

strength of wing for sustained flight in the keen and difficult air of historic drama. The poem gives us another illustration of the versatility of the author's talents. We doubt, however, if it will be as popular as most of his earlier works. It has not, of course, the lyric sweetness, like a rich strain of music, of *Maud*; nor the tender pathos and philosophic introspection of *In Memoriam*; nor the idyllic grace of the legends of King Arthur's court; but it is, nevertheless, a noble poem, of a graver and severer type than any of these.

It is in one sense to its disadvantage that it provokes comparison with the grand historic plays of the greatest dramatist of any age or tongue. But the fact is greatly to its advantage, that few poems could bear the comparison so well. We miss, it is true, those marvellously concentrated expressions, that flash like diamonds in settings of gold and become the proverbs of all time. Nor do we find those abyssmal revelations of the human heart, and intense outbursts of human passion which we meet in Shakespeare's page. But we do find that the poet invests the historic characters of three hundred years ago with living interest. He gives a vivid picture of that dim old past. He evokes our sympathy on behalf of the mournful, melancholy majesty of the hapless Queen, whose brow is cinctured for all time with the ensanguined name of "bloody Mary." The false, cold-hearted Philip, the wily foreign ambassadors, the supple papal legate, the bluff and sturdy English knights, the persecuting bishops and their martyr-victims live again, and reenact for us the stirring drama of the time when the Papacy and Protestantism were brought into such sharp antagonism in England as they never were before or since.

A brief outline of the poem and a few citations will better develop its character than any words of mere description.

The first Act depicts the condition

of England at the accession of Mary. The Romish priests were exulting at the restoration of Popery. The Protestant bishops were flying from the threatened storm of persecution. Cranmer speaks:

Our Bishops from their sees
Are fled, they say, or flying. I shall be 'eft
alone.
No! Hooper, Ridley, Latimer will not fly.
My flight were such a scandal to the faith,
The downfall of so many simple souls,
I dare not leave my post. Let me die the death.
I thank my God it is too late to fly.

The populace are exceedingly opposed to the projected Spanish marriage for which the Queen passionately prays:

Holy Virgin,
Plead with thy blessed Son: grant me my
prayer:
Give me my Philip; and we two will lead
The living waters of the Faith again
Back thro' their widow'd channel here, and
watch
The parch'd banks rolling incense, as of old,
To heaven, and kindled with the palms of
Christ!

The second Act exhibits the popular insurrection against Queen Mary under Sir Thomas Wyatt. This is an episode which rather destroys the unity of the play, but historic accuracy demands its presentation. The appeal of the honest knight to the gallant men of Kent is in a vein of stirring patriotism. The Queen throws herself upon the loyalty of London, her Tudor courage kindling with the peril, and awakes a hearty response from the city. The rebellion is quenched in blood. "The tigress had unsheathed her nails at last." Elizabeth is thrown into the Tower, and the ill-omened Spanish marriage is consummated. The account of the death of the lovely Lady Jane Grey is exceedingly pathetic.*

* It had previously been reported to the Queen that the Lady Jane Grey had refused to bow to the "broaden god" of the Romish mass because "the baker made him." "Monstrous," exclaims the Queen, "blasphemous. She ought to burn. Her head shall fall."