

cast race, who despised the Lord of Life, and trampled, with sacrilegious daring, on the blessed symbol of the cross. It was her firm conviction, that the misfortunes, which of late years had befallen the royal house of Portugal were, indications of God's displeasure, for their lenity in permitting these blasphemers to dwell unmolested on their soil, and when she yielded her acceptance of Emanuel's suit, it was only on the condition that he would immediately issue a sentence of banishment against every Israelite within his realm.

The young monarch was shocked by this instance of bigotry in his destined wife; his liberal and just mind revolted from compliance with so tyrannous and cruel a demand, and he almost resolved to resign the prize he coveted, rather than yield to it. But the long cherished passion of his soul pleaded more strongly than the voice of equity within him, and, in an evil hour, he issued against the harmless Jews a decree of perpetual banishment, and then set forth to wed the fair bride, whose hand he had purchased at the expense of a quiet and self-approving conscience. The Jews, thus torn from their homes and possessions, were, as it may be supposed, dreadfully exasperated, and not a few meditated deep and deadly revenge against the authors of their wrongs; a revenge which was reserved for one only to accomplish.

It was arranged that the royal nuptials should be solemnized privately, and without pomp or parade, at the frontier town of Valencia de Alcantara. A repetition of the magnificent festivities that had graced her union with Alphonso, was repugnant to the feelings of Isabella, and at her earnest desire, Ferdinand and Isabella, attended by a small suite, accompanied her to the appointed place of meeting, where they found the royal bridegroom impatiently awaiting their arrival. The time which had elapsed since the Infanta's residence in Portugal, had ripened and perfected her then childlike beauty, into the exquisite loveliness of matured and conscious womanhood; and when Emanuel found himself again in the presence of the idol whose semblance he had so long worshipped, he was dazzled with the increased lustre of her charms. His heart thrilled with ecstasy, as, availing himself of the permitted privilege, he touched with glowing lips the fair cheek, which kindled into brighter beauty at the salutation.

Nor was Isabella less agreeably surprised by the personal attractions and courtly graces of her betrothed. At the period of her brief acquaintance with him, she had been absorbed by another, and amid the melancholy which had since consumed her, one only image had retained its place in her remembrance. A few hours passed in the society of the accomplished prince, whom she had come forth, impelled only by duty, reluctantly to wed, had banished every feeling of dread and aversion from her heart, and awakened pleasurable emotions, whose genial

influence promised to call again into being, those fair blossoms of love and hope, which the icy chill of death, had once so untimely blighted. Emanuel saw with rapture the favourable impression he had produced on the mind of his bride, and in the joy of the blissful discovery, he forgot that this gentle and radiant creature, had required him, as the price of her hand, to commit an act of wanton cruelty, which stung him with present self-reproach, cast a cloud over his bridal joy, and was destined to bring woe and deep repentance to his after life.

It seemed indeed, as if these inauspicious nuptials were ushered in by gloom—for the morning of their solemnization was dark with storm and rain, and on the day succeeding, an envoy arrived from Salamanca, bringing to Ferdinand and his queen, the agonizing intelligence that their only son, the prince of the Asturias was lying dangerously ill. Unable to endure the anguish of suspense, the angust sovereigns bade a sad and hasty adieu to their newly wedded daughter, and set forth with evil forebodings, which were soon, alas! too fatally realized, to seek the sick couch of their son.

The return of fine weather was the signal for the bridal train to depart from Valencia, and as they quitted the ancient town, a circumstance occurred, which trivial as it seemed at the time, proved all important in the influence it was destined to exert on the fortunes of the ill-fated Isabella.

As the royal cavalcade was just emerging from the precincts of the town into the champagne country around it, a singular looking figure darted from the crowd that lined the road, and cast himself prostrate before the mule on which the young queen sat. He was an old man, with a beard descending to his girdle, wrapped in a crimson mantle, and wearing a pointed cap with grotesque figures and characters, engraved on its rim.

"Wo! wo, to the royal bride! wo to her for whom a throne waits! wo! wo! wo!" he exclaimed, in a shrill and mocking voice, as he grovelled in the dust beneath the terrified princess. She grew pale and trembled, and as the wild denunciation of this spectral object rung in her ears, her superstitious mind readily received it as her doom. The high fed animal on which she sat, seemed not less alarmed, for he started back with distended nostrils from the obstacle that impeded his progress, and Isabella, paralyzed with terror, would have fallen to the earth, had not a boy sprung suddenly from the crowd, and spurning the old man away, caught the sinking princess in his arms, and held her firmly on her seat.

The incident had passed so rapidly, that the cavaliers of the royal suite had scarcely time to rally round their queen, before the object of alarm had disappeared, and though several spurred after him, he seemed at once to vanish in the crowd among which he had thrown himself. Emanuel, in the meantime, thinking only of his bride, threw himself from