

finding a twig on which to perch a chaffinch! And why, forsooth, do I dishonour my board with this yeoman's fare, but that old Mark Willoughby scorns to dole out Bourdeaux and Rhenish like a village sutler;—and that, were he to let them flow as they were wont in his father's hall, he might whistle to the waves of the Medway to come and fill his empty cellars! When the exiled Prince, or his parasites, lacked a bag of pistoles, who so ready as the doting dunderhead of Wildinghurst, to mortgage acre after acre—to sell coppice after coppice—in order to teach them that there still beat on loyal heart in Old England? Who more forward to spill his blood in the cause of the Stuarts?—I left a limb, sirs, upon Worcester plain; and, after having been hunted like a beast during the Commonwealth, I dwelt here in solitude, to pinch and spare for the good cause,—and so far I lacked not discretion. But I was fool enough to dream that old claims might avail me something in a new court, and to fancy that a veteran cavalier might find grace in a royal saloon!”

“But surely sir,” interrupted the elder Hemsworth, his eyes glistening and his cheeks flushed, “surely, sir, Charles can know nothing of these claims, of these unrequited services?”

“How should he choose but know?” shouted Sir Mark. “When the warm feelings of my clownish heart urged me to rush, something roughly perhaps, into the presence chamber, that I might gladden my old eyes with a sight of the restored sovereign, whom I loved with the same fondness I bear my own lady-bird—my daughter Grace—I was put back, like a forward child, by a tawdry prince of an usher, who bade me remember—God knows what! I should have smitten the hireling varlet to the earth, but that at the moment I heard young Rochester noting to one of his saucy mates, ‘the boorish breeding of Corporal Stump.’ My anger fell upon prouder shoulders than those of a lackey; and I rushed, cap in hand, to the king, and spoke my indignation in such downright terms, that I was speedily placed in arrest, and in consideration only of my former services—*my services!*—I was permitted to retire to my country seat, to

mend my manners; in order that the minions of Charles Stuart might undergo no further insult.”

“You spoke of your daughter, sir,” said Hemsworth, after a long pause, in which he appeared striving to subdue some painful emotion. “Does yonder lovely portrait represent the Lady Grace?”

“It is her mother's picture,” replied Sir Mark, in a calmer tone; “and although a masterpiece of Vandyck himself, and imaging as fair a creature as ever trod the earth, yet doth it not set forth one-half the loveliness—the heavenly-mindedness of her child! In my days of prosperity, sir, I admired only in my Grace the proud beauty—the accomplished heiress of Wildinghurst; but what is she now, what hath she *not* been, since poverty laid his iron hand upon my household! The soothing comforter of my peevish age; my cheerful, active companion! To serve me with sweet and patient duty, she hath forgotten the sports of her age,—she hath renounced, one by one, the adornments of her lonely existence! She who was born and nurtured in affluence, hath given up state and grace to increase the stock of the old soldier's comforts. Page and bower-maiden,—the palfrey that came neighing to her call,—the jewels that were her mother's bequest—one by one, have all been sacrificed. Those delicate hands that had scarcely moved, save over the strings of her gittern, have laboured for me with the activity of a yeoman's housedame; and more than all—more than all,” continued the old man, in a broken voice, “she hath done this, she hath done more than I can find breath to tell, with a heart that shrunk not from the sacrifice of its own fondest feelings. There is a fair lad among the crew of the laced blockheads ye saw this morning, who would fain take her from her old father's heart, and place her in a station that becomes her; but seeing that my prayers cannot induce him to forsake the King's household, she hath given up the tender affection with which she repays his long attachment, at my bidding. No! although the subdued glance of those bright eyes, the languor of that once light step betray at every moment the sufferings she labours to conceal, Harry Brooke will never