

## COURAGE TO DO RIGHT.

We may have courage, all of us,  
To start at honor's call,  
To meet a foe, protest a friend,  
Or face a cannon ball;  
To show the world one hero lives,  
The foremost in the fight—  
But do we always manifest  
The courage to do right?

To answer "No!" with steady breath,  
And quick unflinching tongue,  
When fierce temptation, ever near,  
Her siren song has sung;  
To care not for the bantering tone,  
The jest of studied slight—  
Content if we can only have  
The courage to do right?

To stop aside from fashion's course  
Or custom's favored plan;  
To pluck an outcast from the street,  
Or help a fellow-man?  
If not, then let us nobly try  
Henceforth, with all our might,  
In every case to minister up  
The courage to do right.

## NOBILITY.

True worth is in being, not seeming—  
In doing, each day that goes by,  
Some little good; not in the dreaming  
Of great things to do by and by.  
For whatever men say in blindness,  
And spite of the fancies of youth,  
There's nothing so kingly as kindness,  
And nothing so royal as truth.

We get by our mete as we measure;  
We cannot do wrong, and feel right;  
Nor can we give pain, and gain pleasure—  
For justice avenges each slight.  
The air for the wing of the sparrow,  
The bush for the root, and the wren,  
But always the path that is narrow  
And straight for the children of men.

'Tis not in the pages of story  
The heart of its ills to beguile,  
Though he who makes courtship to glory  
Gives all that he hath for her smile;  
For, when from her heights, he has won her,  
Alas! it is only to prove  
That naught is so sacred as honor,  
And nothing so loyal as love.

## Tales and Sketches.

## RACHEL AND AIXA;

OR,

## The Hebrew and the Moorish Maidens.

## AN INTERESTING HISTORICAL TALE.

## CHAPTER IV.—The Whirlpool.

During their transit scarcely a word was spoken by any of the little party. Every one was uneasy and seemed to feel a dread of some impending danger, except indeed the New Comer, who, by his bold tone and resolute air appeared to the Jews as though he were rather a chief of the White Companions than a simple knight; he seemed, in truth, to be a man fit to go forth to the pillage of kingdoms. Still they preferred being his captives rather than prisoners to a servant of the Count of Trastamara, for the words of the unknown had induced them to hope that they might be released for a good ransom.

Whilst rowing, the page intently regarded the flames which discolored the azure sky, and feeling his arms weary, and being nearly exhausted, he exclaimed, "Cursed be thou, Don Enrique! thou who hast drawn upon thy country this horde of cut-throats, beggars and thieves!"

The knight, instead of being greatly offended at this apostrophe, quietly replied, "Those cut-throats have come to war against a tyrant who had his wife, Blanche de Bourbon, strangled; those beggars have come to ask alms of the king, who put his counts and barons to death, that he might seize their estates and confer them on his Jewish and Moorish favorites; those thieves have come to steal the throne from a wicked brother, who appropriated to himself the inheritances of his brothers, Enrique, Fadrique, Sancho and Tello."

"Lies and blasphemy!" exclaimed the fair-haired youth, in spite of the looks of Samuel; "those are the calumnies of the gentle Enrique, and yet he knows that he drew his sword in the presence of the King Don Pedro, and struck one of the courtiers with it, and that the cruel tyrant (as he is called) permitted him to escape free and unmolested."

"Because his conscience told him that one fratricide was enough."

"Yes, it was enough, but if the Grand Master of St. Jago perished, it was because the honor of the king demanded it; the king knew that Don Fadrique loved the queen, and that the queen sacrificed her duty to that love."

"By my faith! thou art a bold youth to undertake the defence of a tyrant who had not courage enough to challenge the Grand Master to fair combat, but induced him, by means of a safe conduct, to come to his court; he then ordered his assassination, and was present at it. Was that act worthy of a knight?"

"On that day Don Pedro was not a knight, but a judge, sir; he had given a safe conduct to his rebel brother, and he pardoned the rebellion; but he could not forgive his dishonor, and become the laughing-stock of the whole court."

"These are only words, and not proofs," said the knight, shaking his head; "it is easy to vilify the dead."

"What! can it be possible that you are ignorant that, in the interview with the king, Don Fadrique openly braved him; and that

when he had arrived at the court-yard of the Alcazar, he showed mockingly, a gorgeous banner, studded with pearls and precious stones, which the queen had presented to him." Don Pedro could not then contain his anger, but called out to Pero Lopez de Padilla, commander of the men-at-arms, to seize the Grand Master. Lopez immediately obeyed; but Fadrique sprang from his grasp, and running wildly round the court-yard, endeavored to draw his sword, which, however, was so entangled in the belt that he could not; and then the others fell upon him, and Nuno Fernandez not being able to lay hold of him on account of his struggles, struck him with his mace, intending to stun him. The king, who witnessed this horrible scene from an upper window, called out to them to stop; but it was too late, Don Fadrique was dead.

"This was a marvellous story, got up by the courtiers of Don Pedro," said the knight, roughly. "Where are the witnesses who saw all this, and who can vouch for its truth?"

"I am the nephew of Juan Diente, the sergeant-at-arms," replied the page. "I was at the palace on that day, and saw all this, and can prove that it was so."

"Peace, peace!" said the Frenchman; "it does not become one in your station to speak so freely of princes. Besides, no priest, not even he who holds the keys of St. Peter, would dare to absolve Don Pedro from the murder of Blanche de Bourbon, whom he kept so long in the golden tower, and then caused to be either strangled or smothered by some miserable Jew."

"Well, I will still affirm," exclaimed the nephew of Juan Diente, "that Don Pedro was not guilty of that murder."

"No! Why, has he not often wandered, sad and pensive, in his Alcazar, unable to rest, pursued as he was by the ghost of Blanche de Bourbon?"

"Truly, he did not love her. It was the grandees who imposed that marriage on him; especially his former tutor, the powerful Don Juan Alonzo Albuquerque, who wished the king to abandon his mistress, Maria de Padilla, whose high favor offended him, although that affair was his own contrivance. Blanche arrived from France as a victim, taught to tremble before her husband, as though he were an enemy; scarcely could she dissemble her fears, even when Don Pedro saluted her with the bridal kiss."

"That was because she foresaw her destiny," exclaimed the knight.

"That was because she knew she was criminal in heart, and cherished another love," impetuously resumed the page. "Don Fadrique, who had been delegated to bring her from France, who had accompanied her in her long journey, had already gained her affections; their every look smiled on each other, and their hands were seen clasped within each other's, when they thought themselves most sheltered from observation. This is the true reason why Don Pedro (who deigned not to complain) abandoned his wife, and placed her a prisoner, under the care of Pedro Gomez Gudiel, Bishop of Segovia, of Tel Gonzalo Falomique (of Toledo), and of Juan Manso, all officers of the household."

"It is false!" cried the knight, fiercely; "and if thou darest again to vilify that most sainted woman, Blanche de Bourbon, miserable varlet, I will make thee eat thy words!"

Just at this moment the page smiled at hearing the following ditty, sang in a drawing tone, by some one on the opposite shore:—

Near the donjon it is said,  
Fadrique oft at eve is seen,  
Seeking Bourbon's sister fair,  
As his mistress and his queen.

Then smiling bitterly, he said, "You hear, the dishonor of the king is running the round of the country already."

Samuel, uneasy at the unnatural calmness of the knight, leant over to his retainer, and whispered to him, "Beware!"

"Bah! I don't fear that ill-bred bulldog; he is alone, and in his coat of mail. I can swim; as for him, once in the water, he would not very easily get out again."

The knight, who had observed all this whispering, suddenly arose, and making the boat reel under his heavy tread, seized the page by the arms, and held him, with apparent ease, suspended above the water. "Thank Heaven, you young wolf," said he (not noticing the paleness of the fugitive), "that I admire fidelity in servants, and can willingly forgive him who risks his life for his master; but remember that, if it is a virtue to be faithful, it is a crime to calumniate the dead; therefore, not a word more respecting Blanche de Bourbon; for, by St. Ives, every word uttered against her is an insult to myself!"

The page, after vainly struggling, was silent; but no sooner did the knight replace him in the boat, than, seeing the folds of the litter opened and the eyes of Rachel glistening with anger, as, with her small hand, she tendered a poniard to him, he seized it, and, gliding along the planks like a serpent, sprang on the knight, intending to strike him in some weak point of his armor; but the latter, perceiving his object, with one blow of his foot caused the boat to pitch forward so violently, that his adversary stumbled, and the knight, instantly snatching the poniard from his grasp, put the oars into his hands instead, ordering him to row on. "To work, stripping! to work!" said he, disdainfully, "and don't amuse yourself with pricking my jacket with a woman's bodkin, or I will make you speedily take lessons in swimming, from the fishes."

The page, who dropt into the rowing-bench, and a splash was heard to come from the litter.

"As for you, my pretty one," continued the knight, "you carry such paltry articles as might have procured your father a disagreeable surprise, such, for instance, as being hung; for, had my fingers been here, not one of your companions would have obtained mercy; as it is, I can easily forgive you a little feminine wrath," and he laughed derisively.

The Jewess answered in a mild, but firm tone, "My life is in your hands, Sir Knight, I thought you were going to kill that poor youth for his frankness."

"Say rather, for his slanderous tongue, my pretty one."

"No, I repeat it, for his frankness; and even I, though always shut up in my father's house, in the Jewry of Seville, have heard, like all Spain, that Maria de Padilla alone was accused of the murder of the queen, whom she wished to replace on the throne; and the queen, not having any children, Maria de Padilla feared that her mortal enemy, the Count of Trastamara, might succeed Don Pedro, to the prejudice of her own children, and so induced one of her spies to sell poisoned perfumes to her, in which he too easily succeeded. The king was so horrified that he instantly exiled Maria de Padilla, after making her witness the execution of the poisoner, and then the magnificent funeral of his wife, whom he had deposited in the vaults of the kings. As to the crimes of Don Pedro, they only consist in preventing his grandees robbing the treasury or violating their treaties with the Moorish kings, and plundering the unfortunate Jews. Trastamara is king with the nobility, because they know that he will prove a jovial companion; and they expect under him to be allowed to recommence their lawless lives, their debauchery, and assassinations, which the stern justice of Don Pedro effectually prevented. It is Pedro who is king of the army and the people; for he has drunk from their gourds, shared his purse with them, and draws his sword for their protection."

"By the blessed Tiphany!" exclaimed the knight, "how animated you are, fair one, in praise of your traitor king! Has he composed sonnets to those bright eyes, or released you from the prohibition of wearing jewels?"

"Don Pedro has never seen me," coolly replied the Jewess, "but he once rendered me a service which I can never forget. One day as I was on my way, with two of my Nubian slaves, to the public bath at sunrise, the hours prescribed for our race, lest the sight of us should sully Christian eyes, I was surrounded by a troop of young madmen, noble debauchees, who carried flaming torches. I endeavored to retire, but one of them, taller and more insolent than the rest, attempted to snatch away my veil, and vowed, amidst shouts of laughter, that if I was young and handsome I should not have to pay for my bath, for I should go to his palace; but, on the contrary, if I were old and ugly, he would make me take it in the river, whence one of his water dogs should afterwards drag me. Imagine my fright—I thought I should die; as to the poor slaves, one ran away, whilst the other, trembling in every limb, knelt on the ground speechless; I struggled in vain against the insolent intruder, when just as my veil was about to give way, a young fisherman, clothed in a coarse garb, with his face half-hidden by his cloak, sprang into the group, snatched a torch from one of them, and dashing it in the face of the aggressor, exclaimed, 'Fool! you don't see clear; look well in my face since you are curious, and tell me if it be to your fancy.' Don Enrique, for he was my insulter, uttered a groan of anguish, his beard having caught fire, whilst his companions dispersed as rapidly as possible; the disguised fisherman taking up a jar of water, emptied it over Don Enrique's head, saying, ironically, 'Come, I shall charge you nothing for this bath, Enrique, but don't force me to give you another, for every act carries its own reward;' then beckoning to the Infanta to follow him, he retired without even asking my name. You will easily guess that this fisherman was Don Pedro, who roamed through Seville at night, thus disguised, in order to superintend the vigilance of the night watch."

"Well, well, you are grateful," said the knight; "and I cannot blame you for thus defending your sovereign. Your story somewhat reconciles me to that accursed Pedro; however, you are but a Jewess, and therefore I cannot give you my entire confidence. But see, our friend there with the light hair handles the oars much better than the poniard; at this rate we shall reach the opposite bank in five minutes."

In fact, the page was rowing vigorously, although quite mechanically; he had paid the utmost attention to Rachel's story, and when she related the scene at the baths, his looks were riveted on the litter with a most tender and impassioned expression, whilst a radiant smile brightened his countenance; but this absorption was very nearly fatal to the party.

Samuel, who was in a hurry to reach the shore, answered the knight in a joyful tone, "Yes, sir, we must be near the shore, for the waves foam and whiten, which is a sure sign that they break against the banks."

"It is somewhat singular though," replied the knight, "that the water just ahead of us whirls and gurgles as though it fell into a funnel."

On hearing these words the page stopped rowing, and with a sudden movement sprang upright; he looked towards the place indicated

by the knight, and saw the waves white with foam whirling and eddying with a dreadful noise, and then losing the sight of the shore. His hair stood on end, and his knees trembled. "We are lost!" he exclaimed; "this is the whirlpool, the sunken rock of the Count of Trastamara! What accursed hand has taken away the banner planted there by the Count of Cardona to point out the invisible bank?"

The boat was being drawn with frightful rapidity towards the sunken rock, which was invisible at a hundred paces from the shore. The prisoners uttered cries of the deepest distress at the sight of this inevitable danger, and old Samuel paced round the litter like a wild beast, tearing his beard and crying, "My daughter, my blood, my life!" but without degrading any means of assistance more efficacious than tears and groans. Happily some one else had occupied himself for her safety in a more useful manner.

The page, on perceiving the danger, had instantly thrown off his robe, and rushed to the litter, crying, "Trust thyself with thy armpit, mistress; I will save thee or perish!"

Rachel, surprised and trembling, sprang instinctively from the rude grasp of a stranger; but the imminent danger did not permit him to temporize, and in a moment she found herself within his sinewy arms.

"Not a word, not a cry; it is a question of life or death," said he.

But the young girl, struggling against him, answered, "Can you not save my father also?"

"Impossible!"

"How impossible? I will never abandon him; rather save thy master and let me perish!"

The page impatiently stamped his foot upon the planks. "What! Rachel, do you wish me to wait here and be swallowed up with those poltroons who dared not just now, like you, render me any assistance?"

Rachel only answered, "Obey me; I command you to save my father!"

"But he himself wishes me to save you. I will obey you. But let him choose between his life and yours."

The old treasurer threw himself at his feet, "Save her! save my daughter, the precious joy of my race! and let the withered branch be broken off and cast into the gulph!"

"Dost thou hear, Rachel? there are yet some few moments which heaven will grant us, and then we shall be engulfed in the breakers of this sunken rock."

"My father! oh, my father! cried Rachel, throwing herself into his arms, "I will never save my life at the price of yours!"

"I will not listen to you," replied Samuel, tearing her away from his arms, and brushing off the tears which streamed from his eyes; "take her away, Pero—take her by force if she will not go, I command you! What is it to me to die if my only child be saved? Dost thou, canst thou think, Rachel, that I would live if I saw the lily of my race, the child of my heart, swallowed up by the waves?"

"I must obey your father, Rachel," said the page, seizing her in his arms, "and remember that each moment we lose is as precious to him as to us; for, as soon as you are safe, I will return for him."

He then tore off the long silken dress which Rachel wore, as well as the veil which enveloped her from head to foot, scattering a lurch of mirabolins to the bottom of the boat, whence Samuel began hastily to gather them, placing them carefully in his deep pockets. The round shoulder of the young girl shone dazingly through the rent made in her dress, and her ivory arms mechanically embraced the waist of the page.

Pero trembled in every limb as he felt the heart of that fair creature palpitate against his own; and just at that moment Samuel uttered a shriek of despair, as he perceived the dishevelled locks of his daughter escaping from their bands, contrary to the Jewish law.

The brave young page sprang at once into the water with his beautiful burthen, and breasting the waves like a practised swimmer, made at once for the bank, where, however, the weeds and matted grass rendered the task of landing most difficult, if not altogether impossible.

In the meanwhile, Samuel, forgetful of his own danger, watched with straining eyes the fate of his daughter, when he was aroused by feeling the heavy hand of the knight placed on his shoulder.

"For a Jew," said he, "thou hast behaved nobly, and proved thy courage. I will yet help thee; as for you other heathens, don't stun me with your childish shrieks."

The waters roared and foamed around, waiting for their prey; only a miracle could save them, and the assurance of the knight seemed to the Jews nothing less than sacrilege. At this moment a loud derisive burst of laughter was heard, and turning their heads towards the shore, they perceived a poor deformed child perched like a monkey on the topmost bough of one of the oaks, who now began singing in a discordant tone the song we have already noticed respecting the Queen Blanche.

By our sorrowing lady fair,  
You will have a bitter dream;  
Haste, this safer shore to share,  
If you're bold swimmers 'gainst a stream.

"Wait a little—wait a little," cried the knight; "I'll soon make you come off your perch, young imp of mischief." Then unbuckling the long band or cord which he wore, and which was knotted with leaden balls at intervals, and terminated with a strong iron hook, he threw it with the unerring aim of a practised slinger over the strongest branch of

one of the oaks, where it fastened itself firmly. He then fastened the end of the cord strongly round his own waist, and took Samuel to going to him. At this instant the boat struck against the rock, and the unhappy Jews, shrieking and calling for aid, were swallowed in a moment, while the knight, encountered by Samuel, began his dangerous task of ascending by means of the rope ladder.

The deformed songster had at first regarded with surprise this unlooked-for method of safety, but soon, uttering a savage shriek and brandishing a knife, he began to descend from his perch, in order to cut the cord, as the knight imagined, and let him sink into the river, whence the weight of his armor would prevent his rising. The child was already on the bank, when he caught sight of the head of the young page, who was straining every nerve amongst the fishes and weeds, endeavoring to sustain the young Jewess, whose discolored countenance and fainting form bore witness to her fears—the eyes of the page met those of the child, and both involuntarily brightened them, as he cried, "Help, Pierce Neige, help!"

The child thought no more of the knight whom he instantly left to gain the bank as he best could, but running to the page, he threw him a rope, just as his wearied hands were losing their hold of the slimy rushes, and himself sinking fast into the mire.

No sooner had the page, with this assistance, gained the shore, and placed his fair companion gently on the soft grass, than the young child ran round him clapping his hands for joy, then suddenly stopping, he trembled like a leaf, crying, "Woe to Pierce Neige! woe to him—it is his fault that his brother was so nearly drowned."

In the meantime the page attempted to restore animation to the beautiful Jewess; he breathed into her face and clasped her hands with the utmost uneasiness. "Wilt thou die in my arms, thou pearl of Israel?" he murmured; "must that mouth which so eloquently defended Don Pedro, never speak again? What is there not a sepulchre, not a physician of thy tribe near to save thee? Will they too leave thee to die? Accursed be the hand which tore away the pennant from its place!—if he only fell into my power—answer, dost thou know? tell me," cried he, turning like a wounded lion on the child, and shaking him by the arm.

Frightened at these passionate gestures, Pierce Neige fell on his knees, and acknowledged that he did it.

The knight, who had now arrived, exclaimed, "What! was it you, you imp of evil, who played us this trick?"

The child did not deign even to turn his head towards him, but gazed earnestly on the page. "Why—why did you do this, Pierce Neige?" said the latter.

"Because a band of English marauders are even now burning the sheep-folds of the king, my brother," and pointing to the crimsoned sky, he said, "look at the flames and listen to the cries of the English."

"And thy mother, old Paloma?" hastily demanded the page, without taking his eyes off the Jewess.

"My mother is alone. My brothers have not yet returned from the battle field. Poor Paloma expected them when those white-crowned English, with their iron-clad horses, came upon her; they have pillaged the farm, the stables, the granaries, and burnt everything. And as my mother would not answer their questions, and could not ransom herself with heaps of gold, they have tied her to a stake and driven me away with their whips, because I cried on seeing my mother so cruelly treated."

"Ah! I felt her breath," exclaimed the page. "She lives—thy daughter lives, Samuel. God has been pleased to accept thy sacrifice. Oh, my dear mistress, never did misfortune pain me more bitterly than when I doubted whether I supported a living form or a corpse!" and he kissed, with more of compassion than respect, the hands of the resuscitated maiden.

She sighed, and her beautiful eyes, half-opened, resting with an expression of the deepest gratitude on the devoted page. She was, however, still dreaming, and upheld him only in imagination; for, unconscious of the past danger and her own disordered appearance, she murmured, "Saved—he is saved, then."

"Yes, like thee, like thee, Rachel," cried the page, moved almost to tears, whilst Samuel, prostrating himself at his feet, thanked him, at the same time covering his own head and beard with dust.

"What art thou doing here?" sternly demanded the Knight of Pierce Neige.

"Waiting for my brothers, to warn them," replied the spirited little fellow. "I tore away the signal flag in order that the horses and boats of the White Comrades might be swallowed up. Ah, it is not with the sword alone that one slays. Those marauders despised me because I wore neither sword nor helmet; but if I'm not a good soldier, I'm a good butler at any rate, and incendiarism makes one thirsty. Hold up your glasses, gentlemen, I will fill them without spilling a single drop."

"What meantest thou?" asked the knight, grasping him fiercely by the arm; "dost thou think that thou alone art able to cut the throats of Tom Burdett's companions, the brothers-in-arms of Calverley, even though they be dead drunk?"

"Dost thou perceive that the poor fellow is an idiot?" said the page; "let us make him our guide; it is all we can get out of him, and it is getting dark."