

Thou forgettest thy pretended resignation, to make an appeal to the feelings of Don Pedro, and implore his interference against me. Thou askest what thou hast done?" she continued, approaching the poor Jewess, "thou lovest the king—that is thy crime. Attempt not to deny it." Then, by a sudden movement, tearing away the veil of the shrinking girl, she regarded her with eager curiosity, whilst she added, "Yes, thou art beautiful—more beautiful than I imagined. Expect no pardon from me; thou wouldst contend against me, but I will bear thee down. Thy beauty shall not save thee; for, in thy affrighted looks, in thy paleness, in thy sobs, I yet divine thy love."

The king, choked with anger and surprise, had not been able to interrupt her, but now seizing her by the arm, he removed her violently from Rachel. "Aixa!" he exclaimed, "this conduct is infamous. I ask of thee an asylum and protection for the daughter of one of my adherents; and thou pitilessly crushest, under terms of pride and hatred, that child who cannot defend herself. Oh! abuse my patience no longer!"

"Be it so," said the Morisca. "Disguise no longer the bottom of your thoughts, Pedro; but confess that you love this Jewess, and that you defend her like a lover. Fear not that I shall dispute the possession of your heart with the daughter of the treasurer. I yield my place to that noble and triumphant beauty. My father, at least, will not abandon me; together we will quit Seville, and return to Granada, leaving the beautiful eyes of Rachel to defend the King of Castile."

"Aixa," murmured Don Pedro, with a bitter smile, "this, then, is how thou lovest me." Just at the moment Mohamed and the favorite were moving towards the door of the mirador, little Pierce Neige appeared on the threshold. "Sire," said he, to Don Pedro, "the banners of Don Enrique already float on the plain."

"Let all the gates be shut, and the bridges raised; and let every man, capable of bearing arms, repair to the ramparts," answered the king, fiercely, endeavoring to hide his chagrin.

The Jewess had trembled on hearing Pierce Neige announcing the arrival of the enemy, but, seeing the change of Don Pedro, who could not, without utter ruin, break with his last ally, her resolution was soon taken. She advanced towards Aixa, and humbly knelt before her to prevent her passing.

"Make way," said the Morisca, in a harsh voice.

"Trample me under your foot, but hear me," said Rachel, in a heart-rending tone of supplication. "I humble myself before you—dispose of me—I will do whatsoever you order me. I will not rise till you pardon me. Those who told you, madam, that Don Pedro loved me have deceived you. I am ready to return to my father's house; if terror had not prevented me speaking I should have told you at first. How can a king love a poor Jewess! Kings have too much ambition to descend so low. Oh! I treat you, madam, do not abandon him—do not let him be delivered up to his enemies."

"But, wretch, thou betrayest plainly that thou lovest him, since thou supplicatest me for him!" exclaimed the Morisca.

"No, I do not love him," said Rachel in a plaintive tone, embracing the knees of Aixa, and without daring to look at Don Pedro, in whose heart a terrible conflict was taking place, and who fixed on her the most passionate regards. "He saved me because he has a valiant and generous heart, and not because he loved me. And, as for me, it is love in me to remember so great a service."

"Well," replied Aixa, in a low tone, "rise, then, and return to the house of thy father. If Don Pedro allows thee to depart, and does not seek to detain thee, I will remain in the Alcazar, and my father shall defend him with his guards."

The Jewess arose. "Sire," said she, "at this moment of strife, and struggle my place is not here; I return to the house of my father, that calm asylum in which I am beloved, and where, far from the tumult of war, I can pray for your cause."

Don Pedro hesitated an instant, whether or not he should detain her in the Alcazar, even at the risk of losing the support of Mohamed; but a flourish of cymbals in the outer court brought back his thoughts to Don Enrique and decided him.

Aixa, who had observed his indecision, made a sign to Rachel to retire, and ordered Gil Pierce Neige to see the young girl accompanied to the Jewry by an escort of almogavars.

When the cymbals ceased sounding, Don Pedro, without even casting a look on Aixa, descended from the mirador, accompanied by the King of Granada, saying to his ally, "Come, let us visit the ramparts, I have purchased dearly enough the right of defending Seville."

CHAPTER X.—Raising the Supplies.

Eight days had scarcely elapsed after the return of Don Pedro to Seville, when the resources of that noble city were entirely exhausted.

Don Enrique sought to reduce it by a blockade, and the king, who had seen his auxiliaries, the Moors, twice repulsed by the army of the enemy, found himself entangled, and they were discussing the means of raising a body of troops in Africa, Diego Lopez, captain of the archers, and master-at-arms, came to speak to him, and respectfully intimated that the elite of the soldiery began to murmur as their pay was two months in arrear, and rations were rarely distributed.

At this news the king became more sad and

thoughtful—the treasury at Granada was empty, the chiefs of the tribes were opposed to Mohamed raising the sums he had promised to Don Pedro. The latter, under these desperate circumstances, knew not what expedient to adopt, and gave orders to have his treasurer, Samuel Ben Levi, who had been enabled to enter the besieged city, sent to him.

As soon as the Jew appeared before the king, he prostrated himself at his feet according to the oriental custom, saying, "Sire, what will you of your poor slave?"

"I must have money at any price, Samuel," replied Don Pedro.

"Money!" exclaimed the treasurer, raising his hands to heaven with an expression of the most sorrowful surprise; "alas, noble master, you know as well as myself that the state coffers are as empty as they were in your youth, when the nobles called you 'Don Pedro the Beggar,' and your cook was refused credit in the public markets. To raise soldiers for this accursed war we have sold or pledged all your lands and jewels."

"Let them sell our gold and silver services, our chased cups, and the magnificent reins, saddles and bridles of our horses."

"I have already anticipated that order, sire."

"Let my statue of silver standing in the stuccoed hall, be melted."

"Two days ago it was broken up and melted. To save the king, I thought I might venture to sacrifice his image."

"You have done right, Samuel. You are a good and zealous servant, who knows the heart of Don Pedro. But what can be done then? Give me your friendly advice, my treasurer; life and death depend on it."

Samuel, after a little reflection, deliberately answered: "I have already considered, and find but one means of relief. If you attempt to impose a new tax on your faithful Sevillians, who have already made so many sacrifices, it might probably drive them to espouse the cause of Don Enrique. The Church alone has remained rich and inert amidst the public distress and misery; the Archbishop has declared himself rather in the usurper's favor than in yours; while others have been fighting, in want of money and bread, these good people have been enjoying themselves, monopolising the corn, and making good cheer, sleeping, and praying for Don Enrique, but they have not bestowed on you the value of a marabolin. Summon the canons to the Alcazar, and impose on them the expenses of the war."

"Thy advice is good, Samuel," said the king; "I will lose no time in profiting by it."

Don Pedro immediately ordered Diego Lopez to convoke a meeting of the Canons of Seville at the Alcazar, at two o'clock the same day.

These High Church dignitaries received this order as if it had been an accusation, though they dared not disobey it. Their consciences were doubtless not very clear with regard to the king, for they could not fail to remember that they were the first who had bestowed on Pedro the surname of "Cruel." The king received them in his oratory with every mark of profound deference and respect.

"You see, sire and king," said the boldest of the canons, Augustine Gudiel, "we have hastened to obey your summons, to conform to your will."

"You are not ignorant that I know how to make it respected," replied the king, bluntly; "but a truce to idle words; to-day, my worthy masters, I wish to discover who are my friends, and who are my enemies; and I ask, if you are allies of those sacrilegious adventurers, who dared to put to ransom our Holy Father in his good city of Avignon? In a word, if you are traitors to your legitimate lord?"

The canons turned pale. "Let thy justice fall on us," said Gudiel, in a tremulous voice, "if any living person can, by sign or proof, testify against our fidelity."

"I am inclined to believe you, notwithstanding the numerous reports I have heard to the contrary," said Don Pedro; "but I want to be assured of your loyalty by deeds rather than by protestations and oaths. Are you prepared to give me a positive and substantial proof?"

"Speak, sire," said the canon, "you cannot doubt our devotion."

"Well, the question is, to save Seville and the whole kingdom from the ravages of the base usurper, and his worthy brothers in arms, the horde of robbers of Bertrand Dugesclin. I have nothing more to sacrifice. I have sold even the jewels that adorned my sword; but you have as yet contributed nothing towards the defence of the kingdom; the only resource now left us, is to melt the sacred vessels of the church, the bells, and the statues of the saints."

The canons fell back with a movement of horror at this proposition, which they regarded as an impious attack on the rights and privileges of the Church.

"Will you sign an order to that effect?" demanded Don Pedro.

The canons hung their heads in consternation, and preserved a profound silence.

"You are dumb," continued the king, angrily. "One would imagine that I had blasphemed; and yet do you think that the Gascon, English and Breton robbers, will restrain themselves from despoiling the church, if they triumph? Do you believe that the images of the saints, from the recesses of their chapels, will make the rebels flee? They will be more useful when turned into gold and silver doubloons, which will purchase us provisions and arms."

"We have neither the power nor the sacri-

ligious audacity to sign such an order, sire," answered Gudiel, in an altered tone; "it would be setting God against us. Dispose of our lives, but touch not the sacred objects."

"I could do so without your permission, honest canons," said Don Pedro.

"Do your pleasure," replied Augustine Gudiel, bowing; "but the people of Seville will defend the objects of their worship, and will no longer devote themselves for a sacrilegious king." He then bent his steps towards the door of the oratory, and the other canons prepared to follow him.

"Stop," said Don Pedro, with difficulty suppressing his anger; "before quitting me, at least give me your advice. Must I then surrender myself to my bastard brother, and beseech him to grant me my life and a peaceful retreat in some convent?" and he fixed his eyes on Gudiel, who, perceiving the snare, was on his guard, and answered mildly, "You ought to resist your rebel brother to the uttermost."

But how? asked Don Pedro, "since you refuse me your support?"

"Our counsels shall never be withheld from our legitimate lord," answered Gudiel.

"Speak then!" said the king; "open a door of safety for me; that is all I ask."

Augustine Gudiel cast a hasty glance at a half-open doorway that communicated between the oratory and the treasury; the embroidered curtain which was drawn before it, moved, and he saw two heads protrude from behind it at the same time, and then precipitately with draw. They were Aixa and Samuel, the latter the canon had time to recognize by the horn which surmounted his cap.

He smiled coldly, and turning to the king, said, in a serious tone, "Until now thou hast loaded the co-religionists of the honest, faithful and learned Samuel Ben Levi with benefits and favors."

Samuel, hearing his name mentioned, listened more attentively, and became greatly disturbed at the praises bestowed on him by Gudiel.

"Yes," answered the king, promptly, "I have protected the Jews because their mercantile genius has, by creating credit, revived commerce in every part of the kingdom. I have also protected the Moors, who, by their patient industry, and the application of the sciences to agriculture, have so improved the soil that its produce has been increased threefold. I know that this only excites the hatred and contempt of those Christians, who, in their blind pride for war, regard all peaceable occupations as vulgar and disgraceful tasks, fit only for vassals and serfs."

"We do not ask thee, sire, the reason for thy protection," said Gudiel, hypocritically.

"Thou hast always chosen Jews for collectors of taxes, and they have not pressed on their brethren. If the riches of the nation are exhausted, they have accumulated them in their hands; it is, therefore, their turn to save him who has protected them. Henceforward let them be charged with the expenses of the war. I have nothing more to say." And Gudiel, respectfully saluting the king, withdrew at the head of the canons, while Samuel remained thunderstruck at this unexpected blow.

The Morisca pulled him into the oratory.

"Well, Samuel," said the king, laughing, "the canons are very ingenious, it must be confessed. It is not safe to meddle with them. It is you who will have to pay the expenses of your own advice. After all, they are right. If we were to melt their bells and statues there would be a riot amongst the Christians. The Jews do not revolt."

"Truly, they are a pacific people, and little understand the use of arms," replied Samuel, with a singular smile.

"They have profited by my prosperity," said Don Pedro, "and they ought to come to my assistance in the day of adversity. Convoke a meeting of thy brethren, Ben Levi, and let them resolve to furnish the supplies. If I conquer, I will recompense their good will."

"But it is impossible, my noble master," said Samuel; "the riches of the Jews exist only in the envious imagination of the Canon, Augustine Gudiel. It is plain that he has never visited their poor dwellings; they are kennels that a Christian beggar would not live in."

"Take care not to urge me too far, Samuel," interrupted the king, more and more enraged at the opposition he met with on all sides.

"It is a question of rigorous necessity. If your brethren resist my will I shall banish them from Seville, confiscate their property, and give the Jewry up to the pillage of my archers. You can announce this resolution to them."

"The Jews will prefer being banished, I assure you," replied the treasurer, in a mournful tone of voice. "I myself, who have no wealth in the world but my daughter, Rachel, will depart sooner than sign an unjust decree, and exact impossibilities."

Aixa regarded the king attentively, while Samuel uttered these last words. Don Pedro with sudden emotion, exclaimed, "You shall not depart with your daughter, for you have furnished me with an excellent idea, which is to retain your beloved Rachel as a hostage in the Alcazar, until your brethren have fulfilled my orders."

"She shall not set foot in this palace," said Samuel. "The birdcage may be finely gilt, but it is a cage, nevertheless, and one against the bars of which the poor captive would soon break its wings."

"Ah, good Samuel, interrupted Aixa, "your daughter has nothing to fear from Don Pedro,

for he loves her with a most brotherly affection."

"It is that very affection that I fear for my daughter," replied Samuel.

"But to re-assure you," continued the Morisca, who seemed to take a pleasure in aggravating Don Pedro's vexation, "the King of Castile led you to hope that you might see your beautiful Rachel one day seated beside him on the throne. At present, he dares not form so singular a union, for it would cause him to lose all the Christian swords yet held up for him. You understand, he cannot raise your daughter so high yet without being lost himself and ruining you with him; but when his crown shall be firmly fixed on his brow—"

"A truce to your sarcasms, Aixa," interrupted the king, angrily. "Samuel attaches no more importance to these wanderings of a changeable woman's mind than I do. Go then, Ben Levi, and tell your brethren, that if within thirty hours they have not paid the impost, they shall be banished as traitors, and all their property confiscated."

"Be careful," replied the Jew, "thou art about to dig a pit beneath thy feet."

"The lion fears not a mole-trap," replied Don Pedro, disdainfully. "As to your daughter, she shall this day be conducted to the Alcazar as a hostage. I have said it."

"Exact not that from a father!" exclaimed Samuel. "Have pity on my child—spare her that shame. I would rather sacrifice all I possess, all I have acquired with so much labor and pains. Once within the walls of the Alcazar, my daughter, whom I have reared in my humble home, chaste and pure, far from the gaze and conversation of men, my Rachel will be despised by our brethren as a tarnished creature. Is it for such a result that I have passed a life of fatigue, humiliation, and privation? Shall the shame of my child be the reward of all my services?"

"Rachel shall be as free and as much respected in my palace as in her father's house," answered the king. "Besides," he continued, "if your brethren prefer banishment to paying the tax, your daughter shall be at liberty, in a few days, to rejoin them. You understand me. Act according to my will."

Don Pedro withdrew, leaving his treasurer in the utmost consternation.

The favorite, who remained in the oratory, regarded the poor man with compassion mixed with contempt. He struggled with feelings at once maddening and perplexing, which she saw might easily render him a fit instrument of her implacable vengeance.

(To be continued.)

The Home Circle.

THE "OLD WOMAN."

It was thus, a few days since, we heard a stripling designate the mother who bore him. By coarse husbands we have heard some wives so called occasionally, though in the latter case the phrase is often used endearingly. At all times, as commonly spoken, it jars the ears and shocks the sense. An "old woman" should be an object of reverence above and beyond most all other phases of humanity. Her very age should be her surest passport to courteous consideration. She has fought faithfully the "good fight," and come off conqueror. Upon her venerable face she bears the marks of the conflict in all its furrowed lines. The most grievous of the ills of life have been hers; trials untold and known only to her God and herself, she has borne incessantly; and now, in her old age—her duty done! patiently awaiting her appointed time—she stands more honorable and deserving than he who has slain his thousands or stood triumphant upon the proudest fields of victory. Young man, speak kindly to your mother, and ever courteously, tenderly of her. But a little time, and you will see her no more for ever. Her eye is dim, her form is bent and her shadow falls graveyard. Others may love you when she has passed away—kind-hearted sisters, perhaps, or she of whom all the world you choose for a partner—she may love you warmly, passionately; children my love you fondly, but never again, never, while time is yours shall the love of a woman be to you as that of your trembling mother has been.

TWO HONEST MEN.

In the good old days, which our fathers tell us were much better than these, two unlettered men met to settle accounts, and Mr. Smith found himself owing Mr. Jones seventy-five dollars and some odd cents.

"No matter about the money, brother, no matter at all," said Mr. Jones, "I only wanted to see how we stood, and you can pay me just when you want to."

"Well, I haven't the money by me," said Smith, "but I'll tell you what; I'll give you my note, and that will fix it all straight and sure."

"I ain't a mite afraid to trust you without a note," quoth Jones, "but if you feel any easier to give me one, why you may, I suppose."

So after whetting up a penknife, and converting a goose quill into a pen; after pouring a few drops of vinegar into the dried up inkstand, after much rummaging for the diseased letter paper, and after studious consultation of an old arithmetic as to the proper form of a note, the important paper was at last executed,

and Jones having deliberately looked over his friend's handwriting, and dried it before the open fire, handed the note to the signer, saying:—

"Now, brother, you keep the note, for to see how much you've got to pay."

"Well, guess I will, for I am a master hand to forget, specially if there are any odd cents."

So Smith kept his own note, and when he was ready to pay it, took it to Jones, and handed it over to him with the money, saying:—

"And now, brother, you keep the note to show that you've got your pay."

Although we may not believe with Pope that "an honest man is the noblest work of God," we would not resist the conviction that these were noble men, or fail to honor such nobility whenever or wherever it is found.

NOTHING AT REST.

Although the solid earth seems destined to remain just as we see it, there are forces unceasingly operating for altering the boundaries of the sea, and all those lines ordinarily regarded as permanent features in nature. There is not a rill or a rivor on the Continent of America now coursing in its primeval channel. They are continually rasping down the rocks and reducing broken fragments to powder, which is transported by the restless element, water, and spread out in new relations. The sea is perpetually encroaching upon the land. Vast regions are gradually swallowed up from view; while new territory is rising above the surface in other directions. So the revolution goes on from age to age. It is so gradual that a thousand years hardly registers the variations of a coast line. But the law of alteration is never suspended. On its unvarying progress depends the perpetuity of animals and plants, and possibly the globe itself. The stability of the overlying mountains is a beautiful poetical figure, but nothing is more uncertain than their duration, while water, the emblem of instability, never changes. It is the most potent agent in the constitution of this ever varying world for altering and remodeling its condition that there may always be seed time and harvest. Science confirms this declaration.

DID'NT KNOW THE NATURE OF AN OATH.

A scrub-headed boy, having been brought before the court as a witness, the following very amusing soliloquy ensued:—

"Where do you live?" the Judge inquired.

"Live with my mother."

"Where does your mother live?"

"She lives with father."

"Where does he live?"

"He lives with the old folks."

"Where do they live?" says the Judge getting very red, as an audible titter goes round the court-room.

"They live at home."

"Where in thunder is their home?"

"That's where I'm from," said the boy, sticking his tongue in the corner of his cheek, and slowly closing one eye on the Judge.

"Here Mr. Constable, take this witness out and tell him to travel; he evidently does not know the nature of an oath."

EVERY MAN TO HIS TRADE.

An ingenious but over conceited man undertook to mend a tea-kettle. He had seen tinner do the thing, and knew he could do it too. In prodding round the bottom of the kettle for weak places, he found one where he least expected it, and ran the brad-awl through his finger. Whereupon he howled with anguish and dropped the kettle on the head of his infant son, lying prone on the floor at his feet chewing a rubber rattle. The infant's head was badly cut, and in the excitement which followed, another young Purcell managed to tip over the solder and catch about a spoonful of it in his little shoe, and added his lusty yells to the family chorus. The unhappy Purcell tied up his finger, put sticking plaster on the baby's head, plastered ointment on the boy's foot, and left the tea-kettle at the tin-shop on his way to the doctor's.

LOVE AND DISCOUNT.

A charming German soubrette when starring at Hamburg, attracted an enthusiastic young man whom she allowed to visit her salon. The acquaintance ripened until the eve of her departure, when the young man paid her another visit. She saw that something lay very heavy on his heart.

"What ails you, my friend?" she asked, in a most encouraging tone.

And the youth replied, hesitatingly,— "I wish to ask a favor, which you can easily grant me. Just wait a moment; I will hasten home and fetch you a casket."

The soubrette awaited his return in eager expectation.

"Is he so timid," she said to herself, "as not to venture to present a souvenir to me?"

A few moments afterwards her friend re-entered the room. He carried a very neat little box in his hand.

"Look, Fraulein," he said, opening the lid, "these are the finest Bremen cigars. You have many distinguished acquaintances among the Vienna cavaliers. I am a cigar-dealer, and will give you ten per cent. discount on all you sell."