

the shores of France; he went, dwelling on the probable disappointment of his long permitted hopes, and almost wishing, that the storm which drove her upon the coast, had proved fatal to her, and all her followers. But such feelings could not long withstand the sight of Mary's loveliness, and at the termination of their first short interview, he would almost willingly have exchanged his youth and hopes, for the age and infirmities of the king, who was to possess her. In presence of her future subjects, Mary felt the necessity of forgetting the woman in the queen—of wreathing her lip with smiles, albeit her heart was bleeding from the past, and aching with a thousand fond and sad regrets. She was not used to dissemble, but in this, her first attempt, she succeeded beyond her expectations. Her versatile conversation, the richness of her mental resources, the sweet playfulness of her manners, blended as it was with enchanting modesty, and gentle dignity, her youth and her exquisite beauty, awakened the most passionate admiration in the heart of the elegant and accomplished Francis. It shone forth in the eloquent beams of his dark and sparkling eyes, and as they rode side by side towards Paris, Mary, mounted on a snow white palfrey, trapped with cloth of gold, and he on a stately steed, as richly caparisoned, again and again, arose in his heart the fruitless wish, that it might have been his happy fate, to devote his life to this young and lovely creature. More than once he sighed heavily, as he contrasted her with the princess Claude, to whom he was espoused—with whom he possessed no sympathy in common, who was destitute of personal attractions, and to whose many virtues, for she was a model of piety and goodness, he was insensible.

It was during their second day's progress, that Mary and her retinue approached the city of Abbeville. She had been insensibly beguiled from many sad and corroding thoughts, by the fascinations of the Count D'Angouleme, and was listening with pleased attention, to some court details of interest, which he was narrating, with a grace and ease peculiarly his own, when suddenly he paused, and looking with eager surprise, towards two or three horsemen, who were seen approaching, made a gesture as if he would dismount. While Mary was vainly striving to comprehend his motives, her ears were saluted by loud shouts of "Vive le Roi," which burst from the train of French nobles who formed her escort. "It is the King," cried Francis; at the same moment he threw himself from his horse, and seeing that Mary also was endeavouring to alight, he hastened to assist her efforts. But her rich and cumbrous robes, together with the embroidered trappings of her palfrey, so impeded her attempt, that Louis, noting her design, and solicitous to prevent it, bowed with a smile, that seemed to say, "the half of her beauty was not told me!"

and immediately wheeling round, struck into a cross road, and with his two attendants, disappeared. Mary's confusion and mortification were extreme—but Francis, by the gaiety of his humour, succeeded in dissipating her chagrin, though nothing could erase from her mind the unpleasant impression left upon it, by this first brief sight of her royal lord. Though in reality, but a little past fifty, he seemed a man of fourscore, bent down by age and infirmity, and the very desire which he had shown to behold her, served to increase her disgust towards him. Her thoughts reverted with inconceivable tenderness, to the graceful Suffolk, and a gloom settled upon her spirits, which neither her own efforts, nor the assiduities of Francis, had any longer power to dispel.

But her fate was not to be averted. She arrived at Paris without any further incident—the marriage was duly solemnized, and with becoming pomp, in the Abbey of St. Denis, and the day was fixed for the imposing ceremony of her coronation. Yet amidst the pomps and rejoicings of the occasion, Mary found it a hard, and often a hopeless task to wear an air of composure. Her sadness was apparent to all, and it deepened and hallowed the interest which her beauty and her sweetness had awakened in the heart of the Count D'Angouleme. He strove by every art to minister to her happiness and enjoyment, and was perpetually devising some little fête, or pleasant surprise for her amusement; and it was only when beguiled by the charm of his manners and conversation, that she was alive to any pleasurable emotion, or displayed for a brief space, the playful animation of happier days. At the count's instigation, the king proclaimed a tournament, to be held immediately after the coronation, challenging the knights of England and France to appear at the same, and enter the lists against all who presumed to dispute the peerless pre-eminence of the new queen's beauty. Mary looked forward with a feeling of awakened interest to this tournament. The nobles of her own country, would, many of them doubtless, be present, and though she dared not hope that Suffolk would be among the number, she looked for some, who might bring her tidings of him, and by whom, at least, she might hear his name spoken.

The day appointed for the coronation arrived, and Mary, notwithstanding her dejection experienced a sensation of noble pride, and conscious dignity, as she reflected that the diadem which had graced the brows of her exalted predecessor, the beautiful Anne of Brittany, was also to encircle hers. But she was too much accustomed to magnificence, to be dazzled by it now; too little desirous of a crown, to feel one emotion of triumph at its attainment; almost her only thought was, of how she should be able to maintain herself through this trying day—and her struggles for calmness and self possession were rendered