone can furnish grounds for accusing it, my lord, and it is that topic on which I would speak with you.

"You are insolent," said Leicester, and abuse the hospitable licence of the time, which prevents me from having you punished. I demand your name!"

Edmund Tressilian of Cornwall, answered the mask. "My tongue has been houled by a promise for four-and-twenty hours—the space is passed. I now speak, and do your lordship the justice to address myself first to you.

"Who enter to Leicester's very heart at hearing that name pronounced by the voice of the man he most detested, and by whom he conceived himself so deeply injured, at first rendered him immovable, but instantly gave way to such a thirst for revenge as the pilgrim in the desert feels for the water brooks. He had but sense and self-government enough left to prevent his stabbing to the heart the audacious villain, who, after the ruin he had brought upon him, dared, with such unmoved young person, thus to suppose upon him further. Determined to suppress for the moment every symptom of affection, in order to perceive the full scope of Tressilian's purpose, as well as to secure his own vengeance, he answered him in a tone so altered by restrained passion as scarce to be intelligible—"And what does Master Edmund Tressilian require at my hand?"

"Justice," said Leicester, "all men are entitled to—Your Master Tressilian, are peculiarly so, and be assured you shall have it."

"Justice," said Tressilian, "not under a roof, and that roof mine own. We will meet under the free cope of heaven.

"You are disposed or displeased, my lord," replied Tressilian, "yet there is no occasion for distemper. The place is equal to me, so you allow me one half-hour of your time uninterrupted."

"A shorter time will, I trust, suffice," an-
The man of the world, with the monotonous
pace of his toil and the
wearisome routine of his daily
labors, thought, as he
walked through the
streets, that the
activities of his life
were
monotonous and
mechanical.

As he passed by the
shops and the
buildings, he
wondered why
the world was
not
more
different.

Yet, as he
continued his
travel, he
realized that
the world was,
indeed,
more
different
than he
had
thought.

For
besides the
crowded streets
and the
noisy
streets,
there were
also
quiet
streets,
where
people
were
content
with
their
lives.

And
besides the
busy
streets,
there were
also
calm
streets,
where
people
were
at
peace.

The
world
was,
indeed,
more
different
than
he
had
thought.

As
he
continued
his
travel,
he
realized
that
the
world
was,
indeed,
more
different
than
he
had
thought.
the apartment, Leicester proceeded to change his dress for a very plain one, threw his mantle around him, and, taking a lamp in his hand, went by the private passage of communication to a small secret portier-door, which opened into the court-yard, near to the entrance of the Pleasance. His reflections were of a more calm and determined character than they had been at any late period, and he endeavoured to claim, even in his own eye, the character of a man more sinned against than sinning.

'I have suffered the deepest injury,' such was the tenor of his meditations, 'yet I have retributed the instant revenge which was in my power, and have limited it to that which is mainly and noble. But shall the union which this false woman has this day disgraced, remain an abiding fetter on me, to check me in the noble career to which my destinies invite me? No!—these are the means of disengaging such ties, without unloosing the cords of life. In the sight of God, I am no longer bound by the union she has broken. Kingdoms shall divide seas—oceans roll between us, and their waves, whose abysses have swallowed whole navies, shall be the sole depositaries of the deadly mystery.'

By such a train of argument did Leicester labour to reconcile his conscience to the prosecution of a cause of vengeance, so hastily adopted, and of schemes of ambition, which had become so woven in with every purpose and action of his life, that he was incapable of the effort of relinquishing them; until his revenge appeared to him as a face of justice, and even of generous moderation.

In this mood the vindictive and ambitious earl entered the superb precincts of the Pleasance, then illuminated by the full moon. The broad yellow light was reflected on all sides from the white freestone, of which the pavement, balustrades, and architectural ornaments of the place were constructed; and not a single fleecy cloud was visible in the azure sky, so that the scene was nearly as light as if the sun had just left the horizon. The numerous statues of white marble glimmered in the pale light, like so many sheathed ghosts just arisen from their sepulchres, and the fountains threw their jets into the air, as if they sought that their waters should be brightened by the moonbeams, ere they fell down again upon their basins in showers of sparkling silver. The day had been saunter, and the gentle night-breeze, which sighed along the terrace of the Pleasance, raised not a deeper breath than the fan in the hand of youthful beauty. The bird of summer night had built many a nest in the bowers of the adjacent garden, and the tenants now indolently themselves for silence during the day, by a full chorus of their own unvaried warlings, now joyous, now pathetic, now united, now responsive to each other, as if to express their delight in the splendid and delicious scene to which they poured their melody.

Musing on matters different from the full of waters, the gleam of moonlight, or the song of the nightingale, the stately Leicester walked slowly from the one end of the terrace to the other, his cloak wrapped around him, and his sword under his arm, without seeing anything resembling the human form.

'I have been fooled by my own generosity,' he said, 'if I have suffered the villain to escape me, and perhaps to go to the rescue of the adulteress, who is so poorly guarded.'

These were his thoughts, which were instantly dispelled, when, turning to look back towards the entrance, he saw a human form advancing slowly from the portier, and darkening the various objects with its shadow, as passing them successively, in its approach towards him.

'Shall I strike even I again hear his detested voice?' was Leicester's thought, as he grasped the hilt of the sword. But no! I will see which way his vile practices tend; I will watch, disdaining as it is, the coils and meshes of the worthless snake, ere I put forth my strength and crush him.

His hand quitted the sword-hilt, and he advanced slowly towards Tressilian, collecting, for their meeting, all the self-possession he could command, until they came front to front with each other.

Tressilian, made a profound reverence, to which the earl replied with a haughty inclination of the head, and the words, 'You sought secret conference with me, sir—I am here and attentive.'

'My lord,' said Tressilian, 'I am so earnest in that which I have to say, so desirous to find a patient, nay, a favourable ear, that I will stoop to exculpate myself from whatever might prejudice your lordship against me. You think me your enemy?'

'I have not some apparent cause?' answered Leicester, perceiving that Tressilian paused for a reply.

'You do me wrong, my lord. I am a friend, but neither a dependent nor partisan of the Earl of Sussex, whom couriers call your rival; and it is some considerable time since I ceased to consider either courts, or court intrigues, as suited to my temper and genius.'

'No doubt, sir,' answered Leicester; 'there are other occupations more worthy a scholar, and for such the world holds Master Tressilian—Love has his intrigues as well as ambition.'

'I perceive, my lord,' replied Tressilian, 'you give much weight to my early attachment to the unfortunate young person of whom I am about to speak, and perhaps think I am prosecuting her cause out of rivalry, more than a sense of justice.

'No matter for my thoughts, sir,' said the earl; 'proceed. You have as yet spoken of yourself only; an important and worthy subject doubtless, but which, perhaps, does not altogether so deeply concern me, that I should postpone my repose to hear it. Spare me further prelude, sir, and speak to the purpose, if indeed you have ought to say that concerns me. When you have done, I, in my turn, have something to communicate.

'I will speak, then, without further prelude, my lord,' answered Tressilian; 'having to say that which, as it concerns your lordship's honour, I am confident you will not think your time wasted in listening to. I have to request an account from your lordship of the unhappy Amy Robsart, whose history is too well known to you. I regret deeply that I did not at once take this course, and make yourself judge between me and
the villain by whom she is injured. My lord, she extricated herself from an unwelcome and most perilous state of confinement, trusting to the aid of her own remonstrance upon her unworthy husband and extorted from him a promise that I would not interfere in her behalf until she had used her own efforts to have her rights acknowledged by him.

"Ha!" said Leicester, "remember you to whom you speak!"

"I speak of her unworthy husband, my lord," repeated Tressilian, "and my respect can find no softer language. The unhappy young woman was withdrawn from my knowledge, and sequestered in some secret place of this castle,—if she be not transferred to some place of better fitted for her. This must be returned, and I speak it as authorised by her father,—and this ill-founded marriage must be avowed and proved in the Queen's presence, and the lady placed without restraint, and at her own free disposal. And, permit me to say, it cannot be supposed that these most just demands of mine should be explained with, so much as it does of that from your lordship."

The earl stood as if he had been petrified, at the extreme coolness with which the man, whom he conceived as having injured him so deeply, pleaded the cause of his criminal paramour, as if she had been an innocent woman, and he a disinterested advocate; nor was his anger lessened by the warmth with which Tressilian seemed determined to defend her rank and situation which she had disgraced, and the advantages of which she was doubtless to share with the lover who advocated her cause with such effect. Tressilian had been silent for more than a minute ere the earl recovered from the excess of his astonishment; and, considering the prepossessions with which his mind was occupied, there is little wonder that his passion gained the mastery of his reason. "I have heard you, Master Tressilian," said he, "without interruption, and I bless God that my ears were never before made to tingle by the words of another."

"The task of chastising you is for the hangman's scourge; but the sword of a nobleman, but yet—Villain, draw and defend thyself!"

As he spoke the last words, he dropped his mantle on the ground, struck Tressilian smartly with his sheathed sword, and, instantly drawing rapier, put himself into a posture of assault. The vehement fury of his language at first filled Tressilian, in his turn, with surprise, but Leicester had felt when he addressed him, when Tressilian had given place to resentment, when the unmerited insults of his language were followed by a blow, which immediately put to flight every thought save that of instant death. Tressilian's sword was instantly drawn, and, though perhaps somewhat inferior to Leicester in the use of the weapon, he understood it well enough to maintain the contest with great spirit. But the rest of the two he was not equal in the contest. The more equal, since he could not help imputing Leicester's courage either to actual fury, or to the influence of some strong delusion.

The encounter had continued for several minutes, without either party receiving a wound, when, of a sudden, voices were heard beneath the parapet, which formed the entrance of the terrace, mingled with the steps of men advancing hastily. "We are interrupted," said Leicester to his antagonist; "follow me.

At the same time a voice from the parapet said, "The jackalope is right—they are here.

Leicester, meanwhile, drew off Tressilian into a sort of recess behind one of the fountains, which served to conceal them, while six of the Yeomen of the Queen's Guard passed along the middle walk of the Pleasance, and they could hear one say to the rest, "We shall never find them to-night among all these squatting tunnels, squirrel-cages, and rabbit-holes; but if we fight not on them before we reach the further end, we will return, and mount a guard at the entrance, and secure them till morning."

"A proper matter," said another, "another the drawing of swords near the Queen's presence, and, in her very palace, as 'twas doing it, they must be some poor drunken game-cocks fallen to twenty pence almost we find them; the pen is not by no hand, is it not?

"Twere hard to lose hand for handling a bit of steel, that comes so natural to the tips."?

"Thou art a barber thyself," George, said another; "but take heed, for the law stands as thou sayest."

"Ay, do thou, first," said the third; "how knowest thou who may be within hearing?"

They passed on, making a kind of careless search, but seemingly more intent on their own conversation than bent on discovering the persons who had created the nocturnal disturbance.

They had now passed forward along the terrace, then Leicester, making a sign to Tressilian to follow him, glided away in the opposite direction, and escaped through the park. He conducted Tressilian to Mervyn Tower, in which he was now again lodged; and then, ere parting with him, said these words, "If thou hast courage to continue, and bring to an end what is thus broken off, he near me where I court goes forth to-morrow—we shall find a time, and I will give you a signal when it is fitting."

My lord," said Tressilian, "at another time I might have inquired the meaning of this strange and furious invertebracy against me. But I have laid that on my shoulder, which only blood can wash away; and you as high as your proudest wishes ever carried you, I would have from my satisfaction for my wounded honour."

On these terms they parted, but the adventures of the night were not yet ended with Leicester. He was compelled to pass by the Knolloe Tower, in order to gain the private passage which led to his own chamber, and in the entrance thereof he met Lord Hunsdon, half-clothed, and with a naked sword in his arm.

"Are you awakened, too, with this harb, my Lord of Leicester?" said the old soldier. "'Tis well—By gog's nails, the nights are as noy as..."
the day in this castle of yours. Some two hours since I was awakened by the screams of that poor brain-sick Lady Varney, whom her husband was forcing away. I promise you, it required both your warrant and the Queen's to keep me from entering into the game, and cutting that Varney of yours over the head; and now there is a brawl down in the Pleasance, or what call you the stone-terrace-walk, where all yonder gimp-cracks stand.

The first part of the old man's speech went through the ear's heart like a knife; to the last he answered that he himself had heard the clash of swords, and had come down to take order with those who had been so insolent so near the queen's presence.

"Nay, then," said Hunsdon, "I will be glad of your lordship's company.

Leicester was thus compelled to turn back with the rough old lord to the Pleasance, where Hunsdon heard from the Yeomen of the Guard, what were under his immediate command, the unsuccessful search they had made for the author of the disturbance; and bestowed for their pains some round dozen of curses on them, as heavy knives and blind whoresons. Leicester also thought it necessary to seem angry that no discovery had been effected; but at length suggested to Lord Hunsdon, that after all it could only be some foolish young men, who had been drinking hotly at the Gallows-street, and who would be sufficiently searched by the search which had taken place after them. Hunsdon, who was himself attached to his cup, allowed that a pint-flagon might cover many of the fellows which it had caused. 'But,' added, 'unless your lordship, will be less liberal in your housekeeping, and restrain the overflow of ale, and wine, and vassall, I foresee it will end in my having some of these good fellows into the guard-house, and treating them to a dose of the strappado—and with this warning good-night to you.'

Joyful at being rid of his company, Leicester took leave of him at the entrance of his lodging, where they had first met, and, entering the private passage, took up the lamp which he had left there, and by its expiring light found the way to his own apartment.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Room! room! for my horse will wince
If he come within so many yards of a prince.

For to tell you true, and in rhyme,
He was afraid in Queen Elizabeth's time;
When the great Earl of Leicester
In his castle did feast her.

MASQUE OF OWLS—BEN JOHNSON.

The amusement with which Elizabeth and her court were next day to be regaled, was an exhibition by the true-hearted men of Coventry, who were to represent the strife between the English and the Danes, agreeably to a custom long preserved in their ancient borough, and warranted for truth by old histories and chronicles. In this pageant, one party of the townsfolk presented the Saxons and the other the Danes, and set forth, both in rude rhymes and with hard blows, the contents of these two fierce nations, and the Amazonian courage of the English women, who, according to the story, were the principal agents in the general massacre of the Danes, which took place a' Hockstede, in the year of God 1012. This sport, which had been long a favourite pastime with the men of Coventry, had, it seems, been put down by the influence of some zealous clergyman of the more precise cast, who had been so solicitous as to have considerable influence with the magistrates. But for the generality of the inhabitants had petitioned the queen that they might have their play again, and be honours with permission to represent it before her Highness. And when the matter was canvassed in the little council, which usually attended the queen for dispatch of business, the proposal, although opposed by some of the stricter sort, was allowed in the eyes of Elizabeth, who said that such boys occupied, without offense, the minds of many, who, lacking them, might have worse subjects of pastime; and that their passage, however commendable for learning and amusement, were somewhat too sour in preaching against the pastimes of their locks; and so the pageant was permitted to proceed.

Accordingly, after a morning repast, which Master Laneham calls an ambrosial breakfast, the principal persons of the court in attendance upon her Majesty pressed to the Great Tower, to witness the approach of the two contending parties of English and Danes; and, after a signal had been given, the gate which opened in the circuit of the castle was thrown wide to admit them. On they came, foot and horse, and carried to the giddy heads of the great gentry, in order to resemble the chivalry of the two different nations. An accident, however, to prevent fatal accidents, they were not permitted to appear on real horses, but only to acquire themselves with these hobby-horses, as they are called, which anciently formed the chief delight of a morrice-dance, and which still were exhibited on the stage, in the grand battle fought in the conclusion of Mr. Bayes's tragedy. The infantry followed in similar disguises. The whole exhibition was to be considered as a sort of antique masque, or burlesque of the more stately pageants, in which the nobility and gentry bore part in the show, and to the best of their knowledge, initiated with the personages whom they represented. The Hockstede play was of a different character, the actors being persons of inferior degree, and their habits the better fitted for the occasion, the more incongruous and ridiculous that they were in themselves. Accordingly their array, which the progress of our tale allows us no time to describe, was less elegant, and their weapons, though much better formed to deal sound blows, were long pole-axes and lances, and sound edged for stumps; and for fence, both cavalry and infantry were well equipped with stout head pieces and targets, both made of thick leather.

Captain Cox,7 that celebrated humorist of the Warwickshire gentry, who in his knowledge of old legends and customs, contributed to the entertainment of Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth Castle. He had a collection of old books curious at the time. Laneham's Letter and Ben Jonson's The Masque of Owls.

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7 Captain Cox was a Warwickshire gentleman, who by his knowledge of old legends and customs, contributed to the entertainment of Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth Castle. He had a collection of old books curious at the time.
Coventry, whose library of ballads, almanacs, and penny histories, fairly swarmed up in parchment, and tied round for security with a piece of whipcord, remains still the envy of antiquaries; being bought by the ingenious person under whose direction the pageant had been set forth, rode valiantly on his hobby-horse before the bands of English, high trussed, saith Lasheun, and brandishing his long sword, as became an experienced soldier of war, who had fought under the queen's father, with King Henry, at the siege of Bologna. This chivalric was right and reason craved, the first to enter to the lists, and, passing the gallery at the head of his myrmidons, kissed at the same time a gambade, the like whereof had never been practised by two-legged hobby-horse. Then, passing on with his followers of cavaliers and infantry, he drew them up at the opposite extremity of the bridge or tilt-yard, until his antagonists should be fairly prepared for the game.

This was no long interval; for the Danish cavalry, infantry, no way inferior to the English in number, quality, and equipment, instantly arrived, with the northern bogey blowing before them in their token of war, and headed by a cunning master of defence, only inferior in might to the renowned Captain Cooxe, if to him, in the discipline of war. The Danes, as invaders, took their station under the gallery, and opposed to that of Mortimer; and, being in such a condition, their arrangements were completely made, a signal was given for the encounter.

Their first charge was made by each other was rather moderate, for either party had some dread of being forced into the lake. But as零售s mom came up on either side, the encounter grew from a tilt into a blazing battle. They rushed upon one another as Master Laneham testifies, like rams inflated by an emollient, with such furious encounter, that both parties were overthrown, and the clubs and targets made a most horrid matter. In many instances that happened which has been headed by the more experienced warriors, who became the day of truce. The rails which defended the edges of the bridge had been, perhaps on purpose, left but slightly burning, and gave way under the pressure of those who thronged to the combat, so that the hot courage of many of the combatants received a sufficient cooling. These incidents might have occasioned more serious damage than became such an affair, for many of the champions who met with this mischance could not swim, and those who could were encountered with their suits of leathern and paper armour; but the case had been provided for, and there were several boats in readiness to pick up the unfortunate warriors, and convey them to the dry land, where, dripping and dejected, they comforted themselves with the hot ale and strong waters which were liberally allowed to them, without showing any desire to re-enter so desperate a conflict.

Captain Cooxe alone, that paragon of black-letter antiquaries, after twice experiencing horse and men, perched a leap from the bridge into the lake, equal to any extremity to which the favourite heroes of chivalry, whose exploits he studied in an abridged form, whether Amadis, Belisarius, Bevis, or his own Gray of Warwick, had ever been subjected to—Captain Cooxe, like a true hero, after two such mishapenies, rush again into the heat of conflict, bis hams and the foot-clot of his hobby-horse dropping water, and twice resounded by voice and called the polyphonic spirits of the English; so that at last with his victory over the Danish invaders became, as was just and reasonable, complete and decisive. Worthy he was to be recorded immortal by the pen of Ben Johnson, who, fifty years afterwards, dressed a massacre, exhibited at Kenilworth, chambered in by none with so much propriety, as by the hand of Captain Cooxe, mount'd upon his rushed hobby-horse.

These rough rural gambols may not altogether agree with the reader's preconceived idea of an entertainment presented before Elizabeth, in whose reign letters revived with such brilliancy, and whose court, governed by a female whose sense of propriety was equal to her strength of mind, was no less distinguished for delicacy and refinement than for her councils for wisdom and fortitude. But whether on the political wish to seem interested in popular sports, or whether from a spark of old Henry's romantic fancy, in which Elizabeth sometimes displayed, it is certain that the queen laughed heartily at the imitation, or rather landscape of chivalry, which was presented in the Coventry play, and desired, near her person the Earl of Sussex and Lord Hunsdon, perhaps to make amends to the former for the long and private audiences with which she had indulged the Earl of Leicester, by engaging him to produce a pastime better suited to his taste than the pageants which were furnished both from the stores of antiquity. The disposition which the queen showed to laugh and jest with her military underwent the Earl of Leicester the opportunity he had been desiring for withdrawing from the royal presence, which to the court around, so well he had chosen his time, had the grateful appearance of leaving his rival free access to the queen; instead of availmg himself of his right as her servitor, to stand perpetually between or the light of her company and the people.

Leicester's thoughts, however, had a far different object from mere courtesy; for he deemed it wise to see the queen fairly engaged in conversation with Susseux and Hunsdon, behind whose back stood Sir Nicholas Blount, grinning from ear to ear at each word which was spoken, than, making a sign to Tressilian, who, according to an appointment, watched her motions at a little distance, he extricated himself from the press, and, walking towards the prince, made his way through the crowds of ordinary spectators, who, with open mouth, stood gazing on the battle of the English and the Danes. When he had accomplished this, which was a work of some difficulty, he shot another glance behind him to see that Tressilian had been equally successful, and as soon as he saw him also free from the crowd he led himself on the one, and made signs to Tressilian to mount the other, who obeyed with-
Leicester then spurred his horse, and galloped without stopping until he reached a sequestered spot, environed by lofty oaks, about a mile's distance from the castle, and in an opposite direction from the scene to which curiosity was drawing every spectator. He there dismounted, bound his horse to a tree, and only pronouncing the words, 'Here there is no risk of interruption,' laid his cloak across his saddle, and drew his sword.

Tressilian imitated his example punctually, yet could not forbear saying, as he drew his weapon, 'My lord, as I have been known to many as one who does not fear death, when placed in balance with order, methinks I may, without derogation, ask wherefore, in the name of all that is honourable, your lordship has dared to offer me such a mark of disgrace, as places us on these terms with respect to each other?

'If you like not such marks of my scorn,' replied the earl, 'betake yourself instantly to your weapon, lest I repeat the usage you complain of.'

'It shall not need, my lord,' said Tressilian.

'God judge betwixt us, and your blood, if you fall, be on your head.'

He had scarce completed the sentence when they instantly closed in combat.

But Leicester, who was a perfect master of defence among all other exterior accomplishments of the time, had seen, on the preceding night, enough of Tressilian's strength and skill to make him fight with more caution than heretofore, and prefer reserve to action. For some minutes they fought with equal skill and fortune, till, in a desperate lunge which Leicester successfully put aside, Tressilian exposed himself at disadvantage; and, in a subsequent attempt to close, the earl forced his arm from his hand, and stretched him on the ground. With a grim smile he held the point of his rapier within two inches of the throat of his fallen adversary, and, placing his foot at the same instant upon his breast, bit him confess his villainous wrongs towards him, and prepare for death.

'I have no villain nor wrong towards thee to confess,' answered Tressilian, 'and am better prepared for death than thou. Use thine advantage as thou wilt, and may God forgive you! I have given you no cause for this.'

'No cause!' exclaimed the earl, 'no cause!—but why parley with such a slave?—Die a liar, as thou last liest.'

He had withdrawn his arm for the purpose of striking the fatal blow, when it was suddenly seized from behind.

The earl turned in wrath to shake off the unexpected obstacle, but was surprised to find that a strange-looking boy had held of his sword-arm, and clung to it with such tenacity of grasp, that he could not shake him off without a considerable struggle. In the course of which Tressilian had opportunity to rise and possess himself once more of his weapon. Leicester again turned towards him with looks of unabated ferocity, and the combat would have recommenced with still more desperation on both sides, had not the boy clung to Lord Leicester's knees, and in a shrill tone implored him to listen one moment ere he prosecuted this quarrel.

'Stand up, and let me go,' said Leicester, 'or, by Heaven, I will pierce thee with my rapier!—What least thou to do bar my way to revenge?—' Much—much!' exclaimed the undaunted boy; 'since my folly has been the cause of these bloody quarrels between you, and perchance of worse evils. O, if you would ever again enjoy the peace of an innocent mind, if you hope again to sleep in peace and undisturbed by remorse, take so much leisure as to peruse this letter, and then do as you list.'

While he spoke in this eager and earnest manner, to which his singular features and voice gave a goldfinn-like effect, he held up to Leicester a packet, secured with a long tress of woman's hair, of a beautiful light brown colour. Enraged as he was, my almost blinded with fury to see his destined revenge so strangely frustrated, the Earl of Leicester could not resist this extraordinary supplicant. He snatched the letter from his hand—changed colour as he looked on the superscription—mild, with faltering hand, the knot which secured it glanced over the contents, and staggering back, would have fallen, had he not rested against the trunk of a tree, where he stood for an instant, his eyes bent on the letter, and his sword-point turned to the ground, without seeming to be conscious of the presence of an antagonist, towards whom he had shown little mercy, and who might in turn have taken his life. But such revenge Tressilian was too noble-minded—he also stood suddenly, waiting the issue of this strange fit of passion, but holding his weapon ready to defend himself in case of need, against some new and sudden attack on the part of Leicester, whom he again suspected to be under the influence of actual frenzy. The boy, indeed, he easily recognised as his old acquaintance Dickon, whose face, when first seen, was scarcely to be forgotten; but how he came hither at so critical a moment, why his interference was so energetic, and, above all, how it came to produce such powerful an effect upon Leicester, were questions which he could not solve.

But the letter was of itself powerful enough to work effects yet more wonderful. It was that which the unfortunate Amy had written to her husband, in which she alleged the reasons and manner of her flight from Cumnor Place, informed him of her having made her way to Kenilworth to enjoy his protection, and mentioned the circumstances which had compelled her to take refuge in Tressilian's apartment, earnestly requesting him, without delay, assign her a more suitable asylum. The letter concluded with the most earnest expressions of devoted attachment, and submission to his will in all things, and particularly respecting her situation and place of residence, conjuring him only that she might not be placed under the guardianship or restraint of Varney.

The letter dropped from Leicester's hand when he had perused it. 'Take my sword,' he said, 'Tressilian, and pierce my heart, as I would but now have pierced yours!'

'My lord!' said Tressilian, 'you have done me great wrong; but something within my breast ever whispered that it was by egregious error.'

'Error, indeed!' said Leicester, and handed
him the letter; 'I have been made to believe a
man of honour a villain, and the best and purest
of creatures a false prelate.'—Writche'd boy,
who swipes this letter now, and where has the
heber lingered, and perished of this great
and ever again enjoy it, if you hope in any-thing but
mourned by remorse, and
sense this letter, and

hager and earnest
tures and voice
ed to Leicester
'ing tree of woman's
colour. Enraged
wished with fury to see
frustrated, the
conquered the letter
n and as he looked on
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ghed over the
ught to have fallen
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boy confessed, with much contrition, that
in resentment at Wayland's evading all his inquiries
concerning the lady, after Dickon conceived
he had various ways merited his confidence, he
had purloined from him in revenge the letter
with which Amy had entreated him for the Earl
of Leicester. His purpose was to have restored
him that evening, as he reckoned himself
sure of meeting with him, in consequence of
Wayland's having for a time performed the part of
Arius in the pageant. He was indeed so much
alarmed when he saw to whom the letter was
sent, but he argued that, as Leicester did
not return to Kenilworth until that evening,
it would again be in the possession of the proper
message, as soon as, in the nature of things, it
could possibly be delivered. But Wayland came
to the pageant, having been in the interim
expelled by Lambrion from the cast, and
the boy not being able to find him, or to get speech
of Tressilian, and finding himself in possession
of a letter addressed to no less a person than the
Earl of Leicester, he conceived it no longer
advisable to retain it in his keeping, and
that he should not prejudice the lady by giving it
to any of the domestics. He made an attempt or two to
reach an audience of the Earl, but the singularity of his
appearance, occasioned his being almost repulsed by the insolent
mentals whom he applied to for that purpose. Once,
indeed, he had nearly succeeded, but in
pursuance, he found in the grotto the earnest
which he knew to belong to the unlucky countess,
seeing it on her journey; for nothing
escaped his prying eye. Having stowed in
in order to restore it either to Tressilian or the courtier,
but into the hands of, as we have seen,
Leicester himself, but unfortunately he did not
recognise him in his disguise.
At length the boy thought he was on the
point of succeeding when the earl came
down to the lower part of the hall; but just as he
was about to accept him, he was prevented by
Tressilian. As sharp in ear as in wit, the boy heard
the appointment settled between them, to take
place in the Pleasure, and resolved to aid
the party, in hopes that either, in
coming or in returning, he might find an
opportunity of delivering the letter to
Leicester; for strange stories began to float among the domestics,
which alarmed him for the lady's safety. Accident,
detained Dickon a little behind
u, and as he reached the arcade he saw
them engaged in combat; in consequence of
which he hastened to alarm the guard, having
little doubt that what bloodshed took place
between them might arise out of his own frolic.
Continuing to lurk in the court, he heard
the second appointment which Leicester, at putting
assigned to Tressilian, and was keeping them
view during the encounter of the Coventry men,
when, to his surprise, he recognised Wayland
in the crowd, much disgusted. Indeed, but not
sufficiently so to escape the pelting gibe of
his old comrade. They drew aside out of
the crowd to explain their situation to each other.
The boy confessed to Wayland what we have above told; and the artist in return informed him that his deep anxiety for the fate of the unfortunate lady had brought him back to the neighbourhood of the castle, upon his learning that morning at a village about ten miles distant, that Vane of Loundorne, whose violence he dreaded, had both left Keuffleworth over-night.

While they spoke, they saw Leicester and Tressilian separate themselves from the crowd, dogged them until they mounted their horses, when the boy, whose speed of foot has been before mentioned, though he could not possibly keep up with them, yet arrived, as we have seen, soon enough to save Tressilian's life. The boy had just finished his tale when they arrived at the Gallery Tower.

CHAPTER XL.

High o'er the eastern steep the sun is beaming.
And darkness flies with her inevitable shadows.
So truth prevails o'er falsehood.

OLD PLAY.

As Tressilian rode along the bridge, lately the scene of so much riotous sport, he could not but observe that men's countenances had singularly changed during the space of his brief absence. The mock fight was over, but the men, still habited in their masquing suits, stood together in groups, like the inhabitants of a city who have just been startled by some strange and alarming news.

When he reached the base-court, appearances were the same—domestics, retainers, and under officers, stood together and whispered, bending their eyes towards the windows of the great hall with looks which seemed to once alarmed and mysterious.

Sir Nicholas Blount was the first person of his own particular acquaintance Tressilian saw, who left him no time to make inquiries, but greeted him with, 'God help thy heart, Tressilian, thou art fitter for a clown than a courtier—thou canst not attend as becomes one who follows her Majesty.' Here you are called for, wished for, waited for—no man but you will serve the turn; and hither you come with a misbegotten brat on thy horse's neck, as if thou were dry nurse to some sneaking devil, and went just returned from airing. 'Wry, what is the matter?' said Tressilian, letting go the boy, who sprung to ground like a feather, and himself daimonising at the same time.

'Wry, no one knows the matter,' replied Blount; 'I cannot smell it out myself, though I have a nose like other courtiers. Only my Lord of Leicester has galloped along the bridge, as if he would have rode over all in his passage, demanding an audience of the Queen, and is closeted even now with her, and Burleigh, and Walsingham, and you are called for—whether the matter be treason or worse, no one knows.'

'He speaks true, by Heaven!' said Raleigh, who that instant appeared; 'you must immediately to the Queen's presence.'

'Be not rash, Raleigh,' said Blount, 'remember his books. By Heaven's sake, go to my chamber, dear Tressilian; and don my new brown-coloured silk suit—those I gave them but twice.'

Shouts answered Tressilian; 'do thou take care of this boy, Blount; he's kind to him, and look he escapes you—not much depends on him.'

So saying, he followed Raleigh hastily, leaving honest Blount with the bridle of his horse in one hand, and the boy in the other. Blount gave a long look after him.

'Nobody,' he said, 'calls to these mysteries—and he leaves me here to play horse-keeper and child-keeper at once. I could excuse the one, for I have a good horse naturally; but to be plagued with a brat which—Whence come ye, my fair-favoured little gossip?'

'From the Fens,' answered the boy.

'And what didst thou learn there, forward imp?'

'To catch gulls, with their webbed feet and yellow stockings,' said the boy.

'Umph!' said Blount, looking down on his own immense roses.—'Nay, then the devil takes him asks thee no more questions.'

Meantime Tressilian traversed the full length of the great hall, in which the astonished courtiers formed various groups, and were whispering mysteriously together; while all kept their eyes fixed on the door that led from the upper end of the hall into the queen's withdrawing apartment. Raleigh pointed to the door—Tressilian knocked, and was instantly admitted. Many a neck was stretched to gain a view into the interior of the apartment; but the tapestry which covered the door on the inside was dropped too suddenly to admit the slightest gratification of curiosity.

Upon entering, Tressilian found himself, not without a strong palpitation of heart, in the presence of Elizabeth, who was walking to and fro in a violent agitation, which seemed to scorch her cheek; whilst two or three of her most sage and confidential counsellors exchanged anxious looks with each other, but delayed speaking till her wrath had abated. Before the empty chair of state in which she had been seated, and which was half pushed aside by the violence with which she had started from it, kneel Leicester, his arms crossed, and his brows bent on the ground; still and motionless as the gamines upon a sepulchre. Beside him stood the Lord Shrewsbury, then Earl Marshal of England, holding his latter of office—the earl's sword unshak'd, and lay before him on the floor.

'Ho, Sir!' said the queen, coming close up to Tressilian, and stamping on the floor with the action and manner of Henry himself; you know of this fair work—you are an accomplice in this deception which has been practised on us—you have been a main cause of our doing injustice! Tressilian dropped on his knees before the queen, his sense showing him the risk of attempting any defence at that moment of irritation. 'Art thou in or out?' she continued; 'thou know'st of this affair, dost thou not?'

'Not, gracious madam, that this poor lady was Countess of Leicester.'

'Nor shall any one know her for such,' said Elizabeth. 'Death of my life! Countess of
Leicester!—I say Dame Amy Dudley—and well if she hath not come to write herself widow of the traitor Robert Dudley.

"Madam," said Leicester, "do with me what it may be your will to do—but work no injury on this poor lady—who hath in no way deserved it."

And will he be the better for the intercession," said the queen, leaving Tressilian, who slowly arose, and rushing to Leicester, who continued kneeling—"the better for thy intercession, than doubly false—then doubly forsworn—of thy intercession, whose villany hath made me ridiculous to my subjects, and odious to myself? I could tear out mine eyes for their blindness!"

Burleigh here ventured to interpose.

"Madam," he said, "remember that you are a Queen—Queen of England—Mother of our people. Give not way to this wild storm of passion.

Elizabeth turned round to him, while a tear actually twinkled in her proud and angry eye.

"Burleigh," she said, "thou art a statesman—then dost not, then cannot, comprehend half the scorn—half the misery, that has poured out of my heart.

With the utmost caution—with the deepest reverence, Burleigh took her hand at the moment she saw her heart was at the fullest, and led her to an oriel window, apart from the others.

"Madam," he said, "I am a statesman, but I have no man—a man already known to your council, who has not—cannot have a wish on your heart, but your glory and happiness—I pray you to be composed."

"Ah, Burleigh," said Elizabeth, "thou little knowest!—here their tears fill over their cheeks in spite of her.

"I do—no know, my honourable Burleigh, O, beware that you lead not others to guess that which they know not!"

"Ha!' said Elizabeth, pausing as if a new train of thought had suddenly shot across her brain. "Burleigh, thou art right—thou art right—anything but disgrace—anything but a confession of weakness—anything rather than seem the cheated—slighted!—Neath! to think on it is disease!"

"Be it between you, my Queen," said Burleigh; "and let far above a weakness which no Englishman could ever believe his Elizabeth could have entertained, unless the violence of her disappointment caused a sad conviction to his bosom."

What weakness, my Lord!" said Elizabeth haughtily; "would you too insinuate that the favour in which I held yeunder proud traitor, derived its source from aught!—But here she could no longer sustain the proud tone which she had assumed, and again softened as she said, "But why should I strive to deceive even thee, my good and wise servant?"

Burleigh stooped to kiss her hand with affection, and rage in the sounds of courts—a tear of true sympathy dropped from the eye of the minister on the hand of his sovereign.

It is probable that the consciousness of possessing this unhappy wight Elizabeth in supporting her mortification and concealing her extreme resentment; but she was still more moved by fear that her passion should betray to the public the affront and the disappointment which, alike as a woman and a queen, she was so anxious to conceal. She turned from Burleigh, and sternly paced the hall to their features had recovered their usual dignity, and her mien its wonted stateliest and regular motion.

Our sovereign is her noble self once more, whispered Burleigh to Walsingham; "mark what she does, and take heed you thwart her not."

She then approached Leicester, and said, with calmness, "My Lord Shrewsbury, we discharge you of your prisoner. My Lord of Leicester, rise and take up your sword—a quarter of an hour's restraint, under the custody of our marshal, my lord, is, we think, no great penalty for months of falsehood practised upon us. We will now hear the progress of this affair."

She then seated herself in her chair, and said, "You, Tressilian, sit for good, and say what you know."

Tressilian told his story, generously suppressing as much as he could what affected Leicester, and saying nothing of their having twice actually fought together. It is very probable that, in doing so, he did the earl good service; for had the queen at that instant found anything on account of which she could vent her wrath upon him without laying open sentiments of which she was ashamed, it might have fared hard with him.

She paused when Tressilian had finished his tale.

"We will take that Wayland," she said, "into our own service, and place thy boy in our Secretary-office for instruction, that he may in future use discretion towards letters. For you, Tressilian, you did wrong in not communicating the whole truth to us, and your promise not to do so as was both imprudent and unfruitful. Yet, having given your word to this unhappy lady, it was the part of a man and a gentleman to keep it; and on the whole, we esteem you for the character you have sustained in this matter."

"My Lord of Leicester, it is now your turn to tell us the truth, an exercise to which you seem of late to have been too much a stranger."

Accordingly, she extorted, by successive questions, the whole history of his first acquaintance with Amy Robmers—their marriage—his jealousy—the causes on which it was founded, and many particulars besides. Leicester's confession, for such it might be called, was wrenched from him piecemeal, yet was upon the whole accurate, excepting that he totally omitted to mention that he had, by implication or otherwise, assented to Varney's designs upon the life of his countess.

Yet the consciousness of this was what at that moment lay nearest to his heart; and although he trusted in great measure to the very positive counter-orders which he had sent by Lamber in, it was his purpose to set out for Summer Place in person, as soon as he should be dismissed from the presence of the queen, who, he concluded, would presently leave Kenilworth.

But the earl reckoned without his host. It is true, his presence and his communications were gall and wormwood to his once partial mistress. But, barred from every other and more direct mode of revenge, the earl perceived that she gave her false suster torture by these inquiries, and dwelt on them for that reason, no more regarding the pain which she herself experienced, than the savage cares for the tearing of his own
hands by grasping the hot pincers with which he tears the flesh of his captive enemy.

At length, however, the haughty lord, like a tiger that has slain, gave information that his patience was restrained. "Madam," he said, "I have been much to blame—more than even your just resentment has expressed. Yet, madam, let me say, that if I temporarily, or for my own sake, I now submit to the consequences of my action, I do so to stifle the cruel passion which I bear you.

"Your grace, who has pardoned so much, will excuse my throwing myself on your royal clemency for those expressions, which were yesterday morning accounted but a light offence.

"The queen fixed her eyes on him while she replied, 'Now, by Heaven, my lord, thy effrontery passes the bounds of belief, as well as patience—but it shall avail thee nothing—What hope! my lords, come all and hear the news—Winston, Lord of Leicester's stolen marriage has cost me a husband, and England a king. His lordship is patriarchal in his tastes—perhaps life at a time was insufficient, and he designed as the honour of his left hand. Now, it is not this too insolent,—that I could not grise him with a few marks of court-favour, but he must presume to think my hand and crown at his disposal?—You, however, think better of me; and I can pity this ambitious man, as it could a child, whose humble soap has burst between his hands. We go to the presence-chamber—My Lord of Leicester, we command your close attendance on us.'

All was eager expectation in the hall, and what was the universal astonishment, when the queen said to those next her. 'The revels of Kellworth are no yet exhausted, my lords and ladies—we are to solemnise the noble owner's marriage.'

There was a universal expression of surprise.

'It is true, on your royal word,' said the queen; 'the hath kept this a secret even from us, that he might surprise us with it at this early place and time. I see you are of curiosity and anxiety to know the happy bride—It is Amy Robart, the same who, to make up the May—game yesterday, figured in the pageant as the wife of his servant Varney.'

"For God's sake, madam," said the earl, approaching her with a mixture of humility, vexation, and shame in his countenance, and speaking so low as to be heard by no one else, "take my head, as you threatened in your anger, and spare me these taunts! Urge not a falling man—tread not on a crushed worm.'

'A worm, my lord!' said the queen, in the same tone; 'say, a snake is the nobler reptile, and the more exact similitude—the frozen snake you wet of, which was warmed in a certain bosom.'

"For your own sake—for mine, madam," said the earl—'while there is yet some reason left in me—'

'Speak aloud, my lord,' said Elizabeth, 'and at further distance, so please you—your breath thins our raft. What have you to ask of me?'

"Permisive," said the unfortunate earl humbly, "to travel to Cannmor Place.'

'To fetch home your bride, belle!'—Why, ay, that is but right—for, as we have heard, she is indispensably necessary for there. But, my lord, you go not in person—we have computed upon passing certain days in this Castle of Kellworth, and it were slight courtesy to leave us without a landlord during our residence here. Under your favour, we cannot think to bear such disgrace in the eyes of our subjects. Tressilian shall go to Cannmor Place instead of you, and with him some gentleman who hath been sworn of our chamber, lest my Lord of Leicester should be again jealous of his old rival. Whom wouldst thou have to be in commission with thee, Tressilian, with humble deference, suggested the name of Raleigh.'

'Why, ay,' said the queen; 'so God ha me, thou hast made a good choice. He is a young knight besides, and to deliver a lady from prison is an act of justice and adventure. Cannmor Place is little better than a prison, you are to know, my lords and ladies. Besides, there are certain sentiments there whom we would willingly fast to saving. You will furnish them, Master Secretary, with the warrant necessary to secure the bodies of Richard Varney and the foreign Alasco, dead or alive. Take a sufficient force with you, gentlemen—bring the lady here in all honour—low no time, and God be with you!'

They bowed and left the presence.

Who shall describe how the rest of that day was spent at Kellworth? The queen, who seemed to have remained there for the sole purpose of mortifying and taunting the Earl of Leicester, showed herself as skillful in that female art of vengeance, as she was in the science of wisely governing her people. The train of state soon caught the signal, and, as he walked among his own splendid preparations, the Lord of Kellworth, in his own castle, already experienced the disgrace of a disgraced courtier, in the slight regard and cruel manners of alienated friends, and the ill-concealed triumph of importunity and open enemies. Sussex, from his natural military, from his spirit of disposition, Burleigh and Walsingham, from their penetration and prospective sagacity, and some of the ladies, from the compassion of their sex, were the only persons in the crowded court who retained towards him the countenance they had borne in the morning. So much had Leicester been accustomed to consider court-favour as the principal object of his life, that all other sensations were, for the time, lost in the agony which his haughty spirit felt at the succession of petty insults and studied neglects to which he had been subjected; but when he retired to his own chamber for the night, that long fair tress of hair which had so secured his letter fell under his observation, and, with the influence of a counter-charm, awakened his heart to nobler and more natural feelings. He kissed it a thousand times; and while he recollected he had always in his power to shun the mortifications which he had that day undergone, by retiring into a dignified
The troop consisted of six persons; for, besides Wayland, they had in company a royal attendant and two attendants serving men. All were well armed, and travelled as fast as it was possible with justice to their horses, which had been rested beforehand. They endeavoured to procure some tidings as to the road along Wayland and his party, but could hear none, as they had travelled in the dark. At a small village about twelve miles from Kenilworth, where they gave some refreshment to their horses, a poor clergyman, the curate of the place, came out of a small cottage, and entered into the company of the people who might know aught of surgery to look in for an instant on a dying man.

The empire of Wayland undertook to do his best, and, as the curate conducted him to the spot, he learned that the man had been found bound to labour, as they were going to their work on the preceding morning and the curate had given him shelter in his house. He had received a gun-shot wound which seemed to be mortal, whether in a broil or from robbers; they could not learn, as he was in a fever, and spoke nothing distinctly. Wayland entered the dark and lonely apartment, and, to his horror, had the curate's crutch aside the curtain, than he knew in the distorted features of the patient the countenance of Michael Earle, house. Under pretence of seeking something which he wanted, Wayland hastily apprised his fellow-travellers of this curious circumstance; and both Tressilian and Ralegh were filled with boisterous apprehensions, hastened to the curate's house to see the dying man.

The wretch was by this time in the agonies of death, from which a much better surgeon than Wayland could not rescue him, for the bullet had passed clear through his body. He was sensible, however, at least in part, for he knew Tressilian, and made signs that he wished him to stoop over his bed. Tressilian did so, and after some inarticulate murmurs, in which the names of Varney and Lady Leicester were alone distinguishable, Lambourne bade him 'make haste, or he would come too late.' It was in vain. Tressilian negled the patient for further information; he seemed to become in some degree delirious, and when he again made a signal to attract Tressilian's attention, it was only for the purpose of desiring him to inform his uncle, Giles Gossip of the Black Bear, that he had died without his shoes after all. A conviction verified his words a few minutes after, and the travellers derived nothing from having met with him, saving the obscure fears concerning the fate of the countess, which his dying words were calculated to convey, and which induced them to urge their journey with their utmost speed, pressing hopes in the queen's name, where these by which they rode became unfruitful service.

CHAPTER XII.

The death-bell thrice was heard to ring. An aerial voice was heard to call, And thrice the raven flapped his wing Around the towers of Cunnr Hali.

Mickle.

We are now to return to that part of our story where we intimated that Varney, possessed of the authority of the Earl of Leicester, and of the queen's permission to the same effect, hastened to secure himself against discovery of his perfidy, by removing the countess from Kenilworth Castle. He had proposed to set forth early in the morning, but reflecting that the Earl might relent in the interim, and seek another interview with the countess, he resolved to prevent, by immediate departure, all chance of what would probably have ended in his detection and ruin.

For this purpose he called for Lambourne, who was exceedingly incensed to find that his trusty attendant was again on some rumble in the neighbouring village, or elsewhere. As his return was expected, Sir Richard commanded that he should prepare himself for attending him on an immediate journey, and follow him in case he returned after his departure. In the meanwhile, Varney used the ministry of a servant called Robb Tiler, one to whom the mysteries of Cunnr Place were already in some degree known, as he had been there more than once in attendance on the earl. To this man, whose character resembled that of Lambourne, though he was neither quite so prompt nor altogether so profane, Varney gave command to have three horses saddled and prepared a horse-litter, and have them in readiness at the western gate. The natural enough excuse of his insolvency, which was now universally believed, accounted for the secrecy with which she was to be removed from the castle, and he stationed on the same apology in case the unfortunate lady's resistance or screams should render such necessary. The agency of Anthony Foster was indispensable, and that Varney now went to secure.

This person, naturally of a sour, unsocial dis-
position, and somewhat tired, besid's, with his journey from Cumnor to Warwickshire, in order to bring the news of the countess's escape, had early extricated himself from the crowd of wassailers, and betaken himself to his chamber, when he lay asleep, when Varney, completely equipped for travelling, and with a dark lantern in his hand, entered his apartment. He paused an instant to listen to what his associate was mumuring in his sleep, and could plainly distinguish the words, 'Art Martin—ora pro nobis—No—it runs not so—deliver us from evil—Ay, so it goes.'

'Praying in his sleep,' said Varney; 'and confounding his old and new devotions—He must have more need of prayer ere I am done with him.—What ho! holy man—most blessed penitent!—Awake—awake!—The devil has not discharged you from service yet.'

As Varney at the same time shook the sleeper by the arm, it changed the current of his ideas, and he roared out, 'Thieves!—thieves! I will die in defence of my gold—my hard-won gold, that has cost me so dear.—Where is Janet?—Is Janet safe?'

'Safe enough, thou bellowing fool!' said Varney; 'art thou not ashamed of thy clamour?'

'By this time the day was break awake, and, sitting up in his bed, asked Varney the meaning of so untimely a visit. 'It angers nothing good,' he added.

'A false prophecy, most sainted Anthony,' returned Varney; 'it angers that the hour is come for converting thy fel low—old it into copyhold—What sayest thou to that?'

'Hadst thou told me this in broad day,' said Foster, 'I had rejoiced—but at this dead hour, and by this dim light, and looking on thy pale face, which is a ghastly contradiction to thy light words, I cannot but rather think of the work that is to be done, and the querdon to be gained by it.'

'Why, thou fool, it is but to essert thy charge back to Cumnor Place.'

'Is that indeed all?' said Foster; 'thou look'st deadly pale, and thou art not moved by trifles is that indeed all?'

'Ay, that— and maybe a trifile more,' said Varney.

'Ay, that trifile more!' said Foster; 'still thou look'st paler and paler.'

'Reed not my countenance,' said Varney, 'you see it by this wretched light. Up and be doing, man—Think of Cumnor Place—thine own proper copyhold—Why, thou mayest form a weekly lecturechip, besides endowing Janet like a baron's daughter—Seventy pounds and odd.'

'Seventy-nine pounds, five shillings, and five-pence halfpenny, besides the value of the wood,' said Foster; 'and I am to have it all as copy hold?'

'All, man—squirrels and all—no gipsy shall cut the value of a broom—no boy so much as take a bird's nest, without paying thee a quit rent—Ay, that is right—don thy matters as fast as possible—horses and everything are ready, all save that accused villain Lambourne, who is out on some infernal gambol.'

'Ay, Sir Richard,' said Foster, 'you would take no advice. I ever told you that drunken profligate would fail you at need. Now I could have helped you to a sober young man.'

'What, some slow spoken, long-breathed brother of the congregation!—Why, we shall have use for such also, man—Heaven be praised, we shall lack labourers of every kind.—Ay, that is right, forget not your pistols.—Come now, and let us away.'

'Whither!' said Anthony.

'To my lady's chamber—and, mind—she must along with us. Thou art not a fellow to be startled by a shriek.'

'Not if Scripture reason can be rendered for it; and it is written, 'wives, obey your husbands. But will my lord's commands bear us out if we use violence?'

'Tush, man! here is his signet,' answered Varney; and, having thus silenced the objections of his associate, they went together to Lord Hunsdon's apartments, and, acquainting the sentinel with their purpose, as a matter sanctioned by the queen and the Earl of Leicester, they entered the chamber of the unfortunate countess.

The horror of Amy may be conceived, when, starting from a broken slumber, she saw at her bedside Varney, the man on earth she most feared and hated. It was even a consolation to see that he was not alone, though she had so much reason to dread his sullen companion.

'Madam,' said Varney, 'there is no time for ceremony. My Lord of Leicester, having fully considered the exigencies of the time, sends you his orders immediately to accompany us on our return to Cumnor Place. See, here is his signet, in token of his instant and pressing command.'

'Is it false!' said the countess; 'thou hast stolen the warrant—thou, who art capable of every villany, from the blackest to the basest!'

'It is true,' said Varney; 'and, madam, replied Varney; 'so true, that if you do not instantly arise, and prepare to attend us, we must compel you to obey our orders.'

'Compel!'—thou darest not put it to that issue, base as thou art,' exclaimed the unhappy countess.

'That remains to be proved, madam,' said Varney, who had determined on intimidation as the only means of subduing her high spirit; 'if you put me to it, you will find me a rough guest of the chambers.'

'It was at this threat that Amy screamed so fiercely, that, had it not been for the received opinion of her insanity, she would quickly have had Lord Hunsdon and others to her aid. Perceiving, however, that her cries were vain, she appened to Foster in the most affecting terms, conjuring him, as his daughter Janet's honour and purity were dear to him, not to permit her to be treated with unwomanly violence.

'Why, madam,' wives must obey their husbands—there's Scripture warrant for it,' said Foster; 'and if you will dress yourself, and come with us patiently, there's no one shall lay finger on you while I can draw a pistol-trigger.'

Seeing no help and comforted even by the dogged language of Foster, the countess promised to rise and dress herself, if they would agree to retire from the room. Varney at the same time assured her of all safety and honour to which she was entitled, and, with a sense of freedom, she gave her consent to proceed to her chamber.
I have a breathing. The madam,' said And and trust time, if I were to obey and accept not a fellow to be rendered for them, obey your husband. His commands bear us not," answered Sir Richard. "I reduced the objection by a twofold measure. I went together to the Earl of Leicester, and, as a matter of course, to the Earl of Pembroke, where the unfortunate Varney was received, when, for Sir Richard, I saw a more earth she most desired a consolation to suffer, though she had so strong a companion.

There is no time for delay, the matter, having fully arisen, and in the ear of my lord company us on our next move. This is his signet, having using commands.

"Thou hast the art capable of rendering Varney's son so hard. Let Varney merely arise, and, by this art, compel you to put it to that course which troubled the unhappy woman;"

"Madam, madam," said he. "You give your intimations as to the high spirit; I find you a rough mead."

I screamed so feebly, said Varney, and quickly have thought to put her to her aid. Per- sonally, I was not then in affecting terms, but the countess' respect to permit her to enter this scene of violence.

"My husband, my husband," said Peveril, "and reason to come to your side."

"Woe, woe," comforted even by her husband, the countess, if they would pursue Varney at the cost of his safety and honour while in their hands, and promised that he himself would be disposed of, she, since her passion was so dispassion. His husband, he added, would be at Cumberbatch Place within twenty-four hours after they had reached it.

Varney was not a little surprised at his unusual tone of insinuation, for, ascribing it to a moment of passion, he was to take advantage of this moment, which was more than a little, for he, in my mind, would not be trusted to his trusty followers to their utmost wish. And upon Michael Lamborne's seeming ignorant of what was meant, he plainly indicated 'the lord-dean, young, as the impediment which he desired should be removed.

"Look you, Sir Richard, and so forth," said Michael, "some are wiser than some, that is one thing, and some are worse than some, that is another. I know my lord's mind on this matter better than thou, for he hath trusted me fully in the matter. Here are his mandates, and his last words were, Michael Lamborne—his lordship speaks to me as a gentleman of the sword, and useth not the words drunken villain, or such like phrases, of those who know not how to bear new dignities—Varney, says he, must pay the utmost respect to my countess,—I trust to you for looking to it, Lamborne, says his lordship, and you must bring back my countess from his peremptoriness."

"Ay," replied Varney, "said he so, indeed? You know all, then?"

"All—and you were as wise to make a friend of me while the weather is fair betwixt us."

"And was there no one present," said Varney, "when my lord so spoke?"

"Not a breathing creature," said Lamborne; "think you my lord would trust any one with such matters, save an approved man of action like myself?"

"Most true," said Varney; "and, making a pause, he looked forward on the moonlight road. They were traversing a wide and open heath. The letter, being at least a mile before them, was both out of sight and hearing. He looked behind, and there was an expanse, lighted by the moonbeams, without one human being in sight. He resumed his speech to Lamborne; "And will you turn upon your master, who has introduced you to this career of court-like favour — whose apprentice you have been, Michael, who has taught you the depths and shallows of court intrigue?"

"Michael not me!" said Lamborne; "I have a name will brook a master before it as well as another; and as to the rest, if I have been an unusual bitterness. 'Drunkens villain,' he said, 'thy idleness and debauched folly will stretch a halter ere it be long; and for me, I care not how soon.'"
apprentice, my indenture is out, and I am resolved to set up for myself."

'Take thy quittances first, then fool!' said Varney; and with a pistol, which he had for some time held in his hand, shot Lambourne through the body.

The wretch fell from his horse, without a struggle or groan; and Varney, dismounting, rifled his pockets, turning out the lining, that it might appear he had fallen by robbers. He secured the earl's packet, which was his chief object, but he also took Lambourne's purse, containing some gold pieces, the relics of what his debauchery had left him, and, from a singular combination of feelings, carried it in his hands only the length of a small river, which crossed the road into which he threw it as far as he could fling. Such are the strange remants of conscience which remain after she seems totally subdued, that this cruel and remorseless man would have felt himself degraded had he pocketed the few pieces belonging to the wretch whom he had thus ruthlessly slain.

The murderer reloaded his pistol, after cleansing the lock and barrel from the appearances of late explosion, and rode calmly after the litter, satisfaction, much as himself that he had so adroitly removed a troublesome witness to many of his intrigues, and the bearer of mandates which he had no intentions to obey, and which, therefore, he was desirous it should be thought had never reached his ears.

The remainder of the journey was made with a degree of speed, which showed the little care they had for the health of the unhappy couple. They paused only at places where all was under their command, and where the latch they were prepared to pull of the main door of Varney would have obtained ready credit, had she made an attempt to appeal to the compassion of the few persons admitted to see her. But Amy saw no chance of obtaining a hearing from any to whom she had an opportunity of addressing herself, and, besides, was too terrified for the presence of Varney, to violate the implied conditions under which she was to travel far from his company. The author of Varney, often so used, during the earl's private journeys to Cumnor, readily procured relays of horses wherever wanted, so that they approached Cumnor Place upon the night after they left Kenilworth.

At this period of the journey, Varney came up to the rear of the litter, as he had done before repeatedly during their progress, and asked: 'How does she?'

'She sleeps,' said Foster; 'I would we were home—her strength is exhausted.'

'Rest will restore her,' answered Varney. 'She shall soon sleep sound and long—we must consider how to lodge her in safety.'

'In her own apartments, to be sure,' said Foster. 'I have sent Janet to her aunt's, with a proper usher and, the old women are truth itself—for they hate this lady cordially.'

'We will not trust them, however, friend Anthony,' said Varney; 'we must secure her in that stronghold where you keep your gold.'

'My gold!' said Anthony, much alarmed; 'why, what gold have I?—God help me, I have no gold—I would I had.'

'Now, marry hang thee, then stupid brute—who thinks of or cares for thy gold?—If I did, could I not find an hundred better ways to come at it?—In one word, thy heel-chamber, which thou hast fenced so curiously, must be her place. Of seclusion; and then, thou hind, shalt press her pillows of down—I dare to say the Earl will never ask after the rich furniture of these four rooms.'

This last consideration rendered Foster tractable; he only asked permission to ride before, to make matters ready; and, springing his horse, he posted before the litter, while Varney falling about threescore paces behind it, remained only attended by Tider.

When they had arrived at Cumnor Place, the countess asked eagerly for Janet, and showed much alarm when informed that she was no longer to have the attendance of that amiable girl.

'Oh, my daughter is dear to me, madam;' said Foster gravely; and I desire not that she should the court-tricks of lying and 'seeping'—some-what too much of that has she learned already, and to please your ladyship.

The countess, much exhausted and greatly terrified by the circumstances of her journey, made no answer to this insolence, but mildly expressed a wish to retire to her chamber.

'Ah, ay,' muttered Foster, 'this is but reasonable; but, under favour, you go not to your gaw-gaw toy-house yonder; you will sleep to-morrow in better security.'

'I would it were in my grave,' said the countess; but that mortal feelings shiver at the idea of soul and body parting."

'You, I guess, have no chance to shiver at that,' replied Foster. 'My lord comes hither to-morrow, and doubtless you will make your own ways better with him.'

'But does he come hither—I does he indeed, good Foster?'

'O ay, good Foster!' replied the other. 'But what Foster shall I be to-morrow, when you speak of me to my lord—though all I have done was to obey his own orders? You shall be my protector—a rough one, indeed—but still a protector,' answered the countess. 'O that Janet were but here!'

'She is better where she is,' answered Foster—one of you is enough to perplex a plain head.

'But will you taste any refreshment?'

'O no, no—my chamber—my chamber. I trust,' she said apologetically, 'I may secure it on the inside.'

'With all my heart,' answered Foster, 'so I may secure it on the outside;' and, taking a light, he led the way to a part of the building where Amy had never been, and conducted her up a stair of great height, preceded by one of the old women with a lamp. At the foot of the stair, which seemed of almost immeasurable height, they crossed a short wooden gallery, formed of black oak, and very narrow, at the farther end of which was a strong oaken door, which opened and admitted them into the miner's apartment, homely in its accommodation in the very last degree, and, except in name, little different from a prison-room.

Foster stopped at the door, and gave the
luuMt

'hearing

The narrow, thirsty answer did indeed rise, and the Varney falling upon it, pointed with self-complacency to a piece of concealed machinery in the wall, which, playing with much ease and little noise, dropped a part of the wooden gallery, after the manner of a drawbridge, so as to cut off all communication between the door of the bedroom, which he usually inhabited, and the landing-place of the high winding stair which ascended to it. The rope by which this machinery was wrought was generally carried within the bed-chamber, it being Foster’s object to provide against invasion from without; but now that it was intended to secure the money within, the cord had been brought over to the landing-place, and was there made fast, when Foster, with much secrecy, had dropped the unsuspected trap-door.

Varney looked with great attention at the machinery, and peeped more than once down the abyss which was opened by the fall of the trap-door. It was dark as pitch, and seemed profusely deep, going, as Foster informed him, the whole of the castle behind Varney cast once more a fixed and long look down into this sable gulf, and then followed Foster to the part of the manor-house most usually inhabited.

When they arrived in the parlour which we have mentioned, Varney requested Foster to get them supper, and some of the choicest wine. ‘I will seek Alasco,’ he added; ‘we have work for him to do, and we must put him in good heart.’

Foster groaned at this intimation, but made no remonstrance. The old woman assured Varney that Alasco had scarce eaten or drunken since her master’s departure, living perpetually shut up in the laboratory, and talking as if the world’s continuance depended on what he was doing there.

‘I will teach him that the world hath other claims on him,’ said Varney, seizing a light, and going in quest of the alchemist. He returned, after a considerable absence, very pale, but yet with his habitual mien on his lips and nostril— ‘Our friend,’ he said, ‘has exhausted.’

‘How what mean you?’ said Foster.— ‘Run away— fled with my forty pounds, that should have multiplied a thousand-fold; I will have hue and cry!’

‘I will tell thee a surer way,’ said Varney.

‘How— why what way!’ exclaimed Foster; ‘I will have back my inquest, at the least!’

‘I will tell thee a surer way,’ said Varney.

Alasco in the devil’s court of chancery, for thither he has carried the cause.’

‘How—what dost thou mean—is he dead?’

‘Ay, truly is he,’ said Varney; ‘and properly swollen already in the face and body—He had been maiming some of his devil’s medicines, and

lamp to the countess, without either offering or permitting the attendance of the old woman who had carried it. The lady stood not on the ceremony, but, taking it hastily barred the door, and secured it with the ample means provided on the inside for that purpose.

Varney, meanwhile, had lurked behind on the stairs, but, hearing the door barred, he now came up on tiptoe, and, seating himself in the Varney falling, disappeared, and it remained

Cumnor Place, the bustle, and showed that she was not one of that amiable

‘Sit, madam,’ said Foster; ‘I am not that she should be thrusting into the family, as you have learned already.

‘And great and terrifying are my journey, made mildly expressed

‘tis but reason, you will not go on to your grave,’ said the monk, ‘you will soon shiver at my eagerness.'

‘But must to shiver at the word comes either way, and will make your

—does he indeed,

they hid the other.

—now, when through all I have

— a rough one, I answered the question— but here!

—answered Foster in a firm head. — a plain statement?

—ex a plain chamber. I

— I may secure

— said Foster, ‘so I

— and, taking a part of the building which conducted her— a box, one of those at the heart of a masterpiece— it contained a wooden gallery, narrow, at the end of which the last rays of the sun enter into the window, its accommodation, and except in the

— and gave the

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their plan. Tider and Foster's old man-servant were sent on a feigned errand down to the village, and Anthony himself, as if anxious to see that the countess suffered no want of accommodation, visited her place of confinement. He was so much staggered at the mildness and patience with which she seemed to endure her confinement, that he could not help earnestly recommending to her not to cross the threshold of her room on any account whatever until Lord Leicester should come. 'Which,' he added, 'I trust in God, will be very soon.' Any patently promised that she would resign herself to her fate, and Foster returned to his hardened companion of his conscience half-cased of the perilous load that weighed on it. 'I have warned her,' he said; 'surely in vain is the snare set in sight of any bird!'

He left, therefore, the countess's door unsecured on the outside, and, under the eye of Varney, withdrew the supports which sustained the falling trap, which, therefore, kept its level position merely by a slight adhesion. They withdrew to wait the issue on the ground-door adjoining; but the countess waited long in vain. At length Varney, after walking long to and fro, with his face muffled in his cloak, threw it suddenly back, and exclaimed, 'Surely never was a woman fools enough to neglect so fair an opportunity of escape!'

'Perhaps she is resolved,' said Foster, 'to await her husband's return.'

'True!—most true,' said Varney, rushing out, 'I had not thought of that before.'

In less than two minutes Foster, who remained behind, heard the tread of a horse in the courtyard, and then a whistle similar to that which was the earl's usual signal;—the instant after, the door of the countess's chamber opened, and in the same moment the trap-door gave way. There was a rushing sound—a heavy fall—a faint groan—and all was over.

At the same instant, Varney called in at the window, in an accent and tone which was an indescribable mixture between horror and rapture;

'Is the bird caught?—is the dead done?'

'O God, forgive us!' replied Anthony Foster.

'Why, thou fool,' said Varney, 'thy toil is ended, and thy reward secure. Look down into the vault—what seest thou?'

'I see only a heap of white clothes, like a snowdrift,' said Foster. 'O God, she moves her arm!'

'Hurl something down on her—Thy gold chest, Tony—it is an heavy one, Varney, thou art an incurate fiend!' replied Foster, 'There needs nothing more—she is gone!'

'So pass our troubles,' said Varney, entering the room; 'I dreamed not I could have ministered the Earl's call so well.'

'O, if there be judgment in heaven, thou hast deceived it,' said Foster, 'and wilt meet it! Thou hast destroyed her by means of her best affections—It is a stoning of the kid in the mother's milk!'

'One art a fanatical ass,' replied Varney.

'Let us now think how the alarm should be given—the body is to remain where it is.'

But their wickedness was so permitted no longer;—for even while they were at this consultation, Tressilian and Raleigh broke in upon them, having obtained admittance by means of Tider and Foster's servant, whom they had secured at the village.

Anthony Foster fled on their entrance; and, knowing each corner and pass of the intricate old house, escaped all search. But Varney was taken on the spot; and, instead of expressing compunction for what he had done, seemed to take a fiendish pleasure in pointing out to them the remains of the murdered countess, while at the same time he defied them to show that he had any share in her death. The despairing grief of Tressilian, on viewing the mangled and yet warm remains of what had lately been so lovely and so beloved, was such, that Raleigh was compelled to have him removed from the place by force, while he himself assumed the direction of what was to be done.

Varney, upon a second examination, made very little mystery either of the crime or of its motives; alleging, as a reason for his frankness, that, though much of what he confessed could only have attached to him by suspicion, if such suspicion would have been sufficient to deprive him of Leicester's confidence, and to destroy all his towering plans of ambition. 'I was not born,' he said, 'to drag on the remainder of life a degraded outcast,—nor will I so die, that my fate shall make a holiday to the vulgar herd.'

From these words it was apprehended he had some design upon himself, and he was carefully deprived of all means by which such could be carried into execution. But, like some of the heroes of antiquity, he carried about his person a small quantity of strong poison, prepared probably by the celebrated Demetrius Alciatus. Having swallowed this potion over-night, he was found next morning dead in his cell; nor did he appear to have suffered much agony, his countenance presenting, even in death, the habitual expression of suffering sarsaquin which was predominant while he lived. 'The wicked man,' said Scripture, 'hath no bonds in his death.'

The fate of his colleague in wickedness was long unknown. Cunnor Place was deserted immediately after the murder; for, in the vicinity of what was called the Lady Dudley's Chamber, the domestics pretended to hear groans, and screams, and other supernatural noises. After a certain length of time, Janet, hearing no tidings of her father, became the uncontrolled mistress of his property, and conferred it, with her hand, upon Wayland, now a man of settled character, and holding a place in Elizabeth's household. But it was after they had been both dead for some years, that their eldest son and heir, in making some researches about Cunnor Hall, discovered a secret passage, closed by an iron door, which, opening from behind the bed in the Lady Dudley's Chamber, descended a sort of cell, in which they found an iron chest containing a quantity of gold and a human skeleton stretched above it. The fate of Anthony Foster was now manifest. He had fled to this place of concealment, forgetting the key of the spring-lock; and, being barred from
Sir Hugh Robart died very soon after his daughter, having settled his estate on Trossilian. But neither the prospect of rural independence, nor the promises of favour which Elizabeth held out to induce him to follow the court, could remove his passionate hatred. Wherever he went, he seemed to see before him the disfigured corpse of the early and only object of his affection. At length, having made provision for the maintenance of the old friends and old servants who formed Sir Hugh's family at Lidloe Hall, he himself embarked with his friend Raleigh for the Virginia expedition, and, young in years but old in grief, died before his day in that foreign land. Of inferior persons it is only necessary to say, that Blount's wit grew brighter as his yellow roses faded; that, doing his part as a brave commander in the wars, he was much more in his element than during the short period of his following the court; and that Flibbertigibbet's acute genius raised him to favour and distinction, in the employment both of Burleigh and Walsingham.

**NOTES TO KENILWORTH.**

**Note A, p. 178.—Title of Kenilworth.**

[Lockhart informs us that 'Sir Walter wished to call his novel, like the ballad, Common Hall, but, in deference to his publisher's (Constable's) wishes, substituted the present title.' The fascination he had for this ballad is referred to by his old schoolfellow Mr. Irving, who says, 'After the labours of the day were over, we often walked in the Academy (a public park in Edinburgh, intersected by formal rows of old trees), especially in the moonlight nights, and Scott seemed never weary of repeating the first stanza, "The dew of summer night did fall." When speaking of the Waverley Novels, Mr. Lockhart declares that 'Kenilworth' was one of the most successful of them all at the time of publication and it continues, and I doubt not, will ever continue, to be placed in the very highest rank of prose fiction. The rich variety of character, and scenery, and incident, in this novel, has never indeed been surpassed; nor, with the one exception of the Bride of Lammermoor, has Scott bequeathed as a deeper and more affecting tragedy than that of Amy Robart.']

**Note B, p. 192.—Foster, Lamberdine, and the Black Bear.**

If faith is to be put in epitaphs, Anthony Foster was something the very reverse of the character represented in the novel. Adamson gives this description of his tomb. I copy from the Antiquities of Berks, vol. i. p. 147.

In the north wall of the chancel at Common Church is a monument of grey marble, wherein, in brass plates, are engraved a man in armour, and his wife, in the habit of her time, with a woman and three children, together with the figures of three sons kneeling behind their mother. Under the figure of the man is this inscription:

**Sir Walter Scott**

**General Letters to the Poets.**

**Antonius Forster, &c.**

**Notes on the Poems of the Poets.**

**Auctores Poeticorum Latinorum.**

**Antonius Forster, General Poems to the Poets.**

**Auctores Poeticorum Latinorum.**

**Auctores Poeticorum Latinorum.**

**Auctores Poeticorum Latinorum.**
Note C, p. 235—LEGEND OF WAYLAND SMITH.

The great defeat, given by Alfred to the Danish Invaders, is said to have taken place, at least, in a single day, and to have been wrought by a people who must have been, to all intents and purposes, in a state of disunion. The victory of the Danes was due to the superiority of numbers, and the superiority of numbers was due to the fact that the Norsemen were much better armed and equipped than the English. The English, on the other hand, were not only numerically inferior, but they were also less well armed and equipped. The English were, therefore, unable to resist the combined forces of the Danes and had to retreat in disorder.

The story of Wayland Smith is a legend that is told in many different versions throughout Europe. It is a tale of a blacksmith who was said to be able to create any object he desired by using his magical hammer. The story of Wayland Smith is said to have been the source of the name "Wayland" for the town of Wayland, Massachusetts.

Note F, p. 234—ROBERT LANEMAN.

Little is known of Robert Laneman, save in his curious position as a friend in London, giving an account of Queen Elizabeth's entertainment. We may be sure, however, that the jesters, and companions of the royal court, were often as much inclined to jest and mirth as they were to serious and deep thought. It is probable, therefore, that Laneman was not altogether out of place in the company of his masters.

In his life, it is said, he was known for his wit and his ability to tell stories. He is also credited with composing a number of songs and ballads, and with being a skilful musician. It is possible that these were the qualities which led to his being selected for such a position in the royal court.

Note G, p. 236—DR. JULIA.

The Earl of Leicester's physician, Julian, was his ablest assistant and was said to have been a skilful and distinguished man. He is known to have been a good doctor, and to have been respected by his contemporaries.

Note H, p. 237—WALTER RALEIGH.

Among the attendants and retainers of Sir Walter, we have ventured to introduce the celebrated Raleigh, in the dawn of his court favour. In Ashbee's Correspondence, there are some curious particulars of Sir Walter Raleigh. "He was a tall, handsome man, with a head, but his name was that he was damnable proud. Old Sir Robert Harley of Brampton Brian Castle, who knew him, would say, it was a great question who was the greatest. Sir Walter, or Sir Thomas Overbury; but the difference that was, was judged in Sir Thomas's good piece, at Downe, at Mr. Raleigh's, is a good piece, an original of Sir Walter, in a white satin doublet, embroidered with rich pearls, and a mighty rich chain of great pearls about his neck. The old servants have told me that the pearls were not as big as the painted ones. He had a most remarkable aspect, an exceeding high forehead, long-faced, and sour-eyed. A rebuke is added to this purpose:

The enemy to the stomach and the word of discourse, of inward discouage, forward, or backward.

Sir Walter Raleigh's head turned up naturally, which gave him an advantage over the gallants of the time who must have received a touch of the barber's art to give them the air of most admired. — See Ashbee's Correspondence, vol. i. part p. 290.

Note E, p. 244—COUNT FAVOUR OF SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

The gallant incident of the cloak is the traditional account of this celebrated statesman's rise at court. None of Elizabeth's courtiers knew better than he how to make his court to her personal favor, or to keep his name in the keeping of her grace. He was able to produce the quantity of flattery which she could condense to swallow. Being confirmed in the Tower of London after a most hard and trying experience, and understanding the queen was about to pass to Greece, that he might see, as at whatever distance, the more he loved her, and the more affectionate she was to him, the more beautiful object which the earth bore was to be seen. The Lieutenant of the Tower (his own particular friend) threw himself between his prisoner and the window; while Sir Walter, apparently influenced by a fit of unresisting passion, swore he would not be delivered from seeing her face, his life, his goddess! A scuffle ensued, get up for effects sake, in which the lieutenant and his captive grappled and struggled with fury—true each other's hair—and at length drew daggers, and were only separated by force. The scene was exhibited by her frantic actress, it wrought, as was there little doubt that his quarrel with the lieutenant was entirely contrived for the purpose which it produced.
NOTES TO KENILWORTH.

Therefore was chosen to be discussed in his audience, if I be not deceived of his being that day plain. So, though never do I think to do the matter, but showeth rather the great running and skill of the artificer. —PARSONS. 'Leicester's Commonwealth,' p. 27.

It is necessary to state the numerous reasons why the Earl is said to be the rival of the duke. To him the undeveloped author of his atrocities. In the latter capacity, which a prior and his withal. To supple them to him, he would have made a character too

I have only to add, that the union of the poacher, the quacksalver, and the same person, was familiar to the pretenders to the mystical sciences.

NOTE II. p. 292.—AMY ROBERTS AT KENILWORTH.

[The historical critic will recognize an obvious anachronism in the Author’s account of Amy Dudley, and the Earl of Leicester being in secret wedlock with Lady Salisbury.

With reference to these historical liberties, see the conclusion to the Monasry, vol. x. p. 473, of this edition.]

NOTE I. p. 307.—ENTERTAINMENTS AT KENILWORTH.

See Lanham’s Account of the Queen’s Entertainment at Kenilworth Castle, in 1575, a very diverting treatise, written by a great converser. It is interesting collection of the Press at once in Mr. Nichols’s very curious and singular publication termed Kenilworth Illustrated, printed at Chawick, for Henry Customers and Kadiflee of Birmingham. It contains re-pints of Lanham’s, the MS. and the Style, the original sketch was found among the manuscripts of Queen Elizabeth, vol. i.; and more lately in a bedstead, suitable, embroidered, and other scarce pieces, annotated with accuracy and fidelity. The Author takes the liberty to refer to this work as his authority for the accounts of the festivities.

I am indebted for a curious ground-plan of the Castle of Kenilworth, as in Queen Elizabeth’s time, to the voluntary kindness of Richard Badnell, Esq. of Kenilworth, near Liverpool. From his obliging communication, I learn of the celebrated Mr. J. Roussett, when he left England. These are corroborated by a friendly letter from the care of his friend Mr. Davenport, and passed from his legatees into the possession of Mr. Badnell.

NOTE II. p. 310.—ITALIAN RHYMES.

The incident alluded to occurs in the poem of Orlando Innamorato of Bolardo, lib. ii. canto 4, stanza 25.

'Non ero per ventura, etc.'

It may be rendered thus:

As then, perseverance, uncyn, was the tower,
So entered free Anglican’s stainless knight.
No monster and no giant had the bowers,
Whose rocks reclined the fairy light.
Robert in a bower by of his wide
And on her lay a sword of bread and might.
In whose broad blade, in a mirror light.
The fairy deck her hair, and placed her next night.
Elizabeth’s attachment to the Italian school of poetry was singularly manifested on a well-known occasion. Her Earl of Leicester, having offended her delicacy Orlando Ferrara, she imposed upon him, as a penalty, the task of rendering the resemble poem into English.

NOTE K. p. 314.—FURNITURE OF KENILWORTH.

In revising this work, I have had the means of making some accurate additions to my attempt to describe the princely pleasures of Kenilworth. I have visited the kindliness of my friend William Harmer, Esq., who had the goodness to give me an inventory of the furniture of Kenilworth in the days of the magnificent Earl of Leicester. I have adorned the text with some of the splendid articles mentioned in the inventory, but anticipate, especially, to see a full specimen of the story.

Extracts from Kenilworth Inventory, A.D. 1584.

A Saloon, ship-form, of the mother of pearl, garnished with silver and divers works, artistic design, and ornaments, with xvi pieces of ornament, whereof, if on the image of Dame Fortune standing on a globe with a flag in her hand. Polis xxx oz.

A gilt salt box for a winnow, mother of pearl. Polis xxx oz., iij quarters.

A green large-cloth, embroidered with white lions and bears.

A perforating box of silver. Polis six oz.

In the laths, Toleis, long and short, vj. Forms, long and short, xiij.

HANGINGS.

(These are minutely specified, and consisted of the following sort, in tapestry, and gilt, and red leather.)

Flowers, leaves, and pillars arched. Forest work. Historic. Storie of Shemuel, and the Prophets, Childe, Sable, Toilee, Hercules, Lady Fame, Hawking and Hunting. Jermio, Herakles and Holopherne, David, Abraham, Sampson, Hippolitus, Alexander the Great, Nama, Assurian, Jacob, etc.

BEDSTREES, WITH THEIR FURNITURE.

(These are magnificent and numerous. I shall copy, reverently, the description of what appears to have been one of the best.)

A bedstead of walnut-tree, topsy fashion, the pillows red and varnished, two and a half, a bedstead, and single valance of crimson satin, padded with a broad lace of gold and silver. The tester richly embroidered with my Lo. arms a label, Queen’s cipher, and crimson, and with a border of crimson silk and gold, containing xii brocades of satin, and one yard in quarters deep. The bed, valance, and curtains lined with crimson satin, red velvet. A crimson satin counterpane, quilted and embelished with a gold twister, and lined with red satin, being in length ij yards good, and in breadth iij scant.

A chaise of crimson satin, suitable.

A fayre quite of crimson satin, xj yards, 3 quarters nailed, close, all longvoiced with silver and silver, with the arm of a chasuble damask of crimson, fringed round about with a small fringe of crimson silk, and pomegranate with white fastam.

Five plumes of crossed feathers, garnished with bone lace and fringes of gold and silver, standing in cups with all over, with gold, silver crowns, and other suitable ornaments.

A carpet for a cupboard of crimson satin, embroidered with a border of crimson twill, and shawls of parts of it fringed with silk and gold, lined with red satin, in length ij yards, and xij breadth of satin.

(There were eleven down beds and ninety feather beds, besides thirty-seven mattress.)

CHAVERS, STOOGES, AND CUSHIONS.

(These were equally splendid with the beds, etc. I shall here copy that which stands at the head of the list.)

A clavier of crimson velvet, the scene and backe embroidered, with a Lo. in cloth of gold, the bare and ragged stuffs in cloth of silver, garnished with lace, a fringe of gold and silver, and crimson silk. The frame covered with vellet, border about the edge with gold lace, and studded with gilt nails.

A square foot, and a flat stool, of crimson velvet, fringed and garnished suitable.

A long cushion of crimson vellet, emb. with the ragged stuffs in a wreath of gold, with the lines of 'Droit et Loyall' written in the same, and the letters K. L. in

* Probably on the centre and four corners of the headboard. Four

beads and ragged stuffs occupied a similar position on another of

* Drages. 135
cloth of goulde, being garnished with lace, fringe, buttons, and tassels, of gold, silver, and crimson silk, lined with crimson satin, being in length 1 yard quarter.

A square cushion, of the like velvet, embo, suitable to the long cushion.

CARPETES.
(There were 10 velvet carpets for tables and windows, 49 Turkey carpets for floors, and 32 cloth carpets. One of each I will now specify.)

A carpet of crimson velvet, richly embo, with my Lo-
poole, beares and ragged staves, ece., of cloth of goulde
and silver, garnished upon the seams and aboute with
gold lace, fringed accordingly, lineed with crimson taffeta
canvas, being 3 breadth of velvet, one yard 3 quarters
long.

A great Turky carpet, the grounde blew, with a list
of yellow at each end, being in length x yards, in breedthe
ij yards and quarter.

A long carpet of blew cloth, lineed with bridges sattin,
fringed with blew silk and goulde, in length y yards hact
a quarter, the whole breadth of the cloth.

PICTURES.
(Chiefsly described as having curtains.)
The Queenes Majestie (a great table.) 3 of my Lord,
St. Jerome. Ld. of Aundrell. Lord Masheverus, Lord of
Alexander Magnus. Two Ynge Ladys. Pom-
Phillips Wife. Prince of Orange and his Wife. Mary of
Burgos and his Wife. Conne de Hore. Countt hoi-
ville. Duches of Parma. Henri, E. of Pembroke
and his young Countes. Counts of Essex. Occasion and
W. Mildmay. Sr. Wn. Pickering. Edwin Alp. of
York.

A tabell of an historie of men, women, and children,
molden to wax.

A little folding table of emboe, garnished with white
bone, wherein are written verses with lines of goulde.

A table of my Lords armes.

Eye of the plannetts, painted in frames.

Twenty-three cardes, ece maps of countries.

INSTRUMENTS.
(I shall give two specimens.)

An instrument of organs, regals, and virginals, covered
with crimson emboe, and garnished with goulde lace.

A fair pair of double virginals.

* Ce Charts.

CARBONETS.

A cabonett of crimson satini, richly embo, with a device
of hunting the stagge, in goulde, silver, and silk, with
ij glasses in the topp thereof, xij cups of flowers made
of goulde, silver, and silk, in a case of leather, lined with
green sattin of bridges.

(Another of purple velvet. A desk of red leather.)

A CHERV BOARD of chine, with checkers of churlist and
other stones, layed with silver, garnished with beares
and ragged staves, and cinpettions of silver. The
xxxij likeness of churlist and other stones set, the one
sort in silver white, the other gilt, in a case gilded and
lineed with green cotton.

(Another of orange and chine. A pair of tabellts of bone.)

A GREAT EBANIE CANDLESICK to hang in the rooke
of the house, verie layder and curiously wrought, with
xxxij branches, xij greater and xij of lesser size, 6 rowers
and 12 wings for the spread eagle, xijxj sattets for can-
delie, xijxij greater and xij of a lesser sorte, axxiij sawers,
or candle-cups, of like propretion to put under the
sattets, xjij images of men and xij of women, of brass,
verie finely and artificiallie done.

These specimens of Leicester's magnificence may serve
to assure the reader that it scarce lay in the power of a
modern author to exaggerate the lavish style of expense
displayed in the princely pleasures of Kenilworth.

NOTE L. p. 351 — DEATH OF THE EARL OF LEICESTER

In a curious manuscript copy of the information given
by Ben Jonson to Durnond of Hawthornden, as trans-
cribed by Sir Robert Sibbald, Leicester's death is ascribed
to poison administered by a cordial by an impostor,
to whom he had given it, representing it to be a restorative
in any faintness, in the hope that he herself might be
cut off by using it. We have already quoted Jonson's
account of this misstaken stroke of retribution in a note
to the preceding, p. 178. It may be here added, that
the following satirical epistle on Leicester occurs in
Durnond's Collection, but is evidently not of his com-
position.—

EPISTAPH ON THE EARL OF LEICESTER.

Here lies a valiant warrior,
Who never drew a sword;
Here lies a rich gentleman,
Who never kept his word;
Here lies the Lord of Houses,
Who governed the Estates;
Whom the earth could not keep alive,
And the just heaven now has

[See Archæologia Scotica, vol. iv.; and the volume
published by the Shakespeare Society, Notes on
Jonson's Conversations, 1844, p. 244.]
GLOSSARY TO KENILWORTH.

A. in.
Ate, a degraded person.
Agra, a shed.
Alas, suffering.
Aglide, slip the flat blade of a sword.
Acolyte of chivalry, attendant on junior assistant in a ceremony; a novice.
Ardite, evil genie in Mahomedan mythology.
Aiguilette, golden tag.
Amazons, a famous Arabian astronaut, b. 804 A.D.
Alchemist, a universal solvent of the alchemists.
At freshen, in the open air.
Alicante, Spanish wine.
Almsmen, Germans.
Alms, second self.
Amadis, the hero of a XIV. century romance.
Amoret, an XVII. century love name.
An, if.
Anita, Eh? I beg your pardon?
Angel, gold coin=10s.
Ancle, ludicrous, clownish.
Arunna, the great secret, the clixor.
Arepal, silver.
Arion, ancient poet, who, when flung into the sea, was saved on a dolphin’s back.
Arrow, ‘er a, ever a.
Artif, craftsman, artisan.
Arteget, etc. (p. 261), the stars rule men, but God rules the stars.
Autognus, a crafty pedlar, one of the characters in The Winter’s Tale.
Avers, Mary, gray for us.

Baby, small image of self reflected in the eye of another.
Barrack, expanded.
Bartholomew fair, held on 24th August, great resort of clowns.
Bast, a painted skin sometimes imitated in mailed armour.
Bastard, a sweet Spanish wine.
Bear the bell, take the first place.
Bears, are you there with your, are you there again? are you at it again?
Beasroad, bear-keeper.
Beaver, the hat, or part of helmet, made of beaver’s fur.
Belshrew. See Don Belshew.
Bell Strasse, in Ludgate Hill, London. For meaning of name, see Spectator, i. 28.
Behave, mischief take!
Benogius, orig. raw Spanish soldier; worthless fellow.
Bevis, Sir of Hampton, slain of the giant Ascanius.
Billets, wood cut for fuel.
Black letter, form of type used by first printers.
Black Sanxets, a burlesque of the Sanctus of the Roman missal.
Blood and wine, thirty-two nials said to have been used at the Crucifixion, have been preserved as relics.
Body o’ me, current oath in reign of Elizabeth.
Bona, rice, a wench, a showy wanton.
Bolcher, a cobler, a tailor who does repairs.
Bota, a disease caused by parasitical insects.
Bredhefor, a little brat.
Breech, bosh.
Briareus, fabulous monster.

Brill (The), a Dutch port.
Brothel of the Roye Cross, mystical secret society able to transmute metals, etc.
Buffy, leather of a dull yellow colour.
Bump, to make a hollow sound.
Bush, the sign of atavism.

Ca, like Ten, abbreviated for Caliban.
Culver, sixteenth century musket.
Camerae, comrades.
Camis, shirts.
Capotaine, close fitting hat.
Carel, written challenge, letter of defiance.
Cast, specimen, sort.
Casting bottle, bottle for spitting judged perfumed waters.
Cater-cousin, on terms of close intimacy.
Candle, a warm drink of gruel and wine, sweetened and spiced.
Caries, dish prepared from the roe of the sturgeon.
Cest Bonhomme, etc. (p. 241), 'Tis the man who does the fighting and gives counsel.
Chefs, scold, worry.
Chantrey, famous sculptor, 1782-1841.
Charitatis, charlatans.
Chinny, cotton, S. Philippine.
Churb, bird of the crow family.
Clief, miser.
Chery, spiced wine.
Clerks, book-keepers.
Cloud, piece of leather or cloth; a rag.
Cock and crow, oath consisting of an adjuration of the Deity and the Roman Catholic service book.
Coddling, an unripe apple.

Coldhead, fool.
Colts, unwept.
Cognizance, emblem, ladder.
Cog’s wounds, God’s wounds.
Cog, head-dress.
Cowl, noise, buskin.
Combust, astrological term applied to a planet when it is near to the sun.
Consortable, enjoying contentment and ease.
Commodity, goods, profit.
Compo, roti, having accomplished your wish.
Compiler, name formerly given to debtor prisoners in London.
Coragio, courage.
Cordovan, Spanish leather.
Corthian, a daubed man.
Costard, the head.
Cote, pass, overtake.
Couchez, going to bed.
Craze in the Vintry, the Three. See Vintry.
Cricket, four-legged stooge.
Cross, silver coin marked with a cross.
Cuerpo, body.
Cup, eper, naled.
Cot, broth of boiled meat smained.
Culinaris, to be in the highest point of altitude.
Culleen, ancient small cannon.
Currier, a cobbler, let the breakfast be cured for.
Cuttab, bully, sharper.
Cyclote, Heroic one-eyed monsters, who inhabited Sicy.
Cuir Surt, a knight covering, scarf.

Dan, title of honour common with the old poets.
Deadleopard, dwarf, urchin.
Debauched, debauched.
Dance, roll down.
Decoy looking over Lincoln, possible allusion to the malignity with which the devil was supposed to regard the beauty of a finished cathedral, or else to a sour-faced statue at Lincoln of his infernal majesty.

Devour duty,
Deblatini, little devil, mischievous young drap.

Died without his shoes, i.e. in bed.

Difficulty, etc. (p. 220), endurancr of hardships from day to day.

Difficult, finger.

Drink, rim, tidy, diril, thrill, vibrate.

Distemper, dissertation, disorder, failing.

Divertissement, entertainment.

Do it,

Don Belchini of Grocer, hero of an old romance.

Doubt, fear.

Douse, blow, stroke.

Dramatis personae, characters of the drama.

Drink-bar, coarse dark stuff.

Drawee, waiter.

Drink and a half, physic draught, and a pill.

Eprount, Duke of Guel- dres, beheaded by Alva for treachery.

Eldorado, very rich country which Martinez claims to have discovered.

Electuary, kind of medicine.

Epicureus, Greek philosopher, b.c. 342-270.

Erasmus, Dutch scholar, A.D. 1466-1536.

Erasmus de Douta Gote, Latin for Erasmus de Zaelis.

Erps, huss, etc. (p. 221), so ho there, my pupil, come hither, I play thee.

Esclusius celebrated physician of antiquity.

Esplinger, tells work for training bees.

Et sic de eterna, and so on with the rest.

Esmensidad, Siglantymur nefas, id Furies and the Nigian monster.

Esquire, famous sword of King Arthur.
IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (MT-3)
Scrope, mean fellow, wretch.
Scion, sitting down—term in heraldry.
Septuagint, Greek version of the Old Testament.
Sentry, banch.
Seven sleepers, martyrs of Ephesus, who, according to the legend, slept in a cave from the reign of the Emperor Decius to that of Theodosius II., a period of 196 years.
Screw, head butler.
Sey, a drinking vessel, a goblet.
Shag, sort of rough cloth.
Shals, sort of pipe, resembling a hautboy.
Sheeter, Jeres, town in Spain, famous for its wine.
Shog, move on.
Shovel-board, game of pushing pieces of money on a board.
Sărants, Solos, etc. (p. 226). If you dissolve a fixed substance and make the solution fly, and then turn it into a fixed substance, you will live safe and sound if the process causes a wind, it is worth a hundred pieces of gold. The wind blows where it lists. Catch who catch can.
Shire and shear, division by means of a slive fixed to the point of a pair of shears.
Sine prole, childless.
Skene, short sword, knife.
Skill, know.
Slaver, saliva.
Sleuth-board, blood-bound, Stocket, to convey things privately.
Stock, an outer or lower garment.
Snob-faced, of girlish face or complexion.
Snails, an oath. See Blood and Nails.
Snipe up, be hunged.
Solen, important.
Something, somewhat.
Solemn, brought to destruction, ruined.
Spiro, peg for stopping a hole in a cask.
Sponge, sponge, split and breasted.
Springs, nose, gin, snare.
Stance, station.
Stand shot, pay the reckoning.
Sraple, a settled market, an emporium.
Start, move on.
Startup, high-topped shoe.
Steak, stocking.
Strappado, a military punishment in which the offender was drawn to the top of a beam and let fall.
Strike up, to cause to sound.
Syrup, be silent.
Spear, faint.
Snoaking, noisy, bullying.
Tabard, inn celebrated by Chaucer.
Tabor, a small drum.
Taffeta, silk stuff.
Take order, take suitable steps, or position.
Tailing, distress, agitation.
Tartleton, famous comedian at Elizabeth’s court.
Tent stitch, fancy stitch in worsted work.
Terangant, a fierce-tempered, brawling woman.
Thieves’ Latin, thieves’ cant or slang.
Three Cranes in the Vintry. See Vintry.
Thrift, gain, prosperity.
Tintare, one of the metals, colours, or furs used in armory.
Tippet, a length of twisted hair, also a short cloak.
Tilt, a horse.
Tod, a bush, thick shrub.
Top, a Hungarian wine.
Topping, first-rate.
Touched, speak of.
Trencher, a wooden platter.
Triangulus, the thrice great one, an ancient philosopher, who first divided the day into hours.
Truth, truth.
Trunk-house, large breeches reaching to the knee.
Trust, to tie the tagged breeches which fastened the breeches to the doublet.
Tuparia, huts.
Tyke, a dog.

Uda, God’s.
Un, be, him.
Uno scialo, etc. (p. 220), when one has been torn off, another grows in its place.
Un’s, his.
Untimely, untimely.

Vanburgh, Sir John, poet and architect, 1656-1726.
Varium et mutabile, changeable and capricious.

Vengefully, terribly.
Virtue, fortitude in Holland.
Vie! away!
Vinery, Three Cranes in the, celebrated Larchdon tavern, so called from its sign and three machines on the neighboring wharf used for lifting the vessels of wine out of the ships.

Very, old-fashioned piano.
Vite, acclamation.
Vogue la galere, come what may.
Voto a Dios, Spanish oath, By God!

Waistcoat, once a part of female attire.
Wassail, spiced ale or wine.
Witchel, pale blue.
Wench, young woman, handmaid.
White boy, a term of endearment.
White witch, wizard or witch of benevolent disposition.
Wife woman, midwife.
Witch’s mark, a wart or mark, insensible to pain, inflicted by the devil on his vassals.
Wittolfo, cuckold.
Wid’d, dwelt.
Word, name.
Worship, honour.
Wos, know.
Wyvern, dragon-headed heraldic monster.

Zany, a silly John, a simple fellow, fool, mimic.
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