

THE QUEEN'S SECRET.

OBAP. XLIII. (Continued.)

"The Queen of Scots?" "Ay, for she's but a painted puppet, after all." "Truly, a very effigy," "Without courage to kill a spider," said the queen, contemptuously. "Or a soul above a worm."

nurse, she being, at the same time, the very protectress of keeper of this girl. "I must confess the affair looks somewhat strange," replied the countess, "and yet, as for the girl, she speaketh of the noble earl more as a friend than as a lover. And I'll be bound, were the truth known, he hath never thought of the maiden but as a protector."

many, these six years gone, that I fear me the fish-bait to suspect the decoy? "Ha, ha!" she playfully cried; "fear not for the man, fear not for the colors are bright and taking; let us only draw it decorously, by the nose of this young trout of France, and we may fool him yet for years to come."

It please your majesty to name a time and place for their hearing?" "Humph!" said the queen, thoughtfully, "we will have the interview a secret. Marry, were it known to France, I fear me Orleans were lost to us forever, especially should the league fall in the dangerous enterprise we have promised; and yet we fear that, in justice to our subjects, we cannot at this juncture comply with the demands of the prince. Nathaniel, we must first see with what proposals come these deputies, and in the meantime, ourself glance at the state of our treasury. Eh, what thinkest thou of taking the barge to-night, about the hour of ten, and quietly falling down to thy summer lodge near the bridge? We could meet there with safety. As for the court here, with this cunning De Foy, and the watchful Melville, and the hundred other French and Scotch spies, we dread to run the risk of detection. Moreover, we have been often on the river by moonlight of late, and need fear no suspicion of our purpose."

and striking his assailant above the elbow, (whether by accident or otherwise it would be hard to tell,) caused him to drop the sword instantaneously, and himself to stand against and confounded at the suddenness of the act, writhing with pain, and incapable of moving a muscle in his defence. "Down on yer knees with ye, I say, and don't be obstinate," cried the Irishman. "Hold ye there," interposed Oliver, again waddling in between the hostile parties, and affecting to be greatly concerned for the reputation of his house; "grace and patience! bless my soul, masters, how's this? what! I'll send for her majesty's constables, and have ye both to the Tholsel for disturbing my quiet and respectable hostelry."

back again at his earliest convenience. No, no, there's no murder in the pure water of life, in the cold aqueous bath that our ancestors used to drink long ago, when they were all sobolars and sainals. O, hiena; but as for ye, poor ignorant creatures, it was livin' on the dirty pot ale and graine so long, that reduced ye to what ye are; ye, begorra, till ye haven't one decent feelin left in ye; carin' more for yer bellies than yer souls, and willin' to live like bastes, and die like bastes, if ye only get the mate and the drink. And then, besides all that, the sin of gettin' drunk, an' losin' yer five blessed senses on such dishwater, thout the laste taste of temptation in it in the world. Why? now, if it riz yer heart itself, even if it made ye laugh, or sing, or dance at a weddin', or trail a coat at a fair, or spit on yer sholk and screech at a frolic, or pish any other decent, pious Christiane again, ye are at all at all, it might be some consolation; but—

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