

But we went further than this in our measures of precaution, for we threatened, and ever used violence where we deemed it necessary; and having thus foiled first suspicions, Cambray and I made arrangements to recommence our traffic in wood, to dupe the entire world, but especially strangers who had possessed any money. These were seduced into hotels where, in the exercise of our lucrative and industrial talents, we rarely, if ever, failed in lightening them of their effects. There are, in several parts of this town, many houses of entertainment where from the host down to the servants in his employ, including a numerous fry of attachés, all reap considerable profit in the way we have mentioned.

I was not a little surprised to meet there frequently people who ranked by no means with the lower grades of society, people who pretended to be gentlemen. They were adventurers, it is true, but they had the impudence to mix with honest people. They were rascals of the vilest stamp; one with hypocritical face played upon the best feelings of human nature, by preaching virtue, while his associate, more hardened or more skillful, was extracting the purse of the listener, or involving him in some game in which he was sure to be a loser to some extent.

We were on the high road to fortune when the avalanche fell; we were arrested and thrown into prison. In the records of the Court the details of this unfortunate business will be found; it happened on a fine day in the middle of July, at about three o'clock in the afternoon. The evening before this certain magistrates furnished with an authentic document, had searched the premises occupied by Cambray, and taken therefrom some silver spoons and a telescope. That day Cambray had spent the greater part of his time cockfighting in the *Palais*, according to his laudable custom.

On his arrival at home about the hour mentioned, his wife, whom he found alone, for (Waterworth was absent), gave him in lengthy detail an account of the magisterial visit.

"Did they say nothing more—nothing very significant?" asked he, "did you read nothing striking in their demeanour? Did they often ask to see me?"

"But why so many questions concerning so trifling a matter, if as you told me yesterday morning it is only a seizure for ten pounds, owed by Waterworth, for which you have become responsible, it can never ruin us; it but verifies the old proverb, 'he who answers pays.'"

"Well, you see it is because I do not think their mode of proceeding strictly legal. To enter a house as they did, *secundo* to me rather a stretch of authority."

"Do not agitate yourself," replied the young woman, "there is nothing disgraceful in the matter: if it were even for your own debt, a promise of your own unfulfilled, it might then be a subject of trouble, of shame, but *security* only, there is no shame in that. Ah! Heavens, what do I see? Look there! look, they are speaking together and pointing to the house—now they are coming towards it. Oh, have you concealed anything from me? What do they want? What can they want? Let me lock the door."

"Stop, stop! no foolery," replied her husband with affected coolness, and rising from his chair with a firm step, he crossed the room and lay down upon the sofa. While this conversation was going on, an acute observer might have noticed a certain embarrassment in his manner and speech; doubt, even fear, at times flitted across his countenance, as if disturbed by some secret presentment. In truth, when his wife pronounced to him the terrible words, "here they are," he made an involuntary bound from where he was, a cold shiver seemed to pass over him, and for a moment he remained pale, immovable and dejected. "Can it be?" muttered he between his teeth, "can it be that we are discovered, betrayed?"

Coming to himself again, his strength of mind once more resumed its sway, he became calm and collected, seemed to despise his ill-fortune, and resolved to brave his destiny; when suddenly the house resounded to a thundering knock, and

five or six men, among whom were several members of the constabulary, entered and surrounded him with dreadful precision.

(To be continued.)

THE LION IN THE PATH

(From the Publisher's advance sheets.)

Continued from page 65.

"My lords and gentlemen, I do not doubt but that my words find an echo in all your hearts. Is it not so?"

"All—all, your majesty!" was the universal response.

"The truth is, sire," said the Earl of Bridgminster—or, to give him his future title, the Duke—"we had all been consulting among ourselves on this very matter, and knowing your majesty's kindness of heart, were about to address to you a unanimous request to do the very thing that your majesty, as a consummate statesman and true father of his people, has already determined upon!"

"I am truly glad of this. Now, indeed, I feel strong in my purpose, and you may all rest assured I shall abide by it!"

"May it please your majesty to bend your eyes for one moment away from the mightier cares of the state, to give your grateful servant counsel on a matter personal to myself?"

"Certainly—certainly, your grace! Speak, and speak freely!"

"Has your majesty yet heard that this unfortunate man is, in a certain slight way, related to myself?"

"Related to you!" The king's small eyes twinkled unceasingly, as he ruminated on what this new fact might mean.

"As a boy, he was married to my daughter Herminia, then, also, a mere child."

"Is it possible! Is it possible! I have heard vague rumours of some romantic love story of this kind, but never did I believe them true."

"Unhappily, they are so far true that he—even while I was hoping to get the marriage set aside—has been arrested in his wife's apartment!"

"You astonish me," said the king. "You distress me! The Lady Herminia! I did not count on this!"

"And I hope your majesty will at once, and for ever, dismiss any painful feelings the incident may call forth. I am an Englishman, not a Roman; but I trust have enough of the Roman's stoicism to bear the things that may be to me calamities, but to the state the choicest blessings. Besides, your majesty," added the duke, with a slight tinge of colour faintly crossing his cheek, "I have no love for him, nor he for me. We are, in a word, enemies, unhappily connected by a single and frail tie, which he has now himself snapped!"

The king looked grave, and presently he said—

"What does the Lady Herminia propose to do?"

"I know not, your majesty, but can guess."

"And you think, no doubt, that I may guess too?"

The duke bowed.

"And if she does come to me, what on earth am I to say to her? Dreadful! It is really dreadful! Her very wedding night—for so I understand you to speak—to be changed into such a sad, black business."

"If your majesty will pardon a hint—"

"I shall be grateful for any suggestion that may lessen the pain of such an interview. It is not possible, I fear, to erade it altogether."

"I fear not, your majesty. My daughter has something in her of the family tenacity, and can hold fast. But this is what I was about to say. She will be wanting admittance to the Tower—wanting indulgence for him there. These I will take care she shall not be able to obtain, except through your majesty."

"Good—very good! I may then yield something."

"Your majesty will thus show your own clemency in a safe way. You will also enable me

to feel that this unhappy gentleman's last hours may have every possible solace. I am most anxious for that!"

"The feeling does your grace credit. But let there be no beating about the bush—no coming upon me with unexpected surprises. You do not tell me, I charge you, in all sincerity of heart—you do not expect, not even hope, that I may thus be induced to spare him?"

"Certainly not, your majesty, for I should expect, if I did so, to have the curses of the nation on my head. If he were spared, and, through such ill-judged clemency, our land were again deluged with blood—"

"That is sufficient. It was not that I hesitated! I feel for Lady Herminia, but she must pardon be if I also feel for myself!"

A servant now came to the door. The duke went to him, received his message, and went back to say to the king—

"Your majesty is happily prepared. She is here!"

CHAPTER CIX.—THE DEATH WARRANT.

When Lady Herminia, a few minutes after, was admitted to the king, she found him alone, and standing formally to receive her.

Seeing her pallid looks, and also noting her unflinching step and dignified gestures, both in making her lowly obeisance and in rising from it, the king advanced to meet her, holding out his hand.

She took it respectfully, kissed and held it passionately, and weeping again, threw herself on her knees before him, crying—

"Oh, sire, you see before you one who is the happiest, or the most truly wretched of women, and who comes to ask your majesty which she is to be."

This beginning disturbed the king's comparative composure, and for a moment or two prevented his replying directly to her question.

"Rise, Lady Herminia—nay, I ask pardon for forgetting your father's new dignities!"

Herminia did not rise, nor wait to hear what the new dignity was, but said hurriedly—

"Sire, I have another title, dearer to me infinitely than any new one that your majesty's goodness may have conferred on my family, because—because it is a title that I predict shall be no less dear to your majesty, if—"

"What title do you speak of?" interrupted the king, a little harshly.

"I am sire, Herminia Countess of Langton, now, and for ever more!"

"Do you not know that the rebel of whom you speak has been attainted, his rank abolished, and his estates passed to other hands?"

"Oh, yes, sire—his unhappy wife knows all that; but she also knows that what he did was done throughout in honour, and that he broke away from his old allegiance the very instant honour permitted, never—never to return to it!"

"My dear young lady, we may not discuss these things. As a man, I feel for you—as a king, I am bound to close my heart!"

"You cannot do it! No, sire—it is impossible! Your heart, your humanity, your policy, your conscience will all be against taking the life of a man who has saved yours!"

This was certainly a powerful stroke—so powerful, indeed, as to be absolutely self-destructive. The king changed colour—moved away a pace or two to hide the excitement he felt at being reminded of just the one element of the business that he had determined to forget or disbelieve. When he came back, Lady Herminia—or, as we shall now call her, Lady Langton—saw at a glance the mischief she had done, and bled at heart.

"Is that all you have to say?" demanded the king, in a tone of icy quietude, that seemed absolutely to deprive the sad petitioner of any hope.

"Oh, your majesty, forgive—I entreat, implore you to forgive—the error of an unhappy woman—one not accustomed to the ways of politicians, nor heedful how to think one thing while saying another. Can your majesty wonder that I—as loyal an Englishwoman, I dare to avow, as breathes in the words of your majesty's