

VOL. XXV.

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LORD DACRE OF GILSLAND; OR

THE RISING IN THE NORTH.

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE OF THE DAYS OF ELIZABETH.

By E. M. Stewart.

CHAPTER XII.--(CONTINUED.)

During this discussion the Earl of Leicester had been silent, leaving the misgivings of Elizabeth, where her cousin was concerned, to be combatted by the craft or the wisdom of his associates. Now, however, he leaned forwards, and spoke in a low

"Whispering kind of tone : "Oh, there are many modes, Sir Francis, by which the sentence of the law may be executed. Sure-sure and silent modes-a bowl well tempered for succeeding days, who shall trace out its operations, which have worked so secretly and slow. Blood spilt publicly finds, every drop that falls, a tongue; then check its current with some friendly drug."

At these words of the Earl, the Queen's hand, which had rested on the table, was clenched with earnestness, and her eves wan a kind of convulsive dered over the countenances of Walsingham and Cecil with an anxious piercing look. Both these counsellors, however, dissented from the advice of Leicester, and urged, whatever might be her guilt, that a public trial of the Queen of Scots was necessary, even to the honor of their own mistress, Queen Elizabeth. The latter, as they finished speaking, drew a long breath, as though a load were passing from her breast ; then she said : "We blame not that zeal for our cause in our faithful Leicester which would urge him even to propose a justice executed on our hapless cousin, which were indeed in its operation a thought too harsh. But we applaud ye much, trusty Sir Francis, and grave and reverend Cecil ; we esteem that care for the honor of your mistress and your own which prompts you to contemn a secret justice. Oh, severe justice. Hard is the hap when a nation's good compels us to abandon an unhappy kinswoman to thy stern decree."

in London, yet did she feel disposed, in some of her reflecting moments, to reproach herself with a want of affection. She felt now as if it would be something to be in London to be near him, though forbidden to see him-though a prisoner like himself -nor did she forget her cousin Lucy. These selfreproaches of the affectionate maiden were combatted not only by the Countess of Westmoreland, but by the good Father Cuthbert, who reminded her that her adventurous journey to the North had been undertaken with a certainty of being useful to others, while her stay in London could not have advantaged her father, and must certainly have destroyed herself. Nevertheless, the parting assurances of Lord Morden, and her knowledge of that nobleman's great credit with Lord Burleigh, did mere, it must be owned, to calm her mind than all the ghostly reasonings of the good father or the lavish kindness of the Countess. Gertrude had not forgotten the conversation which she had overheard in the turreted house between the robber Hugh and Ralph Adams. That Ralph-that false and ungrateful servant-had been employed by the Earl of Leicester to decoy her into some snare she did not doubt, and as little doubt did she entertain that the strange female who had visited her chamber at Whitehall was another among the instruments of that nobleman, whose long residence in the palace had very probably supplied him with a knowledge of every nook and outlet which it contained. Beset with this apprehension of the Earl and his minions, Gertrude would not venture out alone even in the environs of Raby. Nor was she altogether free of a terror for Lord Morden. Cecil was indeed his friend; but if Leicester knew how much he had promoted her escape, would not Leicester be his foe? It is true Ralph asserted that the great lord would spare those who had assisted her flight, because that he himself wished not that she should fall into the hands of the Queen. But she had been hitherto safe also from his violence, and now was under honorable protection, and to this, her security, Lord Morden had been instrumental—an offence which Gertrude could not believe that Leicester would forgive; and the world had already proved that Leicester's concealed enmity was no less dangerous than that which was open and expressed. All these griefs and anxieties had Gertrude poured into the

bosom of the gentle Blanche Norton; yet Blanche scemed dissatisfied, and alleged that even those griefs were not cause sufficient for the profound melancholy which, since the departure from Raby of the two Earls and Lord Dacre, had clouded for ever the fair brow of the merchant's daughter -But Gertrude was suffering under a reaction of spirit, the natural consequence of that strong excitement into which she had been wrought by her late iourney.

"I protest," said Blanche playfully to her one day about five weeks after the departure of the Earls, "I protest, fair Gertrude, if thou dost not honor us, the forlorn and deserted ladies of Raby, with some of thy bright smiles, I will prefer a complaint against thee to the good Earls and their honorable friend, the Baron of Gilsland. In truth, damsel, thou shouldst be a liege vassal to that right noble Lord since that thy father was born upon his land, and to the severe justice of that liege Lord will I assuredly consign thee if thou mend not thy manners ere he return."

falling on her knees, implored for charity in a piercing tone. The impressive manner and wild black eyes of this woman somewhat stariled Blanche, and taking out a purse which she had in her bosom, she extended some money to her, as much from an impulse of terror as of compassion. A rustling among the leafless thickets, however, and a scream from Gertrude, excited her attention, and looking round, she peceived a group of armed men springing from the thicket; and led by the before-named retainer of Gertrude and her friend both made an effort to fiy; but the endeavor was fruitless, for thereupon the pretended beggar, darting to her feet, wrenched them asunder, and, twining her arm round the waist of Gertrude, forced her down the declivity, where more men appeared, leading some caparisoned hor-

"None, maiden, ever foiled me twice," said the strange female in a bitter tone to Gertrude ; and in the voice and in the blazing eyes she remembered the visitor to her chamber at Whitehall.

In spite of her resistance Gertrude was now placed upon a horse, and secured there by the strong grasp of one of the armed men. The treacherous female mounted another of these horses ; and as the party gathered together ere they rode away with their prize a man on Gertrude right hand leaned forward till his face came almost in contact with hers. A devilish sneer was on his lip, and a deadly malice in the low guttural tones in which he exclaimed : "Be of good cheer, bonay Mistress Gertrade

said they not that so proud a damsel never before lived in London's city bounds? Be of good cheer for assuredly thy pride shall be pampered now; yea, thou shalt be made prouder by the love of a right noble lord."

Gertrude screamed at the sound of that woice, and at the sight of that face; then a swoon, deeper than that which had before alarmed the gentle Blanche, released her for awhile from the horrible conscious ness that she was a victim in the hands of Ralph Adams.

As for Blanche, she had not beheld her friend torn from her without emotion. When the hand of Gertrude was wrenched from her clasp, she, too, uttered a piercing shriek. But she was then fierce-ly seized herself, and looking up beheld the false retainer with a naked dagger pointed to her breast. Blanche was of a timid nature, and she forgot even her friend, in the agony with which she besought mercy towards herself.

"Lady," said the man, "I have no wish to do you harm, but I am bound to keep you silent, till my comrades are out of sight, then you may return in security to the castle. My mission concerns not vou."

"Alas, cruel man !" said the lady, " what harm has been done thee by that unoffending maiden, that to rob her of liberty thou must become a traiton to thy Lord, and deprive her of his lady' protection ?"

"No harm, lady !" said the man, with a coarso laugh, "no harm in life, and be assured that no harm is intended to the fair maiden. She is but conveyed even now to the guard of one who dearly loves her."

"Alas for such love!" exclaimed Blanche. "M gentle friend, may Heaven have mercy on thee." "Amen, lady, with all my heart !" said the man then perceiving that the captors of Gertrude had turned a point in the road which led towards the county of Cumberland, he released his grasp of Blanche, and telling her with a sneer that she had now his free leave to return to the castle, he vaulted on the back of a horse which his companions had tethered for him to a tree, and galloping away in the direction which they had previously taken, he was himself speedily out of sight, leaving Blanche to hasten with a sorrowful heart to Raby, and relate the fate of her companion.

Catholic gentry hastened to join the standard of Elizabeth, of her who had pronounced their religion to be idolatry, and who persecuted its ministers unto death; and to crown this terrible reverse, news had arrived that Vitelli had departed from England, that Alva had played them false, and that Sussex, rousing at last from his lethargy, was at the head of a powerful army, treading fast upon their steps.

The gallant Dacre had for awhile left his friends to rouse his own people in Cumberland, with him the Nevils. With their bands locked in each other the life even of their enterprise seemed gone, and dissension, that attendant on failure, had already in-ed itself into their councils.

The Earl of Northumberland protested that he had not taken up arms against the Queen; but to prevent the threatened arrest of his person, and to insist upon the removal of those ministers whose pernicious councils were the source of all the evils which the Catholics had endured.

"No, my Lord," said Westmoreland, rising with warmth at these remarks, " no, let us not because by a fault, a cowardice not our own, we have failed in a noble enterprise-let us not ourselves debase the dignity of those motives which first led us to the field. Our object I had thought, mine at least I know, was the liberation of the Royal Mary, the raising up of God's own ruined altar, the debasement of those parasites who have long lorded it over the land, and the restoration to its former influence. of a pobility not newly created like the summer files. but with hearts warmed with illustrious blood to sentiments of honor and humanity. Such, my Lord of Northumberland, were my motives, such, until now, have I esteemed yours."

"And such, noble Nevil, were my motives too," said the elder Norton, "Shame on us, if because we are overtaken by misfortune we palter with each other, and deny even among ourselves, those motives which led us to take arms against the tyrannical and usurped authority of Elizabeth."

"And what?" said the Earl of Westmoreland, with still greater vehemence, "what is the design which induces our noble colleague thus to degrade the dignity of our ill-fated enterprise! Does he expect thereby to mollify the wrath of Elizabeth 7 It were as easy to soothe the tigress when robbed of her young. Away then with such shallow pretexts, which had been unheard of had our efforts been at tended with success."

"I should be as loth as thyself, proud Nevil," said Earl Percy with equal violence, "from stooping to mollify, with base equivocations, the intern-perate fury of Elizabeth. It was never a custom of my race to kiss the rod which they had sought to break; it were an easier task to bend my head to the axe than to the yoke of the Tudor and her parasites. Yet do I maintain my former assertion; too much precipitancy has there been in our measures. We might have been assured that our forces could not contend against those of the Queen ; ithad been well at least to wait for the promised assistance from Alva. And now, what is to be done? Shall we linger here to witness tamely those who had rallied round our standard daily deserting it to rank themselves beneath the banner of our foes? Shall we stay patiently to be taken like the silly birds in the fowler?-are we to ling till the forces of Hunsdon and Sussex encircle us on all sides? To my judgment at least there appears remaining but a single course; bitter is it to pursue, and with bitterness of heart do I propose it. For present safety we must provide by flight; may future time yet yield to us the hour which may avenge our wrongs." "Flight!" cried the Earl of Westmoreland " is such the council of the Percy ?" "Peace, my children," interposed Bather Cuthbert. Preserve at least the blessings of concord among yourselves. It was not for me, when the axe hung suspended by a thread over your necks, it was not for me to discourage any measure which might, even by a possibility, preserve you from the threatened danger. But alas! I may now say that the result of your enterprise, evil though it be, is only evil as R apprehended. Why should harsh and bitter terms be bandied among you; had others but been true to you, even as ye have been to each other, very different had been your condition now. Impose not the blame of this ill success upon yourself, but upon those who are the very recreants of their own faith, whose stubborn and unworthy love of self leaves their brethren in that faith to perish by the balter and the sword, while they hug themselves in a sluggish security, or, yet worse, lend their aid to strengthen that power by which you fall. Thus did I surmise that you would be abandoned in the hour of your utmost need; yet I blame you not that ye hoped for other results than such abandonment. If there be not ten gentlemen in these counties who are not of the ancient faith, who indeed that knew them not as well as I do, could have thought that they would have tendered their swords to her who oppressed that faith, and turned them against those biethren who sought to uphold it at deadly peril to themselves." Something more of calmness was induced among the disputants by these remarks of Father Cuthbort, the justice of which none present could dispute .--After much debate it was finally resolved that no better course remained than for the leaders in the rising to depart in all possible speed for Scotland, and seek for shelter among the border clans, the tried and entbusiastic partisans of the ill-fated Mary. The elder Norton, when this measure was resolved upon, wrung his hands, and burst into a flood of tears; his son; Marmaduke; had a few minutes be-fore left the council chamber. Various preliminaries were now adjusted; the soldiers, who had yet re-mained faithful to their cause, were to be disbanded, and recommended to return with all speed to their respective homes. A body of five hundred horse was to be retained, to escort the fugitives, and if they themselves willed it, to accompany them to Scotland ... At this point of the conversation the door of the apartment, was, thrown open, and Lord Dacre appeared, accompanied by Marmaduke. Norton: Seme excitement was visible in the countenances of both ... Lord , Daore , had ridden, long and hard, and had just arrived at Durham. He was half armed, wearing a cuirass and head piece of polished ment is especially reserved for those who have ap-peared most warmly as their friends and the Barl of War-The armies of Lora Hansdon and the Barl of War-

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fell upon the lately warm speakers, and they somed almost to shrink beneath the piercing eye of Leonard Dacre; the silence was broken by himself. "Is this true, my gentle friends?' Can it be that! without one more effort for the right cause, ye have:

resolved to flee before the forces of the tyrant Tudor 2 Speak noble Westmoreland and loyal Berey, say that our Marmaduke did not hear aright; but not that yo are thus inconstant to yourselves?" "Illustrious friend," said the Earl of Westmore-

land; "valiant and never daunted Dacre, think us not so unworthy of our names, or of association. with your generous spirit, that on aught but a stern necessity we would abandon that cause to which wo have allied ourselves at so dear a price. But you perhaps, have yet to learn how we have been de-serted, how left to brave with searce a hand in our behalf those accumulated forces which are now marching against us. It were foolhardiness and not bravery to linger here."

"Nay," answered Leonard Daore, "I have heard all. Before I met my friend Marmaduke, I it all. heard how the recreants, miscalled of our faith, had deserted your standard to flock round that of the usurper. That such might possibly be the event of our summons for their assistance, you may remember that I forefold. But I, my Lord, relied-less than you did upon their aid, and more upon the energy of our own efforts. Ah, too well do I know them, ever prompt to aid the winning side. Oh, dear friends, believe the advice which I nown offer is less desperate than it seems ; let your banners on the morrow spread boldly to the breezegather around them that brave remnant of yourforces who yet abide by you, who will do so even unto death. Each single hand in such a gallant. host shall equal three among the mercenary troops. of Elizabeth-they who fight only for fear, for plunder, or for pay. By such a vigorous proceed-ing you may yet intercept the army of Sussex ere he is joined by the Earl of Warwick, and what: though your torces be still somewhat inferior in point of numbers to his, fear not. There is a price above numbers in the valor of those who yet abide by our cause, and the spirit of heroes will animate them. all. More than, life would I stake upon the rick that, thus opposed, the hirelings of Sussex would fall like ripe corn beneath the hand of the reaper. Then should you see of what material they are-these spaniels cringing to the hand which strikes-these sycophants of bloated power. Let but success attend your arms, dear Lords, in onebrief, brilliant action, and then these slaves, these idolators of authority, no matter by what means ac-quired or possessed, will discover the justice of your cause.

A murmur arose as Lord Dacre ccased speaking, and anxiously did he gaze around the circle, confident as he was in the belief that such a bold offers as that which he advised might yet redeem; them all. But the dissentient voices prevailedry The Earls would not risk an action with the superior army of Sussex, and the flight into Scotland was again insisted on. Sorrow and indignation now struggled for a mastery in the expressive countonance of Leonard Dacre. " Alas ill-fated Mary !" he exclaimed, " on what a quichsand dost thou rest thy foot. And you too, rush Lords, pause even for your own sakes, if not for here; remember that you are already as much destroved as you may be while preserving life. Strike again, if but for the credit of your mce. Leave not the rich lands of your inheritance a proy to the upstart and the stranger. If Elizabeth gain the victory, let her feel that it was dearly bought."" "It is in vain, Lord Dacre," said the "Barl of Northumberland, "your sanguine comper creates hope where none exists, to attempt resistance to offer our lives as well as our lands to glut the vengeance of the Queen." "Then," said Lord Dacre, "I am to.understand that you, my Lord; retreat from this enterprise." " Even so," replied the Earl. "Then," returned Lord Dacre, looking round the circle, "is there yet in this fair company one gentleman who will strike a blow for honor and Queen Mary, or must I alone lead my brave borderers to the charge? "Not alone, valiant Dacre," said young Marmeluke Norton, pressing yet closer to his friend. "Not alone," responded the old man and the rest of his brave sons. Many more of the knights and gentlemen professed their determination, since the Earls would not proceed further in the affair, to abide by the standard of Lord Dacre. "God help you, my children," said Father: Cath-

"Such, gracious mistress, is the lot of sovereigns," said Lord Leicester. "It is even a price which heaven's impartial care exacts as the penalty of their high estate that they should resign, as your Highness is bound to do in this instance, all their own tender feelings of compassion for their people's good."

"Still, still, my Leicester, is our hap a hard one," cried Elizabeth, rising to dismiss the council. "Oh heaven be our witness that our heart bleeds for the unhappy Queon of Scots; and that had we no duty to fulfil but towards ourselves, we would freely pardon every injury she ever has, or ever may commit against us."

"Fortunate the people," said Walsingham, "whose sovereign thus submits to their welfare the dictates of her heart."

"Cecil," exclaimed the Queen, ere she withdrew to her closet. " Cecil see that you dispatch strict orders to Sussex and to Sir George Bowes for the taming of those northern rebels. Hang them, Cecil, hang them I we will have a gibbet on every rood of land, but we; will scare them from their treasons." When the Queen had retired, and Burleigh had left the council chamber, Lord Leicester approached the Secretary, Walsingham, as he also was preparing

to depart. "Mine excellent friend, Sir, Francis," he said, "believe me that the mode which I proposed for the disposal of that unhappy source of discord, who has so long unsettled our peace and that of our gracious mistress, is yet worthy of your more grave consideration. There is full often a pious fitness in expediency, which makes itself evident only to a **, profound, and rightly ordered, and long deliberating (judgment, Will it please you to listen to the arguments of a learned divine upon this subject."

stithe resultation of the APTER XUL and the date of the "He mounted himself.on a steed so tall, , ! Andsherion a fair palfraye, all ci anares hon And-slung his bugle about his neck, it ram. io a and alAnd roundly they rode away.".d .isis(aH) mit is specially reactive in the sent of and in a sent to and a grant within the sent of t

The face of Gertrude varied from red to pale while she was thus rallied by Mistress Blanche; but the latter was shocked when, as she finished speaking, the maiden fell senseless from her chair. The affectionate lady immediately summoned ker waiting maids, and they were yet employed with cold water and essences about the scarce recovered Gertrude when a loud blast of a horn was heard at the castle gate. A few minutes afterwards the Countess of Westmoreland entered the apartment, holding an open letter in her hand, and with a countenance expressive of much distress. The letter was from her lord. It did not enter into details ; but, brief as it was, it betokened a bitter disappointment, and required that the Countess, with the Lady Percy, and the noble dames in their company, should repair immediately to Durham, where a council of the leaders of the rising was to be held. A company of horse had been sent by the Earls to guard the ladies on their way; a desire was also expressed that Father Cuthbert should hasten with them to Durham.

All was now the bustle of preparation within the Castle, and while the soldiers were provided with refreshments the ladies made ready to set out.

Meanwhile Gertrude was persuaded by the gentle Blanche to accompany her to the castle woods for the benefit of the fresh morning air which was now playing over the landscape. Apparelled for their journey, which was to commence in an hour, the fair friends passed unattended through the castle gates. It was one of those unusually fine days on which, even in mid winter, the sun diffuses something of the warmth, no less than of the brightless summer,

Deep in anxious and sorrowful discourse as to the motives which impelled the Earls to summon their wives so suddenly to Durham, Gertrude and her companion strolled on until they had passed the immediate demesne of the castle, and had reached a pleasant ascent half-mantled by a thick copse, commanding on one side a prospect of the road to Durham, and stretching on the other hand towards the county of Cumberland. To this spot Blanche and Gertrude had been for the last week daily in the habit of repairing ; for here, at the foot of the acclivity, was situate a rustic bermitage, which had sheltered, they, were fond to think, some saint of yore. This hermitage was built of huge stones, roughly piled one upon another, almost in the fash ion of a grotto, and the lapse of many years had clad these stones with a mantle, of ivy and moss. Before the hermitage ran a little brook, which, unbound by the sunbeams from the icy chain which thad lately isilenced its murmurs, bubbled, clear as crystal, over the bright pubbles which formed its bed. ... As Gertrude and Blanche now approached the hermitage they were surprised to see a man, in the habit of one of the Earl of Westmoreland's retainers,

CHAPTER XIV.

Now spread thine ancient Westmoreland. Thy dun bull faine would we spy, And thou the Erle of Northumberland Now raise thine half moon upon hye.

But the dun bull is fled and goue, And the half moon vanished away,

The Erles, though they were brave and bold, Against so many could not stay. Rising in the North-Percy's Reliques.

A winter evening was closing over the city of Durham, the wind howled dismally through the narrow streets, and groups of armed men who had been loitering lazily about through the day were glad to seek warmth and shelter by the blazing fires of the hostels. Among the groups collected round these fires there were countenances marked alike by discontent and fear; murmurings too there were, and a talk of two great armies marching towards Durham, the first commanded by the Lord Hunsdon, the cousin of Queen Elizabeth, and the other led by the Earl of Warwick and the Lord Admiral of England.

But in a large apartment of a quaint old house near to the Cathedral, these matters were yet more gravely and anxiously discussed.

Among those engaged in that discussion were the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland; with their ladies, the Nortons, the Markenfields, and all the other chiefs of the insurrection, with the exception of Lord Dacre.

In the bitterness of disappointment and despair. had those brave and misused spirits retreated to hold a council in that old house within the city of Durham. Even as Elizabeth had herself foretold, the English Catholic gentry had not only failed to respond to the summons of the two Earls, but, following the base example of the Earl of Derby, had hastened to betray the confidence of 'the rash and generous noblemen who had risked their own lives chiefly to serve the very people who were so meanly felse.

A lamentable instance of that political baseness and ingratitude which, with a few noble exceptions has ever been a distinguishing feature in the charac ter of the Catholics of England-the only religious party who have not been true to their own! cause, and by whom every species of obloquy and ill treat-

"I fear this will be but a wanton sacrifice of bert, of life."

It was now proposed by Leonard Dacres that Blanche Norton, with the ladics of those genilemen who had determined with him to oppose the power of Elizabeth, should, with the Countesses Pency and Nevil, retire into Scotland till the event was decided. This proposal was relished by none; and most vehemently opposed by the commonly gentle Blanche, to whom a separation from herehusband appeared as an evil far greater than any other which she could by possibility encounter. It was when she first advanced with these remonstrances that Lord Dacre, casting his eyes more curiously over the fairer portion of the circle, marked the absence of one face fairer far than all. It was then, in a voice broken by her tears, that Blanche made known to him the strange manner in which Gertrude Harding was torn away; but when he really understood that no trace could be obtained of the captors of the maiden, an almost convulsive expression of agony and alarm agitated, his features, he meditated for a few moments, and then whispered to Blanche that he thought he had surmised the author of the outrage the Alas poor maiden, sweet and imagent

maiden l" he exclaimed; half unconsciously, woe was the day when I mixed thee with matters so beyond thy state; safe wast thou in thy lowlings, and now I who have so endangered thee, may scarcely hope to save "as shi to be writed to your regree