

Thomas Gaspey

# THE LOLLARDS:

A Tale,

FOUNDED ON THE

PERSECUTIONS WHICH MARKED THE EARLY PART  
OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

---

BY THE AUTHOR OF

THE MYSTERY, OR FORTY YEARS AGO; AND OF  
CALTHORPE, OR FALLEN FORTUNES.

---

Forgotten generations live again.

H. K. WHITE.

---

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR

LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,

PATER-NOSTER-ROW.

1822.



English  
Houses  
7.26.43  
47802

# THE LOLLARDS.

---

## CHAPTER I.

“ 'Twas a manly blow ;  
“ The next thou giv'st, murder some sucking  
    infant,  
“ And then thou wilt be famous.”

WEBSTER.

It becomes necessary to give some account of that which immediately preceded the scene at Lutterworth. Edward had joined his father, according to the wish which the latter had expressed. Amidst the great affairs which had lately occupied the public mind, Lord Cobham calculated that he had been forgotten ; and, believing his steps to be less watched than formerly, he thought he might visit

VOL. III.

B

SKV

Q 8-3-43

Lutterworth with safety, to embrace daughter ever fondly beloved, but no more endeared to him than before, by the dangers which she had encountered, and the sufferings she had known.

By the care of the faithful Evans, horse was provided for Lord Cobham but a saddle and rowels were wanting and these it was necessary to procure from Chester. Thither Evans went and, in order to save time while he was thus engaged, Edward sought for such other articles as were requisite for the meditated expedition. The affair in which he was involved with Hus made him conceive that he ran less risk than formerly, as he had no idea that the desperadoes, who had once taken him prisoner, would care to detain him if he should again fall into their hands. It was nevertheless his wish to avoid them, from an apprehension that if repeatedly seen, it would strengthen the idea which had previously obtained

among them, that Lord Cobham lay concealed in that neighbourhood.

On one occasion, he remarked that he had been followed by the mastiff which has been already mentioned as sharing with Evans the duty of guarding Lord Cobham. Though the services of such an attendant were not to be despised in the paths which Edward traversed, he was uneasy at being accompanied by the sturdy and faithful animal; from the reflection that in the absence of Evans, his vigilance was more than ever necessary to the safety of his master. He endeavoured to send the dog back; but to accomplish this was no easy task. Though he drove him away, the creature did not return towards the cottage. When Edward had advanced a mile further, Tray bounded through a thicket, and would have lavished on him his joyous caresses. His unwelcome kindness was requited with harshness, and he was repelled. Still the object which

Edward had in view was not accomplished; and, looking back, he saw the dog pausing at the end of the lane down which his chastiser had last turned, as doubting whether he might venture to rejoin him. At last, with great satisfaction, Edward perceived that there was an end of his attendance. Tray was no longer on the watch for him; and, he doubted not, had hastened to resume his proper station.

It was dusk when Edward returned. He found Evans at his post. No inconvenience had been experienced in consequence of the absence of the dog, which, it was noticed as remarkable, had not yet sought its home. Evans accounted for it by supposing the creature to be then waiting the return of Edward. This was a habit to which he had been carefully trained, and with exemplary patience, Tray would remain six or eight hours at any place where he might be left, till rejoined by his master.

While Evans was expressing this conjecture, and questioning Edward touching the way he had taken, in order to show from his not having returned by the same path which he had pursued in the morning, that it was the clearest thing in the world, that the absence of Tray might be ascribed to that circumstance; the subject of his eloquence and reasoning made his appearance. He recognised his masters, but not with that gay fondness with which he was accustomed to greet them. With difficulty he approached, plaintively moaning, and covered with blood. It was evident that the creature had been wilfully wounded.

They condemned the wanton cruelty which had thus assailed the faithful animal, and Evans withdrew him to the lower dwelling. All was ready for the father and son to take their departure; but as it was not quite dark, Lord Cobham thought it advisable that they should remain another half hour, that

the increasing gloom might more securely conceal their intended movements.

“In suggesting this delay,” said I “it may be that I err on the side of caution. At this moment, I feel as I did when (I was then a mere youth) I first went into battle. A startling apprehension made me, for an instant, suspect that my courage was inferior to that of the veterans who marched by my side; but at the same time, glowing hopes of victory and glory, produced a sensation so rich in unquiet joy, that I cannot but look back upon those moments as being among the most delightful I have known in the course of my chequered career. So do I not feel oppressed by an apprehension which I cannot wholly discard — yet I exult in the near prospect of enjoying the sweetest transports, in once more beholding my long lost Alice.”

“The delay,” Edward remarked, “can do no harm, though I certainly consider



it to be unnecessary. The vigilance of our enemies has abated; and it is so generally supposed that you are now in perfect safety, that I much incline to believe the pursuit has been altogether abandoned in despair."

"I suspect that his Highness half repents the persecution to which I have been subjected. Were it not that he is likely to be again in France, ere I could find my way to London, I should be much tempted to throw myself upon his clemency, in the hope that if he still excluded me from favour, his pity would remove the danger to which I have so long been exposed, and recall the sentence which has been pronounced against me. But though the sovereign may incline to clemency, I cherish not the same opinion of the regent in his absence, the Duke of Bedford. He personally dislikes me; and would I doubt not, do any thing but soften the rigour of my enemies."

"The absence of the king will, pro-

bably, not be very long protracted. Might it not be well, even now, to decline your meditated journey till he returns?"

"O no, though the reward offered for my apprehension be immense, and may possibly have kept some needy wretches constantly on the look out for me, I cannot defer the attempt to realise the hope in which I have so long indulged. Through the long days, I have pined for the welcome return of winter's gloom, to favour my present attempt, and now my desire to see Alice is wrought up to that pitch, that to abandon the attempt were not less painful than the sacrifice of life. But a deeper tint has been already supplied, and dubious evening yields her place to night. Now let us forth."

They left the cot to proceed to that of Evans, who was then tending the wounded dog. The animal was howling under the remedies which his kindness supplied, when his cries of pain were suddenly

succeeded by a furious roar, and he sprang from the hut at a stranger, who had begun to ascend the mound. Evans perceived that the object of Tray's attack was not alone; and, applying a whistle to his mouth, he blew one loud shrill blast, to warn Cobham of peril, and prepare him for defence.

"It is the danger signal," cried Cobham; "and listen,—Evans is attacked,—back for our arms, and let us descend to his aid."

They retreated to the cottage. Cobham snatched a battle-axe, and gave a sword to Edward. Again they began the descent, when they perceived that two strangers had already passed the tree which obstructed the winding path to the cottage. The battle-axe of Cobham crushed the skull of one of them, and Edward engaged the second; but others now came rapidly forward, and father and son were compelled to retreat to the summit of the hill.

“ We know who you are —surrender!” cried one of the assailants.

“ Not while I can wield this weapon,” said Cobham; and death descended as he spoke on the man who had accosted him.

In the meantime, Edward had disarmed the individual opposed to him. At that moment one close behind the vanquished, called out, pointing to Lord Cobham,—

“ That is the Old Lollard—look to him.”

More was not necessary to inform Edward who was near him. He knew the voice of the Red-hand. Furious at finding him foremost among the enemies of his father, he thought of no one else, and aimed a blow at the assassin, which, had it taken effect, would undoubtedly have terminated his hostility. But the rage which animated Edward, defeated his object. The Red-hand adroitly stooped, and avoided the sword. Not meeting with

the resistance on which he had calculated, Edward lost his footing, and, unable to stop himself, was precipitated from the brow of the hill. The cottage in which Evans had resided interposed, and prevented him from falling to the bottom; but the shock was so great that it rendered him insensible.

Cobham was completely surrounded; but he still offered a determined opposition, without any hope but that of terminating his life on the spot, and dying, like a soldier, with arms in his hands. He received several wounds; but his assailants, desirous of taking him alive, pressed him less furiously than they might have done. At length, a peasant having got behind him, cut the sinews of his right leg, and he fell. The others rushed on him, wrested the battle-axe with which he had done such fearful execution, from the warrior's hand, and deprived him of the means of making further resistance.

“ Bind his hands !” cried one, who now pressed forward and seemed to command ; — “ Bind the prisoner’s hands.”

Those who had previously thrown themselves on Cobham’s prostrate form, hastened to comply with this mandate ; and, obeying it, they raised him so that he could sit. He looked calmly round, while the person who had directed that his hands should be tied, and who was then superintending the execution of the order, met his view.

“ Lord Powis !” he exclaimed, with surprise.

“ Yes,” replied the Earl, “ it is I who have the honour of securing a heretic and rebel.”

“ I am sorry for it, my lord. My life is of little value ; but I should have hoped that a nobleman of your rank might be better employed than in seeking it. You will, doubtless, receive the mighty sum which has been set on this devoted head ; but you will not gain peace or happiness by

thus descending below your station, to give up a guiltless man to blood-thirsty pursuers."

"For me," said Earl Powis, "it is sufficient to merit the applause of my king and country. I heed not what character may be given to my conduct by a foul traitor, and pestilent Lollard."

"Be it so, my lord; and when, in advanced age, you shall feel that your soul is about to depart from its earthly mansion, may the recollection of the arts you have used to trace me to this poor retreat, be ever present to your imagination! Memory shall then faithfully recount your noble services. Enjoy them in your last hour—if you can."

"That satisfaction will be mine," said the Red-hand, presenting himself before the pale and bleeding, but undismayed soldier. "It was I, my proud lord, who sought and who found the means of thus chastising the former insolence of your family."

“ You ! — and what are you ? ”

“ Ask the young insolent fool, whose carcase lies at the foot of this hill, and whose filial love knows no concern for the defeat of his father, — ask him when you meet him in another world, and he will tell you ; for not even the sleep of death shall make him forget it. — ask him who was Roderick the Red-hand, whom he once dared to scorn.”

“ Away ! ” cried Cobham.

“ No ! ” replied the wretch, exulting in the success which had crowned his efforts against the Oldcastles. “ No ; your bidding is not now to be obeyed as formerly. I shall mock you with my presence, and feast my vengeance on the narrative which I have ready for your ear.”

“ Earl Powis,” said Cobham, “ may I ask if it is your desire that I should be thus exposed to the vulgar scoffings of every common ruffian ? ”

“ Nay,” replied the Earl, “ you have



have taunted me, and I therefore leave you to deal with others as you may."

"Know, then," Roderick resumed, "that when the irresolute Reginald suffered your son to depart, and refused to pursue you, I sought a bolder heart, and more powerful hand, and found them in Earl Powis."

"Ye are worthy partners," Cobham coolly remarked. "May each continue to possess the friendship of the other! I know not which will be honoured most."

"And your life will probably be too short to enable you to judge from experience."

"No matter. — I can little regret leaving the world, peopled as it is at present."

"Your son had the arrogance to believe that he had baffled my vigilance. He did so for a brief season, and snatched the repeatedly found clue from my hand, by his nimble doublings. I would have served him as I served his dog, but that his

stubbornnes might have defeated my object. His cur, I knew, would drag his mangled flanks to his master's dwelling ; and, therefore it was only necessary to disable him from going home too swiftly. 'Twas this consideration induced Roderick the Red-hand to strike a wretched brute, and let the master pass for a time unharmed."

" Well, blood-hound ! — your artifice has succeeded, and you have now but to finish the work. Gratify your nature, by proving once more your dagger's point on the prostrate, bound, and bleeding Cobham."

" No ; I reserve for you that fate which has been so often invoked for me by your son, and I doubt not by yourself. To the hand of justice I consign you, and buy my own neck a holiday from the halter, by sending your body to the stake."

While he spoke, his companions raised the wounded prisoner in their arms, and

conveyed him down the hill. A cart waited their approach. Into this Lord Cobham was lifted, and carried towards the residence of Earl Powis, who now retired, delighted with the complete success which had crowned his expedition.

Edward awoke from the trance into which he had been thrown, to the horrible consciousness of the situation of his father. The injuries which he himself had sustained were less severe than might have been expected, and he was hardly aware that he had received wound or contusion, so completely were his thoughts diverted from all external pain. He sadly gazed on the ravaged hut, and the slaughtered mastiff. The cottage of Evans was deserted. Whether that faithful friend had perished, or had been detained as a prisoner; or whether he had fled to escape from the heavy penalty attached to the crime of harbouring Lord Cobham, it was in vain to conjecture; and it was of little importance, as, in either case, death

and hopeless ruin seemed to be his lot. Frantic with the grief—inspired by the reflections to which events so mournful gave birth, he at length took his way towards Lutterworth, where, after encountering many hardships, as they would have seemed to him under other circumstances, though now he felt them not, he arrived in the state which has been described.

## CHAP. II.

“————— My father's treachery,

“ If he be false, prove not his son so too.

“ I ne'er consented to such villainy

“ As now is charged against my sire by you.”

*The Wars of Charlemagne in Spain.*

THE vast and varied affliction of which the house of Mr. Whittington had become the scene, demanded all the humane exertion of which that philanthropist was capable, to soothe the frenzy, and preserve the lives of the sufferers. Edward was almost expiring from fatigue, endured with every sort of privation, as well as under the pressure of the most agonising sorrow. Alice was too much shocked

herself, to be capable of administering consolation to her brother; and Octavius, bewildered by the intelligence so unexpectedly brought to him, was for a time absolutely bereft of reason. All that kindness could offer, to relieve the misfortune thus concentrated under one roof, was readily supplied; but all was of little avail to assuage misery like that which Mr. Whittington had to combat.

The morning of the day succeeding that on which Edward last arrived at Lutterworth, had dawned, and found him in the same room with the son of Lord Powis. Suddenly starting from a stupor, which, for many hours, had bestowed oblivion on the past, Octavius fixed his eyes sadly on Edward, while he exclaimed —

“Another day has shed its brightness on me, and still I live. O! this is misery! In such circumstances, to survive, is base insensibility.”

Something in his tone arrested the at-

tention of the unhappy Edward. Though he was too much absorbed with his own meditations, to reason very accurately on what he had heard, there was that which struck him as extraordinary, and he could not help demanding —

“What mean you?”

“Can you, Oldcastle, ask me? Wild and inglorious as my career may have been, I still had hoped to reach my grave without experiencing a shock like that which yesterday inflicted.”

“I cannot deny that assuming you to be ignorant of what your father was about to do, and not approving nor participating —”

“And is this to be assumed, — not conceded? Am I — am I — so vile?”

“I would not charge on the innocent, the deed of the culpable. But ought I to conclude that you knew not till I arrived, what had taken place? This may be so, but could the circumstances

under which I found you here, lead to such an inference?"

"The circumstances! — what circumstances?"

"Can you forget them?"

"My memory is no more. You have roused a fearful curiosity. Explain."

"Were you not here as suitor to my sister? Such, I have learned, was the character in which you came. Did you not talk to her of sudden wealth that had descended on your family, — of service rendered to the state by your father, which had at once lifted him to fame and glory?"

"I did — I did."

"And to what else could you allude than that deed, which shall give its heartless perpetrator a damning immortality? What other service enables your father's name? What other mine of wealth has he discovered?"

"Alas! none, none — I fear, none."



“Why, then, should I doubt, that it was to this you alluded; and that the honours and rewards which you invited Alice to share, had been thus acquired?”

“Horrible surmise! Can you for a moment entertain the thought, that, knowing what you have reported, I could present myself here? What! participate in an act which my soul shudders to contemplate? Share the polluted wealth destined to be its reward; and, still refining on depravity, repair hither to woo your sister; and bid her forth with me to revel in the joy that might be purchased with her father's blood? O never! strike me to the heart! — annihilate every spark of my father that animates this frame! — but suspect me not of conduct so atrocious.”

“I wish not to give pain, where reproach is not merited. If you have not been seduced by the tempting offers of wealth and greatness —”

“Wealth and greatness! These may

have charms, but not for me, at such a price! Were every flinty vein that runs through this earth, a vein of purest gold; nay, were its soil all gold, and every pebble on its ample surface a richer jewel than ever glistened in the proudest diadem — were these, and every title of distinction that emperors, kings, or nations can bestow, proffered to me, to share in such a deed, with measureless contempt I had scorned them all, nor deigned to look on those who tendered them.”

“ You speak as you should feel.”

“ Nay, as I must feel, while thought appertains to me. What is wealth, and all that it can purchase? What, all the gold and purple in the world to deck the body, that reasoning man should, to enjoy these for a few years, submit to endure deformity of soul so lasting, that not even the grave can cure it, nor all eternity remove? In blameless rags I cheerily could walk; but never, for an

hour; would I endure to hear such marks of ignominious state, and stalk beneath a weight of splendid shame."

"Octavius, I think you speak sincerely. This emotion cannot be counterfeited."

"I will make you know that it is not feigned. To the Earl I will hie forthwith; but may you — may you not have been deceived? Surely, my father never could act such a part! Have you not been misled by vague report?"

"Impossible! These eyes beheld him there, when the retreat of my devoted father was rudely stormed. That he has claimed the reward, is known to all the country."

"Wild rumours," Octavius observed, "sometimes gain credence. Methinks it cannot be. What motive could he have?"

"To destroy the enemy of the Archbishop of Canterbury — to gratify the zeal of Chicheley, who still considers my

father to be the greatest foe the church ever had to cope withal. Thus would Earl Powis show his gratitude to the prelate who took you under his protection."

"Still let me doubt it. But I will hasten to Wales. I will beseech my father never to carry the prisoner — if, unhappily, that name belong to Lord Cobham — to London. Failing to persuade, if force or artifice of mine can break his chains, he shall be free.

"Your generous efforts will be useless. Weak and disabled as I am, though I thought not of rest, I travelled but slowly. My tortured brain forgot to number the days that I was on my road; but this I learned on the way, that already Earl Powis had sent his prisoner forward, intending forthwith to follow himself. By this time Lord Cobham is near London."

"Then I will thither. There will I seek Chicheley; and pray, if he ever had

my welfare at heart; that he prove it now, by using his influence, which is most potent, in behalf of the brave betrayed captive. I will conjure my father, if he set any value on my affection — on my peace — on my life, to abandon all reward — all hope of advancement, and join with me to supplicate for mercy.”

“The archbishop is undoubtedly possessed of vast power, and could he be wrought upon to favour such a suit, a pardon might be won from the clemency of the king. Then, what has occurred, from being a calamity, might become the source of joy and comfort.”

“I will hope it. You well know that Chicheley is my warm friend; and, trust me, though stern and harsh with those who offend the church, I believe his benevolence not small.”

“I have heard that, fierce as he is against the Lollards, humanity is no stranger to his bosom. If this be so, he may not be prayed in vain to throw a

pitying eye on such a case as this. I had before a thought which now ripens into resolution, to present myself before him, and plead my father's cause."

"Let this be done!" cried Octavius; "but I will first approach him, and prepare him to listen to your pleadings with indulgence. I will away instantly. You shall follow me to town so soon as you have recovered."

"Nay, I will with you. My heart is too much engaged to feel the trifling injuries to which you allude. These shall not delay me."

"By Heaven! you seem in this moment to have regained your lost vigour, and ruddy health appears about to re-lumine that cheek, so lately wan and faded. That duty has won from Nature so important a boon already, I take as an earnest of success. We will forth this hour. — Yes, lovely one," he continued, addressing himself to Alice, who now entered, supported by Mr. Whit-

tington, "we will away; and I trust the day is not remote, when you shall learn that the life and liberty of Lord Cobham, have been accorded to our prayers."

The anguish which had previously been endured by Octavius, and the generous energy which now animated his countenance, escaped not Alice. The former gained, in the midst of her own affliction, pity and esteem; the latter commanded admiration and gratitude.

"And will *you* — will *you* solicit for my ill-fated father?" she tremulously enquired.

"As for the greatest, richest boon that mortal can obtain. Believe me, if petition of mine may avail, your father's life is in no danger. If I sue not for his life more earnestly than I would for my own, may my existence terminate with shame, — be vengeful spectres the attendants of my death-bed, — hope a stranger to my bosom, and mercy's ear, deaf to my latest prayer."

“Generous Octavius!—why is your father so unlike you in virtue?”

“Speak not of him, Alice, at this moment. Think not too harshly of him. When men decline in years, their intellects do sometimes fail them. Such must have been his case, or he could not have undertaken what he has performed. His days are few, and he can only be anxious to gain wealth on my account. That he has erred thus, proves to me that he is labouring under some fatal malady. I will be his physician; and returning health shall restore him to virtue, and unite his earnest representations with mine, in favour of Lord Cobham.”

Edward and Octavius departed. On the road they made no unnecessary pause. Alice had wished to accompany them, but this was not permitted, as they thought it of importance that they should travel with all possible expedition. Mr. Whittington, to whom the difficulties at-



tendant on a journey to London, appeared less awful than formerly, undertook to bring Alice after them. On reaching the capital, Octavius hastened to his father, for the purpose which he had previously avowed. Earl Powis, intoxicated by the applause he had received from those who, from malice or bigotry, wished for the ruin of Lord Cobham, was not prepared to listen with patience, much less with favour, to the energetic remonstrances of his son. Praised as the great supporter of the church — as the gallant conqueror of its worst enemy, he was little disposed to relinquish the high renown, which he persuaded himself attached to this exploit, by soliciting the release of the Lollard. To do this, and to give up the splendid reward which he had earned, were things not to be thought of; and the consequence was that the entreaties of Octavius were most ungraciously received. It was in vain that he renewed his appeals. The Earl was proof against every thing that

could be urged. The frantic zeal which Octavius at last displayed, instead of waking pity, roused indignation; and the Earl, highly scandalized at the depravity of his son, enjoined him to speak of Lord Cobham no more. Disobeyed in this, he finished by forbidding Octavius his presence.

Not more successful were his efforts to shake the resolution of the archbishop. His reasonings on subjects connected with those measures, which Chichely had decided were necessary for the well-being and for the preservation of the established church, were considered to indicate presumption, and, still worse, disaffection. Repeatedly admonished, to beware how he suffered himself to become an advocate in the cause, he was at last charged with having embraced the principles of the Lollards. He continued refractory. The prelate made another effort to damp his ardour, by giving Octavius to understand that, if such were his opinions, he could

no longer recommend that the charms and wealth of Matilda, should be bestowed on one so forgetful of his duty. With astonishment not to be described, Chicheley found that the mention of Matilda produced no change in the conduct of Octavius; and he could only relieve himself from the reiterated intercessions of the young soldier, by refusing to listen further to any thing that he might urge, and withdrawing to another apartment.

The sad tidings of failure were promptly conveyed to Edward. His hopes were much abated by the determined resolution manifested by Chicheley, not to listen to any application for mercy; but he was determined, if possible, to see him. With this intention, he directed his steps to Westminster. A tractus, or ferry, was then established at a small distance from Lambeth-House, as the archiepiscopal palace was called. By this he passed to Lambeth, or Lambhithe, as it was

then named. Part of the palace is at this day nearly the same, in appearance, as it was then. The Bishop's Walk, such as it now is, was not in existence. Instead of the raised terrace, a sloping uneven path ran along the front of the building, and by the wall of the garden. From the palace a bridge had been thrown over this path to a jetty, which was carried nearly one-third of the way over the river, on account of the shallowness of the water, which made it difficult to bring a boat, and impossible to carry a barge near the shore. The bridge was necessary on account of the state of the path, from the frequent overflowing of the river, which, at high tides, often washed the walls of the palace. Gazing on the splendid and venerable object, which the residence of the archbishop presented, Edward was so much overpowered with reflections on the important consequences of the interview which he aspired to obtain, that he hesi-

tated to apply for admission. Rumours, however, had reached him that the death of Lord Cobham was determined on, and that the day was not distant when his sentence would be rigorously carried into effect; and he therefore felt that he had no time to lose. But he still paused. He was fearful that some of the arguments, which he was anxious to press on the prelate, might escape his recollection, if he presented himself to Chichely before he was fully prepared. He endeavoured to recall all that it had ever occurred to him to submit, and to arrange it so that one topic should suggest another, and save him from the affliction of omitting any thing that might prove important.

He at length ventured to approach the door, and demanded to see the archbishop. The porter scrutinized his appearance, and, with that shrewdness that menials usually acquire, he discovered an expression of sorrow in Edward's face,

which led him rightly to conclude, that supplication was the object of his visit. The dejected tone in which the trifling questions he put, were answered, confirmed him in this idea. He, therefore, took upon himself to say that the archbishop was engaged, and could see no one but on business of importance.

“But mine is of importance,” said Edward.

“Then tell it to me,” was the reply.

“When I have your master’s authority for communicating to you matters of importance, intended for his private ear alone, I will do so. At present I shall not; but bear you this to his grace, and see you give it into his own hands.”

With these words he gave a letter. The firm indignation of his tone, and the dignity of command which marked his last injunction, recalled the menial to himself; and saucy opposition gave way to servile obedience.

He soon returned. His countenance

was changed, and re-instated insolence had now an auxiliary in malignant exaltation.

“ I thought how important your business was !” said he. — “ Here is your goodly note ; (throwing it at him,) the archbishop sends it you back.”

“ But will he not see me ?”

“ No !”

“ Let me pass, friend ; — mine is an affair of life and death ?”

“ You don't get by me though, for all that.”

“ He cannot have understood the nature of my request.”

“ What ! then you suppose the archbishop can't read, and want to go in to teach him his Christ-cross-row ?”

“ Suffer me to pass, that I may speak to him, but for one moment.”

“ Not I, indeed. — I tell you he won't have anything to say to you.”

The fellow was shutting the wicket,

when Edward made a new effort to gain an entrance,

“ Stay !” he exclaimed ; “ by Heaven, I must see the archbishop !”

“ But you shan’t,” retorted the porter ; and the door was closed with violence.



## CHAP. III.

“ Ah ! whither fled, dear peaceful hours !  
“ As rapid as the lightning's gleam ?  
“ Why fade so soon youth's fairest flowers,  
“ Why roll so quick joy's gliding stream ?”

ROCHE.

**MATILDA**, immured in a convent, sighed not for the world, from which she was separated. The bright glow with which hope had once decked every object, was no more ; and, in the very flower of her youth, she had begun to recognise the transient character of all that can charm. She sought no occupation to chase her tedious hours, but she coveted solitude ; that unobserved by all, she might weep

for the blissful days which were fled, and indulge those ideas which it was once joy to entertain; which it was now, in the sad reverse of her fortune, consolation to recall, from the conviction that doing so, she was faithful to her duty.

Sometimes she blamed herself for the involuntary kindness, with which she regarded Octavius. While enduring reproach, withdrawn from the world, and denied the solace of hearing of Cobham's welfare, there were moments when she could not but reflect that accepting the proffered hand of the son of Earl Powis, censure would be at once converted into praise; seclusion exchanged for the gayest circles, and yet more, she would not only hear of Edward, but should distress again overwhelm him, might find the means of imparting succour to him, and to the other members of his family. But these thoughts were resolutely banished, and she accused memory of injustice to his worth, for

retaining so vivid a recollection of the manly graces and noble bearing of Octavius; and determined, if possible, to avoid seeing him again.

The Abbess frequently conversed with her, on the subject of her temporary residence in that retreat. To her, Matilda scrupled not to avow, that its calm retirement was infinitely more grateful to her feelings, than the scenes in which she had lately been compelled to act a part. This was answered by a lecture on the duty of obedience to parents. Matilda listened to it with calmness, but made no effort to repel the implied reproach, which it cast upon her. In what was urged by the Abbess, she recognised the arguments of Lady Mary Walworth. On this point she had before expressed, to those most interested in knowing her sentiments, all that she considered essential to her own vindication; and she had no disposition

to repeat it, or to comment on what had been the conduct of others.

Thus passed her time, when one day it was announced to her, that the Archbishop of Canterbury demanded to see her instantly. She attended him, and remarked more than usual solemnity in his countenance. The cause of this was promptly communicated; and she was informed that Sir Thomas Venables had been suddenly attacked, was then considered to be at the point of death, and required that she should hasten to him to receive his last injunctions.

Matilda was not slow in complying with the summons. The archbishop forthwith conducted her to Lambeth. Sir Thomas, while his house at Charing was undergoing repair, had taken up his residence with Chichely. Here he had been assailed by that malady which threatened to terminate his existence, and which had caused him to desire

that Matilda should be brought to him. She was received by Lady Mary Walworth, who mournfully announced to her, that all hopes of the recovery of Sir Thomas were at an end, and that his dissolution might be hourly expected:

During the illness of the knight, it had been the care of Chichely to guard against every symptom of returning kindness for the Cobham family, and to press on him the importance of doing all that it rested with him to do, towards promoting the union of Matilda with Octavius. He had been thus occupied, when the latter unexpectedly appeared before him, as the advocate of the Oldcastles. The zealous anxiety of the youth took, in his view of it, the shape of culpable obstinacy. He now remembered the untoward opposition which his opinions had encountered on former occasions, and the result was a conclusion so unfavourable to Octavius, that his ardour in the cause began to fail him; and he anxiously

cast about for a pretext, on which he might call upon his dying friend to invest him with such powers, as would give him the means of preventing that very union which he had long laboured to bring about, if it should continue to appear that Octavius favoured the Lollards.

He therefore changed his course as the illness of Sir Thomas advanced. The conditions which he had before suggested, as fit to be coupled with any disposition of property, he now abandoned. To bind Matilda, he said, to marry a particular individual, might be any thing but politic, as events (he spoke of possibilities), might spring up that would make a marriage, once to be desired, no longer suitable. This, he remarked to his friend, had been experienced in his own case; and that which had already happened, might occur again.

Sir Thomas Venables felt the force of these remarks. Dying, his kindness

for his child returned; and remembering that she had cherished no passion but that which he had himself encouraged, he deeply regretted that Edward had become unworthy of her. Inspired by ancient prejudices, and by the animadversions of the archbishop, with a sincere horror for Lollardy, he could not now retrace his steps; but, without doing that, he was anxious to leave Matilda in some degree at liberty to consult her own inclinations.

Chichely had by no means determined that she should never become the wife of Octavius, but he wished the young man to know that his union with her, depended upon him. This, he thought, might tend not a little, to keep down those opinions and partialities, which had provoked his displeasure. He, therefore, suggested to Sir Thomas, that the most rational course he could take, would be to delegate that power which he could no longer exercise to some friend, who would use it as he

would have done himself if living. This, he eloquently insisted, was the course which promised the best results. All depended upon the friend he might select. For his own part, he nothing doubted that one might be found, who, attached to him in life, would respect his memory in death, and zealously labour to carry his wishes into effect, by seeking the real happiness of his daughter.

Tears burst from the eyes of the sick man, while these topics were pressed on his attention, and he unhesitatingly declared, that such a friend he really possessed in the archbishop.

It was after repeated conversations to this effect, that Matilda was brought from the convent to see her father. The meeting was a melancholy one. The heart of the father was touched, when he gazed on the paleness which overspread that face, so recently the chosen seat of health, while the ghastly aspect of death, which Matilda failed not to recognize, called



forth tears of sensibility and heart-rending sorrow. She remembered his harshness no more; and entertained no sentiments but those of love and pity, for her dying father.

When emotion subsided, so far as to admit of speech, Sir Thomas exerted all his fortitude to console Matilda for that separation which he felt to be inevitable. He vindicated the course which he had lately taken, assuring her that it was no other than that which regard for her welfare had dictated. That it had given her pain he lamented; but now that they were to part for ever, it was his wish to breathe his last, in the confident anticipation that the cares he had known, and the labours he had endured to promote her real happiness, would not be rendered vain. In the hope that she would not refuse him such consolatory assurances as were necessary to tranquillize his departing spirit, he called upon her to state if she was

prepared to give him one promise which was essential to his repose.

Matilda started at the manner in which the request was made. She feared that it was the object of her parent to obtain from her a pledge that she would complete that union, to which, without being false to her first vows, she never could consent.

“ Oh ! my father ! ” she exclaimed, “ I know not how to refuse you any promise that can afford you the slightest comfort ; but, if you love me — if my peace of mind has ever been dear to you, do not bind me to Octavius, — do not seek to exact such a promise.”

Chichely, to spare Sir Thomas the exertion of replying, took upon himself to assure Matilda, that however great the advantages of such an alliance might appear, it was not the object of her father to gain a pledge, that she would marry Octavius, or any one else.

“Then,” Matilda replied with eagerness, “there is nothing that my dear father can desire, that I, so far as depends upon me, will not most readily promise.”

“What my wishes have been,” said Sir Thomas, “you have not now to learn. But that which I would hear you promise is this:—since, in a matter of such importance as marriage, you are yet too young to judge discreetly for yourself, promise that you will never wed any one without first obtaining the consent of my right reverend friend—the Archbishop of Canterbury.”

“I promise:” said Matilda, with an air of resignation, while her faintly extended hand received the feeble grasp of her father, who thus expressed his feelings:—

“I can now leave the world in peace. Satisfied that you will never violate the promise you have given, and satisfied also that the archbishop will never sanction a

marriage that will be incompatible with my honour and your happiness."

A faintness came over Sir Thomas, and it became necessary for Matilda to retire. She left the apartment, and avoiding that in which Lady Mary Walworth expected her, descended to a lawn in the rear of the palace. The moon had just risen, and the temperate splendour distributed over the aged elms which bounded the gardens of the archbishop, would have been contemplated with delight by a mind at ease. It was lost on Matilda, whose thoughts were wholly occupied by the scene which she had just witnessed, and by the promise which she had been prevailed upon to make. Deeply did she lament, that the parent whom she had long revered was now to be snatched from life. Bereft of him, she shuddered to contemplate the situation in which she must shortly find herself. The promise she had given, never to marry but with the

consent of the archbishop, left her no alternative, she believed, but to become the wife of Octavius, if ever she became a wife at all. But it was still possible, she wished to think, that her father might recover. It might be her's again to see him in health and comfort ; and then, perhaps, grateful for being so unexpectedly spared, he would relieve her from the extorted promise, and permit her to suppose that the course of events at some future period, might again permit her to think of Edward as formerly. These ideas she wished to encourage ; but reflection told her that it was all in vain. Death rapidly advanced to seize his victim. She could see it in the altered countenance of her father, and she could not doubt that in a very few hours he would cease to live. At such a time, it was not for her to think of love and Edward. It was, on the contrary, necessary to fortify her weakness, by reconciling her mind to an eternal separation.

“The promise I have made,” she sadly murmured, “has sealed my fate. I never — never can be Edward’s, without forfeiting the pledge given to a dying father. — I must not think of him ; — I will see him no more.”

While these ideas possessed her mind, Matilda slowly paced the lawn. Her eyes were fixed on the moon ; she remarked that it approached its wane, and trembled at the idea that, in all probability, before it vanished — soon as that must be — its rays would fall on the grave of her father. At this moment, her attention was called to a slight rustling in a remote part of the garden, succeeded by the sound of a cautious footstep. Matilda saw a man disengaging himself from the bushes by which it was bounded. He stepped on the lawn, and was advancing towards the palace, when perceiving her, he halted and seemed disposed to retreat. He then moved forward, but again paused, apparently irresolute how to act. The com-

plicated sorrows which oppressed the bosom of Matilda, precluded her from feeling that alarm, which the suspicious manner of the person she had seen would otherwise have inspired, and she continued to observe, without attempting to call for assistance, and without offering to retire. The intruder approached, and she thought she recognized a form which she knew too well for her own peace. The light of the moon rested on his countenance, — she saw his features, — and doubt was at an end. — It was Edward!

## CHAP. IV.

“ He looked upon her, and her hurried gaze  
“ Was at his look dropped instant on the ground ;  
“ But o’er her cheek of beauty rushed a blaze ;  
“ Her bosom heaved above its silken bound,  
“ As if the soul had felt some sudden wound.  
“ He looked again — the cheek was deadly pale,  
“ The bosom sunk with one long sigh profound.”  
CROLY.

BREATHLESS with astonishment, Matilda gazed on her lover in silence. Emboldened by her manner, he respectfully advanced, and entreated her to dismiss all fear, as he had approached for no hostile purpose. Edward was still speaking, when her emotion became so great that she could scarcely stand. He



therefore applied himself more anxiously to dispel the terrors of which he supposed his sudden intrusion to be the cause. It was then that he caught a view of her countenance, and the involuntary exclamation burst from his lips —

“ Good Heavens! — Matilda Venables.”

A pause followed. Their mutual amazement produced in each that confusion of ideas, which baffles all expression. After some minutes had elapsed, Matilda spoke —

“ It is I, indeed. But why have you exposed yourself to danger by following me here? Fly, while you may retire unperceived, by the way you came. It is not now, when a father, about to pay the last awful debt of nature, claims all my thoughts, that I should see and hold converse with one who was my lover.”

“ Who *was* your lover!” Edward repeated, unable even in that hour of

mingling anxieties, fears, and sorrows, to avoid noticing the manner in which Matilda had spoken.

“Yes, who *was* my lover,” she repeated, attempting a firmer tone. “Such you must now cease to consider yourself. I tell you this, Heaven knows, with grief! but it is the last duty which affection can pay to one so beloved as you have been, to warn you that on me your thoughts must dwell no longer—to assure you that it is now irrevocably decided that I can never be yours.”

“My heart endured so much of woe before, I dreamed not it could know another pang. But you have added misery to misery.”

“Trust me, Edward, I mourn the sad necessity that dooms my lips to utter aught that can give you pain. But what has passed this day cannot be concealed from your knowledge. A solemn promise, demanded by a dying father, binds me never to marry, but with the consent

of the archbishop. We must think of each other no more. — Farewell!”

“Yet tarry for an instant,” cried Edward.

“To tarry, is but to prolong suffering too exquisite for endurance. Yet for one moment I pause, to pray you to receive the assurance that your image shall ever inhabit my heart — that your name shall linger on my tongue, shall be uttered in my prayers, till the last spark of life be extinct. Of this rest satisfied. Yet why do I tell it? Believe it not; for I would pray you to forget that I have ever lived, and seek happiness with another.”

“No more, Matilda! Bid me seek light and warmth from another sun, for this shall be as practicable, as for me to find felicity with any but Matilda.”

“I am sincerely anxious in my prayer, that you will take the advice I have given. Now, fly me. Much do I lament

that you have ventured upon seeking me here."

"Though to the earth's extremest limit, I could blithely follow to win your smile, it was not to seek you that I invaded these grounds."

"Indeed! Then why have you exposed yourself to the dangers which surround you in this place?"

"To solicit for a father's life."

"How!"

"Know you not that my father, betrayed by Earl Powis to his cruel enemies, is at present close prisoner in the Tower, in daily expectation of being consigned to the flames?"

"I had the affliction to hear that he had been taken. But will the barbarity of those opposed to his principles carry them the dreadful lengths that you anticipate?"

"'Tis all too certain; for my only hope, — a slender one it is, — now rests

on moving the archbishop's pity. I applied for entrance at the gate, but was denied by the insolent menial who attends it. Grown desperate, I have ventured, under cover of the night, to scale the garden wall, and now seek Chichely, at the risk of provoking his ire, to make a last effort—to supplicate his interference on behalf of Lord Cobham."

"Bethink thee, Edward, is it well that having a boon to crave, thou shouldst thus approach his presence? Anger at the intrusion, will forbid him to listen. Retire unseen, and come another day, when he shall be less indisposed to entertain thy suit."

"In the mean time my father will be carried to the stake—his ashes will be scattered by the winds, and possibly, through my failing to make that appeal which I now meditate."

"It will not be so sudden. O! if I thought the prayer that you would offer

could succeed, never believe that I would for a moment restrain you. It is to save Lord Cobham, that I now bid you fly. Again you can return by this same way, if other means should fail you. I will first attempt to wake compassion in the archbishop's bosom."

"Angelic being! take my thanks and blessing. But let me hasten to him now. This at least I know, that my prospects cannot be worse than they are at this moment."

"But they may be better than they shall be if you act unadvisedly. I will prepare him to expect you; I will moreover try, if I retain any influence over Sir Thomas, to persuade him to occupy the few minutes which my fears tell me remain to him, in conjuring the archbishop to spare the life of Lord Cobham. The prayer of a dying man for one who was his most ancient and most valued friend, cannot be disregarded. Methinks it must prevail."

"Heaven must inspire the wise, the

virtuous thought, and I will yield to your entreaties. Your once kind father, in this awful moment, shall duly feel the force of friendship's claim. That voice which is heard for the last time, will plead with resistless eloquence in such a cause."

"Such is my hope."

"But you have told me, that Sir Thomas is near his last hour. Lose no time in soliciting him. It will not be to interrupt his pious preparations for eternity, to call his thoughts to such a subject. Engaging him to devote his latest moments to intercession for a fellow mortal, you shall conduct him to the holiest exercise that can fit him for the awful change."

Deeply affected by the reflections growing out of these allusions to the present situation of her own father, Matilda, at the moment, wanted power to re-assure Edward that no effort on her part should be wanting to save his. She at length replied:—

"Fear not. Leave me now. To—

morrow, at this hour, return hither ; if you hear not glad tidings before."

" My tongue denies expression to the transports of gratitude, which this proof of your faithful love inspires. I will retire. But, hark!—What noise is that within? It comes this way."

" Fly Edward—fly!" cried Matilda, breathless with alarm at the sounds to which her attention had been directed.

" It is too late," he replied, " I cannot pass unperceived."

While speaking, several of the Archbishop's domestics appeared, and the retreat of Edward was completely cut off. Lady Mary Walworth came with them. She advanced towards Matilda, and instantly recognised the son of Lord Cobham with an exclamation of horror. Edward respectfully accosted her.

" Permit me, Lady Mary, to address a few words to you, whatever may be your displeasure at encountering one who was not always an object of aversion."

" Monster!" cried Lady Mary, " Pre-



sume not to speak to me. Your present conduct supplies a fearful comment on the pernicious principles which you have adopted. Do you hold nothing sacred on earth, that at this moment you can steal into this hallowed place, and call a daughter from the-death bed of her parent, to hear the language of a sinful passion?"

"Madam! madam! outrage not affliction: wrong not virtue thus. Such was not my errand, nor has Matilda lent an ear to supplications like those you suppose me to have offered. I presented myself to utter—I came—"

"Wretch! be gone."

"Yet hear me.—Not as a favour to one of my devoted family, but in justice to your own relation hear me."

"I will hold no communication with you. O Matilda! when I saw you sobbing, apparently in deepest affliction, over the almost lifeless form of a father, little did I suspect that you were even

then trembling for the success of a new contrivance to gain a secret interview with a lover: a lover whom that father had forbidden you to think of more."

The duplicity imputed to Matilda, arrested the course of her tears, and she replied with firmness,—

"What charge is this, madam! What is there in my past conduct, that can justify a suspicion so injurious?"

"Are you so hardened that you can answer thus? Do you presume to think the history of your life so free from reproach, that it can overwhelm facts like those which now condemn you? Unhappily, your present conduct is but too consistent with that of the heiress, who thought it not beneath her dignity and rank to receive visits from a disguised lover, under the roof of a confiding father."

"My heart, madam, is unconscious of deserving these reproaches, and I will not answer them. To my father I will vindicate

cate my conduct. The very boon which I have to ask of him, shall prove how much I have been wronged. To him will I appeal."

"Matilda," said Lady Mary, in a tone of severe expostulation, "I grieve to find you still adding artifice to artifice. You know that Sir Thomas, if he still breathes, is not in a state to hear your appeal."

"I am sure while he lives, he will not again refuse to listen to his outraged child, nor will he expect me to endure with patience, such reproofs as you have not scrupled to bestow."

"You know yourself his heiress, and believe that he has no longer the power to make arrangements which may disturb you; and hence, you presume on the situation in which you expect to find yourself, to oppose his wishes, and to spurn the gentle admonitions that would recal you to a sense of duty."

"My duty, I persuade myself, I have never forgotten. Of this my father shall be convinced."

She advanced towards the building, with the intention of repairing immediately to the chamber of Sir Thomas.

Just then a domestic passed her, and fixing his eyes on Edward, called out to his fellows,—

“Why this is the knave that tried to force his way by me. My Lord said he would not see him, and so he has ventured to break in.”

“Take him to the lower strong room,” cried another. “My Lord says he must not go forth. Sir Thomas Venables is expiring; and as soon as the archbishop has closed his eyes, he will examine this fellow.”

Matilda's steps had been arrested by the intimation just given, that Edward was to be forcibly detained. She started at learning that her father was supposed to be breathing his last, and again attempted to advance, when a low murmur met her ear. It was indistinct, but expressive. She paused, listening for its repetition, when the words, “He is gone,”

pronounced by some one descending towards the lawn, announced that the life of her father had terminated.

She had not suspected that his end was so near. The shock was great. Scarcely could she believe that he was thus suddenly bereft of the power of hearing what she was anxious to impart, and of pleading that cause, which she had hoped he would espouse. She turned to lean on her aunt, but the emotion of Lady Mary, at hearing that Sir Thomas was dead, prevented her from offering Matilda support. Edward sprang towards her. She sunk in his arms; and a new exclamation from Lady Mary Walworth, announced to those who were present, that such a spectacle gave her as much pain as the dissolution of her brother. Matilda hastened to disengage herself. This was a task of little difficulty, assisted as she was by the domestics, who now prepared to conduct Edward to the strong room.

Matilda saw Edward dragged as a pri-

soner, from the lawn. While nature claimed the filial tear, on the mournful occasion of a father's death, virtuous pity augmented the stream of sorrow. Lamenting that she might hear a parent's voice no more, the sad consciousness that the solicitation which she had hoped would prove all potent in the cause of Lord Cobham, could not now be interposed — and the dread that the circumstances under which Edward was about to appear before the archbishop, would inflame his indignation rather than awaken his compassion, added to affliction a weight of misery so insupportable, that it threatened the annihilation of reason.

## CHAP. V.

“ When I find the instruments he works with are racks, gibbets, gallies, and dungeons; when he imprisons men’s persons, confiscates their estates, ruins their families, and burns the body to save the soul, I cannot stick to pronounce of such a one, that (whatever he may think of his faith and religion) his faith is vain, and his religion unprofitable.”

ADDISON.

CHICHELY had promptly been informed of the discovery on the lawn. That indignation which most men in power feel, when the mandate it is their good pleasure to issue has been neglected, was experienced by him, and he in consequence gave orders that the intruder should be detained. Sir Thomas having ceased to live, the prelate hastened to seek Matilda and Lady Mary. Matilda had

retired to her own chamber. He found Lady Mary, and soon learned that the grief she felt for the loss of her brother, was aggravated by that which the supposed misconduct of her niece had inspired. The colouring which, between her sobs, she contrived to give to the meeting of Edward and Matilda, soon brought him to take the same view of the conduct of the former that she did. That an unhallowed passion — such he considered the love which Edward had indulged for the daughter of his friend, should have led him presumptuously to invade his grounds in quest of Matilda, was that for which it appeared to him no explanation could account — no humiliation atone. Though hostile to all who shared the principles of Cobham, he had sometimes been induced to think Edward less culpable than the other followers of Wickhiffe. Little as he desired to hear the praises of that young man from Octavius, what had



been uttered in his presence had diminished the prejudices once entertained against him, and making allowance for the influence which a father might reasonably be expected to possess over his offspring, he was disposed to believe that Edward Oldcastle had been misled by a false sense of duty. But what he had now learned, overthrew every thing that he had heard in favour of the son, and in his opinion supplied a new demonstrative proof of the baneful and demoralising tendency of Lollard principles. Fired with holy zeal, he ordered the offender before him, that he might reprobate the depravity which filled his bosom with horror, and award that punishment which it deserved.

Edward entered, not with that aspect of discomfiture and confusion which the archbishop had expected to behold, but with a collected air, and an intrepid step. He was well content to be brought into the presence of Chichely on any terms.

The hope which Matilda had inspired was no more, and he was anxious now, not only to plead for his father, but to vindicate her.

The prelate was struck by the firmness and composure which he remarked. He considered the deportment of Edward, to be such as would have become a better cause. This impression arrested the voice of his indignation for a moment, but it soon occurred to him that what had surprised him into involuntary admiration, gave evidence of hardened depravity, which aggravated previous misconduct. This thought restored all his anger, and he broke silence in the following words:—

“ Is it that you regard nothing as holy on earth;—or are you anxious to mark your profound contempt for every thing sacred;—that you now intrude yourself within these walls, which have contained so many true ministers of the church, in order to woo a

weak female to listen to the carnal voice of passion, even in that hour when her prayers were demanded by duty for a dying father? Why, wretch, present yourself at such a time? Were you fearful that no other opportunity of manifesting so much of the depravity of your heart would offer? What answer have you?"

"My lord, my simple and sincere reply is this:—'twas not to make a child sin against a dying parent, that I ventured hither. My coming was to enable filial love to plead for a father's life."

"And was there no way of accomplishing your object, but by addressing your unhallowed supplications to the ready and expecting ear of the daughter of Sir Thomas Venables?"

"Wrong not the spotless virtue of Matilda, by assuming that she knew of my coming. Accident conducted her to the spot on which I found her; and when

reflection shall have time to perform its office, yourself, my lord, shall confess that no premeditated design to seek her carried me to the same spot. Your reverence must remember that I did not invade your premises by stealth, till I had openly solicited an audience in vain. It was not till your refusal drove me to madness, that desperate in a suffering father's cause, I ventured on that rash experiment to gain your presence — which, happily — so I will hope, has brought me here.”

Chichely was staggered by this appeal. He had forgotten, in his rage, the application which Edward had made to himself, and he took a very different view of that intrusion, which had for its object to solicit mercy for a parent, and that which he supposed to have been prompted by an unwarrantable passion. He, however, judged it right not suddenly to abate the sternness which he had previously displayed, though it be-

came necessary to find another cause for maintaining it."

"If this be your excuse," said he, "it is no good one. My answer to your application had been given, and was I then to be assailed by your obstreperous sorrow for one whose crimes have rendered him unworthy to breathe this air, all tainted as it is with impiety. Why, I demand, was my will thus set at nought?"

"Despair, my lord, forgets observance of forms, and deviates from good manners. Deign to reflect: if, instead of being what you are, you claimed a son the fruit of wedded love, and death in his most horrid form approached, say would you think that son performed his duty, who, hoping that his prayers might save your life, feared to offer them, lest on himself a dreaded frown should fall. Forget, my lord, that Cobham's offspring speaks, and think but what a son thus encompassed ought to do."

In spite of himself the archbishop relaxed. He spoke not reproachfully, but contented himself with repelling the supplications addressed to him.

“This boots not,” he said. “To sue for grace is useless. The tares which have sprung up among God’s wheat must be put down — the Lollards which have risen against his church must be extirpated. More needs not. Your father cannot be spared.”

“Recall the awful sentence, good my lord, recall it. Doom not a fellow creature to destruction, — to death, and torture.”

“I doom him not; the law decrees his death.”

“You, my lord, possessed of mighty influence, may in this instance bid mercy sheath the sword of law, and save a brave soldier, a loyal subject, and a kind father, from ignominious suffering. A tear bedews your cheek. Repress it not. Great Nature, striving in a parent’s

cause, has snatched pity's gentle dew from Heaven, to move your heart to kindness."

Chichely could not conceal that he was affected. He replied, —

"I seek not to disguise that in my nature there lurks instinctive reluctance to inflict torture. I can pity the man, but I may not pardon the Lollard."

"Bear you in mind, my lord, he hath never imbrued his hands in blood, but in that of the enemies of his king; he is no felon who hath torn from others what was not his."

"But worse, infinitely worse than the marauder who takes a purse, or even the assassin who deprives his victim of life, he has aimed at the salvation of his fellows, and rushed, like a lion, on God's flock, seeking but to devour."

"Indeed, my lord, you have been ill informed."

"Has he not been the foe of religion?"

"Never."

“ He has denied that pilgrimages are good — that alms to the church lead to salvation — that holiest images deserved to be venerated.”

“ In some respects he may have manifested imprudent zeal, but he was never the foe of religion. In Cowling Castle, its most solemn rites were duly observed. But he did teach that all the forms you name — that counted beads — repeated paternosters, and ceaseless prayers, were not alone sufficient to constitute true religion.”

“ What then described he to be true religion ?”

“ He taught that humble carriage before men, that gratitude to Heaven for blessings proved, and resignation under hard affliction, deserved that name ; but chiefly did he contend for peace and amity between man and man, convinced that love of God was best evinced by kindness to his creatures.”

“ So, then, the forms consecrated by



the wisdom of ages, were scorned by his untoward spirit, and abstinence from outrage seemed to him that, which should supersede religious rites and ancient forms of devotion."

"Forms of devotion he did still observe."

"Aye, but unseen by men, as though he thought it shame to offer glory to his Maker."

"He thought," Edward meekly remarked, "that he had more than mortal sanction for *praying in secret, that he might one day be openly rewarded.*"

The indignation of the archbishop was nothing soothed, by the reference thus made to the highest of all authorities. — He replied,

"But he had no command so to pray, to the exclusion of public worship. One so profane — so accursed, may not hope for life."

"Reflect, my lord."

“ I do, and far from thinking that he may be spared, each coming moment proves my duty is severely simple. Such an outcast from grace, if still obstinately unrepentant, I would have conducted to the stake, and when reduced to ashes to mark horror even of them, I would give the separated atoms to the winds, that no two particles of one so vile should rest together on the outraged earth.”

“ Pause, my dread lord ; and, O ! believe my ignorance and folly have injured much the cause I seek to serve. Let this consideration be ever present, that mercy — mercy is the sublimest attribute of Heaven, and the best homage to that Heaven from earth.”

“ And mercy bids me now reject your suit. Mercy suggests that the punishment inflicted by the Church, coupled with the beneficial warning such spectacle affords, may in part purify the sin-

polluted soul, and spare it the awful destiny which else awaits it in another world."

"Distract me not! But frenzy fires my brain even now. Would you consign my father to a dreadful death, and call it mercy? Did I hear aright! — O! that real mercy might be shown! Forgive me when I say it, but means would not be wanting, nobly to requite him who should obtain remission of the sentence."

"Justice," the archbishop sternly added — "I call mercy, to him and to the world. Shrinking even from the infliction of these brief pains, it is my compassion that decides he must die. Though appalling to my weakness, it will be a grateful spectacle to the Ruler of the universe."

"O! hideous mockery!" exclaimed Edward, who in the horror which now assailed him, lost all command of his

thoughts and of his speech. Raising his eyes to Heaven, he proceeded, —  
“ Sacred Religion ! at thy hallowed name, my soul bends with true reverence and solemn awe. Thy holy flame, aspiring to the sky, attests the splendour of man’s origin, and proves the eternal Spirit living in him, while struggling from the earth it seeks the mighty Author of its being.”

“ What may this mean ? ” interrupted the archbishop.

Edward heard him not, and proceeded with the free expression of his feelings, which neither hope nor fear could longer restrain.

“ But when, O bigotry ! thy ruthless hand dares to assume the right to avenge imagined slights, put by the creature on his Creator, what horror fills my bosom, whilst I see thee preparing to indulge in sainted cruelty and pious murder ! ”

“ Go on,” cried the archbishop ; “ thy profane tongue proves thee the worthy

son of Lord Cobham. — Go on, since it must be so, and outrage your Maker, as he did, till just vengeance arrests your impious career.”

“ I trust, my lord, that it is not *I*, but *you* that outrage the Eternal. You describe him as coveting human sacrifices ; you represent the Protector of all his creatures as their direst foe ; and, in the appalling picture you produce — I speak it not profanely, but with awe — you make your God a demon.”

“ Blasphemer, hold ! — Too long my weak compassion has suffered language from your daring, that even your father has never ventured to breathe. That he is not alone in crime, your conduct proves, nor shall he be alone in punishment. — Who waits there ?”

The domestic with whom Edward had first spoken, and another servant, entered. They were commanded by Chichely to remove the “ profane intruder” to the Lollards’ Tower.

Edward was too much affected by the failure of his attempt to mitigate the severity of his father's fate, to regard the orders issued with respect to himself. His hopes and fears had pointed but to the life or the death of his father. What he most dreaded had come to pass, and despair terminated apprehension.

The archbishop directed his attendants to bind their prisoner, and left the room. As he retired, Edward threw a lingering look on him. He felt that the last moment was passing in which he could hope to find an opportunity of addressing the powerful individual he had so anxiously desired to see; but the wrath expressed in the countenance of Chicheley precluded further solicitation. For himself, Edward had nothing to ask; and had he been sufficiently collected to renew his suit for his father, there was no prospect of its obtaining the slightest attention from the incensed prelate. He,

therefore, saw him depart without speaking.

“ Well, thou hast thy wish,” said Martin, the menial before-mentioned; “ thou hast got into the palace, and now, perhaps, thou wilt be soon willing to try if thou canst get out of it. But, trust me, if thou foundst me churlish when refusing thee entrance, thou shalt find me hospitable enough to detain thee, since thou art here.”

“ Obey your orders,” was Edward’s reply.

“ You had better be more civil. I will obey my orders; and you shall instant hie to where others equally insolent once, but quiet enough now, have been before you. Come, your hands being tied with a good thong, I will introduce you to an excellent staple and chain, which are ready for your accommodation in the Lollards’ Tower.”

Edward's mind was too much occupied to hear the taunts of which he was the subject; and, silently submitting, he was conveyed to the place which had been named as his prison.



## CHAP. VI.

“ When ye doubt, the truth not knowing,  
“ Believing the best, good may be growing.  
“ In judging the best, no harm at the least ;  
“ In judging the worst, no good at the best.”

HEYWOOD.

THE Lollards' Tower, which has been for ages an object of curiosity at Lambeth, was built by Archbishop Chichely in the latter part of his life. It had not been raised at that period to which our history has arrived ; but an ancient erection occupied its scite, which was used as a place of confinement. The massy walls, though outwardly decayed, retained internally much of their original strength ; and the ceiling was lined with

oak, secured by strong bars of iron. The floor was composed of the same materials, in which five enormous rings inserted, with chains attached to them, indicated the spot on which Edward's predecessors in suffering had been doomed to pine. It was from their imprisonment in this tower that it received the name which has been continued to its successor.

Edward was made fast to one of the rings, and after his attention had been scoffingly directed to its strength by Martin, he was invited to try how far he could get from it by morning. He took no notice of this wretched mockery, and was soon left to himself.

Sitting upon the floor, he endeavoured to recall his wandering thoughts, in order so to regulate his deportment, that however great his affliction, he might not afford his enemies an opportunity of deriding his want of fortitude. Since it was impossible to avert the irreparable calamity which threatened his family, he

felt reckless of his own safety, and could have been well content to perish with his father. But the thought of his sister, — the reflection that her helpless situation would add to the sorrows of that father in his few remaining hours, brought him to lament what had happened to himself.

Food was unsparingly supplied in the course of the evening, and of a kind superior to that on which others had been obliged to sustain life, while inmates of the Lollards' Tower. He was rather surprised at this distinction, but was not in a state of mind to profit by it.

The hours sadly rolled on. By degrees the sounds in the palace died away, and the most profound silence prevailed. He heard the *horloge*, in the clock-house at Westminster, toll the arrival of midnight; but late as it was, no sleep came over his eyes. The next hour was announced. He was still listening to the sound, when a gleam of light shot beneath the iron-defended entrance of his

prison. The fastenings were slowly and carefully removed, and a faint rustling struck on his ear. A sudden thrill ran through his frame, and thoughts the most opposite chased each other with lightning-like rapidity. Once, within the last few hours, he had most unexpectedly obtained a meeting with Matilda. Was it possible that she could have ventured to attempt visiting him in his prison? It was difficult to suppose that her intrepidity, or her love, could accomplish so much. But who else, within those walls, would take so lively an interest in his fate, as to seek him at that period of the night, and in a manner that evinced extreme dread of discovery? He felt quite sure that whoever should venture to afford him consolation or relief, would become the object of the archbishop's fierce resentment; and from the silence observed by the coming visitor, it was clear to his mind that he already trembled for the consequences of the experiment. Once it occurred to him,

that possibly Martin had some taunt to bestow, which he had previously forgotten ; but this idea was instantly rejected ; for he could not believe that the menial's insolence would be sufficiently active to call him from his bed at that hour. Plunged in inextricable confusion, he found it quite impossible to form any reasonable conjecture who it was, that approached with such cautious deliberation.

The other fastenings having been gradually removed, the key now turned in the lock, and the door was opened with the same care which had marked the preceding efforts of the operator. Edward perceived a figure enter the room ; but the lamp which he carried was so shrouded by his loose garment, that he could not determine whether he had ever seen the bearer of it before.

“ Who art thou ? ” demanded the captive.

“ Speak not so loud, ” was the reply,

in a voice scarcely above a whisper, "if you value life — if you wish for liberty."

"Life and liberty have little value for me," said Edward; "but, as you come with friendly intentions, I willingly comply with your injunction, that I may not expose you to the wrath of the archbishop, who, thirsting for my blood, would prove a cruel enemy to one who should desire to save me."

"Is that certain?"

"Quite."

While Edward spoke, the lamp was disengaged from the drapery which had previously interfered with its rays. They fell on the face of the visitor; and the prisoner, with inconceivable astonishment, perceived that he was conversing with the archbishop himself.

"Perhaps, young man," said Chicheley, "thou hast wronged me. I never thirsted for blood. When the solemn duty of shedding it is imposed by the high office

I hold, it is still my object not to inflict more of suffering than may be needful for the sake of example, and the rooting out of pernicious heresy. Although an irreverent tongue has sorely wounded mine ear, and it grieves mine heart, that one so young should deviate so fearfully from the right path, yet will I not forget that devoted zeal in the cause of thy wretched father, prompted much of that in the which thou didst offend. I regret that my impatience ordered thee into confinement, and even now come hither to release thee from the bonds which hold thee."

Surprise prevented Edward from making any immediate reply. In the conduct of the prelate there was something so inconsistent, — so unlike all he had been led to anticipate, that he had some difficulty in satisfying himself that it was really the archbishop who had spoken. While thus confused, an inscription, traced on the wall by one who had

been a prisoner in the same place, caught his attention. In the present state of his feelings, it conveyed an idea that the former captive had experienced some dread of receiving a visit from beings of the other world, and had recorded the prayer of his heart to be saved from their influence. The same inscription, probably from its being regarded as peculiarly suitable, was afterwards written in the present tower, and is as follows: —

“I. H. S. Cyppe me out all el compene.—Amen.”

Edward felt almost disposed to repeat the same prayer, while beholding the form of the archbishop, he witnessed conduct so diametrically opposite to all that he had expected.

“I am bewildered,” he said. “It seems to me like a dream, that you, who lately directed all your resentment against me, should thus, in the dead of night, seek me, with offer of release.”



“ Boy, thy intemperance moved my anger; — thy sinful tongue fashioned phrases that claimed reproof and punishment. But when calmer reflection came over my ruffled mind, I did remember that thy blameable zeal was prompted and sustained by filial love. Then did I recall the days of my own youth, and feeling for the jeopardy in which thy indiscreet warmth had placed thee, I commiserated thy suffering. Hoping, for that thou art young, repentance may overtake thee, and lead thee to abjure the pernicious errors in which thou has wandered, I would give thee freedom.”

“ Why then this caution — why this secrecy ?”

“ Because, although I would not persevere in evil, I desire not to be a bye word with my servants. Passion is weakness — I have been betrayed by it to error, which error I would fain repair, but I wish not my failing to be a scoff in

the mouth of observers. Therefore, I approach thee now to favour thy escape, under cover of the night."

"For this humanity my gratitude is due, but let me take it as an earnest of a mightier boon. Let not your pity stop in its career with me, but rather punish my intemperance, and spare my father!"

"This were not possible, even could I listen to thine entreaties. Firm to avenge the violated law, the Duke of Bedford will not relax; and hopeless would it be, to attempt a new escape from the tower. The fame of Lord Cobham's former flight hath caused all precautions to be redoubled. Additional sentinels watch night and day, and Sir Robert Morley knows right well, that his office would not survive another proof of negligence."

"But, my lord, were your voice raised on the side of mercy —"

“ Away! This is a dangerous topic. If life be valuable to you, seize on the opportunity and fly while you may.”

“ For myself, existence is now bereft of all that once gave it value. Though such my melancholy fate, solemn duties wed me still to life. I have a sister —”

“ Then fly to her protection.”

“ But bid me carry to her the assurance that your voice shall be raised, at least in favour of a mitigation of the punishment awarded against Lord Cobham.”

“ Take you the boon I offer ; — save yourself, or, devote to ruin, tarry here.”

“ Nay, deign to hear me yet a moment. Remember, Cobham was among the first who joined the cause of Lancaster, when the inglorious Richard lost his sceptre. My father's sword contributed to obtain, and well sustained the throne of Henry. Shall the brave warrior, like a common wretch, be borne to

Tyburn, there to be suspended alive in chains, while fires are kindled to consume with ignominy that form which England's enemies have often seen exposed to all the injuries of war."

"The punishment is awful, but the crime committed by the culprit deserves it. Hath he not — I shudder when I think of it, conspired to send the Bible forth in the vulgar tongue? — to cast, as it were, God's pearl before the swine?"

He seemed much exasperated while he spoke, and Edward was silent in dismay. The archbishop made an effort to regain composure, released the prisoner from his chain, and beckoning to him to follow, left the room. He turned the key of the door when on the outside with the same caution as before, and forced the bolt into its place with all possible silence. The handle of the bolt was a substantial plate of iron with a hole in it, which was constructed to pass over a

strong staple. Into this a padlock was introduced, which Chichely carefully locked, and having again shrouded the lamp, so that it should emit but a faint ray to guide the steps of Edward, they descended. Proceeding through a passage which led from the staircase, a slight noise was heard. The archbishop instantly halted, and looked round upon Edward in manifest confusion. The sound was not repeated.

“It was the closing of the chamber door,” he remarked, “where Matilda sits up, adjoining the room in which the corpse of Sir Thomas remains.”

“May I, — mistake not my object — may I for one moment see her?” Edward enquired.

A ray of fiery indignation darted from the eye of the prelate.

“Yes,” he vociferated, forgetting the caution he had previously observed, “you may see her if you will, to announce to her that you are on your way back to

that prison from which my foolish pity would have liberated you. What! can you thus promptly forget her situation, as well as that of your own father, to desire, at an hour like this, to throw yourself at beauty's feet, — to soothe a mourner by new protestations of foolish passion, and forbidden love."

From the manner of the archbishop, Edward expected to be instantly reconducted to the Lollard's Tower. Exposition he believed useless.

"I must submit," he said, "to whatever may be your will. But you have not judged rightly of my motive."

This resignation on the part of Edward, and the recollection of the too hasty decision to which he had come on the preceding evening, induced Chichely to pause.

"What motive," he demanded, "could you have for wishing now to intrude on Matilda's sorrows and solitude, but that which I supposed?"

“ She knows of my imprisonment — I would but afford her that poor solace which her gentleness would derive from knowledge of your mercy.”

“ In the morning she will know that you are at large. For my mercy, that must be a secret; and from you I require a solemn promise, to make it known to no one that it was by my aid you were enabled to depart.”

“ I promise.”

“ We are in the garden,” said the bishop, as they passed through a door which they had opened. “ The moon is down to favour your retreat. Now hasten hence — you know the way.”

“ I return humble thanks for this grace, but may I not —”

“ Away — away young man. I pity and pardon you, but cannot do more — fly.”

He turned from him; and Edward, with an aching heart, again scaled the garden wall. He passed through the

marshes, and the almost boundless fields adjoining, on which no house was then to be seen ; sadly directed his steps to the bridge, (but one bridge over the Thames being then in existence, near London,) and crossed into the city. It was nearly day-break, and the lanterns, (lamps not having been thought of,) which had recently been ordered to be hung out by each inhabitant after night-fall, had ceased to give light, and were in most instances withdrawn, as from the few passengers expected to traverse the streets of London after ten o'clock, all external illumination at a later hour was held to be totally unnecessary. A few remained, but for the most part the projecting poles were relieved from their burden, and he found Cheap and Fleet Street dark, silent, and depopulated.

When day returned, he determined to seek Lord Powis ; but on approaching the residence of that nobleman, he wanted resolution to meet him. He



trembled lest his own fury at seeing the betrayer of his father, should prompt him to seek instant vengeance; and convinced on reflection that solicitation could avail nothing, he abandoned the idea. But he wished to find the son of the Earl, and sought him with some anxiety. Octavius had continued to hold the language of hope; was fruitful in expedients, and it was possible that in the time which had elapsed since they parted, some new project had occurred to him, which their united efforts might carry into execution. But Octavius was no where to be found. Edward conjectured that he might have attempted to meet Mr. Whittington and Alice, on their way to London; but their arrival without having seen him negated this surmise. Edward at last was rather inclined to think that he had been reconciled to his father, and had prudently withdrawn from those for whom he had promised to continue to interest himself. This idea was soon put aside, by reports

that he had committed suicide, or been secretly murdered. That there was any foundation for either of these rumours, did not appear, but that he was missing was clearly ascertained; as also, that the Earl knew not whither he was gone, or what the object which had called him away.

In the mean time, no small surprise had been excited at Lambeth. Matilda had the satisfaction of learning that Edward was no more a prisoner. Martin, who had tauntingly advised him to make his escape, was dreadfully disconcerted by his absence in the morning. To exonerate himself, he proved that he had looked well to the bolts; and what was very remarkable, that he had found all the fastenings as he left them on the preceding night. The carelessness of the prisoner's deportment which he now recalled, satisfied him that his indifference arose from a consciousness that he possessed the means of escape. In that age,

the immediate interference of the arch-enemy of man and his agents with human affairs, was believed to be of no very uncommon occurrence; and it was soon concluded, that it was by their aid that Edward had escaped. The archbishop, to avoid the shame of having shown mercy to a Lollard, did not discountenance this idea, but tranquilly suffered all the blame to fall upon the devil.

## CHAP. VII.

“ The fettered culprit, erewhile dumb,  
“ Marks this last loveliest victim come,  
“ ‘ Fate bows me down,’ he bending cries,  
“ And for a moment closed his eyes.  
“ ’Twas but a moment, up he sprung,  
“ Seeming to loathe the plaint thus wrung  
“ From his proud breast.”

PHILIBERY.

THE last hope of the Oldcastles was no more. It was certain that the enemies of Lord Cobham would be satisfied with nothing short of his blood. The hour was already fixed for his execution, when he received permission to see his son and daughter. He consented to an interview with Alice, but he peremptorily forbade Edward to approach, from the apprehension that if suffered to visit him in his

prison, it was but too probable that he would not be allowed to go at large.

Cobham felt that the meeting with his daughter would try his resolution; and endeavoured by careful reflection to prepare himself to pass through it with firmness. He was disposed to emulate the heroism of John Huss, and Jerome of Prague. When he saw the increasing numbers of the Lollards, he felt convinced that the heroic deaths of his Bohemian friends had served the cause in which they perished. Exhilarated by the confident hope that his fate would be not less useful, he overlooked the brief tortures which he had to sustain, and contemplating the mighty and everlasting reward on which he doubted not it would be his immediately to enter, he felt prepared to advance to the fatal stake, not with fortitude, but with transport. His spirits were indeed at times so buoyant, that it was his study to guard against apparent exultation, lest he should be

suspected of affectation — lest courage should be mistaken for bravado.

Such was his frame of mind while occupied with the pains which menaced his own person, and the consequences which must flow from them. But when his thoughts rested on the helpless Alice, who must now be left to the precarious protection of a brother, destined perhaps at no distant day, to yield his life, as he himself was about to do; the cheering visions in which his spirit had revelled, ceased to elevate him. He forgot the eternal bliss of which he expected to partake, to think on the dangers which his child had to encounter — the temptations which would assail, and the miseries which might overwhelm. Then, the rapturous glow which pious enthusiasm had supplied; ceased to warm his anxious bosom; and the firmness of the man yielded for a season to the affection of the father.

The policy of seeing his daughter un-

der such circumstances, was questionable, but he could not deny himself the sad luxury of beholding her once more ; — of clasping her again in his embrace, and of giving her his parting blessing. He resolved to admit her, and persuaded himself that the consolations which sustained him might be imparted to her. At all events he decided on making the attempt.

Alice entered his gloomy apartment with a faltering step, and shuddering at the sombre appearance of his prison, looked wildly round as expecting to see him already encompassed with the instruments of torture or death. He met her, — received her in his arms, and sought to re-assure her. His embrace reminded her of those happy days when she could enjoy the indulgent smile which now dwelt on the unruffled brow of her father, without being constrained to entertain the ghastly thought that it was enjoyed for the last time. But it relieved her,

for it produced a flow of tears which had before struggled in vain to escape.

Cobham gazed for some moments in speechless agony on that lovely countenance, which lighted up with youthful mirth, had so often inspired the purest joy in the happy admiring parent. This however, was not the time to invite such reflections, and resolute not to give utterance to the anguish which oppressed his heart, he remained silent till by a great effort he had subdued the weakness which had surprised him, and felt competent to attempt diminishing the woe which he could not choose but share.

“Alice!” he exclaimed, while tenderly lifting her from his bosom he seated her by his side, sustaining her with one arm — “Alice! it is not well that we should meet thus — Why are you so violently affected?” —

He paused, as expecting her to speak. A deep sigh, and a look of astonishment



that a reply could be expected, was all the answer he received.

“Nay, speak to me,” he continued; “I have not asked an idle question.”

Alice attempted to check her tears, and again embracing her parent, replied by a new interrogatory — “Can my father ask why his daughter weeps, when she comes to see him for the last time?”

“Yes, Alice, I can; and I wish to call your attention to the question. I desire that you search well your mind, and tell me what are the real causes of this distress. I know that purer love than you have felt for me, has never warmed a fond and dutiful bosom, but I cannot see that the affection which has evermore displayed itself in my child, can rationally account for this deep affliction.”

“O! my father, is it nothing that gazing on you now, I must do so with the dismal consciousness that ere this hour to-morrow, you will be seen no more on

earth? Is it nothing, that that smile which even when you would chide, still dwells upon your countenance, must so soon give way to the distortions of agony?—that the light of those eyes, now so mildly bright, must in a few hours be quenched for ever?”

“What then? You have known that I must die, even from that hour when reason first dawned on your mind.”

“But I was not prepared, when Heaven would grant you many happy years, to see cruel men devote you to destruction.”

“They cannot do it, child. This body is but the prison of the soul, and their foolish malice confers a boon,—a mighty boon. They hasten to set the captive free, and terminate all mortal pain. Is it my daughter that repines because I am so favoured?”

“I trust,” Alice replied, “that had you been permitted to remain till, in the due course of nature, age had demanded

your breath, I should then have borne your loss with fortitude."

"Reflect to what suffering your kindness would doom me. You would have me live till old age, sickness, and infirmity, waste me by slow degrees, — to see me die at last. Those ills my enemies propose to spare me."

"But, O! what frightful tortures they prepare! Thy life, alas! is not enough for them! Ingenious cruelty has studied inventions, to surround death with dreadful pain."

"Let them do their worst. Not all the contrivances which intolerance can call to its aid, will be able to extend the torment beyond one hour's duration, and after the protracted sufferings I have known, shall I not claim congratulation, that there remains now but one hour's pain before me, and probably not half so much."

Alice sighed deeply while he spoke,

and violent convulsions shook her frame, as she revolved in her mind the sentence about to be executed upon her father.

“Look up,” said Lord Cobham, “look up, my child. When can I hope to die better than now? Such is the weakness of human nature, that I feel it is but too probable that, living, I might add to the sins already committed, new ones, which death will save me from committing. For the pain, it can bear no comparison with that which I must endure through lingering years of decrepid age, if permitted to live. Your grief, then, is selfish, if you mourn my release, because it deprives you of a protector.”

“Chide me not, my father. It is indeed a selfish woe I feel, for tremendous as your sufferings are, they cannot far surpass those of your ill-fated daughter. To lose you thus — to part with you now — to see you no more, not even when life is fled, is misery. O! I am more wretched than all the wretched

beside, denied as I shall be, even the mournful solace of bending over thy lifeless form. Might I behold thee like the common dead, methinks the performance of the last sad duties would soothe my broken heart. To kiss thy pale face — to pour fresh flowers on thy cold bosom, and deck thee for the grave, would make me almost feel that nature and not cruelty had snatched thee from my love.”

An officer, who guarded him, here presented himself, to announce that one without desired to see him, and to converse with him in private before he should be conducted from the prison. The manner in which he spoke, told Alice that execution was immediately to take place.

“It is to-day,” she exclaimed, “that my father is to suffer. I did not think the barbarians were quite so impatient for thy blood. Even now the miscreant hands are ready to seize thee, and — and O ’tis too horrible for thought !”

Cobham calmly replied to the message which he had just received; that he would see the person from whom it came. Then, turning to Alice, he said. — “ Yes, know it all, before this day is closed I must be made immortal.”

“ Mercy — mercy !” Alice wildly exclaimed : “ And must it be so soon !”

“ Why not, my child ? — Why regret that such a life as I have lately lived is now about to close ? Far, far remote from thee ; doomed to pine upon the hope that thou wert free from peril, yet galled incessantly by the dread that misery might assail, ah, say, what was there in a state like this, that I should wish it lengthened by an hour ?”

“ Let me not leave thee, father. While I remain they will not touch thy life, but I do know the hour we separate will see thee borne to death.”

“ If, as in happier days, it might be mine to taste the solace of thy loved society, in unrestricted freedom — to see

the boundings of thy joyous heart; and the pure raptures beaming from those eyes, ere felon-tears had stolen half their lustre, I should desire to live; for then, indeed, life would be luxury — a luxury so great, that I should fear lest my delighted senses drank too largely of it, and in the bliss forgot they should pursue sublimer objects. But this denied, what else in all this world is worth a thought from me? I may not now dissemble that, when we part, I die; but part we must — and then the rest I heed not; for when no longer I may gaze on thee, there's nothing I would look upon but death!?”

Alice regarded her father in speechless agony. He gently removed a ringlet which had fallen over her forehead, and kissed away the burning tear which trembled on her eyelid.

“Now retire, Alice, retire; — I cannot; may not, look upon you longer. Ah! little did I dream, when, in thy infancy,

I marked the budding roses on that cheek, which lately bloomed so gaily, that I should see them washed away by such a deluge of calamity. Bear my blessing to your brother. To him, and to the great Creator, I commit you; and, till we meet among the happy just assembled near the Majesty of Heaven, I bid thee farewell!"

"Not yet, I pray,—not yet, my father, I pray you.—Let me abide here?"

The Lieutenant of the Tower now entered, accompanied by an executioner, who attended for the purpose of binding Cobham's hands. He understood their errand, and signed to them to withdraw.

"Not now," he cried; "return in a few moments, and I shall be alone."

They complied with his request, and retired.

"O, awful moment!" exclaimed Alice. "They come to bind thee like a very wretch. Great Ruler of the Sky! in



mercy interfere, and let thy thunderbolt descend, and terminate our woe in death."

"Cease, trembling sufferer, and let reason teach —"

"Reason, my father, cannot change my nature, — it cannot turn my heart to stone, nor give the tortured spirit repose, in such an hour as this."

"Alice," said Cobham, mingling stern remonstrance with soothing expostulation, "I can endure no more. By your duty I conjure you not to increase my affliction, by forgetting what is due to the name of Cobham. It is not now that you should move my tears. I must be firm, to act my part as may become a martyr in the cause of truth. Retire, and pray for me one hour, and then give thanks for my release from sorrow. — Retire — retire! — Nay, do not look on me again."

"I cannot now obey; — forgive me

father, I must — I will gaze on thy face once more.”

While speaking, Alice threw her arms around him. He returned her embrace with tenderness. At that moment footsteps were heard; he expected to see the executioner enter; and hastily conducting her to the door of the chamber, he requested of an officer that he would give her to the care of those who had accompanied her to the Tower. He averted his face at the moment, but involuntarily turned to catch a last glimpse of his daughter, just as, striving to waive her hand to bid him adieu, she sunk fainting to the ground.

He gazed on her, — she moved not, — and a gleam of wild hope beamed on his mind — of hope that she was no more. A dizziness came over him, but his wandering senses were recalled by the entrance of the executioner, with the individual who had desired to see him.

“ I did not expect to be thus discovered,” he said, as he wiped away a tear which glistened in his eye.—“ I believed that I had done with the world ; but treacherous nature will intrude a pang to shake my firmness. Acknowledging this, I own the weakness I would fain subdue ; but O, Elijah ! if, when called above, it had been thine to leave a child so dear behind thee, while borne on seraph’s wings thy flaming chariot travelled to the sky, like me thou wouldst not have denied one sigh for fondly recollected love on earth !”

## CHAP. VIII.

“ With small cost without any pain,  
“ These pardons bring them to Heaven plain :  
“ Give me but a penny or twopence,  
“ And as soon as the soul departeth hence,  
“ In half an hour, or three quarters at the most,  
“ The soul is in Heaven with the Holy Ghost.”

HEYWOOD.

HAVING bound Lord Cobham's hands behind him, the executioner retired. The person who had accompanied him wore the appearance of an ecclesiastic. He was a stranger to the prisoner, but he soon explained the object of his errand in the following words :—

“ Forasmuch as you are most justly appointed to die, and are moreover even now, albeit the sentence of the law remains to be executed, dead in trespasses

and sins, therefore I am come to essay in some sort to prepare you for your passage, by affording you an opportunity of making a full confession of all those multiplied enormities which have sacrificed your life in this world, as they will, unless you strait repent, your eternal spirit in the next."

"Your offer," Cobham replied, "claims my thanks, but for your aid I desire it not, and cannot profit by it. I have but a short time to live, and would be left to my own thoughts; wherefore, I beseech you, trouble me not."

"I seek but to refresh your spirit; and it is my duty to press on you the importance of confession and repentance."

"I do confess my sins most numerous and great, and in true Christian sincerity, I repent them all."

"But confess you the justice of your sentence, — confess you that you have been guilty of the horrible crimes of which you stand convicted?"

“ I wish not to condemn those who have condemned me, but spare me further questioning.”

“ Nay, if you will not make reparation by ample and ingenuous confession, to the bottomless pit your soul must pass.”

“ Heed me not, I pray. I do know that I must answer for all my misdoings, but do not withdraw from me the few moments which remain to me, and which I would occupy in soliciting grace from on high. Still to press upon a dying man would be inhuman.”

“ Perverse and blind as thou art,” replied the Pardoner (for such the stranger was), “ in this, as in all the rest, you resolutely oppose your own salvation. Behold, what my pity designed for your solace, and see this pardon in my hand.”

Here the speaker produced a pardon, fairly written on parchment, which set forth, not that the punishment of burning at Tyburn was to be remitted, but that after the sinner should be reduced to

ashes, forgiveness having been conceded to him by the proper authorities on earth, in consideration of his making an ample confession of guilt, the soul of the sufferer was to be entitled to claim admittance into Heaven, and participation in everlasting joy.

At the mention of a pardon, Cobham started. For a moment he suspected that he had been snatched from the pangs which he had prepared to endure in this world; but when he found that such was not its object, but that it purported to give the larger boon of remission from punishment through all the countless ages of eternity, he did not receive the intelligence with that transport for which the bearer of it, perhaps, looked, and he coldly entreated that it should be reserved for some one who better deserved such favour; and that in the interim he might be left to himself.

“Miserable wretch!” exclaimed the Pardoner. “Are ye so resolved on per-

dition? Confess you not that you have grievously sinned?"

"Against my Maker I have, but not against my fellow men."

"Obdurate heretic! — What! is your conscience so seared that even now it can persevere in crime! Is it nothing to have rendered the holy book into English, to the end, that women and tradespeople may be enabled to dispute with priests?"

"I thought that far from teaching them to dispute with priests, it would make them sooner of accord, and aid the pastor in his pious labours."

"I am sad to hear one standing on death's very threshold thus vindicate his fearful backslidings. It is said, that such your devilish ardour in the cause of wickedness, that you did even prevail with those who were ignorant before to be taught reading, that they might sinfully occupy themselves with the Bible."

"This do I acknowledge; but this do I even now account no sin."



“ Then all in vain must prove my care  
for your immortal part.”

“ Since you are satisfied of that, have  
pity on me now, and leave me.”

“ I desire you to have pity on your  
own soul, and, therefore, stay. I would  
instruct you how to die.”

“ That,” said Cobham, looking proud-  
ly on the Pardoner, “ I trust I have not  
now to learn from you, or any church-  
man.”

“ For that because you are a soldier,  
and have affronted death in battle, you  
may judge that in this respect you have  
nought to learn. But bear it in mind,  
that you are not now to die as a warrior,  
but as a criminal — a traitor to your king  
— a heretic to God.”

“ I know that I am to die. — That is  
sufficient. I hope, whatever names ca-  
lumnny may give me, that I shall at least  
die like a man.”

“ But bear in mind this, if your stub-  
bornness shall yet be melted, implore an

absolution. Then make the sign of the cross with your hands. If by reason of the bonds which restrain you, it is not in your power to cross your hands, being but just able to join them, then let the end of the rope, or chain, which holds you, pass downward from them. The cord which you now wear has ample length, to enable you to make the perfect sign."

"I shall not need it."

"As you pass through Cheap, repeat you *Domine ne in furore tuo.*"

"Spare me further counsel. You disturb, but cannot assist me."

"But I must tell you what is meet for you to do, so that your perdition, if you still neglect your soul, shall in no wise be chargeable on me. When you arrive at Newgate, *Ave dulce Mater Christi*, or *Domina mea sancta Maria*, must be rehearsed."

"I shall say that which a humble and contrite spirit may suggest, as befitting the occasion."

“ When you approach Tyburn, and they proffer you the bowl, from which criminals are permitted to refresh themselves, then drink you forgiveness to all who have offended you. Being on the ladder, which you will first have to mount, fail not to pray for the Holy Church, and the Clergy, by whose righteous decree you are to die. Then, calling again for absolution, and making the sign of the cross, as before directed, repeat aloud, *Nunc dimittis servum, Domine*; and you shall depart, and, provided your repentance be full and sincere, you will after a season be admitted into paradise.”

“ So I shall hope while life remains; but not through your good offices; for you do disturb me, and prevent my soul from seeking communion with Him, before whose high throne it must presently appear.”

“ Thankless heretic! — I would have given you consolation; but, since stiff-

necked pride forbids you to profit by my charity, even go your own way. Consider the fires about to be lighted here, but as the beginning of those torments which shall never have an end."

"Enough; and now, having ascertained my unworthiness, bear off thy pardon. So I am relieved from that and thy presence, my soul will not be cast down for the rest."

The Pardoner retired, with an exclamation of horror at finding the prisoner so impenitent; and Cobham, rejoiced at being alone, betook himself to those devotions from which he had been reluctantly detained. He was soon interrupted again. The constable of the Tower announced to him that the sheriffs waited to escort him through the city. He replied with alacrity, that he was quite ready, and would not trespass longer on their time. As he passed down the stairs, Sir Robert Morley offered him his arm,

but he declined it with thanks, at the same time assuring him that he enjoyed that heavenly support within which made all other assistance superfluous. Remembering the fame which John Huss and Jerome of Prague had gained by the heroic manner of their deaths, he felt not only consoled, but elated with the prospect of suffering in such a cause. He spoke with unembarrassed composure to the sheriffs, and passed into the hurdle, which waited to convey him to death, as cheerfully as he could have entered the most splendid apartment, to revel in all the luxuries of life.

On the way, the frequent expressions of sympathy and sorrow, which burst from the crowd, arrested his attention. He could have wished to comfort the mourners ; but he rejoiced in the interest thus manifested, rightly holding it to presage that the cause in which he was to lay down his life would one day be triumphant.

The houses on both sides of the way were crowded with spectators to see him pass to execution. His fortitude was now as much admired, as his daring had formerly been, and in each story of the houses, from the ground floor to the highest projecting window, tears and pitying silence marked the sympathy inspired by his melancholy fate.

The procession had passed the posts which marked the spot at present occupied by Temple Bar, when one countenance different from all the rest that he had beheld met his view. He saw a being, who far from commiserating the sufferings of a fellow man, scowled with savage exultation on the devoted sufferer. Cobham was not slow in recalling the occasion on which he had last seen the wretch. It was the Red-hand, who mingled with the crowd to behold the consummation of his labours for the destruction of the Lollard. Their eyes met, and Roderick, shrinking from the serene

gaze of the victim, was seized with alarm, lest the fury of the crowd should be directed towards him, and, anxious to escape observation, vanished from the view of Cobham.

Approaching the place of execution, near St. Giles's in the fields, Tyburn, the place where criminals commonly suffered being at that time one mile nearer the city, than the place so called in subsequent ages, — the bowl of malt liquor, of which the pardoner had spoken, was brought forth. The procession halted, and room was made for the bearer of the bowl to advance to the hurdle, who tending the ale invited Cobham to partake of it.

“No,” he replied, “my earthly appetites are already dead. I thirst but for the water of life, and that shall be plentifully supplied by hope, even in the midst of the devouring flames which presently shall rage around this devoted form.”

And now the spot on which his suffer-

ings were to terminate was in view. A gallows had been erected in the middle of the road, and to this three chains were attached. The first chain sustained a ring of moderate dimensions; appended to the end of the second a large iron hoop appeared, and the third displayed two rings, each being fifteen or eighteen inches in circumference. Beneath was a large pile of fire-wood, and two ladders were placed against the cross-beam of the gallows.

“A soldier,” he remarked, “might have hoped for a different death, but priests know not how to show mercy.”

“False and accursed blasphemer, say not so, in this thy final hour;” cried one near him.

Turning towards the speaker, Cobham saw the Pardoner.

“I,” the latter continued, “did visit thee in the Tower, commissioned to give thee a pardon for all thy sins, numerous and great as they are.”



“May He who can indeed show mercy, pardon thee, for thus daringly taking upon thyself to pardon.”

“Repent thee, wretch, the crime for which thou diest.”

“I have repented all my sins. For that which brings me here, I do glory in it now, even as I did when I put the idolatrous worshippers of images to shame, before that Thomas Arundel, whom the vengeance of the offended Creator did so speedily overtake.”

“Grant him no further time, but do instant execution on the heretic,” cried the Pardoner.

“This,” Cobham remarked, “is mercy, for now you hasten my release from a world of woe. Right glad am I thus to seal with my blood the truth which I have vindicated, nor could my bosom feel a warmer glow of joy, if these chains and faggots could be turned into appliances of pleasure, and ennobling badges of honour.”

Blood-thirsty malice had exerted itself not a little to give effect to the awful business of the day. It was not enough that the victim should perish by fire in the usual manner. To be at once consumed by faggots, placed close to his person, was thought too gentle a death for so atrocious an offender, and that apparatus which has been described; was ordered to be prepared, that ignominiously suspended on a gallows, he might be destroyed by slow degrees. But superior to his fate, he submitted to the executioner with so lively an ambition to wear the martyr's crown, that many, who were not of the number of his enemies, thought his enthusiasm carried contempt of death too far. Being directed to mount the ladder near the third chain, his legs were passed through the two rings. This done, the iron hoop was thrown over his head. The ladder being then removed from his feet, his body was brought in a horizontal

position over the wood, and the remaining ring was placed about his neck.

An exclamation of horror burst from the crowd when the good Lord Cobham, so he was commonly called by the people, was seen in this situation. Many called out "God bless you;" but the pardoner failed not to reprove such exclamations as sinful, and charged those who uttered them not to pity a wretch who unpardoned and impenitent, was about to pass from fires here, to flames of tenfold rage.

But such admonitions could not subdue the feelings of reverential pity, with which the multitude surveyed the respected and beloved martyr. They saw with agony the light applied to the pile, and when it was perceived that a part of the fuel being damp did not immediately catch the blaze, it was remarked with joy, as if a miracle was about to be interposed between him and destruction. Their exultation was brief, but the cause of it

still supplied the beholders with consolation, for in consequence of the wood not being dry, such an immense volume of smoke rose from it before the flames burst forth with fury, that the sufferings of the victim were completely veiled from sight, and he was believed to have expired from suffocation, before the flames reached him. The barbarity which had devised such a mode of execution was thus defeated, and the sufferer escaped the severer pangs intended to be inflicted.

## CHAP. IX.

“ My patience I will put in ure,  
“ My charity I will extend;  
“ Since for my woe there is no cure,  
“ The helpless now I will befriend.”

OLD BALLAD.

To enlarge on the affliction which Edward and Alice experienced, on thus witnessing the consummation of their worst fears, would be to tell the reader nothing but what his own imagination can supply. The curtain shall therefore be dropped over tears, faintings, and regrets, and the narrative shall proceed with events.

The obsequies of Sir Thomas Venables having been performed, Matilda, as heiress of his wealth, took possession of

her father's late residence at Charing. The Archbishop considered her to be still under his superintendance, but grief for her recent loss, added to that which she felt for the death of Lord Cobham, admonished him that this was not the time for ascertaining the extent of his influence over her, now that the parent whose will had hitherto controlled her was no more.

He was besides not a little embarrassed from other causes. The opinion which he had once entertained of Octavius was changed. Chichely's zeal for the interests of the church, no longer pointed to the son of Earl Powis as one likely to distinguish himself in their defence. His defection moved resentment, but had this not been so, his embarrassment would have been nearly the same. Octavius had now been absent for some weeks. Fears were entertained for his life. It seemed therefore in vain to press the

suit of one who might never return to profit by his efforts, in the event of their being successful, and after going so far as he had already gone in behalf of Octavius, he could not at once bring himself to recommend another to the favourable consideration of Matilda.

Chichely was a frequent visitor at Charing. A cold, formal reception ever awaited him from the mistress of the mansion, and Matilda never scrupled to express her abhorrence of the cruelty which had doomed Cobham to the flames. The archbishop, though he never called the righteousness of that sentence in question, did not disdain to exonerate himself from the suspicion of having taken an active part in causing it to be carried into execution. He referred to the strong measures formerly resorted to by the king, — he reminded Matilda of the severity of the Duke of Bedford against all convicted Lollards; and

argued that after the proclamation which had been made, and the condemnation awarded, not even the regent had he been so disposed, could have saved the life of Cobham, in contempt of that law under which he had suffered.

More than a week had elapsed since the death of Cobham, when the archbishop surprised Matilda with another mourner. He could not conceal his displeasure when he found that the companion of Matilda was no other than Alice, the daughter of Lord Cobham. He ventured a remonstrance on the want of prudence, if not of piety, which led her to form such a connection. Matilda resolutely defended the course she had taken, and upon that he remarked,—

“Acting thus, lady, you decide for a course but little in conformity with the wishes of your deceased parent. He who so strongly opposed himself to your union with the son, would never have



consented, that the daughter of a Lollard should reside under the same roof with his heiress."

"I may not so far wrong the memory of my father," Matilda replied, "as to believe that he ever desired that my heart should be dead to feeling, or these doors closed against virtue in affliction. His misconceptions ought not to deter me from offering such insufficient comfort as it may be in my power to supply, to the gentle mourner whom you have seen here this morning. To do this, I will fearlessly assert my right, and no power can now restrain me from acting by the sister of my love, as if she were the sister of my blood."

"And, peradventure, lady, you determine to make her your sister, and believe no power on earth can effectually oppose such a resolution."

"My lord archbishop, I have given a promise — a solemn promise, which I shall observe. No oath on me could be

more binding. That promise gives you the power of forbidding me to marry, but it goes no further, and I will not be restrained from succouring the afflicted."

"You speak as if the children of Lord Cobham were in distress. This is not so. Strange stories are abroad about the surpassing wealth of his son Edward. Credibly hath it been reported to me, that he hath said that could twenty thousand marks have saved his father's life, they should have been forthcoming. To me he did say, that most nobly should any one be requited who would procure him pardon."

"And is this considered criminal in Edward?"

"I said not that, but wonderful it is, that one so lately bankrupt in his fortunes, should on a sudden be so passing wealthy."

"That the late Lord Cobham had many friends cannot be unknown to you, and surely it ought not to excite surprise,

if their kindness at such a crisis should liberally contribute to assist the son of one so beloved."

"But, lady, I must not dissemble with you. There are unholy ways of gaining wealth. Satan will gladly toil for avarice; and evil commerce with the king of hell will much enrich the sinner, who is content to purchase the same with his soul."

"Your reverence I do fear speaks but the truth; and many, alas! there are beside Earl Powis, who will not scruple, on such horrid terms, to purchase gold."

"Daughter, your tongue forgets that gentleness which best becomes. You outrage propriety when of him who but acted as in duty he was bound to do, conforming to the law, you speak as you might speak of one in amity with the enemy of mankind."

"I have but uttered what I think; for to my feeble judgment it is clear that

he seems in closer communication with the powers of darkness who sells a brother's life for gold, than he who but offends by possessing wealth, the source whence it flows being concealed. Much do I wonder that you countenance a charge so vague."

"Understand me aright. It is not I that prefer such charge against Edward Oldcastle. Were such my pleasure, I could perhaps prove that I am not the enemy of that young man. Far from wishing to punish him for the crimes of his father, although himself most grievously hath wandered I should rejoice to see him penitent, nor would you find me then opposed to him as I have been. But I must inform you, that solemn charges have been preferred against him."

"Against Edward!"

"Against Edward Oldcastle—charges not less serious than those on which his father was—though I commiserated his woes, I say it—justly condemned."

“ Is he accused of affection for a parent, or sorrow for the dead ? ”

“ He is accused — from the interest you take in his fate, I know the news will strike sadly on your ear; — he is accused of sorcery.”

“ Of sorcery ! ” Matilda repeated with indescribable astonishment.

“ Nay more, I am assured that the proofs against him are so strong, that never case was known in which free commerce with invisible agents was so decisively established.”

“ His flight from Lambeth I have heard has been guessed to have been effected by unlawful means, but, surely, your grace must regard this as an idle fiction.”

“ If nought but that can be brought against him, he shall not suffer under the accusation. But it is bruited in mine ear that evidences of his guilt so fearfully appalling will be forthcoming, that even to doubt shall be impossible.

I know not how the truth may be, but seeing that this enquiry cometh within my jurisdiction, when taken he shall have justice, and I hope a good acquittal ; but if culpable, he assuredly will find no mercy.”

Matilda expressed her conviction, that strict justice to Edward Oldecastle would be mercy, and, satisfied of his innocence, she could desire no more.

She felt under this impression no fears for his safety, but the state of her mind was less tranquil when, at the end of a few days, news arrived that Edward was in custody. Then, terrifying thoughts occurred to her. She remembered the power of his enemies, and trembling for the weakness of virtue opposed to persecuting bigotry, her imagination was again tortured with ghastly visions of unmerited sufferings, of punishment, and of death.

It was not her custom to return the visits of the prelate ; but on the morning after that, which brought her intelligence that Edward had again be-

come an inhabitant of the Lollard's tower, Matilda waited on the archbishop at Lambeth House. While speaking on the subject, she could not conceal her emotion. Chichely preserved his accustomed serenity, but there was more than usual solemnity in his deportment. His air was that of a man, who with difficulty has wrought himself up to resolve on doing what he expects will subject him to reproach, and what he would willingly avoid, but considers it a sacred duty to perform.

And his speech accorded well with the expression of his countenance. When Matilda implored permission to speak to the supposed offender, he replied, with firmness : —

“ Lady ! I may not grant that which you solicit. God doth know I sought not the blood of this sinner, but had rather that he should repent and live ; nathless, since he is so fallen, that he hath not scrupled to engage in a most

damnable commerce with Satan, (so at least it is charged against him,) I can in no case allow others to succour him, and teach him aught that cunning might devise to baffle justice."

"So justice be done, I shall covet no more."

"You will mourn to learn that he shares not your impression, forasmuch as he has well nigh confessed that he is guilty."

"Confessed that he is guilty! Say you that Edward Oldcastle hath confessed guilt? This I may not receive — it cannot be."

"He hath not in form, made that ample confession which may yet be won from him; but when he came hither yesterday, to myself he addressed these words—'Heaven wills it, so it must be.'"

"That expressed resignation, but owned no crime."

"Hear further. I did speak with him to ask what he might mean, still lamenting that one, young as he is, should be



suspected of backsliding so monstrous ; withal telling him, that he might nothing fear, so he could prove the imputed guilt not his."

"And what answer made he then?"

"That which you will sorrowfully listen to. His words were these : ' I am lost — nothing can save me — ' "

"This, my lord, hath no meaning, or means but this ; he, in that moment, did despond, fearing the number and power of his foes."

"I should be well content if it were so ; but you have interrupted, or I should have told — that when I mentioned to him that proof of innocence could save him, he added, in distinct words, ' I cannot establish my innocence.' "

The tone in which the archbishop recounted this conversation, carried conviction to the bosom of Matilda that he sought not to deceive. Chichely, though formerly the fierce enemy of the Cobham family, was not naturally of a cruel dis-

position. Now that the head of that family had fallen, and fallen under a law which he had contributed to make, his rancour was no more. When he no longer feared the restoration of Lord Cobham to his former influence, he began to look with compassion on the sufferer; and in proportion as his ardour in the cause of the son of Earl Powis had slackened, his pity for the offspring of the martyr had increased. Pride, and as he thought, the dignity of the high station which he held, forbad him to encourage that rising humanity which he regarded as weakness, so far as to induce him to oppose the regent; but had the Duke of Bedford been disposed to take a milder course, Chichely's zeal would not have carried him as formerly, to call for the last severity. Matilda had remarked the altered conduct of the prelate, and could not persuade herself that he wilfully misrepresented what had fallen from Edward, but she was willing to hope that he was

himself deceived. This she suggested, but he insisted in the most positive terms that he was not in error. He added, the business was to be enquired into that very hour, and gave Matilda unsolicited permission to be present.

With hesitating step she followed the archbishop to the hall. She expected to see Edward with that air of intrepidity which, even in the bitterest distress, had never forsaken him ; and fearful misgivings came over her when he entered, apparently overwhelmed with dejection. That he would proudly repel the calumny, and boldly challenge his adversaries to the proof, was what she had expected ; and her astonishment was equal to her sorrow, when she saw him apparently resigned to the worst, and fixed to attempt no defence.

The archbishop looked on the prisoner, and then turned to Matilda, as if to impress on her the accuracy of what he had just stated. Edward was placed by

a table, at the head of which Chichely, as judge, had taken his seat. Earl Powis was then called upon as the accuser, to offer his proofs. At this name Edward started, and turned from him with disgust. His eyes fell on the sad countenance of Matilda, and overpowered by the reflections which came across his mind, he raised his hand to his brow, and did not again look up till the interrogatories put to him made reply necessary.

He was first asked from what funds he had been enabled to offer the sum he had said would be readily produced, if a pardon could be obtained for Lord Cobham. To this his answer was that a considerable portion of it would have been furnished by those who had long been the friends of his father. He was then charged with having circulated, by unknown means, and in the space of a single night, papers which had been found in all parts of the city, contain-

ing in the most virulent language the clergy of the established church. Of these he denied all knowledge. In whatever way the papers had been circulated, he had not participated in that act. Though he could only oppose the charge by assertion, it was not much dwelt upon, as no stronger proof was offered that he was connected with their distribution than the testimony of an individual, who deposed to having seen him in Cheap, near the little Conduit, before day-light on the morning of their being discovered. That morning happened to be the same on which he had been liberated from the Lollard's Tower, and the coincidence of his escape, and of the miraculous appearance of the manifestoes against the clergy, seemed to countenance the suspicion that infernal agency had accomplished both. It was with some reluctance that the archbishop permitted the officious Martin to press forward as a witness, to speak to the flight from the Lollard's Tower, and

when he had finished, the conclusion which the judge came to on this point was favourable to the prisoner. He remarked that proofs of the bolts being left fast at night, and found so in the morning, might have been obtained had the captive made his way out by human means, supposing his escape to have been favoured by one whose duty it was to guard him. Martin felt hurt at this, and offered to bring Margery his wife to prove that he was in the porter's room all that night. Without attending to him, the archbishop proceeded to the other facts which were to be established; and now Earl Powis, with due solemnity, hastened to bring forward his grand charge. He first exhibited one of the books formerly sent to the king by the Abbot of St. Albans. He showed in what way the pictures of the saints had been defaced, and that their names had been carefully obliterated in the text. This, it was presumed, had been done by

the late Lord Cobham. He next exhibited with suitable symptoms of horror, two new books. These were found to commence with the line *Parce Domine nos*, at which line the erasures of Cobham had ceased. They were embellished with no portrait or representation of any of the saints, and those prayers only were retained which were addressed to the persons of the Trinity. The disfigured old book had evidently served as a copy, or model for the new ones. To guard against such a charge, Edward had been careful to give those which he had most freely ventured to circulate, the character of being merely a part of the Litany; but their unfortunate agreement with the old book, went a great way towards proving that it was the intention of their writer to make war against the other part. But that on which attention now rested, and which filled all present (one or two excepted) with indescribable horror, was the perfect resemblance which

each of the new books bore to the other. The archbishop shrunk back when they were proffered, as if some demon had tendered him the price of his soul; nor was it till after he had crossed himself, and invoked the especial protection of the Most High, that he ventured to receive them into his hands. He turned over some of the leaves, and compared corresponding pages. Appalled beyond description at the terrific display, such he considered it, which their exact similitude presented to the view, he laid them down, as if a sight too horrible for human contemplation had shocked his senses.

After an awful pause, he addressed the prisoner in these words: —

“ Although I may not pretend to have been ignorant that the detestable art of sorcery still existed, being well instructed that like witchcraft, it can be practised as heretofore, seeing the devil continueth as ready a servant as he hath been from the beginning, to those over whom he



will one day be captain; yet I did not believe that he could approach so near the house of God as to touch, and even to produce, any part of our holy Litany. Alas me! I do now see that the serpent is as potent as in the olden times. After the dreadful scene which mine eyes have beheld, my duty exacts from me that I now —”

“Hold!” cried a voice, and looking whence the sound proceeded, the archbishop saw, with astonishment, the individual whose late absence had excited so much surprise — Octavius.

## CHAP X.

“ It is a question, sir,  
“ Beyond my resolution.”

MIDDLETON and ROWLEY.

No language can do justice to the powerful and varied emotions produced by the entrance of one so little expected. Earl Powis had previously felt alarmed for the safety of his son. During the absence of Octavius, his enquiries had been incessantly multiplied on all-sides. The unsatisfactory intelligence which he had received afflicted him much, but had not the effect of softening the natural harshness of his character. He had heard that

Edward had bound himself by a solemn vow, to revenge the death of his father, and suspicion sometimes glanced towards him, as the cause of the loss he deplored, and strengthened his determination to pursue the supposed offender. Matilda gazed with dubious hope on the trembling eagerness with which Octavius panted to get forward, and thrilled with fearful expectation, could scarcely respire; Edward himself, roused from gloomy indifference, participated in the general surprise; and the archbishop was not at first sufficiently collected to express that indignation which the interruption of the proceedings had inspired. He felt abashed that he had been diverted from his course, and impatient to resume that stately severity of manner which the occasion demanded, he accosted the intruder in language not distinguished for its mildness.

“What means this unseemly rudeness? To whom dare you give command to

stay that enquiry which justice to the church of God demands should proceed. If my past kindness is the source of your present boldness, it is meet that I now caution you to trust to it no more."

"I do beseech you, hear me. I would not idly trespass on this assembly."

"You shall be heard in due time. At present be silent or retire."

The archbishop gave Octavius no time to express either dissent from the command, or acquiescence with it, but raising his voice, he proceeded to question Edward.

"Have you ought to answer to what you have heard charged against you? The appalling evidences of your guilt which have been produced are so conclusive, that to me it seemeth all defence is vain, unless you can establish that you have no connexion with the tomes now displayed. Mean you to deny all knowledge of them?"

"No."

"Is it veritable, that these and others

of exact similitude, have been obtained from you?"

"It is."

A general exclamation of horror burst from the majority of those present, at hearing this admission from Edward, which in their judgment amounted to a complete avowal of his being in communication with the prince of darkness.

"Have you ought to say, that can explain or extenuate your crimè?"

Edward, who had from the first, felt that the oath exacted from him by Hoffmann, precluded all hope of vindicating himself, calmly replied:—

"I can say nothing that will avail me here."

"By this, miserable young man! you do admit that you are guilty."

"Not so.—I am innocent; but I may not prove it, — I may not attempt it."

"The awful truth," said Chichely, "must needs be spoken. To me it seemeth the proofs are so cogent, that you despair of

shaking them, and therefore, like a common malefactor, you rest content with a hardened denial of guilt, even though you own the horrid fact that the books have been sent forth by you. That you *may* not defend yourself, is a declaration I understand not. What power on earth can forbid you to save your life, and vindicate your fame?"

"I cannot make the effort without committing a crime."

"That I believe, for it seemeth to me you cannot attempt defence, without violating truth, but owning so much, you acknowledge guilt."

"Never. That will I deny with my dying breath. No torture can ever change my speech in this."

"You trifle. For me, no more remains but that I remit you to safer confinement than the prison from which you lately made escape."

"Hold!" cried Octavius.

"Peace!" retorted the bishop. "It

was my hope, that shame and reflection had silenced this obstreperous folly."

"Call it not so, my lord, till you know why I presume to interrupt —"

"That you do interrupt is an offence. Here, it is for me to command. None shall dare oppose my voice, save only the king himself."

"The king himself now opposes your voice, and nullifies the whole of this proceeding."

"Hence, boisterous jester, nor longer offend discreet and pious ears with these vain follies."

"Your grace may blame, but I conjure you hear. — Behold this parchment, which I have borne hither. It is signed by the king's own hand; and this, you will find, commands you to stay all courses against the son of Lord Cobham, whatsoever they may be."

The archbishop bestowed on Octavius a look of incredulous disdain, extended his hand for the paper, and then gra-

dually withdrew it, as if doubting whether he ought to condescend to far as to look upon it. Curiosity prevailed over doubt, he received it, and instantly perceived that it was indeed from the king. It commanded that all proceedings against Edward Oldcastle should cease, till he in person could hear him, and it directed that the prisoner should be liberated, that he might forthwith depart for France, or wherever the king might be established; to give answer to the charges against him, Octavius being alone held responsible for his appearance before his sovereign.

The production of this document occasioned not less astonishment, than that which had been experienced on the sudden appearance of its bearer; who now in few words explained. On the day when Edward waited on the archbishop, and was committed to the Lollards' Tower, Octavius learning this, and never doubting but it was intended



that he should share his father's fate, determined on making another bold effort. He passed into France without delay, and hastened to petition the king, for both father and son. He pressed his suit with earnestness and impetuosity. The favourable report which had been previously made of him to Henry, seconded his importunities so successfully, that he was on the point of obtaining a respite for Lord Cobham, when news arrived that his sentence had already been carried into execution. It gave the monarch himself no slight shock, to learn that one who had formerly enjoyed his favour and possessed his confidence, had actually suffered the punishment to which he had long been doomed, and pity for him soon obtained that grace for the son, which it was the business of Octavius to announce. Travelling through Normandy with all expedition, he had embarked at Dieppe for Southampton. A violent storm carried the vessel out of

her course, and she was borne by the winds into the Bay of Biscay. This, caused that protracted absence which had prevented his arrival, till Edward, again a prisoner, was enabled to profit by the effort made to relieve him from his former difficulties.

The archbishop perused the document more than once, and examined it with the most suspicious care. He found it impossible either to question its authenticity, or to discover any thing in the peculiar circumstances of the case, that would justify him in hesitating to yield obedience to the mandate of the king; and accordingly, announced to Edward, that he was no longer a prisoner—in his custody,—but must hold himself ready to proceed immediately to France.

The archbishop retired, leaving Earl Powis and his son, Edward and Matilda by themselves, Martin, and the other bystanders, and witnesses, having previ-

ously taken their departure, on finding their services no longer called for. The Earl's grief for the absence of his son, when he learned in what way Octavius had been employed, was speedily converted into rage.

"Wretch!" he exclaimed, "viper, whom I have nourished in my bosom, is this your duty to a father?"

"I humbly hope I have not failed in my duty. A father cannot claim a right to forbid a son to exert himself in the cause of humanity."

"In the cause of crime, rather. Hence, rebellious ingrate."

"If I have sometimes forgotten your commands, I never wilfully opposed your wishes till now. That which you have thought it right to do, has liberated me from Nature's thralldom; and a voice more potent even than a parent's, commanded me from true respect for filial love, to use my best efforts to save a son who had fallen into peril, by pleading for

a father's life—for that father whom you—”

“ Had the glory of giving to the justice of his country, you might add; but corrupted by these sectarians, doubtless the language you would hold is different. Never check your speech. Give to words the calumnious reproach your heart has dared to entertain.”

“ I reproach not,” faltered Octavius—  
“ I but vindicate that conduct which has happily saved the life of a fellow-creature.”

“ Exult not in that hope,” cried the Earl, knitting his brows with rage. “ Your foolish journey shall nothing avail. I will to the king myself, and the proofs which I shall lay before him of this Lollard's guilt, shall extinguish the undeserved clemency which your false representations have inspired. You will not save him from the fate he merits, though you may change the place of his execution.”

With these words he followed the pre-

late. Absorbed in sorrow, Octavius for a moment forgot that Matilda was present, when his attention was arrested by her advance to Edward. Tears of rapture now pursued down her cheeks, those of woe, which had previously been extorted.

“ Much do I joy,” said she, “ to see you thus unexpectedly freed by generous friendship from the cruel toils which had encompassed you.”

Edward, who was the only person that remained unmoved by the sudden change which the return of Octavius had produced, was affected by the congratulations of Matilda.

“ This kindness,” he said, “ is the only treasure earth now contains for me. The image of that heavenly smile will brighten the gloom of a dungeon in which I shall soon repose ; it shall sustain me in suffering, nor will it abandon me even in death. But truly, has my Lord Powis spoken. Of little moment is it to me

that I am now released. Yet a few days and I must be condemned."

"O no!" cried Matilda, "the king is moved by the calamities which have already fallen on the house of Cobham, and he will be merciful."

"Not to one charged with crimes like those of which I must be convicted."

"But you are innocent," said Matilda.

"I am, Matilda, and it shall be consolation to me in the last moments of torture to know that you believe me so. The rest of the world — but what is the rest of the world, in comparison with you? — must think me guilty, till new discoveries, when I am no more, shall prove that what I have accomplished was not performed by magic."

"Is it even so?" sighed Octavius.

"It is."

"And why, being innocent, are you precluded from proving it to the world?"

"An oath — a solemn oath, restrains

me. I must fall. It is the decree of Heaven, that the name of Oldcastle shall perish. Much gratitude is due from me, for the kind sympathies which I now witness. Matilda, when I am gone, drop one tear to my memory; and if my latest wish have weight with you, requite the gallant friendship of Octavius, by giving him that ever-valued hand which once hope, in cruel mockery, had promised should be mine."

"Speak not thus," she replied, "though I never can cease to reverence and admire the noble zeal which you would so unworthily recompence; yet since it was determined that we may never be united, my vows have been made to listen to no new lover."

Octavius thought of Alice, and in the midst of his distress, on account of Edward, could not but heave a sigh for his own untoward fortune. Edward remarked it, and believing it to proceed from grief at hearing the decision to

which Matilda had come, he represented to her, that the greatest solace he could derive from any thing connected with worldly affairs, would spring from the union of two beings of such kindly natures. His prayer, he added, was selfish, as their marriage would secure a permanent asylum for Alice.

“Fear not for her,” said Matilda, “while I survive, but press this subject no further. It pains me, and not less doth it afflict our friend. He, I am well informed, hath never sighed for Matilda since he beheld the brighter beauties of your sister.”

Edward had forgotten for the moment the attachment of Octavius to Alice. He now remarked, that the disgrace which had overtaken her family by the ignominious punishments inflicted, or to be inflicted on its members, would, were other circumstances favourable, interpose a bar to their union.

“Spare me,” cried Octavius; “shame



follows not punishment, but when punishment is the reward of crime. Persecution may destroy, but cannot degrade. It is I — it is I who am degraded. Might that foul blot which has fallen on the name I carry be overlooked, I could then expect happiness. — But no, not even then. Because I share not in my father's wanderings, I am cast out to poverty. — I am a beggar, and may not think of love. Let me rather consider, if no means can be devised, to save you."

" My fate is inevitable."

" Is there no one whose testimony can prove your innocence?"

" There is one who could do it, but he it is that precludes me from defence, and little hope can there be that he would come forward to do that himself which he hath denied me to do."

" Small as the hope may be, it is a hope, and I will cherish it. Where is he resident?"

" He was in Prague."

“ His name ? ”

“ Hoffmann. ”

“ Bound to conduct you to the presence of the king, I cannot seek him myself, but I will find one who shall thither with dispatch. ”

“ Be that my care, ” cried Matilda ;  
“ I have in my service a man who hath travelled much. He shall seek this Hoffmann, and will, I doubt not, prevail on him to come forward in your behalf. I will to France myself to receive the earliest tidings of his journeying, and of your delivery. ”

“ This kindness, ” said Edward, “ this unwearied friendship, is a flower which seldom blossoms with such passing beauty in the sordid soil of this bleak and barren world. I will wear it near my heart while I live, and though it may not break the cruel bonds which soon shall fall on me, yet its loveliness shall cheer my dreary way, and sweetly decorate the path to the scaffold. ”

## CHAP. XI.

“ Inhuman man ! curse on thy barb’rous art,  
“ And blasted be thy murder-aiming eye :  
“ May never pity soothe thee with a sigh,  
“ Nor ever pleasure glad thy cruel heart.”

BURNS.

ENGLAND and France, at the period to which our narrative has now been brought down, began to get heartily tired of the war in which they had engaged. Governed by an imbecile monarch, and weakened by the rancorous struggles of powerful and ambitious nobles, the French were little disposed to continue a contest from which they expected neither benefit nor fame ; and the English, while proudly vaunting of their triumph at Agincourt, and of their successes in

other parts, began to discover that glory, though a fine sounding word, gave but slender repayment for the sacrifices it demanded. The martial genius of Henry might have urged him to attempt new exploits, with much *gaiete de cœur*, had his means kept pace with his ambition, but when he remembered the debts which had been contracted, and of these he was incessantly reminded by the obstacles thrown in the way of augmenting them, and which at length made him feel that it was almost as impracticable for him to borrow more, as to pay off what he had already borrowed, he began to listen to overtures for peace. That disposition to concede something existed on either side, which afforded a reasonable hope that a pacification between the two countries might be effected; and it was proposed, by a royal marriage, to terminate the existing differences, and establish a durable alliance. With a view to accomplish this great object, an interview between the

kings of England and France, it was presumed, might largely tend to bring about an amicable adjustment of the weighty matters in dispute. The meditated interview occupied the attention of all France, and those by whom it had been projected, took care by the pomp with which they prepared to grace it, to make the meeting of the two kings as splendid in itself, as it was expected to prove important in its consequences.

That prompt and regular interchange of news, which now takes place between all the nations of Europe, had not then been imagined. Intelligence, save in cases where events of surpassing magnitude occurred, travelled slowly, and was very imperfectly communicated. The death of Cobham, though soon known to some individuals in France, did not find its way to the public for several weeks, and then the circumstances connected with his end were not detailed. That a captain once so renowned, had

met such a fate, attracted the attention of those who were old enough to remember his triumphant entry into Paris, when his sovereign, King Henry the Fourth, sent him to the aid of the Duke of Burgundy. These however were now comparatively few, and such unfortunately was the character of the times, that no extraordinary interest was excited when it was set forth, that on a particular day a convicted heretic had suffered *punishment by fire*. This was easily said, and such inflictions too frequently occurred, to make the end of Cobham appear very remarkable to those who had little knowledge of the man.

But there was one ear in France, to which the tale of Cobham's martyrdom was no common place event. De Marle learned with horror, that the father of Alice had perished at the stake. To him every thing connected with that deplorable catastrophe possessed the highest interest, and his enquiries into all that

connected itself with the death of Lord Cobham were anxiously renewed, wherever ~~but~~ a chance presented itself of obtaining information. The difficulties which lay in the way of the transit of intelligence, precluded him from obtaining a very copious narrative of what had preceded or followed the execution. He however ascertained that Cobham had been taken through the interference of a nobleman, (the name had not reached him,) and that that nobleman had been largely rewarded for the important service thus rendered to the state.

The recent death of the near relation of Eugene, the Chancellor de Marle, who was murdered, had caused much wealth to devolve to his father, and from that wealth sprang a degree of importance which had not belonged to him before. They were now called from their retirement to mingle in the politics of the times, and the father of Eugene was among the French commissioners who

were appointed to regulate the ceremonial of the intended interview, between Henry and Charles. In the conferences which took place with the English on this subject, he learned that Octavius Powis, had been to the King of England's camp to intercede for the son of Lord Cobham, and Eugene found with the liveliest satisfaction, that the relenting monarch had yielded to his prayer, so far as to consent that the accused should be brought to answer the charges preferred against him, in the royal presence. That the pleader for mercy was the son of the individual who had given the Lollard up to punishment, was not mentioned to him from the supposed notoriety of the fact; and the senior De Marle was too much occupied with the grave business he had to transact, to multiply enquiries on this subject.

The preparations for the meeting of the two kings were nearly completed, when it became necessary for Eugene to



repair to the late residence of his father. Thence, he one day passed to the town of Boulogne. Standing on that spot where he had taken leave of Alice, he delighted to recal the smile of gratitude which dwelt on her face when they parted, and gazing on the cliffs of England, he panted to pass the intervening ocean to dry the fresh streaming sorrows of the mourner. He was rouzed from the reverie which he had indulged, by seeing an English vessel enter the harbour. He perceived that it had brought over some personage of high rank, and information soon reached him, that Earl Powis had landed.

De Marle never doubted but the Earl had come to use his influence, in support of his son's appeal on behalf of Edward Oldcastle. Such active humanity commanded admiration, and he felt himself called upon to wait upon his lordship, to offer such accommodation as it was in his power to afford, and to claim the

honour of entertaining him while he remained in that neighbourhood.

Earl Powis received De Marle with great courtesy, and consented to avail himself of the proffered hospitality. Eugene had hoped that his son had accompanied him, and expressed disappointment at finding that his guest was alone. The father was rather reserved when the name of Octavius was mentioned, and when De Marle praised the valour which had triumphed over him in battle, and the humanity which had saved his life when the fatal order was given to slaughter all the prisoners, his speech produced not that glow of satisfaction which he had expected to see mantle on the cheek of a parent, justly proud of such a son; but on the contrary, they were met with an expression of dissent, — an intimation that praises which were strictly within the limits of truth, had been too lavishly bestowed. Eugene held this to be modesty on the part of the father, strug-

gling to repress, or at least to conceal, the exultation inspired by the fervent praise which justice and gratitude rendered.

“ You, my lord,” he remarked, “ may deem these panegyrics extravagant, but you will find yourself alone in this opinion. A braver soldier, or a warmer friend, never conquered in war, or won affection in peace. Faults he may have—the offspring of gay youth, but none that ripening manhood will not remove, or change to noblest virtues.”

“ He has faults,” said the Earl, “ for which years of duty and repentance will not be more than sufficient to atone.”

“ Forgive me, my lord, when I venture to say, the scrutinizing eye of a parent, labouring his son to perfection, seems in this case to dwell too much on partial failings, regardless of those high and dazzling qualities which mark Octavius for admiration, and promise to exalt him to fame.”

“ Vain hope! — He may be brave in battle, but that is no uncommon virtue.”

“ But to be brave in fight, and gentle when the contest ends, — to blend the lion and the lamb as he does, proves more than common worth in one so young and so impetuous.”

“ Impetuous he is, where evil calls.”

“ Nor less so when true virtue points the way. Perhaps, with dignified indifference to praise, he has not reported to you his late exertions.”

“ Others have.”

“ I mean his efforts in the cause of mercy. O! my lord, dissemble not your pride at witnessing such intrepid benevolence in Octavius. His whole soul, bent on the accomplishment of one sublime object, forgot all common rules and observances, — forgot even friendship in the still more sacred glow of pity for the innocent, nor deigned to give an hour — a single hour to me, near as he passed, which might delay his progress

to comfort the oppressed. His benevolence is famed through France. — All are loud in praise — ”

“ Which he deserves not.”

“ He has concealed from you the glorious zeal with which he lately pleaded for Lord Cobham ; and for the guiltless son of that brave man. Your lordship being just from England, needs must know that Cobham accused of treasons which were never proved, condemned for differences with the clergy, whose faults he laboured to reform, had fled to avoid giving new offence, when a wretch, and report says it was not one of the common sort, basely betrayed the exiled warrior.”

“ What mean you ? ”

“ Some wretch, as I am told, who never felt the thorn of want to goad him from woe to infamy, basely dragged the soldier from concealment.”

“ Who said that he by whom the hiding place of Cobham was disclosed, deserved such character ? ”

“None in particular, my lord, but you. I am sure, noble in nature as in title, must feel this as I do. The coward hand that never grasped a sword — that never buckled armour on for battle, — that never was nerved by those aspiring hopes that swell the patriot’s heart in war, and light the soldier on to victory, such only could perform, for base reward, the task of seizing one so gallant, so defenceless, and give him to be slaughtered in cold blood.”

“You argue rashly. — You have not been told of Cobham’s crimes.”

“His former services — his recent woe, these I have known, from facts confessed and told by those who were not of the number of his friends ; and these a generous mind like yours must feel with me, are sufficient to justify more than my tongue has uttered. How must that valiant murdered man — I speak of Cobham, — have scorned, even from his dungeon, though galling fetters

pressed his honoured scars, the grovelling caitiff who destroyed him!"

"And say you this of him?" demanded Earl Powis with a vehemence that surprised Octavius, though he comprehended not its cause — "of him, who gave the traitor Cobham to the justice of his country?"

"Justice be on him. I know, my lord, you speak not seriously. Justice shall follow, and shame and blood overtake him, before age can bid his degraded heart cease to vibrate. Scorn will pursue, till despair hands him over to death, and infamy shall rest on his grave for ever."

"And is this said to me?" —

"To you, my lord! — To the whole world I say it; nor can I doubt but your integrity joins with me to condemn to ceaseless obloquy the low-souled wretch, who thus could purchase wealth."

"What daring friend of Cobham's

prompted this insolence!—and to my face!”

“ My lord !”

“ Add not hypocrisy to insult. — When you invited me hither, you could not be ignorant that it was my loyalty that sought in his retreat the lurking wolf, to drag him into day.”

“ What mean your words ?”

“ Frenchman, this daring may shortly meet with its appropriate punishment. If such your matchless horror of those actions, which I, by duty forced thereto, have performed, why bid me to your home ?”

“ Surely, my senses cheat me ! I have offered hospitality to the father of my gallant preserver on the field of battle — to the father of the dauntless advocate for the injured Cobham, and his virtuous son ; nor could I doubt but you were hastening to the presence of the king of England, to support those representations which the humanity of Octavius



prompted him to be the first to make. When I spoke of the betrayer of Lord Cobham, I dreamed not that I uttered aught that could move Earl Powis."

"Frenchman," cried the Earl, eyeing De Marle with a look of scorn, "I believe you not."

"Englishman!" exclaimed De Marle, "I heed not what you believe, seeing you avow yourself that outcast from humanity whom my soul must ever abhor; but were you not protected by the rank you have degraded, and by the name which your son — a son worthy a better father, wears, this hand should on the spot chastise your insolence."

"Use you this language to an English peer?"

"There never will be found that being under Heaven, to whom, in such a case, I would not use it. If my words annoy, thank your own lack of humanity for the bitterness you have tasted. I spoke of a wretch unknown, suspecting little

that he was so near ; and, come what may, I cannot recall my words."

"I have not learned to value that spurious humanity, which manifests itself in screening from merited punishment those who violate the laws of God and man, and far from regretting the fate of the father, I will continue to pursue the son. That son, I have heard, has threatened my life ; — let him look to his own."

"I do believe," said De Marle, "that he of whom you speak is too much absorbed by woe to think of vengeance. But for myself I scruple not to say, had I been placed in circumstances like his, I would have made me an hour glass, in the which my father's ashes should have supplied the place of sand ; and constantly bearing it with me, I would have counted every hour till that arrived which brought vengeance on the head of his assassin-like betrayer."

"The Earl was not slow to leave the

mansion where he had met with treatment so different from that which he had expected. He had hardly retired, when he was succeeded by another visitor in the person of his son. De Marle saw Octavius approach, and still glowing with indignation against the Earl, advanced to receive him.

## CHAP. XII.

“ \_\_\_\_\_ Where was now  
“ The promise given—night’s golden promise—of  
“ A radiant morn?—So perish oft the hopes  
“ Of man.”

HARRAL.

DE MARLE gazed attentively on Octavius as he drew near, and was struck with the change in his appearance. A prey to anxiety and sorrow, the florid glow of laughing health which had once seemed to bid defiance to grief and sickness, was no more. His eyes were lustreless, and his former careless gaiety was supplanted by an air of pensive chagrin, which, while it expressed compassion, failed not to command it.

Nor was it only in his faded countenance and disordered manner that he was changed, his attire no longer resembled what he had formerly worn. The soldier's dazzling apparel was dismissed, and a plain student's dress had been adopted. De Marle had never heard Octavius express any intention of leaving the profession of his choice, and the metamorphosis which he remarked was unaccountable. To the Frenchman it seemed to announce calamity, but he soon found that friendship and not distress had produced it. In England, the proceedings against Edward Oldcastle had excited much attention, and journeying to the sea coast, the purpose for which he was quitting England being known, he was not a little troubled by the importunate crowds that thronged to see him in every town through which they passed. To relieve him from this, Octavius had proposed, and had indeed insisted, that they should exchange their

habits. This being done, when exposed to troublesome curiosity it was easy for the soldier to deny that he was the son of Lord Cobham, and none suspected that the military figure who accompanied him could be the individual the multitude were anxious to see, as it was well known that Edward had not been educated to the profession of arms. This arrangement, which proved exceedingly convenient in England, they had not yet thought of discarding, as it was doubtful whether it would not be equally useful in France.

The unwonted solemnity of Octavius, made it matter of speculation at first, whether he approached in friendship or in hostility. Though opposed to his father in what concerned the Oldcastles, it was not impossible that his fiery spirit would be prompt to resent any indignity offered to his parent, even in connexion with their cause. De Marle knew not what colouring the Earl might have given

to their late interview, and he certainly felt that sudden disgust had led him to act an extraordinary part.

It was soon apparent that he had not conversed with his father. De Marle thought it right to acquaint him with what had passed, but attempting to speak on this subject, he found himself abruptly stopped.

“Do not name him,” said Octavius; “he is still my father. — I would not hear him reproached, so mention not his name.”

De Marle complied with the request thus preferred, and turned to other topics. He found that Octavius was not alone, and insisted that Edward with Alice and Matilda should make his residence their home. The mansion of his father, before in a dilapidated state, had now been repaired and enlarged. De Marle was immediately to depart for Paris, and the whole of it he announced to them would be at their command.

Joy and sorrow were strangely mingled in the meeting which followed. De Marle mourned for the misfortunes which Alice and her brother had been doomed to know, but he exulted at seeing them there, under any circumstances; he gazed with profound admiration on Matilda, but more than admiration beamed in his eyes when they rested on Alice. He recalled the scenes through which it had been his lot to conduct her, on the way from Constance, and the very difficulties with which he had had to contend, had now a delicious interest attached to them, which almost provoked a wish that they could be again experienced, while the reflexion that, formidable as they had once appeared, all had been conquered, suggested that the sources of present grief might ultimately share the same fate.

It was in this moment that De Marle rejoiced in the possession of wealth and influence. These enabled him to promise



to Alice and her brother every aid that gold could secure, and encouraged a hope that he might serve them where riches alone could not avail. The attention of the English king had been drawn in a particular manner to the nephew of the murdered Chancellor; and Henry had honoured him with the most flattering notice. On more than one occasion De Marle had the honour of conversing with the monarch. He flattered himself that it might not be impossible for him to gain the ear of Henry, and attempt disposing him in favour of Edward; and he spoke with confidence of the result.

“Be the secret what it may,” said he, “and however important when you took the oath, that it should be preserved inviolate, circumstances may now have changed. Hoffmann, I have frequently heard John Huss declare, was a worthy and humane man; and is it then to be doubted that he will hasten to relieve you from the consequences of your

“fidelity, when he shall learn that on his doing so your life depends?”

This reasoning had some weight; and the positive terms in which De Marle insisted that the accused would be enabled to vindicate himself to the satisfaction of the king, inspired hope. To Edward even it began to appear that the sacrifice to which Hoffmann must submit, as the consequence of making known his mystery might not be so great, but he might consent to incur it, in order to save the life of one so dear to his former patron—John Huss.

All but one tasted tranquillity, to which they had long been estranged. The only exception was Octavius. He read in the looks of De Marle, that his heart bounded with involuntary transport at again beholding Alice. A jealous alarm stole over him. He felt disposed to arraign the love of Eugene as a sin against friendship. He burned to call him to account, and to insist on his renouncing

for ever the passion he had ventured to cherish. A moment after he remembered the part the Earl had acted, and his own forlorn situation. De Marle was rich, powerful and amiable. Ought he not to wish then as earnestly as Eugene himself could do, that every obstacle to their union were removed? It was his duty to resign all thoughts of Alice, and wishing for her happiness, cease to wish that she might be his.

These thoughts passed through his mind, and the conclusion to which he never failed to arrive was the same; but when he looked on the subject of his thoughts, his resolution vanished; burning tears trickled down his cheeks, and he felt that if to renounce all desire of possessing Alice, was a duty — it was one that he never could perform.

While endeavouring to resolve that he would think of Alice no more, it was not without satisfaction that he saw his rival depart. Endeavouring to wish him all

happiness, his presence, favoured by fortune as Eugene was and as he suspected by love also, was more than Octavius had fortitude to sustain. De Marle, on leaving them, promised to use all his influence to give a favourable turn to the examination which Edward was shortly to undergo ; and he added, with energy, rising almost to exultation, that it was not being too arrogant to say, it would prove of no trifling importance on the present occasion. He exhorted Edward to proceed with Octavius to Mante, near which city it was then proposed that the meeting of the two kings should take place. There he would find the English monarch, and he hoped the cause would be dismissed before the expected conference began, as Henry might not be sorry to mark the eve of an interview so memorable by a splendid act of clemency and justice.

When De Marle had commenced his journey, the situation in which the inmates of his father's house found them-

selves was not a little singular. Edward and Octavius were in the presence of those whom they fondly loved, yet neither dared to mention that passion which in the midst of severest woe, never failed to predominate over every other feeling. The former, even if he escaped the perils which now menaced his life; hoped not to gain Matilda; the latter, by the very love for which he dared not to plead, was thrown to that distance from wealth and comfort, that he could no longer be a candidate for more than compassion. All felt embarrassed; and, as if by common consent, all turned their thoughts to the only topic on which their ideas — their fears and wishes, could be freely expressed, the probable issue of Edward's trial.

Matilda began to look impatiently for the arrival of news from Prague. Her servants were constantly on the watch for her courier, or some one from him; for though she had had no idea of taking up

her abode in the house of De Marle, she had purposed resting at Boulogne, and thither she directed the earliest intelligence of Hoffmann to be forwarded.

They were walking in the garden when they saw a stranger approach. He sprang impetuously forward, and clasped her in his embrace. Octavius and Edward started, and gazed on each other with mutual surprise. No resentment was indicated by Alice, but joy and kindness beamed from her eyes, while she announced the individual, who had thus accosted her, to be no other than the Baron de Chlume.

He apologized for disregard of forms at a moment so interesting, and proceeded to state, that learning from the messenger of Matilda, Alice would accompany her to Boulogne, he had outstripped the courier to offer his services, if he could render any, to her or to her brother.

Notwithstanding this kindness, the arrival of the baron brought them little

comfort. He announced that Hoffmann had perished in a fire which had consumed his house to the ground ; and a man who had given out that by listening to a private conversation, he had possessed himself of an art which previously belonged to Hoffmann alone, had also paid the debt of nature.

Matilda, having cherished the most sanguine expectations that Hoffmann would promptly obey her summons, experienced a severe shock at receiving this intelligence. To find one who could give testimony like that which had been expected from Hoffmann, was impossible. De Chlume could indeed speak to the fact, that the deceased printer had possessed a mysterious art which enabled him to produce numerous and exact copies of books ; but proving so much, would not refute the idea that these wonders had been accomplished by magic. But it occurred to her that Edward had intimated it depended

on himself to save his own life. He had been prevented from doing so by an oath which bound him on Hoffmann's account; to abstain from the means of defence which he possessed. It now became a question whether such an obligation could longer remain in force, seeing the party whom it principally concerned was no more. Matilda found little difficulty in convincing herself, that all obligations contracted with that individual must die with him. This she ventured to urge in the course of a conversation which ensued.

"No, Matilda, no;" said Edward, "it is in vain that you press this. I must not listen to you. I can save my life, I know, but only by a crime which would cost me more than life."

"Surely," she observed with increasing confidence in the soundness of her argument, "the oath which an interested individual required you formerly to take ought not to fetter your resolves now,



when he can no longer be affected by them, when he and his interests are buried in one common grave."

"I did not expect to hear from you, Matilda," he replied, "that engagements entered into with those who have ceased to live are not to be regarded as binding. Were the Archbishop of Canterbury to pass from life, would you feel released from the vow which you have made, never to marry, his consent not having been obtained? I might yield some attention to your reasoning if you supplied that additional motive for wishing to live, which an answer in the affirmative would inspire."

Matilda blushed, —an involuntary sob escaped from her troubled bosom, but she spoke not.

## CHAP. XIII.

“ ————— As when a spark  
“ Lights on a heap of nitrous powder laid,  
“ Fit for the tun some magazine to store  
“ Against a rumoured war, the smutty grain  
“ With sudden blaze diffused in flames the air,  
“ So started up in his own shape the fiend.”

MILTON.

IT was the opinion of Octavius, that an appearance of eagerness to meet the charges which his friend was called upon to rebut, would operate materially in favour of Edward. The latter was too thoroughly convinced that the apparent proofs of guilt in the hands of his enemies would overpower all that he could offer, to participate in the idea that alacrity could render any material service to his cause.

He had, however, no objection to use expedition. The state in which he found himself, was not one of such happiness as to make him feel greatly alarmed at the idea of a change taking place. The irksomeness of suspense he considered equal to severest calamity.

They therefore quitted Boulogne on the morning of the day succeeding that on which the Baron de Chlume had arrived. Their parting from Matilda and Alice was in a more than common degree painful.

“ I am now,” said Edward, “ with the three dearest beings that remain to me on earth. How blessed my lot could I still continue near them, to receive their soothing kindness, and administer to their happiness. But it may not be. A brief and stormy career remains for me to accomplish. I trust you will know that I meet my fate with that firmness which becomes the sufferer in a righteous cause. Whatever proofs may be adduced

against me — however convincing they may be to the rest of mankind, permit me to cherish the idea, that you will not believe me guilty. May this thought console my dying moments.”

“ No,” Matilda replied.

“ How ! — Can you join with the rest of the world to believe me culpable ?”

“ Never, Edward ; but you shall not die, till years, in the course of nature, bring you gradually to decay, and these matters are forgotten. Even now a sacred glow warms my heart, and tells me the fate you anticipate shall not be yours. I will follow you to Mante. The king respected the loyal attachment of my father, and will not refuse me an audience, when I claim to be permitted to speak to him of you. The conviction of my soul, I shall be able, I trust, to convey to his ; and failing in this, if he yield you not honourable acquittal, his heart shall be melted, and interposing mercy will forbid him to touch your life.”

“ That is my hope, and my conviction also,” Octavius remarked.

“ And De Marle,—” added Alice. She paused, while she saw a tear glisten in the eye of Octavius, at the mention of his name ; — “ De Marle also, expressed a confident expectation that the result would be favourable to our wishes.”

“ I know it well ; but I also know that his wishes, rather than his hopes, prompted the language of which you remind me. Think not that I yield to unmanly dismay, but sad forebodings come over my weary spirit. The gloom cannot be dispelled. It is the night of the soul. I fear that we, who now mingle tears and exchange adieus, shall reassemble no more.”

“ Dismiss the idea,” cried Octavius, “ and let your heart receive consoling images. I feel sadness, but it shall soon be shaken off. Come ; active journeying will relieve our minds.”

Edward embraced his sister, kissed the

hand of Matilda in silence, and informed Octavius that he was ready.

Having taken leave of Matilda, Octavius tenderly pressed the hand of Alice.

“ I,” said he, “ with more of reason than Edward can have for believing that we four shall never meet again, may be permitted to believe that the felicity I now taste, shall soon be withdrawn from me for ever. This, and the treasure which once I dared to think might be mine, shall be given to another. I desire that it may be so; but I could wish to die first, for I know not what distraction shall assail me, when the event, for which I would fain pray shall have taken place, and Alice shall have blest my gallant rival with her beauties.”

Alice gently reprov'd him, and called on him not to dwell on so trifling a theme as love at that moment.

“ I will not,” he said; “ I will display fortitude. Be happy, Alice, and I will rejoice that you are so. I *will* rejoice.”

While speaking his voice was interrupted by stifled sobs, and he staggered towards the door.

The baron at that moment entered. Edward and Octavius bade him farewell, and received his promise to follow them speedily with Alice and Matilda.

On the road Octavius lamented the hopeless passion which he was doomed to cherish, and mournfully recalled the few blissful moments he had known, when believing his father to have become rich by some illustrious action, he had persuaded himself that he was at liberty to solicit Alice, and to relinquish Matilda to her brother. He now considered his fate irrevocably sealed, for he was convinced that she was beloved by De Marle. Edward admitted that this was probable, but he did not know that such was actually the case. He argued that even if it were so, it by no means followed that he would ever become the husband of Alice. It was not to be imagined.

that one so highly connected, would think of an alliance with a female so poor, so destitute as Alice, and not only poor and destitute, but degraded in the eyes of the world, from her connection with a father and brother, who were the objects of legal vengeance."

"Reptiles," cried Octavius, in a transport of love and friendship, "may crawl upon the surface of this orb, who would impute to innocence and beauty the pretended crimes and real sufferings of those who are near to them, as matters of reproach; but De Marle is none of these. He sees Alice rich in nature's fairest gifts, and knows the path of happiness too well not to prefer that angel smile, — that unearthly loveliness which still survives the attacks of cruel sorrow, to all the wealth the ransacked bowels of the earth could yield, where Heaven itself had not bestowed a dower."

Conversing on those subjects which most occupied their minds, they rapidly



advanced on their way. On the second evening Octavius announced to Edward that they were near Beauvais. He expected every moment to see it burst on their view, but was disappointed. They had proceeded for more than an hour after he had described it as being close at hand, and still they saw it not. Octavius now admitted that he had mistaken the way. They determined on returning till they reached the road from which they had deviated, or till they could find some one who might direct them to Beauvais. They had not long adopted this resolution, when they came to a peasant's dwelling, where they thought it prudent to make enquiry. They knocked, but obtained no answer. After waiting some time, a new appeal to the senses of those within who had retired to bed, produced what neither had anticipated, the English call—  
“Who's there?”

“Marry, get up and see, you snarling cur,” returned Octavius, whose natural impatience and vivacity were in some degree called into action, by the tone of displeasure in which the demand of the inmate had been uttered.

Edward felt surprise at hearing English spoken, and thought the sound familiar to him. He hastened to repress the impetuosity of Octavius; and recommending more conciliatory speech, undertook to make known their wishes to the individual whose rest they had interrupted. He accordingly stated the object which they had in view. While he was speaking, a little door, in the upper part of the house, which was the substitute for a window, opened, and a Frenchman, looking out, began to tell the travellers which path they ought to take, when the voice they had heard before interrupted him, by saying, in a milder tone,

“Nay, since ye are countrymen of my own, tarry while I garter my hose, and I will show you the shortest cut to Beauvais.”

But few minutes had elapsed before they perceived a man issue from the cottage. The night was so dark that they could see little of the person of their English guide when he was close to them; but, taking the lead immediately, he kept in advance, as if unwilling to be recognised. They promised to reward him if he would conduct them into the road to Beauvais.

“I will take you there straight,” he replied; and added, with much cordiality, “I want no recompense for helping a countryman who has lost his way.”

He assured them that a lane, which he described, would shorten the distance they had to go, by more than half a league. The voice no longer struck on Edward's ear as it had previously done; yet the first angry answer was so strongly

impressed on his memory, that he could not discard the idea which it had suggested.

The lane through which they were conducted became so narrow, that Edward and Octavius could no longer travel as before, side by side. Their conductor informed them that the ground was very uneven over which they had to pass, and suggested that it would be wise to dismount, and lead their horses to guard against accident. They acted on this recommendation. Edward and Octavius hardly exchanged a word, — the former, looking suspiciously on the guide, was too much occupied to think of conversation, and Octavius, absorbed in meditation, was not disposed to break silence.

The dreary scenes in which Edward had met the Red-hand, were recalled by those on which he now gazed, and the hated voice of Roderick by that tone which still rung in his ears. From the little he had seen of the guide, he con-

sidered him to be about the same height as the outlaw; but he could hardly refrain from smiling at the impression, which in spite of himself came over him, that it was Roderick whom they followed. That he, ignorant as he was of the French language, should be living as a rustic in France, and that too in time of war, could hardly be regarded as within the range of things possible. Earl Powis had undoubtedly procured Roderick a pardon for his former offences, in consideration of the share which he had had in the detection of Lord Cobham. Reward beside, had in all probability flowed liberally upon him; and if this were not so — if he were again compelled to have recourse to his former desperate courses — Edward could imagine nothing that would lead him to prefer France, for the scene of his depredations, to England. Alone, and in a foreign country, his prospects would be less tempting, — his risk much greater. He, therefore, held it to be idle

to think of the Red-hand, and considered it much more probable that it was some English deserter, or escaped prisoner, that they had stumbled upon.

There appeared something very reasonable in this conjecture, and Edward strove to persuade himself that he might dismiss the subject from his thoughts. But this it was not in his power to do. It occurred to him that so many individuals of rank and fortune were continually on the road from Calais to Paris at that time, that it was not impossible for Roderick and his former companions to determine on trying their fortune in France for a season. Again he repelled the idea, as the monstrous offspring of a mind impaired by suffering and vicissitude; but he determined on entering into conversation with the guide, and at once to enquire how he, an Englishman, chanced to be sojourning in those parts. Before he could do this, it was necessary to approach the individual. From the moment

of his joining them, the guide had kept from six to ten paces in advance. Octavius was now leading his horse at the latter distance from him; and Edward was following him, or rather the animal from which his friend had alighted. He threw the reins over his horse's head, and pressed forward in order to pass Octavius. He had not accomplished this, but was only one step behind his friend, when breaking the silence which had been maintained so long, he began:—

“ You seem to be an Englishman;— who and what are you?” when his ears were suddenly invaded by the loud and ferocious exclamation, —

“ 'Tis Roderick strikes!”

Doubt was no more; and with equal indignation and horror he learned that it was indeed the Red-hand, and that the wretch had plunged his weapon into the bosom of Octavius, who now grasped the assassin by the throat, at the same time calling to Edward,

“ I am slain ! but the villain shall not escape.”

Edward snatched the sword which he wore from its scabbard, and bounded forward in a transport of fancy. He thrust at Roderick, and did not miss his mark ; but before he could repeat the blow, the miscreant burst from the feeble hand of Octavius, who fell from the effects of the wound. Not even his melancholy situation would have induced Edward to pause in the pursuit of vengeance, if the prostrate Octavius had not impeded his advance for some moments. Of this the Red-hand did not fail to avail himself, and Edward sought him in vain. Favoured by the darkness of the night, and his superior knowledge of the path into which he had led them, Roderick had vanished, and to attempt pursuit was useless.

Edward raised his wounded friend from the earth. He felt as he lifted him, with a sensation of shuddering



anguish, the warm blood trickling down his person; and glowing with ten-fold rage in that awful moment, Edward experienced not less sorrow for the escape of the murderous Roderick, than for the apparently dying state of his friend. He could not see his features, but the helpless state of the victim, gave him the melancholy assurance that the outlaw's boasted aptness for murder could not be called in question from failure in the present instance. Octavius however seemed a little to revive, and Edward hoped the wound might not be mortal.

"How fare you, friend?" he enquired.

"Sadly," Octavius replied. "O! I am sick to death.— I cannot stand."

"Cheer up, man. Faintness will follow loss of blood; but I hope your wound will not prove fatal."

"I thank thee Ned, for thy kind hope, but thou wilt not long retain it."

“ I trust you think it more serious than it will prove.”

“ Not a whit. I know a scratch from a wound. This villain strikes home.”

“ Say not so, but what course must we now take ?”

“ Nay, my course is done. The best thing you can do will be to go forward alone, and leave me to my eternal repose.”

“ Prithee man, put forth thy strength.”

“ I have done it Ned ; and so unsparingly, that none now lingers in my drained and exhausted frame, to be put forth. Bear my blessing to Alice, and hie thee hence forthwith.”

“ Mock me not, Octavius. Thinkest thou I would quit thee ?”

“ Why not ? To tarry will be useless to me ; but may prove death to you. I am not afraid to be alone, and after the next two hours I shall not even perceive it.”

“ I hope we shall soon gain assistance,

but I know not which way to proceed in quest of it. Perhaps we are now as far from the place we desired to pass to, as when our cruel fortune gave us this vile guide."

"No, we are near Beauvais. I know this spot; for when I first came into France, the master of the Irish gallow-glasses brought me thus far, in quest of two cottage wenches. But I speak with difficulty — pass you to the right, you shall soon see Beauvais. God — bless thee, go — go."

"What! and leave thee here, still exposed to the dagger of that wretch? — Never."

"No fear of that. You paid his villainy too well, to make him feel at all disposed to stab again. But if he did, what can he do to me? Take you the few marks secured beneath my girdle, and then at worst he can only rob me of about an hour's pain."

“ I will not forth without thee, Octavius.”

“ Then here you must remain ; for I can neither walk, nor sit upon a horse.”

“ Then I will carry thee.”

“ Thou art marvellously perverse. It were better that thou shouldst go forward to Beauvais. Thence you can bring assistance — a litter if you will ; though, trust me, I think you would mark a sounder judgment by hiring a bier.”

“ Leave thee I will not,” said Edward ; and while he spoke, he raised the wounded man in his arms. Octavius pointed out to him that thus engaged, he was wholly without the means of defence, and liable at every step he took to receive a stab himself. But Edward was deaf to his remonstrances ; and, regardless of his own peril, persevered in the design which he had avowed.

## CHAP. XIV.

“ Hurried so sudden from our hearts and eyes!  
“ Even in the glorious blossoming of youth,  
“ And many virtue, torn from all — just Heaven!  
“ 'Twas something superadded to the sum  
“ Of ordinary misery.”

FITZADAM.

**MATILDA** and Alice, with the baron, left Boulogne on the same day that Edward and Octavius took their departure. It was Matilda that recommended this, as she still clung to the hope that her supplications, if she could once gain access to Henry, would induce the monarch to pity and pardon; and trembling lest the enemies of the accused

should be as prompt to bring forward the evidence with which they proposed to support their charges, as they were resolute to pursue their intended victim, she was impatient to repair, without delay, to the place where the crowned heads were to meet.

They passed through Beauvais on the day after Edward and Octavius approached it. From Beauvais they had advanced some leagues, when a newly-built mansion, remarkable for its elegance, was pointed out to them by the Bohemian noble. While observing it, a person, whose appearance and deportment bespoke superior rank, courteously requested them to alight. They declined doing so at first; but when his invitations became pressing, and were enforced by the statement that the honour of their society had been calculated upon — their coming having been announced by Eugene De Marle, who had commended them in an especial manner to

the hospitality of the master and mistress of the house, they no longer refused to avail themselves of the kindness thus proffered. Giving their horses to the care of a domestic, they passed into the mansion.

Conducted into a magnificent apartment, they were invited to partake of all that opulence and liberality could set before welcome guests. The person who had invited them to enter, described himself to be the brother of the mistress of the house. Her name he did not mention. In his manner there was a mysterious tenderness, which perplexed the objects of it not a little. He gazed on Alice with an air of sadness, as if he foresaw some fearful calamity about to overtake her, which friendship could neither avert nor mitigate.

When their repast terminated, he addressed her thus. "There is a dismal story to be told. That you might hear it was in part my object when I arrested

your progress, and that of your companions; yet I know not how to enter upon it; and perhaps it were better that you should be made acquainted with it from the lips of one whom you formerly knew. Allow me to conduct you to the adjoining chamber, where you will learn, full soon, the melancholy tidings which cannot be concealed, but which I tremble to unfold."

Surprised and alarmed at this language, Alice made no reply. By rising, she signified that she was ready to hear what the unseen individual desired to reveal. He opened a door which communicated with another apartment. Alice passed in alone, and it was immediately closed. The baron and Matilda looked on with infinite surprise. What they had seen was an enigma, which their ingenuity failed to solve, and the baron, after a pause of some minutes duration, judged it would not be improper for him to demand explanation. The individual to



whom he addressed himself was about to comply, and had begun by admonishing them to prepare for that which would fill their hearts with sadness, when a shriek was heard. The baron's hand fell on his sword; while rushing to the door by which Alice had vanished, he evinced a fixed resolution to terminate at once his suspense. Their host manifested sorrow, but no surprise or alarm.

They passed into the adjoining chamber, where they saw Alice reclining on a couch, almost in a state of insensibility, attended by a female, who was richly attired, but who seemed herself to be so nearly exhausted by emotion, that she required the support she was labouring to give. A deep sigh, with the exclamation, "O! my brother!" announced that Alice revived; and De Chlume and Matilda, more embarrassed than ever, were not less competent to supply, than to demand explanation.

When Alice left them, she was received in the apartment to which she had been directed by Madame D'Aumont. De Marle had made her acquainted with the story of Lord Cobham and his daughter. — She wished to see Alice, to obtain an assurance that the supposed page would never make known all that it was in the power of Alice to reveal. To expose herself in the presence of witnesses to the inferences which might be drawn from those exclamations of surprise, which a sudden recognition might extort, was that which she would not venture upon. She, therefore, retired, while her brother entertained the newly-arrived guests, and waited for an opportunity of speaking with Alice alone.

Madame D'Aumont advanced to meet her in some confusion. She took her by the hand, while her eyes were anxiously fixed on those of her sad visitor.

“ May I hope,” she said, “ and pardon the selfish being who trembling for

the consequences of former rashness, first intrudes her own anxieties on one, to whom she has a mournful tale interesting herself, to impart — may I hope, that you have not proclaimed the weakness you witnessed on that evening, when reason fled and love alone remained? Have you not made my name the source of sport to glad your merry hours? — Have you not made your young companions laugh, by the mere mention of my name?”

“ Alas! since we met, I have known no merry hours. Alice has been surrounded by no laughing group, intent on thoughtless frolic; but still borne on from woe to woe, has ever been doomed to contemplate the most appalling scenes of suffering and death.”

“ But have you not, recounting your adventures, told how your fond mistress wooed you? Have you not revealed my madness?”

“When I have named you madam, for I own I oft have named you —”

“How, Florio! — So, even now I call you. Did you describe me as a thoughtless wanton, — as passion’s giddy slave?”

“I have named you but to speak of the bounty lavished on your page; — but to describe the shelter, solace, and support which your benevolence accorded.”

“And no more?”

“More I would not remember. — Even from my own mind I have laboured to blot out all that might interfere with that reverential esteem your generous protection inspired.”

“Lovelier than ever — dearer, dearer still than when I gazed on thee in that fair evening which proved so fruitful of sorrow. — Your assurance restores repose to my troubled bosom. And, O! if bitter regret and agonising terror can expiate error, mine has been atoned,”

She paused — Alice would have attempted to afford further consolation; but the dismal apprehension awoke by the intimation she had received, precluded speech, and trembling for the recital which Madame D'Anmont had to make, she listened in painful expectation.

“Hard is my lot,” she at length said, “to find myself in return for the comfort you have afforded me, compelled to pour into your ears that which I know must give severest pain — When De Marle, having recounted your story, conjured me to entertain you on your way, I little thought that mine would be the sorrow to add to the grief you have already known, by intelligence of a calamity not less afflicting than the most severe of all.”

Dreadful alarm seized on Alice, and scarcely able to sustain herself, she wildly exclaimed — “Great God! — when will thy wrath subside?”

“ I would repress the violent emotion which shakes your frame, but cannot tell you that it is without sufficient cause. Imagine the worst that can befall the being most dear to you.”

“ Prolong not this awful suspense. — Speak, tell me the worst — What of my brother ?”

“ I fear you will see him alive no more. If you do, it will be but to receive his dying blessing.”

Here the shriek extorted from the confirmation of the worst fears of Alice, caused the Baron De Chlume and Matilda to enter.

“ Monsters !” Alice after a pause exclaimed ; “ can they have doomed him to death already ? Can the royal Henry have sentenced him to die without hearing his defence ?”

“ Is Edward condemned ?” enquired Matilda, with an expression of agonising impatience. “ But, no,” she added, “ it cannot be. Persecution, however power-

ful and active, cannot yet have done so much of its bloody work. This is — this must be a fable.”

Madame D’Aumont replied, “Edward has not been condemned, but a murderous hand has selected him for its victim.”

“A murderous hand has selected him for its victim!” Matilda wildly repeated. — “Has he been assassinated?”

“Such, — such I grieve to say has been his fate. —”

“By what hand has he fallen?” demanded Matilda.

“That will soon transpire.”

“And has he perished alone?” Alice asked. “He had a companion! — Where is he?”

“Of him I nothing know.”

“They could not be separate. Octavius never would forsake him. If he is not involved in the same calamity, he would have made it known. Some one else may have been mistaken for my brother.”

“ Cherish not the delusive hope.”

“ But have you seen him ?”

“ I have not.”

“ Then the dreadful rumour may be untrue.”

“ Would to heaven it were so ; but that is impossible. He who gave the tidings to me knew your brother well ; alas ! too well ; and he had seen him after the fatal wound was inflicted.”

“ Alas !” sighed Alice, “ it was my brother’s sad presentiment that we should meet no more. Schooled in affliction as I have been, I did not think he trifled ; and I feared it would be mine to find his words prophetic. But thus early to mourn him snatched from life, was even more than terror and despondency suggested. But is he dead ?”

“ Six hours ago he was alive.”

“ Then he may linger still, and I can yet breathe a sister’s prayer over his dying pillow. Where — where is he ?”

“ He is in Beauvais. Passing the



Hotel de Ville on the right of the market-place, there is a mansion open for the entertainment of travellers, where he remains at present. I will furnish you with conveyance thither. Your horses, which are weary, shall be tended here till you return. One of my people shall conduct you to your brother. I would be your companion, but I must instantly to Ponthoise, being summoned express to attend the queen, who purposes meeting the English monarch. Ere we part, I have one earnest request to make."

Alice endeavoured to check her sobs, that she might hear what Madame D'Aumont required.

"When you shall have seen the last sad duties rendered to your ill-fated brother, I conjure you return not immediately to England. Act then as till now you purposed to do. Hasten to your king, and though too late to save Edward's life, it may still be yours to rescue his memory from obloquy."

“A sacred duty,” Matilda remarked, “is that of which you remind us, and one that will not be forgotten or neglected.”

Madame D’Aumont, still in tears, tenderly embraced Alice, and they parted.

The conveyance which had been promised waited for them. Madame D’Aumont had no spare saddle horses, but a carriage was prepared for their reception. Such an accommodation was at that period prohibited in France by law, but to persons of high rank. Coaches had not been invented, and the vehicle which waited was a square platform with low sides to it, provided with a chair or seat. From this four shafts or poles projected, two in front and two behind. These were passed into loops provided in the harness for their reception; a pin, or bolt, was inserted at the end of each pole, to guard against their slipping out of their places, and the machine, which was unprovided with wheels, was by

their means suspended between two horses, on strong thongs passing over the animals' backs, made fast to the shafts before, and in the rear of the carriage. Awkward as this mode of conveyance appears to those accustomed to modern comfort, it was not then deemed either unseemly or insecure, and princesses of high rank did not disdain to perform short journaies in this manner.

Matilda had taken her seat, and Alice was about to join her, when she saw Madame D'Aumont, who now came eagerly towards her, holding a book in her hand.

“ I had the fortune some short time since to find this book. From what I have learned respecting your brother, I was led to conclude that it might be one of the volumes intended to be produced against him, in proof of his supposed intercourse with evil spirits.”

Matilda saw, and momentary joy sparkled in her eye, that it was, indeed,

what Madame D'Aumont supposed it to be.

"I promised myself," the latter continued, "the happiness of contributing to the preservation of one dear to you, by preventing it from being used against Edward. The crime which has since been perpetrated takes from it all importance; but if a miracle could be performed, and he revive, in such a case it might again have value. Though remote the hope, the *tome* cannot be safer than it will be if given to your keeping."

With these words she gave the book. Alice received it with expressions of gratitude, and ascending the carriage, the vehicle moved forward, and they soon arrived at the hotel to which they had been directed, in the market-place of Beauvais.

## CHAP. XV.

“ Can you deny the fact? — See you not here  
“ The body of my son, by you misdone?  
“ Look on his wounds, look on his purple hue;  
“ Do we not find you where the deed was done?”

*History of Sir John Oldcastle.*

ON entering the house to which they were conducted, Alice and Matilda were received by Edward. However great their joy might be at seeing him alive, and apparently uninjured, it was equalled by their surprise at the solemn manner in which Madame D'Aumont had affirmed that he had been mortally wounded, and that he had been seen after the wound was inflicted, by one who knew him well.

Nothing short of absolute conviction could have made her speak so decisively, and how she could arrive at that conviction was not easily to be imagined.

The misrepresentation remained unaccountable, even when they were informed of what had happened to Octavius; but sorrow for the condition to which he was reduced banished every other consideration. It was judged impossible for him to survive through the day. Edward expressed satisfaction at their arrival, as the sufferer had repeatedly called for Alice, and had desired nothing so much as to see her once more before he breathed his last.

Edward led them to the apartment in which Octavius lay. He was extended on a low couch. His eyes were closed; his pale lips a little severed; and the death-like composure which sat on his features, seemed on the first view, when Alice approached, to be death itself.

He perceived Edward as he stood near him, and spoke: — “ My glass, dear Ned, is nearly run. It will not last till Alice can arrive. Tell her, my last sigh — my last thought, was her’s. Promise me, Ned, that thou wilt not fail to do this.”

“ It will not be necessary.”

“ Never flatter a dying man. Though they stopped my blood from flowing last night, that I might see to-day, no human skill can enable me to behold the light of to-morrow. Thy presentiment was right, that we who parted at Boulogne should meet no more.”

“ The melancholy anticipation in which I then indulged seems but too well warranted; but the belief that we should see each other no more turns out to be erroneous.”

“ What mean you ?”

“ Alice and Matilda are now in Beauvais.”

“ Ha ! is it even so ? — Then I shall

die happy. Let her—let Alice be brought to me.”

“ Would you see her now ? ”

“ Instantly ; for jealous Death, apprized of her arrival, seems tampering with my sight. An hour hence I shall not be able to look upon her.”

“ She is here.”

“ Here ! ” Octavius exclaimed ; “ what, in this room ! — Impossible ! ”

Alice advanced, and stood by his side. A sigh escaped her while she marked the pallid face, once so full of health, and the dim eye, in which laughter had heretofore revelled, gaily imparting to all the mirth it was sure to derive from every object. Octavius saw the mistress of his heart, — heard the expression of sympathy which she could not subdue, — looked upon her with an ardent gaze ; and, as if he had mustered all that remained of his fast-failing powers, to aid his vision, he for some moments forgot to speak.



“ O, this is bliss !” he at length said. “ My retiring soul panted for the draught of rapture which it now receives, to strengthen it for its flight. Thy form, beloved, — thy face so passing bright, reminding me of what celestials are, lifts my ideas grovelling on the earth before, to the sublimest contemplation of that home, to which, I trust, my spirit, relieved from this impeding clay, shall pass to share the society of beings bright as thou art !”

“ This,” faltered Alice — “ this is a mournful meeting. Fain would I hope that even yet your valued life may be preserved.”

“ That may not be ; and Mercy it is that denies the painful boon. Recovered, could I regard thee with unconstrained love as now, and not permitted so to regard thee, what is there in the world to glad my senses ! My cruel — my misguided father made it a sin in me to plead the passion which consumed my

heart. I dared not offer to solicit you to become the daughter of one, who — but let me drop the veil over his wanderings.”

He was much agitated, and seemed to feel excruciating pain.

“Be more composed,” said Alice; — “this is not the time to awake afflicting recollections.”

“’Tis useless, lovely one, and therefore it is wrong. Heaven has granted me the joy for which I sighed, — that of again beholding you, — and it is ingratitude to suffer it to be disturbed by any other feeling. A tear has fallen on my hand from those glistening orbs, which beam with consoling tenderness. This shall wash away every trace of grief.”

“Would to Heaven it might, and of pain also !”

“It will — it does ; and now my spirit, already on the wing, exults in its destiny, and recognises in thee an angel bending over my couch, to breathe mercy for

the past, and conduct it to the happy future."

"Tell me not of orders," cried a voice without; "my authority is paramount, and I will see him."

A brief struggle was heard near the door. Its opening announced all resistance to be overcome, and Earl Powis entered.

His presence failed not to excite surprise and emotion. That Alice and Edward felt horror, at finding themselves with the man who having given the father to death, now pursued the life of the son, may easily be conceived; and that inspired in the bosom of Matilda was nothing inferior to it, when she looked upon the fatal destroyer of her peace, in the relentless foe of the Oldcastles. Octavius was too sensible of the feelings inspired by his father, not to regret that he should have arrived at this moment; and, relinquishing the hand of Alice, in compliance with a gentle effort that she

made to withdraw it, he fixed his dying eyes, with a sorrowful but reproofing expression, on the Earl.

“Those who surround you would deny me access to thee,” cried the latter, in a voice which age, grief, and anger, combined to render scarcely audible. “O, Octavius! is it thy father’s wretched lot to see thee thus expiring in a foreign land?”

“For me,” Octavius answered, “your cares will shortly cease for ever.”

“Who — who has done this? — What villain has destroyed ——?”

“I will not tell thee, father — Seek not to know it. — Go thy ways.”

“Nay, I conjure thee, give him to my rage.”

“Hence it must not be. — I would not see thee tear thy hair, and hear thee, in my last moments, invoke the wrath of Heaven upon thy madness and thy avarice.”

“What meanest thou?”

“ I wish not to disclose what cannot be concealed ; but seek the knowledge elsewhere. — Thou seest enough.”

“ Enough, indeed, to blast a father’s hope !”

“ True — old man ; thou now beholdest the reward of thy degrading labours. For me it was, — for me, not for thyself, — for me, that I might live in affluence, didst thou descend from sacred honour’s path, to take — O, shame ! — the reward offered for Cobham’s life.”

“ Whence this reflection ?”

“ Now thou hast thy recompense. The avenging arm of the Almighty has struck that son, for whom thy blindness led thee to toil in the ways of shame, and thou art childless.”

“ Murder has drained thy gallant veins of life ; but think not such a crime the work of Heaven. Too well I now do comprehend thy meaning ; but justice shall avenge.”

“ But will not save. Go, wretched man, go pray. I pardon thee my death, seek forgiveness from Heaven—get thee gone.”

Exhausted by speaking, he sunk back on his pillow; his eyes closed, and he became insensible. The Earl looked on him with grief, fast rising to frenzy, which no description can paint.

“ He is no more !” he exclaimed, when again able to break silence. “ Poor boy ! I will obey thee—yes, I will begone, but I fly to attempt appeasing Heaven, not merely by prayer, but by sacrifice.”

He quitted the room; and in the same moment Octavius revived, and called to Alice.

“ Come near me, Alice. Tarry by me, till you may close my eyes in lasting sleep. That shall not detain you long. But for you, Edward, I am sad that you have been delayed. Much will be inferred to your prejudice if you are thought slow to appear before the king.”

“The cause of the delay, will more than excuse it.”

“Probably not. Therefore I pray you leave me instantly, and go forward.”

“I cannot forsake you.”

“Do you wish to comfort me, to reconcile me to my inevitable fate,—to console me for what has chanced?”

“Were it possible—yes.”

“It is possible; leave me now. In these kind hands, what more can I desire? But one thing; and that is the soothing thought that thou art on thy road to prove thy innocence. Accord me that satisfaction, friend; it will be the greatest boon I can receive from thy love.”

“Nay, do not ask.”

“I will not hear thy request, that I may not refuse; but if thou beholdest me with kindness, if thou regardst the prayer of a dying man, leave me this instant, and promise to depart with all expedition for Mante. Speak! promise;

nay, do not hesitate, Ned — promise ; say this and this alone — ‘ I will.’ ”

Edward reluctantly complied, by repeating the words, — “ I will.”

“ Now perform what thou hast promised. Pause but to utter one more word — ‘ Farewell.’ ”

Having embraced Octavius, Edward turned from him to depart, and to conceal the tears which he laboured ineffectually to restrain.

“ May that God, to whom I trust I am hastening,” cried Octavius, “ bless, sustain, and preserve thee !”

Edward turned, and would have replied, but wanted power to do so. Yielding to the impatient gesture of Octavius, he left the apartment.

“ That is well ;” remarked the dying man, “ and now I taste repose, which I lacked before. Give me thy hand, Alice. Is it Matilda approaches ?”

“ Yes,” was the reply.



" My heart thanks you for this kindness. May the choicest blessings of Heaven descend on both !"

His voice gradually sunk, and was now so low, that it could scarcely be heard. Matilda cautioned him against speaking in his then exhausted state.

" If I speak not now," said he, " I must defer uttering aught that I would tell, till we meet beyond the grave."

His eyes became fixed, but their glance was still directed towards Alice.

" It is nearly over," he observed ; " I grow cold. Hold my hand, Alice."

" I have it already."

" Press it."

Alice gently pressed it.

" Press it, Alice ; do not pause."

" I have pressed it—I press it now."

" I perceive it not. O ! I am already no more. I cannot live, and be insensible to touch of thine."

His hand, which remained in that of Alice, had ceased to return its pressure.

“Where art thou?” he enquired.

“Here!” Alice sighed.

“I see thee not. I have done with light, but thy image is present to my mind. The angel of mercy still hovers near my couch. Alice, I know thou art by me, and thy smile invites me—to Heaven.”

A brief convulsion succeeded; and again attempting to utter the name of Alice, he ceased to breathe.

With solemn sorrow, Matilda and her companion gazed on the remains of Octavius. Alice gently laid down the hand of the deceased, and placed her finger on his eyelids. She was thus engaged, when the door opened, and Earl Powis abruptly entered, followed by several persons who were unknown to those on whom he had burst.

“Seize them! seize them all;” he exclaimed. “But where—where is he?”

Matilda supposed him to enquire for Octavius, and pointed to the corpse.

The Earl started, while he gazed on the countenance of his son, which was discoloured from the struggle which had just terminated. He was silent for a moment, but perceiving Matilda with Alice turn to the door, he vehemently reiterated his previous order.

“Seize them! The chief assassin has fled, but his accomplices shall not follow, and justice shall speedily pursue, overtake, and crush him. Where is he?” he again demanded.

“For whom do you enquire?” said Matilda.

“For the murderer of my son.”

“I know him not.”

“Where is Oldcastle? He,—he, your paramour, is the murderer.”

“Your rage, my lord, annihilates your reason. It is condescending too much to answer you, but Edward Oldcastle is gone forward to present himself before the king.”

“Not to the king, but to the coast he

flies; or why this guilty haste, to leave his victim. But he shall not escape."

"He seeks not escape."

"I heed not what you say. The principal screened from punishment, you may imagine that the accessories shall be passed over. You flatter yourselves. Away with them to Melun, whither the king has now passed."

The last words of the Earl were addressed to those who followed him, and Alice and Matilda now found themselves treated as prisoners. Earl Powis was mounting his horse, when suddenly turning back, as having forgotten something, he called out to one of his servants who remained behind,—

"Observe ye, Hubert, the corpse of Octavius must remain above ground. The murderer, when taken and convicted, as he soon shall be, is to be bound alive to it and buried with it; for such is the law framed in the time of King Richard, for punishing him who slays his

brother in a foreign land. I am sad that my son must be interred in such company, but this, without special interposition of the monarch, must take place."

He then went in pursuit of Edward, taking his way towards the coast; and of course taking the direction opposite to that in which the accused had travelled.

The evening was closing in, and those to whom Alice and Matilda were given in charge, debated whether it would not be adviseable to defer their departure till the following morning. It was resolved to wait for the decision of the Earl on this point. He came not that night. The prisoners were kept in a room securely barred and bolted, guarded at the door, and watched on the outside of the house, that no escape might be attempted from the window.

Though much surprised at the accusation of which she found herself the subject, it would have inspired any thing but alarm in the bosom of Matilda, had

it not been for one circumstance. Alice retained about her the book given to her care by Madame D'Aumont. Matilda was in constant fear that this would be discovered, and that it would supply the proof wanted against Edward, and the absence of which she judged might be in part the cause of a new charge being preferred by the father of Octavius. How to dispose of this was now the question which occupied her mind. Despairing of being able to tear the parchment of which it was composed, into pieces sufficiently small to provide securely against its being reunited and used, she ventured to solicit the indulgence of a fire from those in whose custody she had been left. Her liberality overcame the objections that were made. Alice wondered at the earnestness with which her friend pressed for an accommodation, which, had they been at leisure to study their personal comforts, would have appeared to her unnecessary; but when Matilda had prevailed, she felt

all its importance, and united with her to effect the destruction of the book.

On the following morning at an early hour they set out for Melun. They were exposed to the gaze of immense crowds, now hastening towards that city, to witness the splendid scene expected to take place in its neighbourhood. From this circumstance, they proceeded but slowly, and were compelled to rest one night on the road.

The Earl still believed that Edward had fled towards the coast, till enquiries made at every place between Beauvais and Abbeville proved such was not really the fact. He then retraced his steps. The officers were entering Melun with Alice and Matilda when he overtook them. Edward had passed through a few hours before, and endeavoured, but in vain, to penetrate the guards stationed to keep off the populace from pressing on the meadow in which the king's tent was erected. With much difficulty he had at

last prevailed on a captain to listen to his motives for desiring to pass. He entertained hopes of accomplishing his object, when he perceived Lord Powis behind him, who, vehemently exclaiming,—

“ Villain, are you found at last!” ordered the soldiers to secure him. This was promptly done, and as a prisoner charged with the crime of murder, he found himself once more the companion of Alice and Matilda.



## CHAP. XVI.

“ Sorrow and fury, like two opposite fumes  
“ Met in the upper region of a cloud,  
“ At the report made by this worthy’s fall,  
“ Brake from the earth and with them rose  
    revenge.”

CHAPMAN.

It would be foreign to the purpose of this narrative, to enter at large into a description of the situations in which the events of war had placed the rulers of England and France, or to detail minutely the motives which operated on the parties to make them desire that interview, which had at length been resolved upon. A slight reference to them may not be deemed impertinent.

France was unfortunate, not only in her conflicts with England, but also in

the divisions which existed in her own bosom, to which no small portion of the success which attended the arms of Henry may be ascribed. Henry, though victorious was not rich, and had no small reason to fear from the state of his resources, that his principal conquests might be lost as rapidly as they had been made. The imbecile Charles saw little prospect of retrieving his affairs, and his consort, the sagacious Isabella, was of opinion that her daughter Katherine, a princess of extraordinary beauty, might prove the means of bringing about a reconciliation, by inducing Henry to abate his demands, in order to possess himself of so desirable a consort. It was known to the queen that Henry had seen the portrait of Katherine and admired it; and the partiality of the mother, and the judgment of the woman, concurred in suggesting that the spark of love, which he had caught from the image, might be kindled into a blaze by a sight of the

bright original. To use the words of one of our old historians, she thought "the eyes of her daughter would prove more potent than all her armies." Many conferences had taken place to arrange the ceremonial of this interview; and it was at length agreed that King Henry should repair to Mante, while Charles proceeded to Ponthoise, between which two places the meeting should be held. Near that gate of Melun, which looked towards Ponthoise, a spacious meadow, called the field *De la Chatte*, bounded on one side by the Seine, was fixed upon as the spot on which the conference could most conveniently take place. Three partitions of the ground were made. By the side of the river the King of England's tent, and the tents for the high personages who were to accompany him, were pitched; while those intended for the King and Queen of France, and the Duke of Burgundy, were established on the side of the meadow nearest to Melun.

These were encompassed with a wall, the erection of which, by the bye, was no great compliment to the English, as it indicated suspicion that a sudden and treacherous attack on their part in the hour of negociation, was a measure which they might consider themselves at liberty to adopt. But such precautions were neither very uncommon nor wholly unnecessary in that age; and, on this occasion, though the English did not build a wall for their defence, they planted strong pallisades round their encampments. Midway between the tents of the two kings, at the exact distance of twelve yards from each, a third space was marked out. This was not only palisadoed round, but was further defended by a deep ditch which enclosed it. Three entrances to this space were provided — one immediately opposite the King of England's tent — the other in like manner fronting the tent of the King of France; — the third was half-way be-

tween these, and to the right of the opening towards the city of Melun. Each entrance was secured by a strong barrier, and guarded by fifty men. Within the pallisades which enclosed this central space, a superb pavilion had been erected by the Queen of France, and given by her to the King of England. It was fitted up with a degree of costly magnificence worthy of the donor, and worthy of the occasion. The tent was formed of the richest blue velvet, embroidered with *fleurs de lis*, and worked in gold. Doves, olive branches, and other symbols of peace and friendship were seen. The whole was surmounted by the figure of a flying hart in silver, with outstretched wings, beautifully enamelled by the most skilful artisans of France. Nor was the French monarch's tent, though smaller, less splendid in point of decoration. It was composed of the same materials, embellished with a profusion of *fleurs de lis*; the royal crown appeared above; and,

still higher, the white dove which brought in its beak the phial of holy oil to anoint King Clovis, and which, through so many ages, had continued to supply what was required for the consecration of the French monarchs, was represented with all the elaborate magnificence due to a messenger from the sky, appointed to execute so remarkable a mission. Still more costly was the resting place of the British monarch. Velvet of two colours — blue and green, formed his tent. The rose of Old England — the *red* rose, worked on it, far surpassed in beauty the lilies of France. On each side of the entrance, two antelopes were embroidered, each being represented as patiently drawing in a mill, while a third was placed above, bearing an olive branch in his mouth. Near the antelopes, in three different places, the motto, “After busy labour comes victorious rest,” met the view; and the pinnacle, which rose behind the most exalted qua-

draped, sustained on its summit an eagle, formed of massy gold, grasping the flaming fulmen in his strong talons. His outstretched wings and depressed head indicated that he was ready to hurl the vengeful bolt, confided to his keeping, on those who should dare to oppose his ire; while the lustre of his eyes, supplied by two diamonds of immense value, beheld in one direction, shed around the baleful glare which might belong to remorseless fury; but seen in another, the lightning-like flash of rage, gave way to the mildly-beaming lustre of gentleness and peace.

The entrance to the pavilion, from the French royal tent, was guarded by fifty French soldiers. — The opposite entrance was protected, in like manner, by as many English warriors. Twenty-five soldiers from each nation formed the guard to the third entrance. From the necessity of bringing thus abruptly into close contact as friends, those who had

so long been accustomed to regard each other as deadly enemies, some apprehensions were entertained that national prejudices among the common men, might produce disturbances which it was desirable by all possible means to avoid. Effectually to guard against this, severe measures were resorted to on both sides. It was publicly proclaimed by the marshals of the two nations, that no person of either country should, on pain of death, use injurious expressions to those belonging to the other. It was further ordered, with a view to diminish the probable causes of disagreement, that the games then common among the military should not be practised during the interview or interviews between the monarchs; and hurling the bar, quoits, wrestling, and other exercises, were prohibited under the same heavy penalty. It was also ordered that none should enter the enclosed ground before the interview, but those who might be com-



missioned or summoned to do so. These regulations were severely adhered to; and one unfortunate man who presumed to leap the barrier, was instantly reported to Henry, and forthwith ordered to be hanged. Besides the barrier, low palisades about a foot high defended each entrance to the enclosed space, between the French and English tents. It was only by passing them that the English and French could make their way from their own quarters to those of the other party, and, therefore, by regarding that space as sacred, they did much towards preventing disputes and contentions.

The preparations were completed, when it was ascertained that the meeting from which so much had been expected, could not take place. The malady which had before afflicted the French king, now attacked him with alarming violence. Reason fled before it, and frantic delirium reduced him to that melancholy state, that subjected to

confinement and coercion in his own palace, it was in vain to think of bringing him into the presence of the English king. But the hopes which had been inspired by the intended meeting, and which had been long fondly cherished on both sides, were not at once to be abandoned by those who had entertained them. Care was taken to satisfy Henry that it was the dispensations of Providence alone that opposed the coming of the French monarch; and though Charles could not be present, it was contended that an interview with the Queen and the Princess Katherine might be productive of beneficial consequences. Henry assented to this proposition, and on the morning of the appointed day, the thirtieth of May, Isabella, with the Princess, attended by the Duke of Burgundy, the Count de St. Pal, and a train of twenty-six ladies, took possession of the tents prepared for their reception. The King of England immediately dispatched the

Earl of March, the Bishop of Winchester, and Lord Salisbury, to compliment the Queen on her arrival. They were graciously received, and the Duke of Burgundy and the Count de St. Pol forthwith proceeded to arrange with them the ceremonies to be observed. It was agreed that the King and Queen, with their attendants, should leave their respective tents at the same moment, and advance to the barriers of the enclosure. Sixty persons on each side, exclusive of sixteen of the members of the council of the English king, as well as the same number of that of the King of France, to be particularly named, were to have the honour of passing into the pavilion.

These preliminaries adjusted, it was determined that the royal personages should repair to the place of conference at three o'clock on that day. From all parts of France, immense numbers had issued to seek the field *De la Chatte*. Crowds occupied every prominent spot

that offered a chance of seeing any part of the magnificent spectacle, or the approach of the royal trains; and the inhabitants of Melun were exalted on the housetops, steeples, and towers of the city, in their gayest attire, to grace this memorable holiday.

The appointed hour arrived. The trumpets sounded on the English side of the meadow. This was known to be the signal that the monarch of England was about to move from his tent, and acclamations burst from the vast surrounding multitude. The English trumpets were answered by a flourish from their French opponents, now no longer enemies, and the shouts of the crowd were renewed. Wearing his royal robes of state, Henry then advanced between his two brothers, the Dukes of Clarence and Gloucester — his uncles, the Duke of Exeter and Cardinal Beauford Bishop of Winchester, followed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who had just

arrived; and to these succeeded the Earl of Warwick, Sir Walter Hungerford, Sir Gilbert Umfreville, and other noblemen and gentlemen, to the number specified in the previous agreement. In the mean time on the French side, Isabella was led from her tent by the Duke of Burgundy, and immediately after the two ladies of honour who sustained the train of the queen the Count de St. Pol appeared, who had the honour of leading for the first time into the presence of the English king, that distinguished princess who was subsequently to become his consort. A train of ladies followed, and with these many of the French nobility walked towards the place of conference. Isabella wore a stomacher, studded with diamonds, and a petticoat decorated with flowers, richly embroidered on a purple ground. Over this a robe of green velvet was thrown, fastened in front by two golden agraffes in the form of roses, by which it was held so that falling loosely back from

the shoulders, her other gorgeous habiliments might be seen. It was edged with minever, and its length was such that collected by the two ladies of her train who preceded the Count de St. Pol and the princess, it formed a curve which touched the carpet on which she trod, and passing over their arms again descended nearly to the ground. Her gown, which was of rose-coloured silk flowered over, was so ample in size, that to prevent it from interfering with the train of her external robe, it was necessary to collect it in front, and her own hand compressed its redundant folds, and held them so that rather more than the border of the petticoat might be seen beneath. Her necklace was a blaze of diamonds, from which a ruby cross descended, and her head-dress, after the fashion of the day was high, but not so enormously lofty as had recently been the mode. It was parted in the centre, so that a distinct opening was seen between

the middle of the wearer's forehead, and the light crown of gold which rested on the summit of the two arches formed above by the richly-ornamented borders, which took something like the form of the letter M. A costly handkerchief, or streamer, descended from the summit behind, and seemed contrived like the lappets at present worn by the ladies in Normandy, to serve the back of the neck for a fan. The princess was clothed after the same fashion, but Isabella, unwilling to allow art to participate too largely in the triumph of her daughter's charms, had not lavished that profusion of variegated splendour and obtrusive colours on Katharine, which she had been content to display in aid of her own person. The intended consort of Henry was dressed in a chaster style. White satin, glistening with the light poured forth by clusters of gems of the purest waters, tastefully disposed, formed the modest but captivating array of England's future queen.

Henry wore a crimson cloak bordered with ermine, with a cap of the same colour turned up with spotted ermine, and surmounted by a plume of heron feathers. Round his neck appeared the collar of the order of the garter. The lower part of his apparel was formed of white satin, and the beaks of his shoes were sustained by small chains of gold, attached to loops, provided to receive them above the knee. The Duke of Burgundy was hardly less splendidly attired; but an immense cloak of blue velvet, covered in every part with *fleurs de lis*, so wrapped his person, that the rest of his dress was seldom visible.

They arrived at the opposite entrances to the grand pavilion. — The king of England saw the queen of France, and after a momentary pause, advanced across to the spot where she stood, and removing his cap from his head, after a profound, or as some historians have it, a “solemn bow,” he took Isabella by the hand, and saluted her with a kiss.



He advanced towards the princess, when the dazzling beauty that burst on his view arrested his step, and for the first time in his life, Henry appeared irresolute. Isabella remarked it, and while with stately dignity she seemed to avert her face, her eyes flashed with exulting triumph. The monarch stepped forward and saluted the lovely Katherine. The Duke of Burgundy, by an inclination of the head and bending of the knee, paid his respects to the sovereign of England. He then fell back, and Henry took his place on the right hand of Isabella, and replacing his cap on his head, led her to one of the two chairs of state, which, covered with cloth of gold, and ornamented with regal canopies, were in the centre. — The princess was placed somewhat lower than her mother, and the king then sat in that chair which had remained unoccupied. A flourish of trumpets announced to those without that

the king and queen were seated, and a tumult of acclamation expressed the joy of the assembled thousands, at learning that the conference had commenced.

The Earl of Warwick addressed a speech to the queen, setting forth the causes and object of the meeting, but so much time had been consumed in preparation, and lost in preliminary forms, that it was thought unadvisable to enter on the grand business that day. It was therefore proposed that another conference should take place, at an earlier hour, on the following Thursday. On the part of the queen this was readily assented to, and after an exchange of formal civilities, she prepared to depart with her suite. Both parties were well pleased to have seen each other, and Henry scrupled not to say, that he trusted the honour he had then enjoyed would prove the harbinger of closer friendship, and permanent peace.

In this moment, when all was solemn pomp, when all the courtly refinements which that age had connected with royal etiquette were in the course of being displayed, on a sudden, a rude pressure was felt from without, which impelled some of the courtiers of Henry towards the ladies of Isabella's train, with such indecorous precipitation, that they started, alarmed for the consequences of the involuntary movement. It arrested the attention of the king, who looking towards the English entrance to the pavilion, perceived that the guards were engaged in a dispute with some one, who insisted on being instantly admitted. The confusion hence arising was noticed by Isabella. Henry had not had time to attempt explanation, or to state his inability to explain, when Earl Powis rushed forward, and knelt before him. — Very different was the Earl's aspect from that of the gaily appareled courtiers who surrounded him. His dress was that

in which he had travelled, covered with dust, and all unfit for the presence of royalty. His beard was untrimmed, his face covered with perspiration, from the desperate efforts which he had used to force himself into the pavilion, and the frantic fury which raged in his bosom.

“Earl Powis!” Henry exclaimed with surprise, and with an air of displeasure he added, — “Whence this unmeet eagerness — this offensive rudeness, thus to rush in to our presence, alike forgetful of the respect due to your own sovereign, and to our illustrious cousin of France?”

“Alas! my liege, my business brooks not delay.”

“Whatever your suit may be, it will little prosper by this carriage.”

“Forgive — Forgive my boldness — Your highness knows how I have toiled to serve the state.”

Henry thought the Earl alluded to his

recent seizure of Lord Cobham. Indignation at the present unceremonious conduct of the individual before him, revived the regret he had felt at learning the fate of his ancient favourite, and induced him to look on the instrument of his wrath with no very favourable eye. He coldly replied —

“ You have served the state, my lord, and have you not been paid for it that you thus intrude on us ? ”

“ To you, my liege, as the father of all your people, I come for justice. ”

“ From my lord the archbishop we have learned, that you purpose to pursue young Oldcastle, as fiercely as you formerly did his father, but your zeal might tarry for a fitter opportunity. ”

“ Yet hear me, and when my grief can struggle from my heart in speech, your highness will not visit with your dreaded displeasure a father, who, forgetful of forms, approaches his king, to call for vengeance on the murderer of his son. ”

Henry had previously turned his head from the speaker, and resumed his attentions to Isabella. He was shocked at the words which he had just heard. The courage, eloquence, and humanity of Octavius, had made a deep and lasting impression on the mind of the king, and no longer disposed to reprove the emotion of the Earl, he anxiously enquired —

“Can it be, that your brave son Octavius, has been assassinated?”

“Even so my lord, and by the very wretch for whom he lately pleaded in the presence of your highness.”

“Murdered by young Oldcastle! Impossible!” These words were uttered by one among the French nobility, and De Marle, who had listened to the preceding recital with horror, now stood forward, and gazed on the countenance of the accuser with a look of astonishment, mingled with incredulity.

“The fatal boon,” Earl Powis con-

tinued, "conceded by your highness's mercy has proved the ruin of my thoughtless son. But the assassin is secured with his accomplices, and wearing the very garments of his victim, in which no doubt he purposed to escape; he is now without."

"Then bring him instantly before us. If these things be true, it is not fit that such a monster should live another day. But your highness and our fair cousin," (addressing himself to the Queen of France and the Princess Katherine); "can but ill abide to hear the severe decrees of justice, and till it shall be your pleasure to retire, we will enquire no further into this business."

Acknowledging his courtesy, Isabella rose to depart.

## CHAP. XVII.

“ This is the courte of lusty folke and glad,  
“ And wel becom'th ther abite and arraye ;  
“ O ! why be some so sorry and so sadde ?”

CHAUCER.

THE word was given that the queen was about to go forth. The guards prepared to receive her, and some of her attendants, who in the confusion had lost their places in her train, had quitted the pavilion, when the soldiers, stationed to guard the English entrance, supposing all to have passed out, obeyed the order for admitting immediately those whom the Earl had brought thither prisoners.

The queen had made a momentary pause, while her ladies arranged the folds



of her robe, and was just stepping forward, when Edward, Matilda, and Alice were ushered in. Isabella paused. The interesting appearance of the accused fixed her attention, and she demanded if these were the individuals to whom she had heard the crime of murder imputed. Answered in the affirmative, she replied,

“ Then, cousin, by your leave, we will remain. It seems a duty that we owe our sex to listen if aught can be urged in favour of these supposed culprits, who, if their minds be not foully belied by their form, may rank among creation's fairest flowers.”

Henry replied, “ I confess that never have my eyes yet gazed on brighter charms, save those which Heaven hath bestowed on our fair cousin.”

They advanced, preceded by a serjeant at arms, splendidly habited in the costume of his station. His head was bare, but he wore armour to the feet

with the arms of a knight riding. A gold medal attached to a gold chain hung from his neck; and he carried a peon-royal, or a mace of silver, in his right hand, and a truncheon in his left. Those it had become his duty to introduce to the presence were placed before the state chairs, which Henry and Isabella again filled. — Edward wore an air of resignation, which indicated that, regarding death as inevitable, it was to him a matter of indifference in what shape it approached, or on what pretext it might be inflicted.

Alice was in tears. To her it appeared that to escape persecution was impossible. She considered her fate, in common with that of her brother and her friend, to be irrevocably sealed. Exhausted by previous suffering, she cherished no hope of meeting with justice or of obtaining release, but weeping rather for the situation in which she saw

her brother and Matilda, than for herself, she thought but of bowing with submission to the will of heaven.

Such was not the deportment, nor such the feelings of Matilda. However great her affliction at witnessing the rancour with which the life of Edward was sought, by him whom she regarded as the destroyer of Lord Cobham, it was still inferior to her indignation at the calumnies now heaped upon Edward and upon herself. She advanced with firm step and unembarrassed manner. Glances of resentment and scorn darted from her eyes, while she looked on the accuser, and revolved in her mind the charge which she was called upon to repel.

Chichely, who was standing behind the chair of the king, recognised Matilda, with an exclamation of surprise.

“Most strange is this!” said he; “can Lord Powis suspect the intended wife of Octavius of having contributed to his murder?”

“ I do.” replied the Earl.

“ And can it *now* move surprise in your reverence,” Matilda asked, “ to find that Earl Powis is capable of seeking innocent blood ?”

The meaning of this question was not misunderstood by the Earl. A resentful frown overshadowed his countenance, but he spoke not. If disposed to do so, he could hardly have found an opportunity, for the king, impatient of delay, now called upon him to supply the proofs on which he purposed to substantiate his charge against the prisoners.

His statement was that Edward had left England, in pursuance of the commands of the king, with Octavius. Matilda and Alice had departed at the same time. Edward, to elude punishment for other crimes, had formed the plan of murdering Octavius, to escape from his custody ; and in this design he had been abetted by Matilda and Alice, to save their lover and brother from death. He

proved that his son had been assassinated; — that Alice and Matilda had been found near him in his last moments, — and that Edward flying from the spot where Octavius lay expiring, had been apprehended wearing the clothes of his victim, in which he had disguised himself, as the Earl, in that confusion which had come over him really supposed, to facilitate his flight.

“ Here are circumstances,” King Henry remarked, “ which seriously implicate you, Edward Oldcastle, in the death of one who seems to have lost his life through his generous efforts to preserve yours. What answer can you offer ?”

“ I know, great king,” said Edward, “ that sacred truth, when it falls from the lips of one who is arraigned as I am, unsupported by the testimony of others, even where such testimony cannot by possibility be supplied, may

weigh but little with an upright judge. But could the peaceful spirit of the departed return from the skies to tell what it knows, I should not need defence. Even now, I could prove my innocence by his dying words, but that he who might clear my character has become my accuser."

"Of whom do you speak?" enquired the king.

"I speak of Earl Powis, and he could prove before your highness that his son, when about to breathe his last, ascribed his death not to the companion of his journeyings, but to his relentless father."

"This must be supported."

"Even he, I think, my liege, dare not deny it."

"It is true," said the earl, "that he said I had caused the loss of his life, but he thereby only meant to declare, that I, performing my duty by pursuing the foes

of religion, had been indirectly the means of placing him in the power of this assassin."

"Not so—he charged his death, or meant to do so, upon your taking into your keeping a paid stabber;—your chosen minister of vengeance—the bloody Roderick, by whose hand he fell."

"The man he slanderously names, so please your highness, I had previously sent to Mante. I doubt not he will prove that in that city he resided, even at the time the crime was perpetrated."

"But did Octavius say he was the man?"

"Even if he did it nothing proves, when it shall be known on the oaths of persons of good repute in this very neighbourhood, that Roderick could not be guilty. But, my liege, I have reason to fear, that a fatal passion for the murderer's sister enabled the culprits to prevail with their victim to sin against

the truth, even in the last moments of his being."

"And what charge you further against the female prisoners?"

"That they conspired to favour the perpetration of the crime, and laboured to conceal it when committed."

"But what motive?"

"The sister sought to save a guilty brother."

"And her companion?"

"Your highness shall learn. — It was the wish of her late father that Matilda should be the wife of him who is no more. She would not hear of it, and wished him dead, that she might freely wed with his assassin."

"O! potent God of truth!" exclaimed Matilda, "hearest thou this outrage—"

"Daughter!" cried the archbishop, "repress this energy. Remember in whose presence you appear."

"Father I do: but if I stood before all the holy host of heaven, assembled round



the throne of the Eternal, I would not scruple there, as here, to say the accusations now advanced, are infamously false."

King Henry remarked, "This is rash. Earl Powis may err in the inference which he has drawn, and yet not merit such reproach."

"I pray your highness pardon my seeming boldness. Humbly and dutifully I desire to speak, yet must I defend what I have advanced. Again I say, the charge is infamously false, because there exists no ground on which suspicion can rest, but the imaginings of a base mind. Had Edward Oldcastle been disposed, as some one now present may have been, to seek his own interest by shedding another's blood, he might have used his weapon against enemies, but had never assailed his kindest friend. Now mark the comprehensive malice of this lord. He turns all circumstances to his own cruel purpose. Edward

left Octavius, so he was guilty;— I and my sister in misfortune remained with him, therefore we cannot be innocent. Such is the specious reasoning of calumny,— such the consistent accusations of a man, who having guiltless blood on his head, thinks even now, though his son is among his victims, that he has not destroyed a sufficient number of his fellow creatures.”

“ This is not well,” said the king. “ Calm Justice on her sacred seat must not be swayed by indignant reproaches, hurled at those who pursue crime.”

Isabella having listened with the most anxious attention to the proceedings, demanded of De Marle if the deceased Octavius was the same individual to whom he owed his life?

“ It is the same : — he was my dearest friend ; but after all your grace has witnessed, I cannot for a moment suspect that the parties under accusation are culpable.”

“And I will prove them innocent,” added a female voice, and Madame D’Aumont stepped forth from the train of the queen.

All attention rested on her. She spoke as follows:—

“Fortune, mighty king, or rather Heaven, hath ordained that I should save the lives of these your subjects, who are unjustly accused. The murder was committed not by them, but by a domestic in the service of the accuser, who was formerly known by the appellation of Roderick the Red-hand.”

“Lady, you speak boldly,” said Henry; “but what proof is there of this?”

“All sufficient proof. — Passing from Beauvais with my brother, early on the day after Octavius Powis received his death-wound, our steps were arrested by a feeble call for help. It came from a man who had been grievously wounded, as he said, by robbers. My servants were ordered to tend him,

and he was removed to a cottage in the neighbourhood of my abode. All care was taken of him, but it soon appeared that he could not recover. Alarmed at the approach of death, he desired to be shrived. Then did he confess a catalogue of crimes which it would be tedious to rehearse, the last of which, and that which sat most heavy on his mind, he declared to be the murder of Edward Oldcastle.”

“ This cannot be important, for Edward Oldcastle we see is living; the story, therefore, needs must be a fable.”

“ I pray your highness, give it further hearing. Look on the garments which Lord Cobham’s son now wears. These, which have been supposed strong evidence of guilt, shall prove his innocence. Edward and Octavius, why I know not, changed dresses with each other, and this caused the blow intended for Oldcastle to fall upon the son of Earl Powis.”

“ It cannot be—it cannot be,” added the earl. “ This is deception all.”

“ Behold,” Madame D’Aumont resumed, “ the confession signed by the priest who shrived the Red-hand, and by a notary in whose presence it was taken. Nor is this all: having relieved his mind by such penitent exercise, his bodily health began to improve, and though still exceedingly weak, he is likely to recover. Hither I have brought him, having taken much care that none should talk with him; and still ignorant that he struck Octavius, when he aimed at the life of Edward, he waits without.”

Rage and confusion deprived Earl Powis of speech, and he heard not the order of the king that Roderick should be brought before him; but when he was seen to enter, he fixed his eyes on him, with a look which marked a wandering of intellect, and inability to credit the evidence of his own senses.

Roderick came slowly forward, led, and partly sustained, by two soldiers: He was placed near the prisoners, when his languid eye rested on the well-known features of Edward. He started, and the trembling which seized him in every limb, proved that he calculated on nothing less than another opportunity of looking on the living son of Lord Cobham. But he recovered from the shock immediately. A momentary idea, that the dead rose to confront him, had caused his sudden confusion and dismay, — the recollection that Edward was charged with being a sorcerer, came to his aid in the next moment, and to this he imputed the recovery of his intended victim.

When he had so far revived as to be supposed capable of understanding the questions which might be put to him, Henry spoke.

“It is in proof before us, that you, Roderick, a domestic, lately in the service

of Earl Powis, have confessed to having stabbed Edward Oldcastle. Do you acknowledge to have done so?"

The Red-hand did not immediately answer. He looked round, and perceiving Madame D'Aumont near him, he faintly murmured, —

“ Denial is useless.”

“ We now command you to unfold the motives which urged you to the perpetration of the crime.”

“ Hatred and fear. — Hatred of Oldcastle, for former scorn ; — fear of Earl Powis, from present accident.”

The earl fixed on his wretched dependant a vacant stare, while his knees shook, and he seemed to sustain himself with difficulty.

“ Give further explanation of your words,” said the king.

From faintness and embarrassment, Roderick did not immediately obey. The command was reiterated in a tone which made him thoroughly understand

that he was in the hands of one who would not be trifled with, and he spoke as follows : —

“ I did not make myself. — In former days I could only gain subsistence by becoming the instrument of others' vengeance. Nature and fortune concurred in making me the thing I am ; and if it seem matter of reproach, blame also the steel I used for suffering itself to be fashioned into a dagger. We both alike were moulded by circumstances we could not control.”

“ To your tale at once,” interrupted the royal judge.

“ It is my purpose so to do ; for I have little speech and strength to spare. In brief then, thus it chanced.—Earl Powis, knowing me a trusty knave, gave to my care two books, which he designed to use as evidence against young Oldcastle. These books, others from very terror shrunk from holding ; and so he thought they could only be safe in the keeping



of one who never feared the devil. He ordered me to hasten to Mante, and there abide his coming. I set off, and was far advanced on my road, when it was my hap to meet a party of Cheshire archers. One of these, their leader, knew me right well; for I had helped to hang the mayor his father, and boasted of it fool-like, afterwards. Therefore it was, he passed the word to hunt the Red-hand dog to death. So they gave chase. My good horse at last out-run them all, and I escaped unhurt. But in this luckless pursuit, one of the books, of which I had been bearer, was lost. I sought to recover it, but in vain."

Here he paused from weakness. After some moments had elapsed he was called upon to proceed. He continued his narration.

"Well did I know hell's flames rage not more fiercely, than would the fury of Earl Powis, when it should be known that this disaster had occurred. Useless

I deemed it to come on with one book, and I took my resolution to see him no more, but to make my escape, and return to my former haunts. Immediately returning, I feared to meet him travelling the self-same road. Therefore I quitted it, and found a peasant content to sell me a few weeks' shelter in his hovel. One night a loud knocking broke in upon my slumber. I heard voices from without enquiring the road to Beauvais. One of these I instantly knew to be the voice of Edward Oldcastle. Thereupon I concluded, that if justice had been baffled by my accident, she might yet be righted by my dagger."

"Tell what you did," cried Henry, "not what you thought; and for your love of justice, you may reserve what you would say on that subject till the hour arrives when justice shall be rendered to you."

"I save it then for the priest and the tree," said the Red-hand, sullenly

attempting to recall his former hardihood. "This you shall believe. I judged that if I killed Oldcastle, he would never be brought to trial; and not being brought to trial, the lost book would not be wanted, and so I might remain the favoured servant of Earl Powis, its absence being little heeded if discovered. Upon this conclusion I undertook to be the wanderers' guide. Dark as it was, I could distinguish the nodding plume of the soldier from the common bonnet of the scholar; and when we approached Beauvais, I marked my man so deeply with a well-directed dagger, that nothing on this earth but sorcery could have kept life in his frame till now!"

The looks exchanged by Isabella and the princess sufficiently denoted the high satisfaction they derived, from hearing a statement which so completely refuted the charge brought against the prisoners. Henry participated in their feelings, and now addressed himself to Earl Powis.

“ It seems, my lord, to us, that no clearer proof can be desired, than now has been afforded, that your complaint is utterly without foundation. Your son has fallen ; but you, Earl Powis, are the cause of his death. To you he justly imputed his mournful end ; — to your keeping in your service this murderer by profession.”

The earl looked not on the king while he was speaking: The wildness previously displayed had been augmented by every word that fell from his wretched agent ; — his eyes seemed starting from their orbits, and, frantically rushing towards Roderick, he seized on the emaciated villain, while he vehemently exclaimed, —

“ Hell-hound, away !”

Roderick feebly attempted to break from his grasp. The interference of the soldiers who had guarded the prisoner parted them.

“ Wretch ! — villain ! — murderer !”

the earl vociferated, while the most terrific agitation convulsed his whole frame.

The Red-hand looked on him with bitterness, but with contempt, while he calmly replied: —

“Peace, old comrade! We know what we are; but accomplices should not tell all they know. Be silent, old man, and be wise.”

A glimpse of reason flashed across the earl’s burning brain, as these taunts struck his ear, and he fiercely demanded,

“Blasphemous caitiff! callest thou me thy fellow?”

“Have we not been comrades?” demanded Roderick, in his turn raising his voice to the highest pitch which it could reach, in his present debilitated state.

“As accomplices,” he continued, “have we not shared together?”

“How! — when! — where! What have we shared?”

“The price of Cobham’s blood, which

now brings vengeance on thy hoary head."

The mention of Cobham's name snatched the last vestige of intellect from his betrayer, and seemed to blast him as he stood. His teeth became set — his hands were clenched, while his quivering lips and the awful rolling of his eyes, from which all vision — all intelligence had fled, spoke him the prey of horrible convulsions, threatening instant dissolution. Utterly unconscious of what was passing around him, he was hastily carried from the pavilion, that the queen and princess might not sustain the shock of seeing him expire.

"Bear hence that wretch," said the king, addressing himself to an officer, and pointing to the Red-hand. "Allow him this night for repentance and prayer; but when the morrow dawns, ere the sun's first beam can reach the earth, see that it greets his form upon the highest tree in this vicinity."

Roderick was not taken by surprise. He had anticipated his fate, and he was led away, without having manifested the slightest emotion.

“I joy, my cousin,” said Isabella, “to find that yours is the grateful task of announcing to these who have been so unjustly accused, that they are free.”

“I am sad,” Henry replied, “to announce to your grace, that this is not so. The females are at liberty; but for Edward Oldcastle, a still more awful charge remains against him. But we would not fatigue your highness by proceeding with it while honoured by your presence.”

“If my presence be no impediment, I do pray that you enter upon it now; for such the interest which I feel in the result, I cannot rest till I see his guilt or innocence established.”

## CHAP. XVIII.

“ Now have I gain'd my noblest aim at last :  
“ Now do I view with joy my sorrows past.  
“ Yet oft my former woe shall claim a sigh,  
“ And sad remembrance busy pride deny.”

DERMODY.

THE earnestness with which the queen spoke, left the English monarch no alternative. He accordingly desired that the proofs of Edward's skill in magic should forthwith be brought forward. Alice and Matilda had not availed themselves of the permission accorded to them to withdraw, and the confusion which prevailed in the pavilion, from its being



unexpectedly made the scene of judicial proceedings, saved them from being excluded. They remained near Edward.

But some difficulties were thrown in the way by the situation to which the prosecutor had been reduced, and from which it was held to be impossible for him to recover; and the Red-hand's accident threatened to interpose an obstacle to further proceedings, which was absolutely insurmountable. So at least it appeared to the King of England.

“We know not, on reflection,” said he, “in what manner the matter before us, so far as relates to the books, can be disposed of. Awful as the charge is, in the absence of Lord Powis it cannot be followed up with prospect of success; and if he were recovered, which it is not probable he ever will be, we know not how even he, could substantiate that charge after what hath happened.”

Glances of exultation were exchanged by Alice and Matilda, while their bosoms

glowed with fervent gratitude to that Providence, which, by placing the book lost by the Red-hand in their possession, had removed beyond the reach of Edward's enemies the supposed proof of his guilt.

Short was their joy, for Chichely now claimed the attention of the king.

“ Mine,” said he, “ is the sad duty of bringing before your highness evidences of guilt so awfully convincing, that I do think few moments will suffice to remove all doubt as to the culpability of the accused, and make it your imperious duty to doom him to that death which he so richly merits; and doing so, to consign him to that tremendous abyss where hope can never enter; but with which he has not feared to open a monstrous communication while breathing in this world.”

The unsparing severity of the archbishop's words seemed still more harsh from the firm decisive tone with which they were uttered. Matilda and Alice shud-

dered while he spoke, and doubted not the doom of Edward was irrevocably fixed. Their sobs reached his ear. Chichely's eyes rested on them, and he paused for an instant. Then directing his speech to the king as before, he proceeded —

“ When I was about to leave England, other books than those which I had seen in the hands of Lord Powis were brought under my observation, and given to my keeping; but so like to those I had seen before, that many might unwittingly perjure themselves by swearing that each was the other. The mighty Searcher of all hearts, in whose presence my naked and unshrouded soul must one day stand to receive his righteous judgment — He doth know, full well, that I with pain and heaviness of soul have entered on this task. I may not spare, but nothing will I aggravate, the atrocious crime which I pursue.”

The most solemn silence prevailed. All eyes were fixed on Chichely, who

having first crossed himself, unlocked a small cabinet, and took out a package. On opening this, several books, similar to those which had formerly been produced against Edward by Lord Powis were seen.

“Behold!” he exclaimed, “behold the matchless work of hell!”

While speaking, Chichely proffered two books to the king. Henry started as they approached him, and declined touching them.

The archbishop went on. “Shrink not from them, my liege, for it is fitting that you should inspect them; and be assured of this, I would not yield them to your royal hand, had not holy water, frankincense, contact with the image of the blessed cross, and prayer, first snatched them from the influence of the powers of darkness.”

Thus encouraged, the king ventured to receive the books. He gazed on them with an expression of awful amazement,

while Chichely, directing his attention to the exact resemblance in parts where deviations from exactness were most likely to occur, remarked, as the eyes of Henry travelled over the pages laid before him, how utterly inconceivable it was that aught but magic should produce effects so extraordinary.

“Beholdeth not your highness,” he asked, “how wondrous like each is to the other. Not more perfect is the exactness of two impressions of your highness’s seal. Passeth it not credibility that this can be accomplished by the unassisted hand of man? Verily, it appeareth to me, that to doubt the direct aid of some invisible agent, is well nigh impossible.”

Overwhelmed with astonishment, the monarch made no reply, but displayed the books to Isabella, from consideration for her, keeping each at a distance from her person, by holding them severally as he displayed them, in his right hand, with

his arm extended, while pointing with the forefinger of his left, he alternately looked at the object of his attention with wonder and indignation, and at the queen, with a countenance that appealed to her, if justice could longer hesitate to strike, where crime was so clearly established.

“ By the glory of immortal Heaven !” he at length exclaimed, “ it seemeth to us that further enquiry can nothing avail ; and that, unless the accused can prove that he is in no wise connected with these, we have only to pronounce judgment.”

“ That, he ventures not even to assert, and if he did, abundant evidence is at hand to answer him, and prove them to have been purchased from him.”

“ Prisoner, have you aught to answer to this charge ?”

Edward calmly replied—“ I can but re-assert my perfect innocence of all communication with the evil one. The means which I have used to produce the books you now behold were not unholy.”

“ Then teach us what they were.”

“ That I may not do. Your highness must dispose of me as shall please you ; but bound by a solemn oath never to reveal the secret, I will be silent. I will perish faithful to what I have sworn.”

“ Indeed !” said Henry, who felt offended at the resolute tone in which he had been answered ; “ then we must have recourse to other means. The rack, perhaps, will change your resolution.”

“ Did I believe it possible, in this moment, my right hand should tear my tongue from my mouth, that it might never betray its master to perjury.”

“ Then take the awful consequences,” said the king. “ Glad would our heart have been to find thine innocence established ; but since resistless proofs of crime and stubborn silence leave no doubt of guilt, listen to your doom. You shall be taken from hence to a prison, from the which you shall be carried, for that you

are an accursed heretic, to a place of execution."

"Mercy! mercy! great king!" exclaimed Matilda, prostrating herself before his chair.

"Remove this damsel," said the king; "the course of justice must not be impeded."

Some of his attendants lifted her from the ground, and had begun to lead her from the royal presence, when she burst from their grasp, and again rushed forward.

"He is innocent," she said; and the full deep tone in which she spoke, embodied with energy the sincere conviction of her soul. "O, deign to pause, and reflect the spirit once dismissed from its mortal habitation, cannot be recalled by late repentance, which, assuredly will follow your rash decision."

"Lady, your pity steals away your judgment. If he be innocent let him give proof thereof."



“ But there is one even now at hand who may give some satisfaction to your highness in this matter. He is a Bohemian noble, and is called the Lord de Chlume. He shall testify, that such an art as that which has been evidenced to day, is known to have existed elsewhere, though the process hath not been revealed to him.”

“ That can nought avail the culprit. That the art exists we have fearful proof; that it may have been practised in more places than one, we see no just reason to doubt; but unless it can be shown that what has been done was performed by human means alone, the prisoner must stand convicted.”

“ Even then, dread sire—even then, mercy, the greatest attribute which God hath entrusted to mortals of your highness’s high estate, mercy may be fitly shown.”

“ This,” said the archbishop, “ this is not well. Retire, as may befit a maiden

of your rank. What mercy can you presume to hope shall be shown to one, who, engaging in fearful commerce with the father of all evil, will have no mercy on himself?"

"It is not so—" sobbed Matilda, "it is not so, by Heaven!"

The king replied—

"We feel for your affliction, but justice must not yield to tears. Away," he added, addressing De Marle, who now presented himself. "I cannot now listen to supplication."

"Nor stand I here a suppliant, potent sir; but He who can controul the mighty and make the feeble strong, gives me a right to implore—nay, to demand your ear—and bestows on me the power of conferring an obligation, even upon England's king."

All gazed on De Marle with intense interest—surprised at his boldness. He continued:—

“ Think not I fail in that respect which every subject owes to royalty, but I speak boldly, because I know that, enabling you to spare a life with satisfaction to your own conscience, I shall do you welcome service. I interposed not before, because I wished that you should know the glorious subject you possess, who has this day proved that he dares meet death and torture, but that he dares in no case bend to crime and perjury. What he has said I fearlessly depose is the sacred truth.”

“ This is confidently urged, but where is the evidence ?”

“ Let your highness grant me attention, and it shall not be far off. I was the friend of John Huss. Seeking him one day, while Edward Oldcastle was at Prague, I found him not at home. I waited for him in his chamber for several hours, but he came not. Fatigued with tarrying, and still expecting him, I threw me on his couch, and there did sleep. It

was night before I awoke, and in the first moments of returning consciousness, I heard a voice most solemnly propose an oath — an awful oath, to Edward Oldcastle — which he did take.”

“ Then you, being present, must know to what this youth was sworn.”

“ Concealed from view, I heard the art described, which he who proposed the oath undertook to teach. What there was said I carefully wrote down while it was young and vigorous in my memory. This paper to your highness shall attest the important fact, that human powers alone are competent to perform all that has been done by Edward Oldcastle.”

Henry took the paper, and, while looking on it, enquired —

“ Did Oldcastle subsequently know that you had so been present?”

“ He did not. Finding myself possessed of a secret intended for his ear alone, I wished not to cause disquiet, and left the room by leaping from the

window. To writing I committed it for my own entertainment, but determined it should never be known from me; and but that I felt called upon to save a fellow mortal from undeserved punishment, with me it would have perished."

The monarch having read the paper, handed it in silence to Isabella. She returned it with the remark —

"This paper doth, indeed, disclose wonders. Most potent is the invention it describes."

"And," replied the king, "much I doubt if powers so vast can be discreetly entrusted to the common sort. But of that we shall advise hereafter. The things here set forth do undoubtedly prove that we have erred in judging the books we have seen, could only be produced by aid from hell."

Exclamations of involuntary joy burst from Matilda and Alice; and the latter, overpowered by the unexpected happiness, would have fallen, had she not been

sustained by De Marle. Their exultation was soon abated, for the king proceeded : —

“ But still one accusation remains, which the prisoner must answer, and this is no trifling matter. He is charged with having passed out from a strong prison, being alone and unaided, abetted as it is presumed by the evil one, without forcing or lock, or bolt, or bar, but leaving all even as they were before. Of this there is such good, sufficient evidence, that we marvel much how he shall clear himself. How answerest thou to this charge? How didst thou break prison?”

Edward looked on Chichely, whose eyes were stedfastly fixed on him. He at length said, “ Even of this I am denied to speak.”

“ Nay, fear not for another’s safety. If any one of my lord the archbishop’s servants did favour your escape, he shall nought suffer for the same. Were you so assisted?”

“ I was not.”

“ Were you aided by no one ?”

Edward again looked at the archbishop, who, calm and unmoved, still regarded him with an expression on his countenance which seemed to denounce severest wrath if the accused should implicate him.

“ I passed forth,” said Edward, “ by virtue of no sinful covenant. More I may not state.”

“ Beware — Beware !” exclaimed the monarch, in a menacing tone, “ you must vindicate yourself in this. Here you are not bound by an oath.”

“ I cannot — I may not, and come the worst, I will not save myself by violating a promise solemnly and sincerely given.”

“ Then this must pass for confession.”

Edward was silent, and, by a slight motion of the head, indicated that he had nothing more to offer.

Chichely's countenance brightened, as if his mind had been relieved from a fearful weight of apprehension, and he now addressed the king.

“ Touching these matters, after what hath been witnessed, holy truth requires I should make known that, in this instance, myself can vouch for the prisoner's innocence.”

The king turned to look on the archbishop, as if he doubted whether it was really he that had spoken. The prelate went on:—

“ It was I, who released him from confinement.”

This statement called forth universal surprise. Matilda fixed her gaze on the archbishop in breathless expectation, fearing that she had totally misunderstood his words.

“ I know that some will marvel that I did so,” Chichely continued; “ but thus it was. Having committed him in mine



anger, I did thereafter think that I had been too hasty ; and minding the words of the old proverb —

- ' If ye be moved with anger or hastyness,
- ' Pause in your mynde and your yre repress ;
- ' Defer vengeance unto your anger asswaged be,
- ' So shall ye mynyster justice, and do dewe equyte.'

I judged it better that I should abstain from further punishment of an offence to myself, and give him chance of repentance."

" At length, cousin," said the king, addressing Isabella, " I may decide that the charges preferred against the son of Lord Cobham are satisfactorily answered. He is free and may depart with his fair advocate, who has ventured boldly in her future husband's cause."

" Not so, my liege. I have not craved your mercy for one whom I might regard as my future husband. The time has been indeed, I so considered him, but

that is past, and I have raised my presuming voice but to save a guiltless man."

"But what gave you assurance of his innocence, being ignorant of his secret?"

"The knowledge of his worth, which satisfied my heart he could never descend to the iniquity imputed."

"Your generosity has carried you far for a lover who, it should seem, has proved faithless."

"He never did prove faithless, but is still as firm in his love for me, as in his loyalty to your highness."

"Your mutual regard being unchanged, what prevents your union?"

"A solemn promise given to a dying father, that I would never become a wife without the consent of the Archbishop of Canterbury being first obtained."

"And think you this obstacle insuperable?" enquired the king. "Holy sir," he proceeded, turning to Chichely, "hath

not this beauteous maiden erred, in deeming you would for ever oppose the union of virtuous hearts?"

The archbishop, instead of directly replying to the question, undertook to explain the motives by which he had been animated.

"I did oppose the pretensions of this youth, because he was the son of one who had most grievously offended against the church."

"But that offence has been severely punished. Shall even the sinner's blood be regarded as an imperfect expiation, and shall vengeance continue to pursue his posterity?"

"Need I remind your highness, that in holy writ it is declared, that the sins of the fathers shall be visited on the children?"

"And have not those before us been visited—severely visited already for the transgressions of their parent? Shall there be no limit to human wrath?"

Your reverence would much pleasure us, and as I think our royal cousin, and her gentle daughter, by granting that consent now which the parties whom it most concerns have neither ventured to hope for, nor to implore."

Though since the death of Cobham the zeal of Chichely against his name had much abated, he had not come round to adopt any of his sentiments. He now reflected that one of the errors into which Cobham had fallen, was that of shutting his ears against conviction when royal reasoning appealed to his understanding, and he did not think it would be wise, in this, to imitate the Lollard. But it ought not to be concealed, that the firmness of Edward had won his respect, while the sufferings which the youth had experienced, and the dangers to which he had been exposed, moved his pity. He had satisfied his conscience by stating the objections which occurred to him, and now he felt

at liberty to gratify his own feelings and those of his sovereign, at the same time. He therefore replied —

“ Your highness, who next to the Deity, may claim to command on earth, can fitly decide on the merits of a case like this. To your potent wisdom my feeble capacity must yield ; — and since you will it so, I give my cordial consent to the union of the Lady Matilda with Edward Oldcastle.”

“ Say with Lord Cobham, for his father’s title the youth shall henceforth wear.”

Edward clasped the hand of Matilda with transport, and kneeling with her replied to the bounty of the monarch —

“ My tongue falters, and cannot body forth my gratitude to your grace, which, therefore, must perforce tarry in my heart, where, in sooth, it ever — ever shall remain.”

A tear glistened in the eye of the princess. Henry observed it.

“ This,” said he, “ is a blissful event, which wins a tear from our peerless cousin for joy, in place of that which but a few moments since was prompted by sad commiseration. Trust me, I think the union our holy archbishop has just sanctioned, will not be the only one which shall shortly be celebrated. The speaking glances of De Marle and the sister of Lord Cobham tell that their hearts are one. This is a goodly omen. Still may our subjects continue so to unite; and as they have commanded the admiration of each other in war, may their esteem be increased by efforts to excel in the peaceful virtues. These, when the laurels which victory may wreath for the conqueror shall have faded, with the brow on which they flourished, shall prove to both nations the fruitful source of imperishable glory.”

His eyes raised to Heaven, his hand placed on his heart, attested the sincerity of the monarch while he spoke, and he

almost persuaded himself that the sacred glow of hope which he felt, was that of inspiration.

Their bosoms filled with joy and gratitude, the parties whose affairs had so unexpectedly occupied the attention of royalty retired, and Isabella with her attendants and courtiers departed.

Few words remain to be added. Whether Lord Cobham gave up that source of emolument by which he had previously profited, or whether King Henry, acting on a more enlightened policy, discountenanced any new charges that might be preferred against him, does not appear in the records which furnish the principal facts in the foregoing tale. It may suffice to say that the faithful Evans recovered from his wounds, was rewarded for his devotion to his former friends, and Mr. Whittington had nothing to regret (saving the want of an *Act of Resumption*) but his

having lost the memorable spectacle of the field *De la Chatte*.

The marriage of De Marle and Alice, when time had in some measure soothed their grief for the loss of their common friend Octavius, was celebrated on the same day with that of Edward and Matilda. De Marle was still a catholic, Alice remained a protestant, but each animated by the sacred love of virtue, found no bar to its unrestricted exercise in the forms prescribed by the religion of the other.

THE END.

LONDON:  
Printed by A. & R. Spottiswoode,  
New-Street-Square.

n









