

THE PAGE OF JAMES V. OF SCOTLAND.

Translated from the French by S. A. C., with the author's permission.

CHAPTER XVII.

SIX MONTHS LATER.

Six months have elapsed since Francis became the King's companion, and meanwhile many political changes have taken place. The crisis, which had been imminent between the opposing parties in the State, came to a head at the next meeting of the Parliament. The partisans of Angus and of Beaton—that is to say, of the Douglases and the Hamiltons—met in the High Street of Edinburgh, and a bloody conflict ensued. For some time the result for either party was indecisive, but the unexpected entrance of Sir Home of Wedderburn through the Netherbow Gate, accompanied by a strong band of Border men, gave the victory to Angus, though in the skirmish Wedderburn himself was killed, an end far too noble for one stained with so many crimes. The Hamiltons were chased from the city, leaving seventy of their number dead within its walls, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that the Earl of Arran himself and his son, James Hamilton, succeeded in making good their escape from the pursuit of their vengeful enemies. This street skirmish, called by the wits of the day "the Cleansing of the Causeway," did more for Angus than all the plots he had hitherto hatched. Profiting by the terror his success had inspired, Angus wrested from Parliament an order withdrawing James from the guardianship of his mother, and confiding him to the care of a council of peers, of which he himself was to be head. Henceforth, though still inhabiting Holyrood, Margaret was not allowed to see her son, over whom Angus or one of his family kept an assiduous watch. This precarious sort of authority did not, however, satisfy Angus, whose ambition knew no limits, and who aimed at supreme power, which he could only attain through the King. Therefore, following the virulent counsels of his brother George, he, by threats rather than persuasion, had the King, who was now fourteen, sign a proclamation declaring that he had confided the reins of government to Lord Douglas. Angus could now with impunity wreak his vengeance on his adversaries. Margaret, the Queen-mother, was banished from the Court; but, as a compensation, Angus obtained from Henry the Eighth, with whom he had secret understandings, the confirmation of the divorce so much desired by both Margaret and himself. Margaret retired into one of her private castles, and, laying aside all royal dignity, soon contracted a third alliance with Sir Henry Stewart, afterwards Lord Evandale. As to the Chancellor, since his defeat in the streets of Edinburgh he had everything to fear from the vengeance of Angus, who, as the Cardinal well knew, would not shrink from taking his life.

So long as Angus was merely head of the council of peers, Beaton tried to weather the storm; but as soon as Angus became chief Minister and supreme, Beaton was at once deprived of his office and state. On learning his dismissal, Beaton at once disappeared, no one knew whither—a precaution, indeed, dictated by prudence, for that very day Angus sent his officers to arrest him. It was at first believed that he had sought refuge in one of the castles of the Earl of Arran; but that supposition was soon proved to be untrue. For Arran, terrified by the utter abandonment of the Cardinal, and aimed only at reconciling himself with the all-powerful Douglas. This reconciliation he easily effected, Angus being most desirous to gain over the Arran party. He bestowed honors and offices upon them on condition that they should hold no intercourse with Beaton in the event of his returning to Scotland, for the general belief now was that he had fled to France. This condition the Hamiltons accepted, thus disgracing themselves, and repaying with ingratitude the many favors bestowed upon them by their kinsman in the day of his power. One alone stood aloof—the Earl of Lennox—who, being a man of noble sentiments, declined to accept such dishonoring conditions. But to return to our young hero. As the shrewd Chancellor had foreseen, Francis soon became a favorite with the young King. Ashamed of practicing deceit on one who showed him so much kindness, Francis one day related to the King the stratagem employed by the Cardinal to place him near his person, and made known to him his true name and his recent heavy misfortunes. Moved to pity by this relation, and touched by the frankness of the page, James took him into his confidence, and at the conclusion of his friend's narrative exclaimed: "Well, if as I fear, I have only found in the Earl a master, where I thought to find a friend, you, at least, will be here to serve as a means of communication between me and those who wish me well."

"Yes, sire," replied Francis. "When the day comes that the Earl's power presses too heavily, I shall at the peril of my life, strive to liberate you. But I do not wish any longer to bear the name of Owen, which is not my own, neither do I wish to claim a false kinship with the Douglas. So I shall go to the Earl and tell him all."

"Take care to do no such thing," quickly replied the King. "I recollect now, from what you have related to me of the plan laid by Angus to assassinate you, to prevent your coming here, that he tried to destroy you also in another way, in case his plan failed for he represented you to me as a spy whom the Cardinal wished to place near me."

that paper for him yesterday, which gives him supreme power?" "Surely the Earl will not dare to abuse his power," said Francis; "and, besides, you have friends—Cardinal Beaton, to say nothing of the Queen, your mother."

"I never see my mother now, Francis—I may not see her; and as to the Chancellor—do you think that Angus, who detests him, will leave him long in office?" "As he spoke the words, it seemed that chance wished to confirm them, for at that moment a herald's voice was heard crying in front of the palace: "In the name of the King, our Sovereign Lord, and by command of Lord Archibald Douglas, first Minister, of Lord Beaton, Cardinal Archbishop of St. Andrews and Chancellor of Scotland, is deprived of his offices, dignities, and worldly honors for the crime of malversation."

"You see," said the King, after listening in silence, "one of our friends already taken from us. Ah! what have I done? what have I done?" "Sire," said Francis sorrowfully, "now see that you spoke truly when you said you had put yourself into the Earl's power. May it please God he does not abuse it!"

"And mother—my mother? What will become of her?" "Again the herald gave the response to the question, crying out anew: "In the name of the King, and by command of Lord Archibald Douglas, first Minister, Madam Margaret of England, mother of the King, Countess of Angus, and ex-Roquent of the kingdom, is banished from the Court, being however, free to choose as her dwelling any castle in Scotland she may please."

"No, no!" replied the King impatiently; "I will not listen to you. I hear him coming up. Yes, here he is; leave us."

Angus entered the presence of the King in obedience to his summons, and James expressed his indignation and the displeasure he had felt on hearing the ordinances which exiled his mother and deprived the Cardinal of his office.

"And in my name, too!" he cried. "In my name you banish my mother! Angus, you must revoke those orders—you must! I desire it."

captivity?" "Will the Earl, think you, dare to imprison me?" "He will dare anything. During the two months I have been with your Majesty in this palace I have learnt to know all these Douglases, who, believing me to be one of themselves, do not trouble to conceal their designs from me. He will dare anything, I tell you, sire."

"Listen," said James quickly. "The Earl has not yet taken his measures. What you have just told me has opened my eyes. We must escape from this prison. Let us fly before they deprive us of the liberty we still enjoy. Let us leave the palace by the gardens, and then find my mother. Come!"

"It is too late, sire," answered Francis. "This daring step ought to have been attempted before your interview with Angus. It is too late now, I tell you."

"That does not matter; let us try," replied James, who in his impatience had already caught up some of the things he most valued. But Francis stopped short.

"Hold, sire!" he cried. "Listen to that!" And as they listened intently the sound of arms and the tramp of feet were heard.

"What is it, Owen?" "Pikes falling on the gallery steps, sire."

James quickly laid down his little collection, and went out of the room into the gallery, which he found full of soldiers.

kinsman. Your mother, the niece of Sir Gawain Douglas, was my cousin. For this reason, when you were brought to me utterly destitute, I received you. I wished to give King James V. a companion; therefore I at once placed you with him. To me you owe all, and it would show an unthankful spirit if you were not grateful to me."

"I shall always cherish for Cousin Angus the gratitude he has a right to expect from me," replied Francis, whose presence of mind readily furnished him with ambiguous answers.

"Swear, then, to me, Owen, always to retain for the Douglases the sentiments you have just expressed, and to serve the chief of your family—your master, in fact—in all things."

"Owen, my lord," answered Francis quickly. "I swear—yes, with a solemn oath—that I will always observe, and never depart from what I at this moment feel towards the Douglas family. I further swear to serve faithfully the chief of my family, and to remain always and at all peril faithful to my master. May the curse of Heaven fall upon me should I ever prove faithless to my master!"

These words were uttered by the boy with such deep and true enthusiasm that Angus, interpreting in his own sense, was delighted.

"Good!" he said. "Owen, I am quite satisfied with you. Go back to the King now; later on I will give you your private orders."

Francis left the room, pleased at having so well extricated himself from a serious difficulty.

score, sire," replied Francis. "Sir George is hunting in the park; Sir Parkhead has gone to the stables to look at some new horses that have just arrived; old Archibald is cleaning his weapons, which occupation is of such importance in his eyes that he allows no one to do it for him; the Bishop of Dunkeld is at his dinner, and certainly he would not trouble himself to come and listen; and as to Lord Angus, he is in his private room reading some despatches that have just arrived from Edinburgh."

"No Douglas at our door?" cried James in surprise. "What good fortune!"

"Yes, and very rare; but this is how we have gained a respite. Parkhead was on duty in the ante-chamber when the horses arrived. He could not resist the desire to go and look at them, and as there are fifty, he won't be back just yet."

"Let us take advantage of our freedom, Francis. Is there any means of escape?"

"None. I have racked my brains in vain. Oh! if you only knew how to swim we might attempt it," he added, glancing towards the window, which looked upon the river.

"Yes, but I can't swim," replied James, leaning out of the casement to look at the Tweed, but suddenly withdrawing his head, saying, as if seized with vertigo, "Besides, it is too high."

"Ah, sire," said his page, "what are your friends about? They have abandoned us. If they could help us from without, we might be able to do something. But what men would follow me? What soldiers fight for me?"

hastened to enter. "Sire," he said, addressing the King in a respectful tone, which was, however, belied by his appearance, for his boots bore unmistakable traces of his visit to the stables, "here are the books which Angus, who is always desirous of giving you pleasure, has desired me to deliver to you."

"Thanks sir," replied the King with dignity. "I am all the more sensible of this attention on the Earl's part, as he usually shows very little towards me; but I regret that you have totally deprived this attention of its charm by coming to my room through the stables, so that I hardly know if it is Sir Parkhead, a gentleman of the House of Angus, who is here, or one of the Earl's grooms."

"Sire," growled Parkhead, "I prefer to execute promptly orders given to me rather than delay them by spending time in putting on silk stockings and satin shoes."

"You are right, Sir Parkhead," answered James with the satire natural to his family. "Doubtless it would have taken you too long to attire yourself in that fashion, for I know you are very little accustomed to it; so we will dispense you from it. But another time when you favor us with your presence we would request you to choose another way than the one you took this time, and which has so impregnated you with the smell of horses. Open the window," pitilessly continued James, "and then we can thank Sir Parkhead for his sojourn here does not greatly please us, but he now gives us a pleasure—that of inhaling the fresh air."

"Sire," said Parkhead, deeply wounded. "I am only a plain soldier, who may, perhaps, not know how to adorn himself, but who knows how to overthrow an enemy."

"And told a horse, Sir Parkhead," interrupted James, secretly delighted at the discomfiture of Angus's cousin.

"Well, sire," he continued, "when we have a new horse we will beg you to go and see him at the stables. That will do, sire; you need not tell us you are at our service on such an occasion—we know it," added the King, cutting short Sir Parkhead, who was about to speak. "Be pleased to lay down there the books"—indicating with a gesture a table—"and convey my thanks to your cousin; but I advise you, sir, before you appear before him, to do for the Earl that which you did not do for me—change your shoes."

God will confound the Scotland and James the King. "What does it m King. "That at last you are holding up their Black Gorge, even if castle I have, to throw window into the Tweed by Angus?" "I never thought Francis gravely. "That matter, Sir? I will only endanger myself and that I am determined to punish me—perforate the chance of squire? Oh, no, I will invent some excuse of absence for please God, I shall news for you, sire."

That very evening speak with Angus, as go to Edinburgh for said he was weary of Angus, who as trust him, and, messenger to carry patches to the you, and bade him be following morning Francis obtained Harry with him, who Moses, always att had never left him to be co

THE DE Dr. Ogden Moore official chair and rest critically upon etic faces before the The clinical hour, days sweetening his victims for the most insistent sultriness a potent therapeutic ness in their dream make their way th like streets to the where they had th His eye picked out "chronics"—a Fre officer of not mo who gave her name and who was recoo suspicious case of little show-girls, w cheerful faces; a and gold seeker tion; a poor but student with a pleo derful eyes. The str corrugated, w hercally, who tr to his patient elegant, a produc land. Immaculate aristocratic head polished boot, he able to the assault might a crystal gl a thought flash mind, was dismi crawled back, a and put in a soun The following remain. "His v whir of the fan called a dozen nae ents trooped out. "I have asked said, "because I a little out to my guests to meet the Sound."

There was an a "I should like to-morrow morning pier at the foot street. I will ments, and if an a member of you I shall be glad to morrow is Sunda There was a Frenchman, a "M. le Docteur will give me gr the invitation."

"Good," rep "How about the have the boat al The astonished t that time recovee mon acceptance "I'll look for y ing. Mind you, it's part of your he added with a

The Japanese l Harbor were blz the white blaze moon. In the still there v stiller, and g the voices, mellow space, from the anchor in the Miss Gladys elbows on the house on the long and tho moon whose c with danger.

"That is Moore, who s shoulder. "L Why?" sh around at him keeping with "Because th man can have "I have hea be the cause o sanctly; "bu specially was "Then was been wasted. "Look at the quick—befor cloud!" She shiver cashmere sca and shoulders. a pale shadow could see th seriously. "Th is replied; "th