

with his insinuating jesuitical policy, obtained such power over the easily-influenced mind of Charles. He gained, by apparent subserviency to his wishes, such an entire ascendancy over him, that he extorted from him a promise never to acknowledge Monmouth, and to secure his own succession to the crown.

This, when known to Monmouth, excited his feelings deeply, but still he hoped some fortunate chance might occur, to win from his father's fondness what he deemed but an act of justice. That his mother had been deceived by a pretended marriage he knew; but he thought, could his father ever be persuaded to acknowledge the rite as having been performed, it would secure to him the succession; for the people of England were deeply prejudiced against the Duke of York. The policy he pursued with regard to France, his strong Catholic preferences, excited almost the hatred of the people, and they could not endure the thought of having him succeed to the throne. This would render them quite willing to overlook the *bar sinister* in the Duke of Monmouth's shield.

Such was the state of affairs when rumours began to be afloat that Charles was meditating a marriage between the young Prince of Orange and the Lady Mary. An ambassador had arrived from the prince, and he was himself daily expected; he was known to be of a noble, independent character, and also that he would not marry the Princess, however tempting the position in which it would place him, unless he found her capable of inspiring a warm attachment. She was kept as far as possible in ignorance of the intentions of her uncle, for he feared some difficulty in winning the consent of the Duke of York to a Protestant alliance, and thought it best to wait till the final arrangements were concluded, before he made it a subject of remark and question.

Great was the enthusiasm excited by the arrival of the Prince; he had already rendered himself dear to English hearts, by the warmth with which he had embraced the Protestant cause; all parties united in applauding him, and in expressing their approbation of the marriage. No measure, during Charles' ill-fated and unequal reign, had given so much general satisfaction. No one but Monmouth and a few of his most devoted adherents, opposed it at all. The day after the Prince's arrival, the young Duke had sought his father, and had implored him most earnestly, by all the love he bore him, by the memory of his mother, by the hope of justice to himself, to acknowledge him as his son,—to consent to his marriage with the Lady Mary! The king at first laughed at him, but finding ridicule and

railing of no avail, he sternly forbade him ever to speak of the subject again, and commanded his immediate absence from the court. Deeply hurt, the young Duke withdrew, and without a word of farewell, was soon on his route to Scotland.

The wooing of the Prince of Orange sped well; his character was such as commanded respect, and his manners were well calculated to win affection in a mind not pre-occupied. It was a great effort at first for Mary to reconcile herself to the idea of marrying, and thus placing an insuperable barrier between herself and Monmouth; but she understood her own position; she knew, as heir apparent to the throne, she had no right to choose for herself; she saw the advantage the country would derive from her alliance with William, and as its future Queen she determined to sacrifice unrepiningly her own wishes, and exercising the full strength of her naturally strong will, she put down every feeling of regret, and made no objection to the marriage when it was proposed to her.

The preliminaries were soon concluded, and in a month from Monmouth's interview with her in the palace, the Lady Mary left England, the bride of the Prince of Orange.

ERA III.

LOUD pealed the bells from every church in the town of Taunton, sending forth a chime which proclaimed some joyous occasion; an air of excitement prevailed every where; the shops and places of business were all closed, gay streamers and flags waved from every window, arches of evergreens were thrown across all the principal streets. All at once a band of music, stationed near the gates of Merton Lodge, struck up a merry soul-inspiring tune; the gates of the lodge were thrown open, and a graceful procession passed out. First came a beautiful girl, the daughter of Sir Philip Merton; she held in one hand a richly bound Bible, in the other the ribands attached to a superb banner, which was borne behind her by two stout men; on one side of the banner were woven the arms of England, with the motto "Long live James the Second;" on the other, in compliment to the Scotch parentage of the young Duke of Monmouth, the thistle was entwined with the Monmouth and Orkney arms. Behind the standard walked some thirty young ladies, two and two, carrying garlands and bouquets of flowers, and they were followed by the magistrates and dignitaries of the town.

The bells continued their peal, and the music its enlivening notes; the procession passed through