

apartments. She was herself very fond of the national dances of Spain, and had introduced them at the court, and this evening her guests had danced the *bolero* with great spirit. As the dance was concluded, two, a gallant looking couple, withdrew from the others, and retreated to a recessed window, hung with rich and heavy folds of crimson damask, which, looped on one side, half shadowed the quiet nook. They had been the leaders in the *bolero*, and both seemed fatigued.

"We will rest here, sweet Coz," said the young man, a bold, fine looking cavalier. "I have somewhat to say to thee." And drawing her into the recess, he unlooped the golden cord which confined the curtain, and they were alone, for no mortal eye could penetrate the rich drapery, though the light streamed through with crimsoned ray; and never did it fall on a lovelier pair. The fair girl raised her hand imploringly, as she saw the young man thus shutting her in from the observation of those around her.

"Oh, James!" she murmured, "do not; we shall be noticed, and if my father should come into the ball-room and not find me, he would never forgive us for thus disobeying him."

"Mary, I must speak to you," replied the young man eagerly. "I have been so watched by your father's emissaries, that for weeks I have not spoken to you, and I have endured a perfect fever of the heart; I have been tormented with a thousand fears; and now the rumor of the arrival of this Prince of Orange fills me with a dread I cannot express. From all I can hear, my royal sire favours the alliance, and his wish is law with your father, so there is everything to fear. Oh! tell me, Mary, that you will resist their wishes, you will be faithful to the love we have so long cherished; if you are firm, your father will not oppose you, he will let Anne wed this prince, and that will make the political bond quite as strong."

"Oh! Monmouth, do not urge me to such a course; you know well I dare not resist my uncle's command; if he wills that I should marry Prince William, I must obey his behest. My father, too, though opposed to my marrying a Protestant, will, I fear, look upon this marriage, if proposed to him, as so desirable as to outweigh all objections; his ambition is boundless. He can now look forward, if he survives your father, to succeeding him on the throne."

"Then, Mary, with the almost certainty of the succession to the English crown, why the necessity of this foreign alliance? Why divide the interests of the country? Who so fitting a mate for the heiress apparent of England, as the son of the king? You know, Mary, that no blot can

be considered as resting on my birth. I have the certificate of marriage given by my father to Lucy Walters, and though, from some informality, it is not recognized as a legal tie in England, it is quite sufficient, in Scotland, to establish my position as legal heir to the throne. I have tried it there, Mary! All Scotland is for me, and I have but to raise my standard and to send forth the cry of 'Monmouth and his rights!' and an army large enough to force Charles to recognize me will soon be gathered. He has thought to bribe me by this paltry dukedom, and while I have your love, and the hope of winning you, Mary, I care not for any other ambition; but if my father forces you to this marriage, he will wake in my heart a now slumbering foe. I will instantly leave the court, rally my forces, and fight bravely for my honour and my rights."

"This is infatuation, James! You can do nothing; the Scots might rally around you because your mother was a Scotswoman, and known to be grossly deceived by your Royal Father; and with them the simple acknowledgment of the certificate of marriage, though a sham one, which he gave her, will legalize the union; and on this they may found the plea for espousing your cause; but it cannot hold. You will expose yourself to days of mortification and disgrace, and I pray and implore you, by the love you profess for me, by the attachment you should feel for your father, that you will give up all thought of such a rash enterprise."

"I will be all you wish, and do all you wish, dearest Mary, if you will but remain faithful to me,—I could bear and endure all things, if I but thought you would be firm, and refuse any of those foreign alliances if proposed."

"I dare not, I cannot promise, dear James; I cannot choose for myself. I know, and you do too, that, fondly as your father loves you, he will never acknowledge you as his legitimate son; your rank can never be higher than it is now, while I am the heir apparent to the throne. This will effectually prevent my uncle or father from consenting to our marriage, and I have not the privilege of maidens in a more lowly rank of life; I cannot, I dare not, be independent, and cold as the words may seem to you, James, I must speak them. We must give up all thoughts of one another; you must strive to find another Mary—one who can fill my place in your affection, and who, more happily situated than I am, can return, unreservedly, the treasure of your love."

"Cold—unfeeling indeed! you could never have loved me, Mary! You have deceived me! Fool that I was to trust to woman's love—fleeing as a breath!