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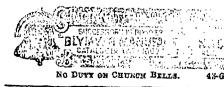
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(By May Agnes Fleming.)

Chapter IX .- Continued. "No, except that her name was Leoline, and nothing else—which struck me as being slightly improbable. Doubtless she will tell you everything, and one piece of advice I may venture to give you, which is, you may propose as soon as you like without fear of rejection. How we are

at the Golden Orown, ao go in and get your horse, and let us be off."

All this time Ormiston had been leading his own horse by the bridle, and as Sir Norman silently complied with this suggestion, in five minutes more they were in their saddles, and galloping at break-neck speed toward the city. To tell the truth, one was not more inclined for silence than the other, and the profoundest and thoughtfulest silence was maintained till they reached it. One was thinking of Leoline, the other of La Masque, and both were badly in love, and just at that particular moment very happy. Of course the happiness of people in that state never lasts longer than half an hour that state never lasts longer than half an hour at a stretch, and then they are plunged back again into misery and distraction; but while it does last, it is very intense and delightful indead.

Our two friends having drained the bitters, had got to the bottom of the cup, and neither knew that no sooner were the aweets swallowed than it was to be replenished with a doubly bitter dose. Neither of them dismounted till they reached the house of Leoline, and there Sir Norman secured his horse, and looked up at it with a beating heart. Act that it was very unusual for his beart to beat, seeing it never did anything else; but on that occasion its motion was so much accelerated, that any doctor feeling was so much accelerated, dust any decret testing his pulse might have justly set him down as a bad case of heart disease. A small, bright ray of light streamed like a beacon of hope from an upper window, and the lover looked at it as a minutes after Leoline's last speech, there was decreted from the lover looked at it as a minutes after Leoline's last speech, there was louded mariner might at the shining of the North Star.

"Are you coming in, Ormiston?" he inquired eling, for the first time in his life, almost bash feeling, for the first time in his me, amount ful. "It seems to me it would be only right,

you know."

"I don't mind going in and introducing you,"
said Ormiston; "but after you have been delivered over, you may fight your own battles,
and take care of yourself. Come on."

The door was unfastened, and Ormiston

eprang upstairs with the air of a man—quite at home, followed decorously by Sir Norman. The door of the lady's room stood ajar, as he had left it, and in answer to his "tapping at the chamber door," a sweet feminine voice called 'come in.' Ormiston promptly obeyed, and the next

instant they were in the room, and in the pre-sence of the dead bride. Certainly she did not look dead, but very much alive, just then, as she eat in an easy-chair, drawn up before the dressing table, on which stood the solitary lamp that illumicated the chamber. In one hand she held a small mirror, or, as it was then called, a "sprunking glass," in which she was contemplating her own beauty, with as much satisfaction as any other pretty girl might justly do. She had changed her drenched dress during Ormiston's absence, and now sat arrayed in a swelling amplitude of rose-colored satin, her dark hair clasped and bound by a circle of milkwhite pearls, and her paie, beautiful face looking ten degrees more beautiful that ever, in contrast with the bright rose silk, shining dark bar, and rich white jewels. She rose up as they entered, and came forward with the same glow on her face and the same light in her eyes sat one of them had seen before, and stood with drooping eyelashes, lovely as a vision, in the centre of the room.

"You see I have lost no time in obeying your ladyship's commands," began Ormiston, bowing low. "Mistress Leoline, allow me to present low. "Mistress Leoline, allow me to present Sir Norman Kingsley." Sir Norman Kingsley bent almost as pro-

foundly before the lady as the lord high chan-cellor had done before Queen Miranda, and the lady courtesied in return, until her pink satin skirt ballooned out all over the floor. It was quite an affecting tableau. And so Ormiston felt, as he stood eyeing it with preternatural gravity.

"I owe my life to Sir Norman Kingsley," murmured the faint, sweet voice of the lady, and could not rest until I had thanked him. have no words to say how deeply thankful and

Fairest Leoline I one word from such line would be enough to repay me, had I done a thousaudiold more," responded Norman, laying his hand on his heart with another deep genuflection.
"Very pretty indeed?" remarked Ormiston

to himself, with a little approving nod; "but I'm afraid they won'd be able to keep it up, and go on talking on stilts like that till they have fluished. Perhaps they may get on all the better if I take myself off, there being always one too many in a case like this." Then aloud: "Madame, I regret that I am obliged to depart, having a most particular appointment; but, doubtless, my friend will be able to express himself without my assistance. I have the honor to wish you both good-night."

With which nest and appropriate speech, Ormiston bowed himself out, and was gone before Leoline could detain him, even if she wished to do so. Probably, however, she thought the care of one gentleman sufficient responsibility at once; and she did not look very seriously distressed by his departure;

time on anything, and went at it immediately. Taking her hand, with a grace that would have beaten Sir Charles Grandison or Lord Chester field all to nothing, he led her to a couch, and took a seat as near to her as was at all polite or proper, considering the brief nature of their sequaintance. The curtains were drawn; the lamp shed a faint light; the bonee was still, and there was no intrusive papa to pounce down upon them; the lady was looking down, and seemed in no way haughty or discouraging, and Sir Norman's spirits went up with a jump to boiling-point. Yet the lady, with all her pretty bashfulness, was the first to

"I'm afraid, Sir Norman, you must think this a singular hour to come here; but, in these dreadful times, we cannot tell if we may live from one moment to another; and I should not like to die, or have you die without my telling, and you hearing all my gratitude. For I do assure you, Sir Norman, said the lady litting her dark eyes with the prettiest and most bewitching earnestness, "that I am grateful, though I cannot find world to a yearners to." witching earnestness, "that I am grathough I cannot find words to express it

"Madame, I would not listen to you if you would; for I have done nothing to deserve thanks. I wish I could ell you what I felt when Ormiston told me you were alive and

safe."
"You are very kind, but pray do not call me madame. Say Leoline!"
"A thousand thanks, ear Leoline!" exclaimed Sir Norman, rating her hand to his lips, and quite beside himself with costasy.
"Ab, I did not tell you to say that!" she cried, with a gay laugh and vivid blush. "I never said you were to call me dear."

"In arose from my heart to my lips," said Sir Norman, with a thrilling earnestness and fervid glance; "for you are dear to me—dearer than all the world beside!"

than all the world beside!"
The flush grow a deeper glow on the lady's face; but, singular to relate, she did not look the least surprised or displeased; and the hand he had foloniously purloined lay passive and quite contented in his."
"Sir Norman Kingsley is pleased to jest," ould the lady, in a subdued tone, and with her eves fixed pertinaciously on her shining dress; "for he has never spoken o me before in his lift."

life."

That has nothing to do with it, Leoline.

I love you as devotedly as I had known you from your birthday; and, strange to say, I feel as if we had been friends for years instead of minutes. I cannot realize at all that you are a

stranger to me !"

Leoline laughed.

"Nor I; though, for that matter, you are not a stranger to me, Sir Norman!"

LADY LEOLINE.

"I have seen you go pase so often, you know; and Prudence told me who you were; and so I used—I used—" hesitating and glowing to a degree before which her dress paied.

"Well, dearest," said Sir Norman, getting

"Am I not How is that?

from the positive to the superiative at a jump, and diminishing the distance between them, "you used to—what?"

"To watch for you!" said Leoline, in a sly whisper: "And so I have got to know you very well I'

"My own darling! And, O Leoline! may I hope—dare I hope—that you do not altogether hate me?"

Leoline looked reflective; though her black eyes were sparkling under their sweeping "Why. no," she said, demurely, "I don'

know as I do. It's very sinful and improper to hate one's fellow-creatures, you know, Sir Norman, and therefore I don't indulge in it."

"Ah! you are given to piety, I see. In that case, perhaps you are aware of a precept commanding us to love our neighbors. Now, I'm your nearest neighbor at present; so to keep up a consistent Christian spirit, just be good enough

b) say you love me!"
Again Leoline laughed; and this time the bright, dancing eyes beamed in their sparkling darkness full upon him.
"I am afraid your theology is not sound, my

friend, and I have a dislike to extremes. There is a middle course, between bating and loving. Suppose I take that?"
I will have no middle courses—either hating or loving it must be! Leoline! Leoline!" (bending over her, and impresoning both hands

this time) "do say you ince me!"
"I am captive in your land, and must, I suppose. Yes, Sir Norman, I do love you!"
Every man hearing that for the first time from a pair of loved lips is privileged to go mad for a brief season, and to go through certain mangures much more delectable to the enjoyprofound silence. But actions sometimes speak louder than words; and Leoline was pertectly convinced that her declaration had not fallen on insensible ears. At the end of that period, the space between them on the couch had so greatly diminished that the ghost of a zephyr would have been crushed to death trying to get between them; and Sir Norman's face was fairly radiant. Lecline herself looked rather beaming; and

she suddenly and without provocation, burst into a merry little peal of laughter.

"Well, for two people who were perfect strangers to each other half an hourage, I think we have gone on remarkably well. What will Mr. Ormiston and Prudence say, I wonder, when they hear this?"

when they hear this?" "They will say what is the truth—that I am the luckiest man in England. O Leoline! I never thought it was in me to love any one as

"I am very glad to hear it; but I knew that it was in me long before I ever dreamed of knowing you. Are you not auxious to know something about the future Lady Kingsley's past history "
"It will all come in good time; it is not

well to have a surfeit of joy in one night,"
"I do not know that this will add to your
joy; but it had better be told and be done with at once and forever. In the first place, I pre-sume I am an orphan, for I have never known father or mother, and I have never had any other name but Leoline."

"So Ormiston told me." "My first recollection is of Prudence: she was my nurse and governess, both in one; and we fived in a cottege by the sea.—I don's know where, but a long way from this. When I was about ten years old we left it, and came to London, and lived in a house in Cheapside for five or six years; and then we moved here. And all this time, Sir Norman—you will think it strange—but I never made any friends or acquaintances, and knew no one but Prudence and an old Italian professor, who came to our lodgings in Cheapside every week to give me lessons. It was not because I disliked society, you must know; but Prudence, with all her kindness and grooness—and I believe she truly loves me-has been nothing more or less all my life than my jailer.

She paused to clasp a belt of silver brocade. She paused to clasp a belt or sliver brocade, fastened by a pearl buckle, close around her little waist, and Sir Norman fixed his eyes upon her beautiful face, with a powerful glance.

"Knew no one—that is strange, Leoline! Not even the Count L'E trange?"

"Ah! you know him?" she cried eagerly, lifting her even with a criebt look. "do do tell

es with a bright me who he is
"Upon my honor, my dear," said Sir Norman, considerably taken aback, "it strikes me

man, considerably taken acack, "It strikes me you are the person to answer that question. If I don't greatly mistake, somebody told me you were going to marry him."

"Oh, so I was," said Leoline, with the utmost simplicy. "But I don't know him for the person is Count L'Estrange and all the athwart the sky followed by another and blinding.

Leoline half pouted and shrugged her pretty pink satin shoulders.

"Because I couldn't help it—that's why. He coaxed, and coaxed; and I said no, and no, and no, until I got tired of it. Prudence too, was as bad as he was, until between them I got about distracted, and at last consented to marry

im to get rid of him."

"My poor, prosecuted little darling! Oh,'
cried Sir Nerman, with a burst of enthusiasm,
"how I should admire to have Count L'Esand, the moment he disappeared, Sir Norman brightened up wonderfully.

It is very discomposing to the feelings to trange here for about ten minutes just now! I make love in the presence of a third party; and Sir Norman had no intention of wasting his instaken.

"No. no!" said Legline looking rather.

"No, no!" said Lecline looking rather alarmed; " you must not night, you know. I shouldn't at all like either of you to get killed. Besides, he has not married me; and so there s no harm done.'

no harm done.

Sir Norman seemed rather struck by that view of the case, and after a few moments' reflection on it, came to the conclusion that she knew best, and settled down peaceably again.

"Why do you suppose his name is not Count L'Estrauge?" he zeked. "For many reason. First—he is disguised; wears false whiskers, moustache and wig, and even the voice he uses appears assumed. Then Prudence seems in the greatest awe of him, and she is not one to be easily awed. I never know her to be in the slightest degree intimidated by any human being but himself and that mysterious more than Mexica.

ous woman, La Masque "
"Ah! you know La Masque, then " "Not personally; but I have seen her as I did you, you remember," with an arch glance; "and, like you, being once seen, is not to be

forgotten."
Sir Norman promptly paid her for the compli-

ment in Cupid's own coin :
"Little flatterer! I can almost forgive Count L'Estrange for wanting to marry you; for I presume he is only a man, and not quite equal to impossibilities. How long is it since you knew him first?"

knew him first ""
"Not two months. My courtships," said
Leoline, with a gay laugh, "seem destined to be
of the shortest. He saw me one evening to the
window, and immediately insisted on being admitted; and after that, he continued coming antil I had to promise, as I have told you, to be

Countess L'Estrange. "He cannot be much of a gentleman, or he would not attempt to force a lady against her will. And so, when you were dressed for your bridal, you found you had the plague?" "Yes, Sir Norman; and herrible as that was I do assure you I almost preferred it to

was 1 to sell of the long it is since you've known me?"

"Nearly three months," said Leoline, blushing again celestial rosy red.

"And how long have you loved me?"

"Novaense. What a question! I shall not

tell you. You shall—you must—I insiet upon it. Did you love me before you met the count? Ont with it."
"Well, then—yes!" cried Leoline des-

perately. Sir Norman raised the hand he held, in rapture to his lips.
"My darling! But I will reserve my raptures, for it is growing late, and I know you

must want to go to rest. I have a thousand things to tell you, but they must wait for daylight; only I will promise, before parting, that this is the last night you must spend bere.

Leoline opened her beautiful bright eyes very wide.

wide.

"To-morrow morning," went on Sir Normen, impressively, and with dignity, "you will be up and dressed by sunrise, and shortly after that radiant period, I will make my appearance with two horses—cas of which I shall ride, and the other I shall lead; the one I lead you shall mount, and we will ride to the nearest church, and he married without any pomp or pageaut; and then Sir Norman and Lady Kingsley will immediately leave London and in Kingsley will immediately leave London and in Kingsley immediately leave London, and in Kingsley Castle, Devonshire, will enjoy the honeymoon and blissful repose till the plague is over. Do you understand that?"

"Perfectly," she answered, w.h radishb

*And agree to it ?" "You know I do, Sir Norman; only—"
"Well, my pet, only what!"
"Sir Norman, I should like to see Prudence."

I want Prudence. How can I leave her behind ! "My dear child, she made nothing of leaving

you when she thought you were dying; so never mind Prudence, but say, will you be ready ?"
"I will."

"That is my good little Leoline. Now give me a kiss, Lady Kingsley, and good-night." Lady Kingsley dunfully obeyed; and Sir Norman went out with a glow at his heart, like a halo round a full moon.

CHAPTER X.

THE PAGE, THE FIRES, AND THE FALL.

The night was intensely dark when Sir Norman got into it once more; and to any one else would have been intensely dismal, but to Sir Norman all was bright as the fair hills of Beulah. When all was bright within we see no darkness without; and just at that moment our young knight had got into one of those green and golden glimpses of sunshine that here and there checker lite's rather dark pathway, and with Leoline beside him would have thought toe dreary shores of the Dead Sea itself a very paradise.

a very paradise.

2. It was now near midnight, and there was an unusual concourse of people in the streets, waiting for St. Paul's to give the signal to light the fire. He looked around for Ormiston; but Ormiston was nowhere to be seen—horse and rider had disappeared. His own horse stood tablesed where he had left his own horse stood tethered where he had left him. Anxious as he was to ride back to the ruin, and see the play played cut, he could not resist the temptation of lingering a brief period in the city, to behold the grand spectacle of the myriad free. Many persons were harrying toward St. Paul's to witness it from the dome; and, consigning his horse to the care of the sentirel on guard at the house opposite, he joined them and was soon striding along, at a tremendous pace, toward the great cathedral. Ere be reached it, its long-tongued clock tolled twelve, and all the other churches, one after another, took up the sound, and the witching hour of midnight rang and re-rang from end to end of London town. As if by magic, a thousand forked tongues of fire shot up at once into the blind, black night, turning almost in an instant the darkened face of the heavens to an inflamed, glowing red. Great fires were blazing around the cathedral when they reached it, but no fone stopped to notice them, but only harried on the faster to gain thefr point of observation. Sir Norman just clanced at the magnificent pile—for the old St. Paul's was even more magnificent than the new-and then followed after the rest, through many a gallery, tower, and spiral staircase, till the dome was reached And there a grand and mighty spectacle was before him-the whole of London swaying and heaving in one great sea of fire. From one end to the other, the city seemed wrapped in sheets of flame, and every street, and alley, and land within it shone in a lurid radiance far brighter than noonday. All along the river fires were gleaming, too; and the whole sky had turned from black to blood-red crimson. The streets trom black to blood-red crimson. The streets were alive and swarming—it could scarcely be believed that the plague-infested city contained half so many people, and all were unusually hopeful and animated; for it was popularly believed that these fives would effectually check the pestilence. But the angry firt of a Mighty Judge had gone forth, and the tremendeus arm of the destroying angel was not to be stopped by the puny hand of man.
It has been said the weather for weeks was

unusually brilliant, days of cloudless sunshine, not believe his name is Count L'Estrange any more than mine is."

"Procisely my opinion; but why, in the name of — no, I'll not swear; but why were you going to marry him, Leoline?"

shot athwart the sky followed by another and another, quick, sharp and bluding, then one great drop of rain fell like molten lead on the pavement. Then a second and a third — quicker, faster, and thicker, until down it rushed in a perfect deluge. It did not wait to rushed in a perfect deluge. It did not wait to rain; it fell in floods—in great, slanting sheets of water, as if the very flood-gates of heaven had opened for a second deluge. No one ever remembered to have seen such torrents fall, and the populace fled before it is wildest dismay. In ave minutes every fire, from one extremity of London to the other, was quenched in the very blackness of darkness, and on that night the deepeat gloom and terror reigned throughout the city. It was clear the hand of an avenging Deity was in this, and He who had rained down fire on Sodom and Gomorrah had not lost His micht. In fifteen minutes the terrific flood was over; the dismal clouds cleared away, a pale, fair, silver moon shone serenely out, and looked down on the black, charred heaps of ashes strewn through the streets of London. One by one the stars that all night had been obscured, gianced and sparkled over the sky, and lit up with their soft, pale light the doomed and stricken town. Everybody had quitted the dome in horror and consternation; and now Sir Norman, who had been lost in awe, suddenly bethought him of his ride to the ruin, and hashened to follow their example. Walking rapidly, not to say, recklessly, along, he abruptly knocked against some one sauntering leisurely before him, and nearly piched headlong on the pavement. Recovering his centre of gravity by a violent effort, he turned to see the cause of the collision, and found himself accosted by a musical and foreign accented voice.

"Pardon," said the sweet, and rather feminine tonca; "it was quite an accident, I assure you, monsieur. I had no idea I was in anybody's

Sir Norman looked at the voice, or rather in the direction whence it came, and found it proceeded from a lad in gay livery, whose clear, colorless face, dark eyes, and exquisite features were by no means unknown. The boy seemed to recognize him at the same moment, and slightly touched his gay cap. "Ah I it is Sir Norman Kingsley! Just the

very person, but one, in the world that I wanted most to see.

"Indeed! And, pray, whom have I the honor of addressing?" inquired Sir Norman, deeply edified by the cool familiarity of the acceptance.

costor.
"They call me Hubert-for want of a better "And name I suppose," said the lad, easily. "And may I sak, Sir Norman, if you are shed with seven-leagued boots, or if your errand is one of life and death, that you stride along at such a

"And what is that to you?" asked Sir Nor-man, indignant at his free-and-easy im-

pudence
"Nothing; only I should like to keep up "Nothing; only I should like to keep up with you, if my legs were long enough; and as they're not, and as company is not easily to be had in these forlors streets, I should feel obliged to you if you would just slacken your pace a trifle and take me in tow." The boy's face in the moonlight, in everything but expression, was exactly that of Leoline, to which softening circumstance may be attributed Sir Norman's yielding to a request and allowing. Sir Norman's yielding to a request, and allowing

the page to keep alongside.
"I've met you once before to-night?" inquired Sir Norman, after a prolonged and wondering stare at him.
Yes; I have a faint recollection of applies

'Ah !" said Sir Norman, with a start that

did not escape the quick eyes of the boy. "And what do you want of her?" what do you want of her?

The page glanced at him.

"Perhaps you know her yourself, Sir Norman? If so you will answer quite as well as your friend, as I only want to know where the liver.

"I have been out of town to-night," said Sir Norman, evasively, "and there may have been more ladies than one jumped into the Thames during my absence. Pray describe your angel in white. she lives.'

"I did not notice her particularly myself," said the boy, with easy indifference, "as I am not in the habit of paying much attention to young laties who run wild about the atreets at night and jump promisenously into rivers However, this one was rather remarkable for being dressed as a bride, having long black hair, and a great quantity of jewelry about her, and looking very much like me. Having said she looks like me, I need not add she is handsome. "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!" murmured Sir Norman, meditatively. "Perhaps she is a relative of yours, Master Hubert, since you take such an interest in her, and she looks so

much like you. "Not that I know of," said Hubert, in his careless way. "I believe I was born minus those common domestic afflictions, relatives; and I don't take the slightest interest in her, either; don't think it!'
"Then why are you in search of her?"

"For a very good reason-because I've been ordered to do so.

" By whom-your master ?" "My Lord Rochester, said that nobleman's page, waving off the insinuation by a motion of his hand and a little displeased frown; "he picked her up adrift, and being composed of righly inflammable materials, took a hot and vehement fancy for her, which fact he did not discover until your friend, Mr. Ormiston, had carried her off.

Sir Norman scowled. And so he sent you in search of her, has

" Exactly so; and now you perceive the son why it is quite important that I find Mr. Ormisten. We do not know where he has taken her to, but fancy it must be somewhere near the river."

"You do I I tell you what it is, my boy, exclaimed Sir Norman, suddenly, and in an elevated key, the best thing you can do is to go home and go to brd, and never mind young ladies. You'll catch the plague before you'll catch this particular young lady—I can tell you

that!"
"Monsieur is excited," lisped the lad raising
his bat and running his taper fingers through
his glossy, dark curls. "Is she as handsome as
they say she is, I wonder?"
"Handsome!" cried Sir Norman, lighting up

mish quite a new sensation at the recollection.

"I tell you handsome doesn't begin to describe
her! She is beautiful, lovely, angelic divine.

"Here Sir Norman's litany of adjectives besinning to give out, he came to a sudden halt, with a face as radiant as the sky at sunrise. Sir Norman paused in his walk, and contem-

plated the speaker a moment in severest silence. But Master Hubert only lifted up his saucy face and laughing black eyes, in dauntless sang "Master Hubert," began Master Hubert' companion, in his deepest and sternest bass, "I don't know your other name, and it would be of no consequence if I did-just listen to me a mo ment. If you don't want to get run through

(you perceive I carry a sword), and have an un

tfinely end put to your career, just keep a civil tongue in your bead, and don't slander England. Now come on !" Hubert laughed and shrugged his shoulders : "Thought is free, however, so I can have my own opinion in spite of everything. Will you tell me, monvieur, where I can find the lady?" "You will have it, will you?" exclamed Sir Norman, half drawing his sword. "Don't

ask questions, but answer them. Are you French ?" Monsieur has guessed it."

"Howlong have you been with your present master?" "Monsieur, I object to that term," said Hubert with calm dignity. "Master is a vul-garism that I dislike; so, in alluding to his lordship, take the trouble to say patron."

Sir Norman laughed.
"With all my heart! How long then have you been with your present patron?"

"Not quite two weeks." "I do not like to be impertmently inquisitive in addressing so dignified a gentleman, but perhaps you would not consider it too great a liberty, if I inquired how you became his page?"

page?"
Ah! I did not believe them, when they told me she was so much like me; but if she is as near perfection as you describe, I shall begin to credit it. Strange, is it not, that nature

should make a duplicate of her greatest earthly chef_d'œuvre?" "You conceited young jacksnapes!" growled Sir Norman, in deep displeasure. "It is far stranger how such a bundle of vanity can contrive to live in this work-a-day world. You are a foreigner, I perceive?"

"Yee, Sir Norman, I am happy to say I am."
"Yee, Sir Norman, I am happy to say I am."
"You don't like England, then?"
"I'd be sorry to like it; a dirty, beggarly, sickly place as I ever saw!"

Sir Norman eyen the slender specimen of foreign manhood, uttering this sentiment in the sinceres of tones, and let his hand fall heavily

on his shoulder:
'My good youth, be careful! I happen to be a native, and not altogether used to this sort of talk. How long have you been here? Not long, I know myself—at least, not in the Earl of Rochester's service, or I would

have seen you."
"Right! I have not been here a month; But that month has seemed longer than a year eles-where. Do you know, I imagine when the world was created, this island of yours must have been made late on Saturday night, and then merely thrown in from the refuse to fill up a

dent in the ocean.

Monsieur shall ask as many questions as he pleases, and it shall not be considered the slightest liberity," said the young gentleman politely. "I had been roaming at large about the city and the palace of his majesty—whom may Heaven preserve and grant a little more wisdom !—in search of a situation; and among that of all the nobles of the court the Earl of Rochester's livery struck me as being the most becoming, and so I concluded to patronize

hime. "What an honor for his lordship! Since you dislike England so much, however, you will probably soon throw up the situation and pat-

ronize the first foreign ambassador—"
"Perhaps! I rather like Whitehall, however. "Perhaps I rather the withchast aboveves."
Old Rowlie has taken rather a fancy to me,"
said the boy, speaking with the same easy
familiarity of his majesty as he would of a lapdog. "And what is better, so has Mistreus." dog. "And what is better, so has Mistrees Stuart—so much so, that Heaven forefend the king should become jealous. This, however, is

you and Mr. Ormiston on London Bridge, a few hours ago, and, by the way, perhaps I may mention I am now in search of that same Mr. Ormiston.'

"You are! And what may you want of him, pray!

"Just a little information of a private character—perhaps you can direct me to his where abouts."

"Should be happy to oblige you, my dear hoy, but unfortunately, I cannot. I want to see him myself, if I could only find any one good him myself, if I could only find any one good him pressing?"

"Very—there is a lady in the case; and such business, you are aware, is always pressing."

"One of the pest-house. I shall trie."

"Good night, it, and my road lies here. Good night, way to it, and my road lies here. Good night, angel, in virgin white, who took a notion to angel angel.

The figure is a law where are and such angel. I shall tak,

lady to-night, most assuredly I shall do so tomorrow."

Turning along a road leading to the pesthouse, and laughing as he went, the boy disaphim, and thereby discover a clue to Leoline's
abode, Sir Norman turned into a street some
the shadow until he was out of sight. Then he
came forth, and, full of impatience to get back
to the ruin, hurried on to where he had left his
man, whom he repaid for his trouble; and as he
sprang on his back, he glanced up at the windows of Leoline's house. It was all buried in
which that faint light streamed, and he knew
moment he lingered and looked at it in the
absurd way that lovers will look, and was
for—a shadow fit between him and the
light. The eight was a strong temptation to
him to dirmount and enter, and, under pretence
and his "pretty page," see her once again,
whispered indignantly that his lady-love was
probably by this time in her night robe, and not
at home to lovers; and Sir Norman respectfully
bowed to reflection,'s superior wisdom. He
her to-night, I shall most assuredly left inpon

"To-morrow," he said, as he to the and a chill presentiment of coming evil fell upon

and a chill presentiment of coming avil fell upon him.

"To-morrow," he said, as he turned to go.

"Who knows what to-morrow may bring forth!

Fairest and dearest Leoline, good-night!"

He rode away in the mconlight, with the stars shining peacefully down upon him. His heart at the moment was a divided one—one half being given to Leoline, and the other to the Midnight Queen and her mysterisus court.

The farther he went away from Leoline, the dimmer her atar became in the horizon of his thoughts; and the nearer he came to Miranda. thoughts; and the nearer he came to Miranda, thoughts; and the nearer he came to Miranda, the brighter and more eagerly she loomed up, until he spurred his horse to a most furious gallop, lest he should find the castle and the queen lost in the regions of space when he got there. Once the plague-stricken city lay behind him, his journey was short: and soon, to his great delight, he turned into the silent deserted by eath leading to the ruin. path leading to the ruin.

path leading to the ruin.

Tying his borse to a stake in the crumbling wail, he paused for a moment to look at it in the rale, wan light of the midnight moon. He had looked at it many a time before, but never with the same interest as now; and the ruined battlements, the fallen roof, the broken windows, and mouldering sides, hai all a new and weird interest for him. No one was visible far or near; and feeling that his borse was secure in the shadow of the wall, he entered, and walked highly and rapidly along in the direction of the spiral stair case. With more haste, but the same precaution, he descended, and passed through the vaults to where he knew the loose flagstone was. It was well he did know; for there was neither strain of music ner ray of light to guide neither strain of music ner ray of light to guide him now; and his heart sank to zero as he thought he might raise the stone and discover nothing. His hand positively trembled with eagerness as he lifted it; and with unbounded eagerness as he lifted it; and with unbounded delight, not to be described, looked down on the same stiled assembly he had watched before. But there had been a change since—half the lights were extinguished, and the g cat vaulted room was comparatively in shadow—the music had entirely died away, and all was solemuly silent. But what puzzled Sir Norman most of all was the fact that there seemed to be a trial of some sort going on.

a trial of some sort going on.

A long table, covered with green velves, and looking not unlike a modern billiard table, stood at the right of the queen's cromsen throne; and behind it, perched in a high their, and wearing a long, solemn, black tobe, and a small, thick personage, whose skin Sir N color would have known on a hush. He glanded at the lower throne and found it, as he expected, empty; and he saw at once that his little highness was not only prince consort, but also supreme judge

Two or three similar black robed gentry, among whom was recognizable the noble duke who so narrowly encaped with his life under the swords of Sir Plorinan and Count L'Estrange. swords of Sir Florinan and Count L'Estrange. Before this solemn conclave stood a man who was evidently the prisoner under trial, who wore the whitest and most frightened face Sir Norman thought he had ever beheld. The queen was louging negligently back on her throne, paying very little attention to the sclemn rites, ocssionally gossiping with some of the snow-white sylphs beside her, and often yaning behing her pretty finger-ling and evident

of the snow-white sylphs beside her, and often yaning behing her pretty finger-lips and evidetly very much bored with by it all.

The rest of the company were decorously steady in the crimson and glided arm-chairs; some listening with interest to what was going on, others holding whispered the A tebes, and all part abiliand respectful. all very still and respectful.

Sir Norman's interest was aroused to the highest pitch; he imprudently leaned forward bighest pitch; ne imprudently leaned forward too far, in order to hear and see, and lost his bulance. He felt he was going and tried to stop himself, but in vain; and seeing there was no help for it he made a sudden spring and landed right in the midst of the assembly.

CHAPTER XI.

THE EXECUTION. In an idetant all was confusion. Everybody to their less -ladies shricked in chorus, gentle-men swore and drow their swords, and looked to see if they might not expect a whole army to drop from the sky upon them as they stood. No other battalion, however, followed this forlorn hope : and, seeing it, the gentlemen took heart of grace and closed around the unceremonitude intruder. The queen had sprung from her royal seat, and stood with her bright lips her royal east, and stood with her bright lips parted, and her brighter eyes dilatied in speechless wonder. The bench, with the judge at their head, had followed her example, and stood staring with all their might, looking, truth to tell, as much startled by the sudden apparttion as the fair sex. The said fair sex were still firing off little volleys of screams in chorus, and clinging desperately to their cavaliers; and everything, in a word, was in most admired disorder.

most admired disorder.

Tam O'Shanter's cry, "Weel done, Cutty sark!" could not have produced half such a commotion among his "bellish legion" as the emphatic debut of Sir Norman Kingsley among these human revelers. The only one who seemed rather to enjoy it than otherwise was the pricoper, who was quietly and quietly seemed rather to supply to than contracted when the prisoner, who was quietly and quickly making off when the malevolent and irrepressible dwarf espied him, and the one shock acting as a counter-irritant to the other, he bounced fleetly over the table and grabbed him in his crab-like claws.

This brisk and laudable instance of self-com-

nand had a wonderful and inspiriting effect on the rest and as he replaced the pale and palsied prisoner in his former position, giving him a vindictive shake and victous kick with his royal boots as he did so, everybody began to feel themselves again. The ladies stopped screaming, the gentlemen ceased swearing, and more than one exclamation of astonishment followed the

cries of terror.

Sir Norman Kingsley | Sir Norman Kingsley ?" rang from lip to lip of those who recogstrictly entre naus, and not to be spoken of on a nized him; and all drew closer and looked it any terms."

"Your secret shall be preserved at the risk their mind to believe their eyes. As for fir of my life," said Sir Norman, laying his hand. Norman himself, that gentleman was destined. any terms."

"Your secret shall be preserved at the risk of my life," said Sir Norman, laying his hand on the left side of his doublet; "and, in return, may I ask if you have any relatives living—any sisters, for instance?"

"I see! you have a suspicion that the lady in white may be a sister of mine. Well, you may see your mind at rest on that point—for II she one of intense astonishment at finding himsel.