

pecuniary success. Another journal quickly followed it, called: "Howitt's Journal;" this became a favourite with the public, and it reached at one period a circulation of twenty-five thousand copies. Both journals are now extinct, a great loss to the working classes at the time of their discontinuance. In 1852, Mr. Howitt set sail for Australia, determined with that love of adventure, which is a leading characteristic of his mind, to derive from his own personal experience an acquaintance with that colony. The result was, two admirable volumes, entitled: "Land, Labour and Gold, or Two Years in Victoria; with visits to Sidney and Van Dieman's Land," which, were by far, up to that time, the best and most complete account of great colony. He returned to England in 1854; and has since written some admirable letters to "The Times" on the subject of transfer of convicts to infant colonies.

THE LION IN THE PATH

(From the Publisher's advance sheets.)

Continued from page 375.

CHAPTER LXXXIII.—A JESUIT'S SANCTION.

We left the conspirators of the assassination plot in alarm at a sudden knocking outside.

It was a false alarm. The noise that interrupted the Jesuit's speech died away; the sentinels were communicated with, and satisfactory explanations obtained.

Then the Jesuit recapitulated what he had before said, and again dwelt on the sanction and the consolation of religion.

Men pricked up their ears at this, while on some faces already appeared that glow which spoke of entire faith and entire devotion; for was not the minister of religion commending the scheme to their heart of hearts?

"Do you ask who I am?" he continued, "that I speak thus to you?—a Jesuit: name abhorred among the enemies of our creed, and too often, I regret to say, unhonoured among our own professing flock. I will tell you who I am; not my name—what signifies that? nor my residence, for I have none, but follow the example of my Divine Master, who said of himself, the foxes had holes, and the birds of the air nests, but the Son of Man had not where to lay his head."

This was said with an air of the deepest humility and in tones of true pathos. Then, erecting his frame, and raising his voice, while his eye kindled, and his every look and gesture revealed the spiritual pride that possessed him, he continued to speak:—

"Yes, I am one of an order that asserts its right to be by its acts. We guide the counsels of kings, the education of youth is in our hands. Astronomers, poets, philosophers, are among us; the secrets of every Catholic Government, and of almost every Catholic family of note are known to us. I myself have worn the Mandarin's garb in an observatory at Peking, have taught the savages of Paraguay the rudiments of agriculture with a spade, and have stood by the bedsides of the dying in times of pestilence, when even the very wife and children had fled in the universal horror of the scourge.

"Why do I mention these things? Is it in a spirit of vain-glory? Far be from me so dishonouring a thought. I tell you these things that you may understand that, if ever men had a right to their own will and desire as against the society to which they belong, it is these men and the Order of Jesus.

"How do they deal with that sacred, inherent first principle of right, the thought of themselves? Why, they bring it as only a fresh sacrifice to the altar; that is the pearl beyond price that they can give, when nothing else remains to be given. And we do give it. Our Church commands, and we obey. Questioning nothing; asking only, 'Are these our orders?' and accepting briefly with, 'They shall be fulfilled.'

"Dear friends, is not that your duty now? Duty, did I say? no, your privilege. Reserving

for more private communion any special difficulties that may occur to any now present—and I entreat all those who need counsel to come to me—reserving these things I ask, Has not your chief spoken? does not the Church sanction and devoutly bless?"

We despair of conveying to our readers any idea of the intensity of the interest with which the Jacobites listened to this address from the Jesuit priest. It was still a time of faith. They believed in their priest, in his order, in the Pope, and in the God whose earthly agents all these persons more or less wisely ministered to. The Jesuit's sanction, therefore, seemed to remove in great part their reluctance to embark in so tremendous an operation as the arrest and possible slaughter of an English king in his own capital, and surrounded by his guards and courtiers.

"Is it quite certain that our monarch will really approve of the project?" asked one still cautious doubter.

"Quite," said Sir George.

"Have you a commission from him?"

"I have."

The commission was produced, read aloud, and found to justify—so far as such a document reasonably could be expected to justify, without revealing the dread secret which Sir George had said.

It was, as we have previously seen, not a commission simply authorising the English to rise in arms, but gave express authority to do, from time to time, such other acts of hostility against the usurper as might be for the royal service.

What could be clearer? Obviously nothing.

Another significant pause—a deep silence—and then, as by one consent, felt, not expressed, they had all agreed to the plot.

And then they took a new and far more serious oath than the previous one.

A document was produced and read. It ran thus:—

"In the name of the Most High, we, the subscribers, hereby pledge ourselves, our lives, possessions, honours, our wives, parents, children, and all that is most dear to us, that we will resolutely pursue to its end the *warlike* measure opened to us to-night; that we will not turn aside from it for any earthly consideration, and that we will be true and faithful to each other, and to our king in this most righteous and necessary work. So help us God."

Sir George bared his arm right up to the shoulder, and said with a smile—

"I am feverish. Who has the skill to let a little blood?"

One of the members stepped forward, took a lancet from his pocket, drank out of and drained dry the wine from a wine-cup, then opened a vein and let the life-stream flow freely into the emptied cup.

"That will do," said Sir George. "My king and country will need the rest in another shape."

His arm was bound up.

"Give me a pen," he said.

The pen was brought, dipped in the crimson fluid, and then, with that significant instrument, did Sir George sign.

All the others imitated the example.

Then the Jesuit came forward, and gave to their excited imaginations a new and deeper tone by engaging them, when the meeting was over, to hear a solemn mass, and by promising, in the name of the Church, to launch the most tremendous weapons in her armory against any traitor. The lesser and the greater excommunication, cursing with bell, book, and candle—in a word, whatever of awful threats of misery in this world, and undying and eternal torments in the next could be held over the heads of such wretches, should be.

And now, at last, Sir George had reached the point for which he had so long yearned—the practical one. He explained in few words his method, thus:—

He must have forty men, courageous and trustworthy every one, well armed, well horsed.

As to what they were to do, he had formed three projects, and he desired to take counsel as to the most feasible.

One was to scale the wall of Kensington Palace by night, shoot or stab the few men on

guard, storm it, and if necessary set the palace on fire, and seize the king as he rushed out.

The second was, to lie in wait on a Sunday morning near the gate of Hyde Park, and when the king passed that way, as he usually did, with some twenty-five guards, fall upon them suddenly with thirty of the forty horsemen, strike down many in the first onset, and silence or drive off the rest, while the other ten should shoot the horses and deal with the king.

The third—and it was soon made clear that this would be the chosen scheme—was a still more happy adaptation of the aim sought to the existing facts. Sir George produced a plan, and several of those about rose, and pressed close to him, looking over his shoulder to follow his explanations.

"This," said he, "is a plan most accurately drawn to actual measurement of a piece of ground at Chiswick. You all know that the Hanoverian goes to hunt in Richmond Park, and generally on a Saturday. And as there is no bridge over the Thames west of London till you get to Kingston, his habit is to go through Turnham Green to the water side, to take boat at the spot here shown. His courtiers, often very numerous, generally leave him here, and go home, while the guards wait till he comes back. On the other side a fresh set of guards receives him. On returning from the hunt and recrossing, he again leaves one set of guards behind and there finds the other set, the courtiers having gone away, and then and there we may strike! Pray look, gentlemen at the ground. How admirably fitted it is, as if Nature had anticipated our want! You see that winding and narrow lane leading from the landing-place. It is little better than a quagmire. I have myself just seen the royal coach floundering through it at the rate of a yard a minute. Can you desire anything better?"

The looks, words, and gestures of all showed that Sir George had perfectly hit the mark.

"When is it to be?" demanded Scum Goodman, in a loud voice, as though his time had come at last.

"Next Saturday, the eleventh instant."

"How shall we meet?" inquired another.

"I propose," said Sir George, "that we all assemble in very small parties, say three, or four, or five (not more) together, and each party choose one of the small public-houses of the neighborhood, no two parties being in the same one."

Then, after a pause of deliberation, he added—

"I shall divide our force into four parties of ten each: one to stop the coach and deal with the king, a second to be on the right side of the lane, a third on the left side, and a fourth in front, to stop the way and watch for new comers. The three parties will then make a combined attack on the Hanoverian troops, while the fourth, as I have said, deals with the king. Meantime, I will have sentinels to watch the palace night and day, so that no movement shall take place without our knowledge. Gentlemen," said he, in conclusion with something like an inventor's pride, "do you not feel, as I do, the first inklings of success, when you see how easy it all is for determined, fearless men?"

Encouraging answers were given to this appeal, and then the meeting broke up into little knots, and discussed all these details with keen zest.

Presently, however, a great difficulty began to loom out before them; the number of the men required—forty—and their own number of fighting, able men, was only just thirteen!

"Unlucky! I never knew thirteen people do good in anything!" said one voice.

"Do not be concerned," said Sir George; "I see you have not reckoned the two outside."

But how were the fifteen to be converted into forty?

"I know and have, in fact, sounded three fine fellows," said the earl; "you may safely reckon them."

"That's eighteen!" said Sir George. "Go on, I will count."

"I have a servant," said Sir William Larkyns, the aged lawyer, "who was once a musician in the King's Blues, and who still visits among