

he people on the streets, but to no purpose—no one had seen the person described.

Richard always attributed the death of his mother and sister to the murder of his father, hence it is not at all singular if he cherished the thought of one day bringing to justice the robber assassin, who was the cause of his early orphanage, the death of his sister, his defective and deficient education, and all the subsequent ills that fell upon him, because of these afflictions. He had no desire for revenge, he was above that thought, but still he felt his mission on earth would never be accomplished until justice was done him, as the only surviving representative of a family most foully and terribly wronged. His chagrin at losing track of Torwillager may, therefore, be easily imagined; however, he consoled himself with the reflection that he had discovered, at least, some tangible ground to work upon.

(To be continued.)

RACHEL AND AIXA;

OR,

The Hebrew and the Moorish Maidens.

AN INTERESTING HISTORICAL TALK.

CHAP. XI.—The Conspirators.

Immediately after the departure of Burdett and the Jew, Deborah introduced Esau to the young Jewess, whose retreat was scarcely less elegant and sumptuous than the mirado of the favourite.

Pale, and trembling with indelible emotion, Esau stopped before her. "Rachel," he murmured, "it is a brother, the friend of your childhood, who comes to ask your forgiveness."

The young girl regarded him with commiseration, but answered not.

"Oh! I was madly insolent the other day," he continued; "the sight of you overpowered my heart, and turned my brain. At the moment when I was relating to you all the efforts I had made to raise myself from the obscurity to which my birth had condemned me—just when I was about to confess that, in order to follow the path my ambition had opened to me, I had been compelled to abjure the faith of my fathers, a man appeared, and with contemptuously-insulting language humbled me in your eyes, crushing me to earth with the most disgraceful epithets. You, whom I had not seen for so many years—years of torment to me, in which the remembrance of you alone supported my courage—for you to hear me branded as a renegade and a spy! Oh! if the abjuration of my religion be a crime—a crime which my love for you alone led me to commit—with what acute suffering did I not expiate it when forced to bend before you, my very temples crimsoned with shame!"

Rachel extended her hand to him. Esau pressed it to his lips, and bathed it with his tears.

"But you see I have gained the most difficult point," he at length resumed. "I have henceforward the privilege of wearing the spurs of a knight. Have all my efforts to obtain a look, a smile, an encouraging word, been useless? Have I been wrong in seeking to remove that mountain of contempt and humiliation that separated me from the titles and honours so much valued by Christians? Should I rather have resigned myself to suffer with our brethren? Oh, no! I preferred death to wearing the red badge and the degrading horn."

"Esau, I hate you no longer—I pity you," said the young girl with a melancholy expression.

"What must I do to be loved by you Rachel?" replied the renegade. "What proof do you impose on me? Nothing shall daunt me to insure your love. I exist only for you."

"Alas!" said Rachel, "an invincible obstacle separates us."

"An obstacle!" exclaimed Esau; "but while I live none shall stop me! You are my faith, my religion, my courage, my all, Rachel. Shameful though it be to avow it, yet for you would I sacrifice my honour as well as my life. I would be guilty of crime or cowardice as readily as an heroic action for you. To be the instrument of your will would be supreme happiness to me. You should command me as a slave. Say you 'strike that man, or save him,' I would strike him, were he my friend, had I even received hospitality or an asylum at his hands; I would save him were he my mortal enemy, who had treacherously denounced and surrendered me from his own hearth. In battle your name has been a talisman to me. Wounded, seeing my blood flow I repeated your cherished name, and it seemed to me that my blood ceased running, and my wound closed. I no longer suffered. I rushed into the combat with an ardour, a feverish frenzy. You were my guide, you were the light of my heart. Without you my mind was confusion and darkness. Have I offended you by serving Don Enrique, Rachel? Say but the word, and I will disown my master, as I have disowned the faith of my fathers."

Alarmed at these violent and incoherent expressions, the daughter of Samuel mildly answered, "Be faithful, Esau, to your master; I cannot despise of a heart that is not mine."

"Still inexorable," murmured the renegade with despairing sorrow; "but, Rachel, can you answer for your heart? Do you know if later it may not change? And who is this rival you prefer to me? I can too easily guess. It is that magnate of the land who is ashamed of

you, and who meanly allowed you to be driven from his palace."

No, I voluntarily quitted the Alcazar," answered Rachel, with dignity. "But I pray you, my dear friend, persist not in pursuing this unpleasant subject. Time, which has not been able to conquer your love, will not cure mine."

"Oh, Rachel," he replied in a mournful tone, "deprive me not of hope—the only consolation for those who suffer—that hope, after which nothing but a shadow is left."

"Esau," said the young Jewess, taking hold of his hand, "in return for the sisterly friendship I offer you, swear to me, since my wishes are sacred to you, swear that, from this moment, you will not attempt anything against the life of the king, or against his crown."

The renegade trembled. "The oath you ask of me is the annihilation of all my efforts, the destruction of all the projects I have formed since I left your father's house, and you know it, Rachel."

"I know it," said she, tenderly regarding Manasses.

Esau smiled faintly, in spite of the torture that wrung his heart, in spite of the anguish that brought the perspiration to his brow. At length he said, "Let what will happen, I swear to obey you, Rachel, my sister."

"And I," replied the Jewess, with passionate enthusiasm, "in return for the sacrifice I impose on you, Esau, my brother, I swear in my turn, that if the love which has touched my heart does not destroy me, if ever time can extinguish it and efface its traces, none but you shall be my husband."

"Rachel, may you one day keep that oath as faithfully as I shall observe mine," said Esau, overpowered with emotion. After having for the last time pressed the hands of the young girl to his lips, he quitted Samuel's house, and bent his steps towards the postern of the Jewry, pondering, as he went along, by what means he could without dishonour, withdraw from the party he had joined.

The treasurer hastened home alone, after leaving Tom Burdett, to communicate his plans to Zedekiah, a fanatic Jew, whose son had been executed for coining, in accordance with a just sentence passed on him by the judges, and confirmed by Don Pedro.

The situation of poor Samuel became every hour more perplexing. On one side Don Pedro demanded that Rachel should be brought as a hostage to the Alcazar; on the other, the hateful Aixia insisted that she should be delivered to her. Esau had proposed to conduct both father and daughter to the camp of Don Enrique. After mature reflection, the old treasurer formed a bold and decisive resolution. He proceeded immediately to his daughter, and seeing her pensive and melancholy, he said, "My poor child, Heaven sends us a new trial; arm yourself, then, with courage to hear me."

"Is the city threatened with new misfortunes?" asked Rachel, anxiously. "Have the king's enemies made a breach in the ramparts?"

"No, my child it is not the city, but yourself. My child, you are no longer safe in your father's house."

"Who then dares to violate this asylum?" asked the young Jewess proudly.

"Don Pedro, my daughter," replied Samuel.

"Don Pedro!" repeated Rachel, smiling, "ah, you have reassured me. But from whom have you such startling news?"

"You are wrong to smile, my child, for I have told you the truth," said Samuel. "The king wants to keep you as an hostage in the Alcazar; he has declared it to me himself. Now, your imprisonment in that place will not only dishonour you in the eyes of our brethren, but it will probably cause your death, for the favourite, who has easily fathomed Don Pedro's love for you, has sworn never to suffer a rival in the king's heart. Aixia is a woman of hot word, when revenge is in question. What do you decide on doing?"

"To obey the king at all risks, my father," replied Rachel. "Does not my life, which he saved, belong to him?"

"But I would not lose my child," said Samuel, in a sorrowful and reproachful tone. "You forget your old father, Rachel; he who has watched over you with so much anxiety and fear since your mother's death. Are you so ungrateful?"

"What do you then advise, my father?" asked Rachel, moved at these bitter words.

"If you would consent to leave Seville until the termination of the siege," resumed Samuel, "Aixia has offered to secure a quiet and secret asylum for you at Granada, where Mohamed, her father, reigns."

"And is it you who would deliver me into the hands of this pitiless and heartless woman who hates me!" exclaimed the Jewess, with surprise. "You could never imagine that I would agree to this proposal, which doubtless conceals some snare. No, I will not leave you my father; I will not quit Seville, where Heaven will probably permit me to make myself useful to Don Pedro—to him who has shown himself so noble and so generous towards me."

"What," insisted Ben Levi, "if I exact from you strict obedience to my orders?"

"I am a submissive daughter," said Rachel; "you know it, my father; I shall not disobey your orders; but you will surely not be inflexible, for you would not wish to see me die of grief, and if you exact my departure, I shall die before I reach Granada. I too know how to keep my word," she added, in a tone respectful, yet determined.

The old treasurer appeared to reflect some moments, then he replied, "You are probably

right, my Rachel; you shall not depart, for your poor father knows not how to oppose you; but if Don Pedro retains you at the Alcazar how can you resist?—you a humble Jewess, without support, without defence, against a king whose desires have never known resistance?"

"I fear not the king, for he has a noble heart," said Rachel. "He will not use his power against a poor girl who loves him, but treasures her honour. Should he incline to imitate those dissipated nobles whose excesses he has so often chastised, he would embrace only a corpse, for I should prefer death to dishonour. I envy not the title of favourite, and the proud Aixia is wrong to fear me."

"Well spoken, my child," exclaimed Samuel. "May the blessing of Abraham, and that of your aged father descend on you! Now I will wait, with a firm heart and serene countenance, Diego Lopez and his armed archers."

Then rising, he opened the door that led to an inner gallery, and observed that old Deborah had laid a table in the court-yard, on which smoked a quarter of lamb, pears, and an olla podrida; there were also baskets filled with pomegranates and oranges, and bottles with chased silver necks, containing the wine of Xeres, as well as porous earthen jars in which the snow water remained as cold as ice.

"For whom is this regal feast prepared?" exclaimed the treasurer to his servant.

"It is the repast you ordered for the English Captain," said Deborah.

"Moses assist me!" cried the Jew, there is enough on the table to ruin an honest household. However gluttonous the gigantic knight may be, he can never consume such a quantity of provisions. Come Deborah, bring us up some fragments of this Belshazzar's feast. My poor body is worn out with fatigue, and I shall be glad to know if the fare provided for this bold marauder be worthy of him."

Deborah hastened to obey, and Samuel affectionately invited his daughter to partake of his meal, when she from mere complaisance began to pick the seeds of a pomegranate, while her father made a notable breach in the provisions accumulated for the entertainment of Tom Burdett.

Suddenly Samuel appeared to listen to some unusual noise, and exclaimed, "I thought I heard a knock at the street-door; go Deborah, and open it. Can it be the English captain already, or Diego Lopez?"

While the servant hastened to descend, he said to his daughter, "Do you Rachel, look from the balcony, and see whether I am mistaken or not."

The young girl whose heart beat violently, sprang towards the balcony. As soon as she had disappeared, Samuel drew from his pocket a flask containing a red liquid, and precipitately poured some drops in a full cup of the Xeres wine intended for his daughter.

Rachel soon returned, and said, "You are mistaken, my father."

"Let us wait," replied Ben Levi. "How pale you are, my child; one would imagine you were in pain. If you do not wish to appear before the king like a poor victim led to the sacrifice, drink a mouthful of this generous wine, which warms and enlivens the heart."

"If you wish it, be it so, my father," and mechanically she raised the cup to her lips. Thinking that she was soon going to see Don Pedro again, a sweet and involuntary joy took possession of her heart; she listened with feverish agitation, to discover whether she did not already hear the sound of the footsteps of the king's foster brother, Diego Lopez. Confused pictures crossed her mind; her eyes, spite of her efforts, closed; a strange stupor came over her senses, and she seemed in a kind of dream, to behold Don Pedro repulsing Aixia.

Samuel anxiously watched her; suddenly her head drooped on her bosom, as if she were overpowered by an irresistible drowsiness; then she endeavoured to struggle against the unknown influence that subdued her; and, finally, her trembling lips murmured, "Support me, my good father—whence comes this lassitude? My heart freezes, and my eyes are dim." She stretched out her arms, and endeavoured to rise, but she immediately fell back fainting, and murmuring, "Oh, my God! a mortal coldness seizes me—am I going to die—to die without seeing him again—to die without supplanting Heaven? It is Aixia, who wanted to prevent me seeing Don Pedro again. My father, I die—I die—cursed be Aixia!"

After vainly struggling against this unconquerable drowsiness, cold, pale, and breathless, she remained extended on the divan.

"It is well," said Samuel, leaning over his daughter with a joy mixed with uneasiness, "my narcotic has produced all the effect I expected. This trance, the image of death, ought to last twelve hours. I have thus time to arrange everything, to save Rachel from the dishonour that awaits her at the Alcazar, or the death probably reserved for her by her rival. Let me now finish my work."

He immediately gave utterance to the most heart-rending cries, so as to alarm the whole neighbourhood, and when old Deborah ran in trembling with fright, she found her master tearing his beard, striking his breast, rending his clothes, and groaning lamentably before the apparent corpse of his daughter.

The poor woman remained terrified at so sudden and unexpected misfortune. She vented neither sighs nor tears to express her grief whilst contemplating the sweet and beautiful Rachel, inanimate and dead, whose birth she had witnessed, whom she had nursed and put

to sleep on her lap, whom she had served and loved, and consoled in all her girlish troubles. She fell on her knees and kissed the cold hands of her mistress, while a convulsive tremor agitated her poor old body. Absorbed, stunned in her consternation, she heard not the noise and cries of the neighbours, who knocked at the street-door as if they would break it open.

"Go," said Samuel, in a stifled voice, "open the door."

Deborah rose mechanically, and swaggering, went to obey her master, and admit the treasurer's friends who had hastened to the house, and who, according to the custom of the Jewry, sought to console their neighbour by adding their plaintive cries and shrieks to his lamentations.

In the meanwhile the hour approached for the meeting of the conspirators. Samuel ordered his servant to dress the corpse in its shroud; when Deborah had executed her task, which she did with a mechanical obedience, he had the body of his daughter carried into the vault of his house, and placed it with the face towards the east on the bier which always stood ready to receive its tenant. Then he ascended with his guests, who silently, by look and gesture, bade him adieu. On finding himself alone, for Deborah had remained in the vault to guard until the last moment her dear mistress, after throwing ashes on his head and beard, and rending his clothes in different places, despair depicted on his countenance, and his eyes red with tears, he sat down on the threshold of the porch, crossing his legs.

Night had come; a torch fixed on one of the pillars of the porch cast a fitting and funeral light on the open street-door before which a watchman was placed to invite passengers to pray for the dead, and to throw on the threshold a handful of ashes taken from an urn he held in his hand.

Four persons, well wrapped in their robes and cowls, met at the same time at Samuel's door. At sight of the old man an untoward presentiment of evil disturbed the heart of the first of them. Retreating a step, he exclaimed, "What, then, has happened in this house?"

"The hand of the Lord has struck it," said the old man, in a mournful voice. "Death has entered it."

"Who is dead here?" resumed Esau, for he it was, and he sprang into the passage. "And this old man weeps and laments—it is Samuel!" added he. Then shaking him by the arm, with haggard eyes, closed teeth, and swelling bosom, he asked, "Whom then do you bewail old man?"

The treasurer answered not, but regarded the renegade steadfastly, as if he did not recognize him, and nothing but a faint groan escaped his lips.

"Which of us two has lost his senses?" cried Esau, violently. "Answer; I left this dwelling calm and peaceable some few hours ago, and on my return I find a house of mourning. They have spoken to me of death; but it is an imposture, is it not? Stay; I do not see your old servant, Deborah; can it be she?"

"It is Rachel who is dead!" interrupted the Jew, in a sad voice.

(To be continued.)

DAMFINO.

I recall an adventure with a night-clerk, once in a Western town. I retired, leaving directions to be called for the express, which came along at three o'clock in the morning. It was important that I shouldn't miss that train, and, with this idea weighing on my mind, I couldn't sleep much. Waking suddenly from a doze, I consulted my watch, and found it was nearly three o'clock. I dressed hurriedly, and going below, found the night clerk asleep with his feet upon the stove, and a half-consumed cigar in his mouth. I shook him, and the following dialogue ensued:—

Traveller—"Won't the omnibus be here soon?"

Clerk (gaping fearfully)—"Wha'om'bus?" Trav.—"Why, the omnibus for the Eastern express."

Clerk—"No om'bus (gape) run that train."

Trav. (growing excited at the prospect of being left)—"How far is it to the depot?"

Clerk (lazily striking a match to re-light his cigar)—"Bout a mile."

Trav.—"Well, call up the night porter and send him down with my baggage, and I'll walk. Come—no time to lose."

Clerk—"Porter won't get up. He goes to bed for keeps."

Trav. (dancing round with nervous excitement)—"How am I to get to that train then?"

Clerk (a long gape)—"Damfino."

Trav.—"Would half a dollar induce you to go down to the depot with me and carry my baggage?"

Clerk (springing to his feet with great alacrity)—"Certainly, sir, I will light a lantern and jog right along."

The depot was a mile from town, a lonely place, with no other building near. No friendly light glimmered from its windows; the agent probably enjoying his necessary five hours' sleep. "Good-bye," said the night-clerk, as he received his half dollar, and was about to return, leaving me to

watch out in the cold for the train. "See here," said I, "is this train usually on time?" "Hardly ever known to be on time," replied the night-clerk. "Three or four hours' behind, sometimes." Here was a pleasant prospect for me, alone at that desolate depot, of a dark, wintry night. I was afraid of robbers, too. I hadn't much money, but how could the robbers be expected to know that? "Can't you stay with me until the train comes?" I pleaded.

"I can't do it, boss (gaping again), must get back to the hotel (gape). Good night; take care of yourself, old man." "What can I do if the train don't stop?" (Gaping fiercer than ever), "Damfino." Visions of robbers filled my mind as the lantern receded, and I yelled, "would half a dollar induce you to stop until the train comes?" "Certainly," cried the night-clerk, cheerily, stopping his gapes as he came back on a run. For once the train was on time, so he was not long delayed. It halted about a second; I jumped on the platform with my baggage, the train started, and the night-clerk yelled, "Here, you! Where's my half dollar?" And the voice of the traveller came wafted back as he gaped, "Damfino."

A SCREAMING FARCE.

THE DANGER OF GETTING SHAVED UNKNOWN TO THE WIFE.

A worthy citizen undertook to trim his beard a short time since, and by a slip of the scissors spoiled the cut. He trimmed a little more, and still more, but it would look lopsided, so he went to the barber's and got shaved for the first time in 12 years.

He was very busy, and business detained him in his office until a late hour of the night, and when he went home he found that his family had retired. This was not an unusual occurrence, so he silently entered by means of a latch-key, sought his own room and undressed without lighting a candle. He got partly into bed, when his wife astonished him by uttering a loud and prolonged scream. He was very much alarmed, and feared she had lost her reason. He implored her to tell him what was the matter.

At the sound of his voice she screamed: "Oh, Edward, come quick, and save me!"

"I am here, dear," said he; but she only screamed the louder at his words.

He sprang out of bed, and had just struck a light when his brother-in-law, a muscular six-footer, rushed into the room, and with a poker aimed a blow at his head. In a minute a pale-faced man, with a long white robe, staggered under the blow, which had doubled the size of his organ of comparison.

"Great heavens!" exclaimed the husband, "are you all crazy?"

"Bless my heart!" shouted the muscular brother-in-law. "Why, it's Ned himself. What on earth tempted you to get yourself up in that style?"

"What style?" asked the much-abused husband, as he rubbed the growing lumps on his forehead.

"Why, when did you shave?"

It was all clear to him then. His wife had put up her hand in the dark, and meeting the shaved face of a man took her husband for an intruder. She recognized his voice at first, but the second time he spoke her terror was too great and she fainted. When the brother-in-law rushed in he saw a thin-faced man with a slightly bald head, in a long white night-robe, and in his rage at the supposed outrage struck him with the poker and knocked him down. Fortunately his voice saved the husband from a second blow. His wife recovered from her faint only to faint again at the recognition of her husband's shaven face and the poker mark on his forehead.

He finally got to bed and slept very well until morning, when "the baby," a child of about two years of age, approached the bed, as he had been used to do, and, frightened at the sight of a stranger, ran screaming from the room. Tripping on the carpet, the poor child received a severe bump on its little head.

Matters were finally straightened up at home, but in the street his friends passed him without speaking, and at the bank he was not only refused payment of a draft, but threatened with arrest for signing his own name in endorsing it. Of course a little explanation brought the various affairs all right, but it took so much time to explain, and for the concussion on his forehead to get well, that the aforesaid citizen vows he will never shave again, as he considers it a habit dangerous to peace, and even to life.

During a recent trial the Judge interrupted the testimony of a lady witness, remarking that it was not relevant. The lady raised her head, and with a look made up of injured innocence, inquired—"Well, sir, am I telling this story or you?" The Judge wilted and allowed her to talk as long as she wanted to after that.