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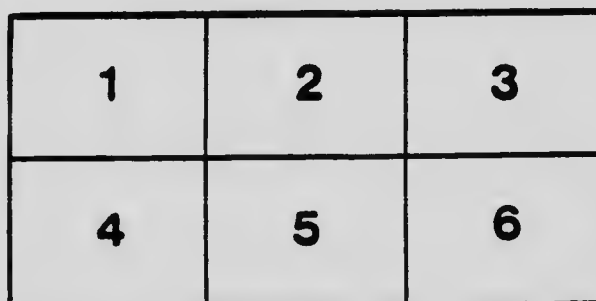
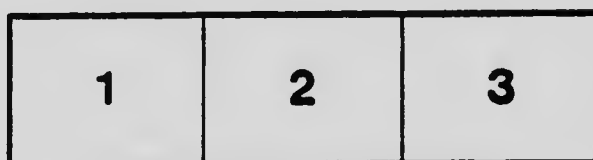
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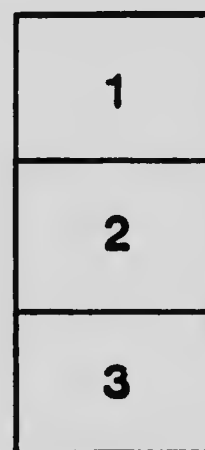
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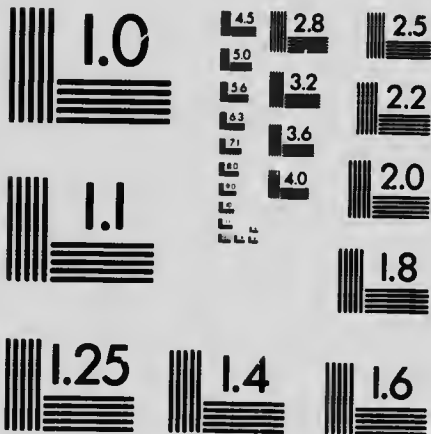
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READING FOR GRADES VII & VIII

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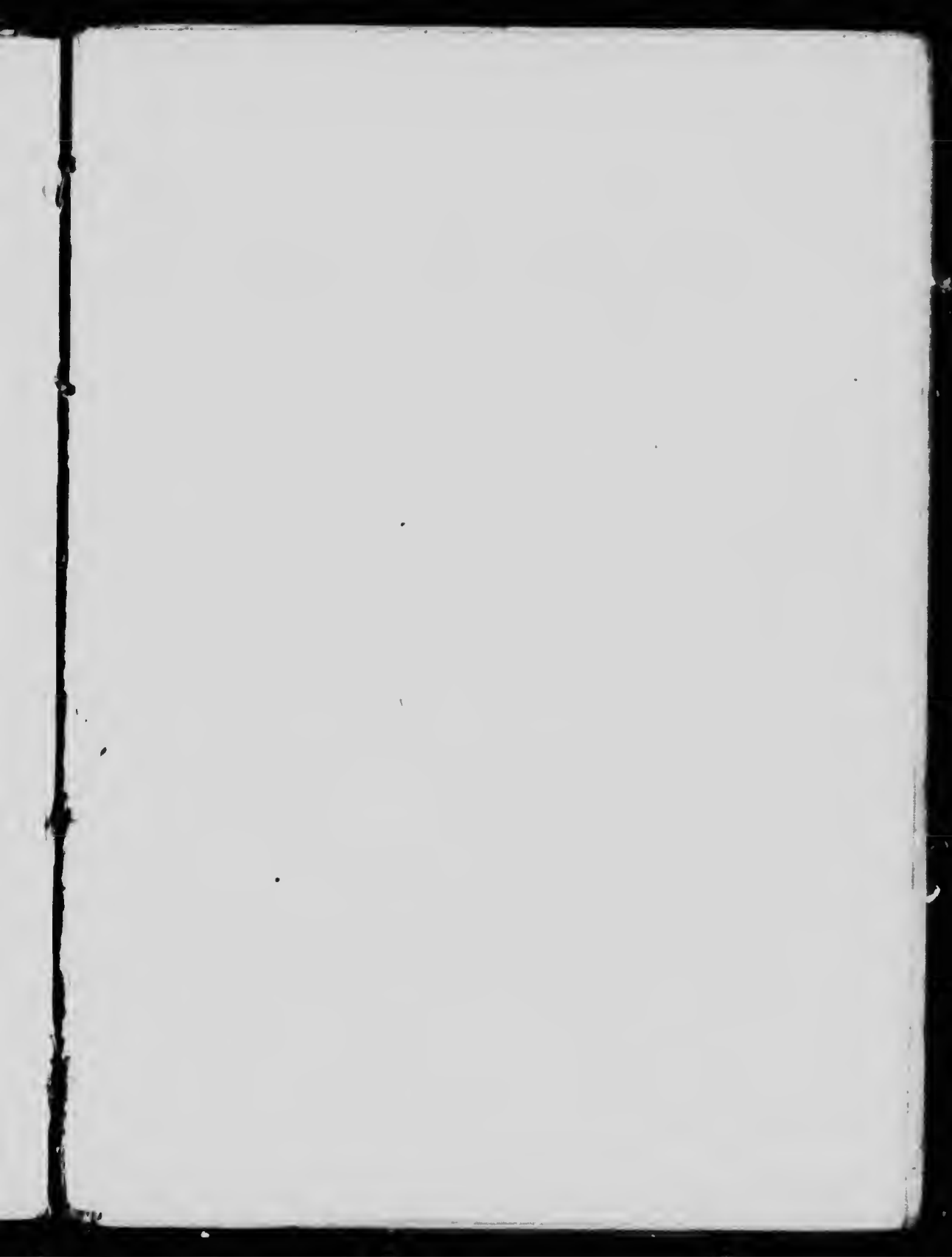
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READING

FOR GRADES VII AND VIII

HORATIUS

A FEW years after the expulsion of the Tarquins for their despotism and crimes, the neighbouring Etruscans, to which nation they belonged, endeavoured to restore the tyrants to power, and came against Rome with an overwhelming force. The Romans, repulsed at first, fled across a wooden bridge over the Tiber, when the Roman Consul ordered the bridge to be destroyed, to prevent the enemy from entering the city.

BUT the Consul's brow was sad,
And the Consul's speech was low,
And darkly looked he at the wall,
And darkly at the foe.
"Their van will be upon us
Before the bridge goes down;
And if they once may win the bridge,
What hope to save the town?"

Then out spake brave Horatius,
The captain of the gate:
"To every man upon this Earth
Death cometh, soon or late;
And how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers,
And the temples of his gods!

"Hew down the bridge, Sir Consul,
With all the speed ye may;
I, with two more to help me,
Will hold the foe in play.

In yon strait path a thousand
May well be stopped by three;
Now, who will stand on either hand,
And keep the bridge with me?"

Then out spake Spurius Lartius,—
A Ramnian proud was he:
"Lo, I will stand at thy right hand,
And keep the bridge with thee."
And out spake strong Herminius,—
Of Titian blood was he:
"I will abide on thy left side,
And keep the bridge with thee."

"Horatius," quoth the Consul,
"As thou say'st, so let it be."
And straight against that great array
Forth went the dauntless three.

Meanwhile the Tuscan army,
Right glorious to behold,
Came flashing back the noonday light,
Rank behind rank, like surges bright
Of a broad sea of gold.
Four hundred trumpets sounded
A peal of warlike glee,
As that great host, with measured tread,
And spears advanced, and ensigns spread,
Rolled slowly toward the bridge's head,
Where stood the dauntless three.

The three stood calm and silent,
And looked upon the foes,
And a great shout of laughter
From all the vanguard rose:
And forth three chiefs came spurring
Before that mighty mass;

To earth they sprang, their swords they drew
And lifted high their shields, and flew
To win the narrow pass.

But the scorn and laughter of the Etruscans were soon changed to wrath and curses, for their chiefs were quickly laid low in the dust at the feet of the "dauntless three."

But now no sound of laughter
Was heard among the foes.
A wild and wrathful clamour
From all the vanguard rose.
Six spears' length from the entrance
Halted that mighty mass,
And for a space no man came forth
To win the narrow pass.

But hark! the cry is "Astur!"
And lo! the ranks divide,
And the great lord of Luna
Comes with his stately stride.
Upon his ample shoulders
Clangs loud the fourfold shield,
And in his hand he shakes the brand
Which none but he can wield.

The proud Astur advances with a smile of contempt for the three Romans, and turns a look of scorn upon the flinching Tuscans.

Then, whirling up his broadsword
With both hands to the height,
He rushed against Horatius,
And smote with all his might.
With shield and blade Horatius
Right deftly turned the blow.
The blow, though turned, came yet too nigh;
It missed his helm, but gashed his thigh:
The Tuscans raised a joyful cry
To see the red blood flow.

HORATIUS

He reeled, and on Herminius
He leaned one breathing-space;
Then, like a wild-cat mad with wounds,
Sprang right at Astur's face.
Through teeth and skull and helmet
So fierce a thrust he sped,
The good sword stood a handbreadth out
Behind the Tuscan's head!

And the great lord of Luna
Fell at that deadly stroke,
As falls on Mount Alvernus
A thunder-smitten oak.
Far o'er the crashing forest
The giant arms lie spread;
And the pale augurs, muttering low,
Gazed on the blasted head.

In the meantime the axes had been busily plied; and while the bridge was tottering to its fall, Lartius and Herminius regained the opposite bank in safety. Horatius remained facing the foe until the last timber had fallen, when, weighed down with armour as he was, he "plunged headlong in the tide."

No sound of joy or sorrow
Was heard from either bank;
But friends and foes, in dumb surprise,
With parted lips and straining eyes,
Stood gazing where he sank:
And when beneath the surges
They saw his crest appear,
All Rome sent forth a rapturous cry
And even the ranks of Tuscany
Could scarce forbear to cheer.

But fiercely ran the current,
Swollen high by months of rain:
And fast his blood was flowing;
And he was sore in pain,

HORATIUS

5

And heavy with his armour,
And spent with changing blows :
And oft they thought him sinking,
But still again he rose.

2 J

"Curse on him!" quoth false Sextus,
"Will not the villain drown?
But for this stay, ere close of day
We should have sacked the town!"—
"Heaven help him!" quoth Lars Porsena,
"And bring him safe to shore;
For such a gallant feat of arms
Was never seen before."

5 J

2 in

1 P.

And now he feels the bottom;
Now on dry earth he stands;
Now round him throng the fathers,
To press his gory hands;
And now with shouts and clapping,
And noise of weeping loud,
He enters through the river-gate,
Borne by the joyous crowd.

Then follows an account of the rewards which a grateful people bestowed upon the hero. The minstrel thus concludes the legend:—

When the good-man mends his armour,
And trims his helmet's plume;
When the good-wife's shuttle merrily
Goes flashing through the loom;
With weeping and with laughter
Still is the story told,
How well Horatius kept the bridge
In the brave days of old.

MACAULAY.

EDINBURGH AFTER FLODDEN

News of battle ! news of battle !—

Hark ! 'tis ringing down the street :
And the archways and the pavement
Bear the clang of hurrying feet.
News of battle ! who hath brought it ?
News of triumph ! who should bring
Tidings from our noble army,
Greetings from our gallant King ?
All last night we watched the beacons
Blazing on the hills afar,
Each one bearing, as it kindled,
Message of the opened war.
All night long the northern streamers¹
Shot across the trembling sky :
Fearful lights, that never beacon
Save when kings or heroes die.

News of battle ! who hath brought it ?

All are thronging to the gate ;—
“Warder, warder ! open quickly !
Man—is this a time to wait ?”
And the heavy gates are opened :
Then a murmur long and loud,
And a cry of fear and wonder
Bursts from out the bending crowd.
For they see in battered harness
Only one hard-stricken man ;
And his weary steed is wounded,
And his cheek is pale and wan :

¹ *Northern streamers* : northern lights.

Spearless hangs a bloody banner
In his weak and drooping hand—
What! can that be Randolph Murray,
Captain of the city band?

Round him crush the people, crying,
“Tell us all—oh, tell us true!
Where are they who went to battle,
Randolph Murray, sworn to you?
Where are they, our brothers—children?
Have they met the English foe?
Why art thou alone unfollowed?—
Is it weal, or is it woe?”
Like a corpse the grisly warrior
Looks from out his helm of steel;
But no word he speaks in answer—
Only with his armed heel
Chides his weary steed, and onward
Up the city streets they ride;
Fathers, sisters, mothers, children,
Shrieking, praying by his side.
“By the God that made thee, Randolph!
Tell us what mischance has come.”
Then he lifts his riven banner,
And the asker’s voice is dumb.

The elders of the city
Have met within their hall—
The men whom good King James had charged
To watch the tower and wall.
“Your hands are weak with age,” he said,
“Your hearts are stout and true;
So bide ye in the Maiden Town,
While others fight for you.
And if, instead of Scottish shouts,
Ye hear the English drum, . . .
Then let the warning bells ring out
Then gird you to the fray,

EDINBURGH AFTER FLODDEN

Then man the walls like burghers stout,
And fight while fight you may.
'Twere better that in fiery flame
The roof should thunder down,
Than that the foot of foreign foe
Should trample in the town!"

Then in came Randolph Murray,—
His step was slow and weak;
And, as he doffed his dinted helm,
The tears ran down his cheek:
They fell upon his corselet,
And on his mailed hand,
As he gazed around him wistfully,
Leaning sorely on his brand.
And none who then beheld him
But straight were smote with fear,
For a bolder and a sterner man
Had never couched a spear.
They knew so sad a messenger
Some ghastly news must bring;
And all of them were fathers,
And their sons were with the King.

And up then rose the Provost¹—
A brave old man was he,
Of ancient name, and knightly fame,
And chivalrous degree. . . .
Oh, woeful now was the old man's look,
And he spake right heavily—
"Now, Randolph, tell thy tidings,
However sharp they be!
Woe is written on thy visage,
Death is looking from thy face:
Speak!—though it be of overthrow,
It cannot be disgrace!"

¹ *Provost*: mayor.

Right bitter was the agony
That wrung that soldier proud:
Thrice did he strive to answer,
And thrice he groaned aloud.
Then he gave the riven banner
To the old man's shaking hand,
Saying—"That is all I bring ye
From the bravest of the land!
Ay! ye may look upon it—
It was guarded well and long,
By your brothers and your children,
By the valiant and the strong.
One by one they fell around it,
As the archers laid them low,
Grimly dying, still unconquered,
With their faces to the foe.
Ay! well ye may look upon it—
There is more than honour there
Else, be sure, I had not brought it
From the field of dark despair.
Never yet was royal banner
Steeped in such a costly dye;—
It hath lain upon a bosom
Where no other shroud shall lie.
Sirs! I charge you, keep it holy,
Keep it as a sacred thing,
For the stain ye see upon it
Was—the life-blood of your King!'

Woe, woe and lamentation!
What a piteous cry was there!
Widows, maidens, mothers, children,
Shrieking, sobbing in despair! . . .
"O the blackest day for Scotland
That she ever knew before!
O our King! the good, the noble,
Shall we see him never more?

EDINBURGH AFTER FLODDEN

Woe to us, and woe to Scotland!—
O our sons, our sons and men!
Surely some have 'scaped the Southron,
Surely some will come again!"—
Till the oak that fell last winter
Shall uprear its shattered stem,
Wives and mothers of Dunedin,
Ye may look in vain for them!

Then the Provost he uprose,
And his lip was ashen white,
But a flush was on his brow,
And his eye was full of light.
"Thou hast spoken, Randolph Murray,
Like a soldier stout and true;
Thou hast done a deed of daring
Had been perilled but by few.
For thou hast not shamed to face us,
Nor to speak thy ghastly tale,
Standing—thou, a knight and captain—
Here, alive within thy mail!
Now, as my God shall judge me,
I hold it braver done,
Than hadst thou tarried in thy place,
And died above my son!
Thou needst not tell it: he is dead.
God help us all this day!
But speak—how fought the citizens
Within the furious fray?
For, by the might of Mary,
'Twere something still to tell
That no Scottish foot went backward
When the Royal Lion¹ fell!"

"No one failed him! He is keeping
Royal state and semblance still;

¹ *Royal Lion*: the Scottish flag.

Knight and noble lie around him,
Cold on Flodden's fatal hill.
Of the brave and gallant-hearted,
Whom ye sent with prayers away,
Not a single man departed
From his monarch yesterday.
Had you seen them, O my masters!
When the night began to fall,
And the English spearmen gathered
Round a grim and ghastly wall!
As the wolves in winter circle
Round the leaguer on the heath,
So the greedy foe glared upward,
Panting still for blood and death.
But a rampart rose before them,
Which the boldest dared not scale;
Every stone a Scottish body,
Every step a corpse in mail!
And behind it lay our monarch
Clenching still his shivered sword:
By his side Montrose and Athole,
At his feet a southern lord.
All so thick they lay together,
When the stars lit up the sky,
That I knew not who were stricken,
Or who yet remained to die.
Few there were when Surrey halted,
And his wearied host withdrew;
None but dying men around me,
When the English trumpet blew.
Then I stooped, and took the banner,
As ye see it, from his breast,
And I closed our hero's eyelids,
And I left him to his rest.
In the mountains growled the thunder,
As I leaped the woeful wall,
And the heavy clouds were settling
Over Flodden, like a pall."

EDINBURGH AFTER FLODDEN

All is terror and disorder,
Till the Provost rises up,
Calm, as though he had not tasted
Of the fell and bitter cup.
All so stately from his sorrow,
Rose the old undaunted Chief,
That you had not deemed, to see him,
His was more than common grief.
"Rouse ye, Sirs!" he said; "we may not
Longer mourn for what is done:
If our King be taken from us,
We are left to guard his son.
We have sworn to keep the city
From the foe, whate'er they be,
And the oath that we have taken
Never shall be broke by me.
Death is nearer to us, brethren,
Than it seemed to those who died,
Fighting yesterday at Flodden,
By their lord and master's side.
Let us meet it then in patience,
Not in terror or in fear;
Though our hearts are bleeding yonder,
Let our souls be steadfast here.
Up, and rouse ye! Time is fleeting,
And we yet have much to do;
Up! and haste ye through the city,
Stir the burghers stout and true!
Gather all our scattered people,
Fling the banner out once more,—
Randolph Murray! do thou bear it,
As it erst was borne before:
Never Scottish heart will leave it,
When they see their monarch's gore!"
AYTOUN.

IVANHOE

BY SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

PERSONS OF THE STORY

Richard I. Cœur-de-Lion (Lion-hearted) was King of England 1189-1199. He went to Palestine, and fought a Crusade against the Turks to recover the Holy Sepulchre, which was built over the supposed tomb of Jesus Christ.

John, Richard's brother, afterwards king.

Locksley, Robin Hood the outlaw.

Cedric, a Saxon thane or squire.

Wilfred, son of Cedric, Knight of *Ivanhoe*, who was with Richard on the Crusade. He appears as the *Falmer* or pilgrim, afterwards as the *Disinherited Knight*.

Rowena, ward of Cedric, whom Wilfred wished to marry. Her father wished her to marry Athelstane. Cedric banished and disinherited Wilfred.

Gurth, the swineherd; **Wamba**, the jester—servants of Cedric.

Brian de Bois-Guilbert, a Knight of the Temple. The Knights Templars took vows—not to marry, to have all things in common, and to obey their chief.

Maurice de Bracy, a soldier of fortune.

Eginald Front-de-Bœuf, owner of Torquilstone.

Isaac of York, a rich Jew.

Rebecca, his daughter.

I.—Cedric the Saxon

IN a hall, the height of which was greatly disproportioned to its extreme length and width, a long oaken table formed of planks rough-hewn from the forest, and which had scarcely received any polish, stood ready prepared for the evening meal of Cedric the Saxon. The roof, composed of beams and rafters, had nothing to divide the apartment from the sky excepting the planking and thatch; there was a huge fireplace at either end of the hall, but as the chimneys were constructed in a very clumsy manner, at least as much of the smoke found its way into the apartment as escaped by the proper vent.

For about one quarter of the length of the apartment, the floor was raised by a step, and this space,

which was called the days, was occupied only by the principal members of the family, and visitors of distinction. For this purpose, a table richly covered with scarlet cloth was placed transversely across the platform, from the middle of which ran the longer and lower board, at which the domestics and inferior persons stood, down towards the bottom of the hall. The whole resembled the form of the letter T.

Massive chairs and settles of carved oak were placed upon the days, and over these seats and the more elevated table was fastened a canopy of cloth, which served in some degree to protect the dignitaries who occupied that distinguished station from the weather.

In the centre of the upper table, were placed two chairs more elevated than the rest, for the master and mistress of the family. One of these seats was at present occupied by Cedric the Saxon, who, though but in rank a thane, felt, at the delay of his evening meal, an impatience which might have become an alderman. It appeared, from the countenance of this proprietor, that he was of a frank, but hasty and choleric temper. He was not above the middle stature, but broad-shouldered, long-armed, and powerfully made, like one accustomed to endure fatigue; his face was broad, with large blue eyes, open and frank features, fine teeth, and a well-formed head. His long yellow hair was equally divided on the top of his head and upon his brow, and combed down on each side to the length of his shoulders; it had but little tendency to grey, although Cedric was approaching to his sixtieth year.

His dress was a tunic of forest green, furred at the throat and cuffs. This doublet hung unbuttoned over a close dress of scarlet which sate tight to his body; he had breeches of the same, but they did not reach below the lower part of the thigh, leaving the knee exposed. His feet had sandals, secured in the front with golden clasps. He had bracelets of gold upon his

arms, and a broad collar of the same precious metal around his neck. About his waist he wore a richly studded belt, in which was stuck a short straight two-edged sword with a sharp point, so disposed as to hang almost perpendicularly by his side.

Cedric was in no very placid state of mind. The Lady Rowena, who had been absent to attend an evening mass at a distant church, had but just returned, and was changing her garments, which had been wetted by the storm. There were as yet no tidings of Gurth, the swineherd, and his charge, which should long since have been driven home from the forest. Besides these subjects of anxiety, the Saxon thane was impatient for the presence of his favourite clown Wamba. Add to all this, Cedric had fasted since noon, and his usual supper hour was long past. His displeasure was expressed in broken sentences, partly muttered to himself, partly addressed to the domestics who stood around; "Why tarries the Lady Rowena?"

"She is but changing her head-gear," replied a female attendant.

"What, in the name of ten devils, keeps Gurth so long afield? I suppose we shall have an evil account of the herd."

Oswald the cupbearer modestly suggested, "that it was scarce an hour since the tolling of the curfew."

"The foul fiend," exclaimed Cedric, "take the curfew-bell, and the tyrant by whom it was devised, and the heartless slave who names it with a Saxon tongue to a Saxon ear! The curfew! ay, the curfew; which compels true men to extinguish their lights, that thieves and robbers may work their deeds in darkness!"

From his musing, Cedric was suddenly awakened by the blast of a horn.

"To the gate, knaves!" said he. "See what tidings that horn tells us of."

A warder announced, "that the Prior Aymer of Jorvaulx, and the good knight Brian de Bois-Guilbert, commander of the valiant and venerable order of Knights Templars, with a small retinue, requested hospitality and lodging for the night, being on their way to a tournament¹ which was to be held not far from Ashby-de-la-Zouche, on the second day from the present."

"Aymer, the Prior Aymer? Brian de Bois-Guilbert?"—muttered Cedric; "Normans both;—but Norman or Saxon, the hospitality of Rotherwood must not be impeached; they are welcome, since they have chosen to halt—more welcome would they have been to have ridden further on their way. Go, Hundebert, take six of the attendants and introduce the strangers to the guests' lodging. Look after their horses and mules, and see their train lack nothing. Say to them, Hundebert, that Cedric would himself bid them welcome, but he is under a vow never to step more than three steps from the dais of his own hall to meet any who shares not the blood of Saxon royalty. Begone! see them carefully tended."

The major-domo² departed with several attendants, to execute his master's commands. "The Prior Aymer," repeated Cedric. "This Prior is, they say, a free and jovial priest, who loves the wine-cup and the bugle-horn better than bell and book. Good; let him come, he shall be welcome. How named ye the Templar?"

"Brian de Bois-Guilbert."

"Bois-Guilbert?" said Cedric—"Bois-Guilbert? that name has been spread wide both for good and evil. They say he is valiant as the bravest of his order; but stained with their usual vices, pride, arrogance, cruelty, and voluptuousness. Well; it is but for one night; he shall be welcome too. Elgitha, let the

¹ *Tournament*: a sham battle fought by mounted armed knights.

² *Major-domo*: steward.

Lady Rowena know we shall not this night expect her in the hall, unless such be her especial pleasure."

"But it will be her especial pleasure," answered Elgitha, "for she is ever desirous to hear the latest news from Palestine."

Cedric replied, "Silence, maiden; thy tongue outruns thy discretion. Say my message to thy mistress, and let her do her pleasure. Here, at least, the descendant of Alfred still reigns a princess."

II.—The Lady Rowena

CEDRIC rose to receive his guests, and, descending from the dais, made three steps towards them, and then awaited their approach.

Motioning with his hand, he caused his guests to assume two seats a little lower than his own, but placed close beside him, and gave a signal that the evening meal should be placed upon the board.

When the repast was about to commence, the major-domo, or steward, suddenly raising his wand, said aloud,—"Forbear!—Place for the Lady Rowena." Cedric, though surprised at his ward appearing in public on this occasion, hastened to meet her, and to conduct her, with respectful ceremony, to the elevated seat at his own right hand, appropriated to the lady of the mansion. All stood up to receive her; and, replying to their courtesy by a mute gesture of salutation, she moved gracefully forward to assume her place at the board.

Formed in the best proportions of her sex, Rowena was tall in stature. Her complexion was exquisitely fair, but the noble cast of her head and features prevented the insipidity which sometimes attaches to fair beauties. Her clear blue eye seemed capable to kindle as well as melt, to command as well as

to beseech. Her profuse hair, of a colour betwixt brown and flaxen, was arranged in a fanciful and graceful manner in numerous ringlets, to form which art had probably aided nature. These locks were braided with gems, and being worn at full length, intimated the noble birth and free-born condition of the maiden. Her dress was an undergown and kirtle of pale sea-green silk, over which hung a long loose robe of crimson. A veil of silk, interwoven with gold, was attached to the upper part of it.

When Rowena perceived the Knight Templar's eyes bent on her she drew with dignity the veil around her face. Cedric saw the motion and its cause. "Sir Templar," said he, "the cheeks of our Saxon maidens have seen too little of the sun to enable them to bear the fixed glance of a crusader."

"If I have offended," replied Sir Brian, "I crave your pardon—that is, I crave the Lady Rowena's pardon—for my humility will carry me no lower."

"The Lady Rowena," said the Prior, "has punished us all, in chastising the boldness of my friend. Let me hope she will be less cruel to the splendid train which are to meet at the tournament."

"Our going thither," said Cedric, "is uncertain. I love not these vanities, which were unknown to my fathers when England was free."

"Let us hope, nevertheless," said the Prior, "our company may determine you to travel thitherward; when the roads are so unsafe, the escort of Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert is not to be despised."

"Sir Prior," answered the Saxon, "wheresoever I have travelled in this land, I have hitherto found myself, with the assistance of my good sword and faithful followers, in no respect needful of other aid.—I drink to you, Sir Prior, in this cup of wine, which I trust your taste will approve, and I thank you for your courtesy."

"And I," said the Templar, filling his goblet, "drink

wassail¹ to the fair Rowena; for since her namesake introduced the word into England, has never been one more worthy of such a tribute."

"I will spare your courtesy, Sir Knight," said Rowena with dignity, and without unveiling herself; "or rather I will tax it so far as to require of you the latest news from Palestine."

"I have little of importance to say, lady," answered Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert, "excepting the confirmed tidings of a truce with Saladin."

Conversation was here interrupted by the entrance of the porter's page, who announced that there was a stranger at the gate, imploring admittance and hospitality.

"Admit him," said Cedric, "be he who or what he may; a night like that which roars without, compels even wild animals to herd with tame."

Oswald, returning, whispered into the ear of his master, "It is a Jew, who calls himself Isaac of York."

III.—Isaac the Jew

INTRODUCED with little ceremony, and advancing with fear and hesitation, and many a bow of deep humility, a tall thin old man approached the lower end of the board. His features, keen and regular, with an aquiline nose, and piercing black eyes; his high and wrinkled forehead, and long grey hair and beard, would have been considered as handsome, had they not been the marks of a physiognomy peculiar to a race which, during those dark ages, was detested by the vulgar and persecuted by the nobility. He wore a high square yellow cap of a peculiar fashion, which he doffed with great humility at the door of the hall.

Cedric coldly nodded in answer to the Jew's repeated salutations, and signed to him to take place at the

¹ *Wassail*: health.

lower end of the table, where, however, no one offered to make room for him. While Isaac thus stood an outcast in the present society, like his people among the nations, looking in vain for welcome or resting-place, the pilgrim who sat by the chimney took compassion upon him, and resigned his seat, saying briefly, "Old man, my garments are dried, my hunger is appeased, thou art both wet and fasting." So saying, he gathered together, and brought to a flame, the decaying brands which lay scattered on the ample hearth; took from the larger board a mess of pottage and seethed¹ kid, placed it upon the small table at which he had himself supped, and, without waiting the Jew's thanks, went to the other side of the hall.

The Jew bent his withered form, and expanded his chilled and trembling hands over the fire, and having dispelled the cold, he turned eagerly to the smoking mess which was placed before him, and ate with a haste and an apparent relish, that seemed to betoken long abstinence from food.

"Pledge me in a cup of wine, Sir Templar," said Cedric, "and fill another to the Abbot. Cupbearer! knave, fill the goblets—To the strong in arms, Sir Templar, be their race or language what it will, who now bear them best in Palestine among the champions of the Cross!"

"It becomes not one wearing this badge to answer," said Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert; "yet to whom, besides the sworn Champions of the Holy Sepulchre, can the palm be assigned among the champions of the Cross?"

"Were there, then, none in the English army," said the Lady Rowena, "whose names are worthy to be mentioned with the Knights of the Temple and of St. John?"

"Forgive me, lady," replied De Bois-Guilbert; "the English monarch did, indeed, bring to Palestine a

¹ *Seethed*: boiled.

host of gallant warriors, second only to those whose breasts have been the unceasing bulwark of that blessed land."

"Second to NONE," said the Pilgrim, who had stood near enough to hear, and had listened to this conversation with marked impatience. All turned towards the spot from whence this unexpected asseveration was heard. "I say," repeated the Pilgrim in a firm and strong voice, "that the English chivalry were second to NONE who ever drew sword in defence of the Holy Land. I say besides, for I saw it, that King Richard himself, and five of his knights, held a tournament after the taking of St. John-de-Acre, as challengers against all comers. I say that, on that day, each knight ran three courses, and cast to the ground three antagonists. I add, that seven of these assailants were Knights of the Temple—and Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert well knows the truth of what I tell you."

"I would give thee this golden bracelet, Pilgrim," said Cedric, "couldst thou tell me the names of those knights who upheld so gallantly the renown of merry England."

"That will I do blithely," replied the Pilgrim, "and without guerdon; my oath, for a time, prohibits me from touching gold. The first in honour as in arms, in renown as in place, was the brave Richard, King of England."

"I forgive him," said Cedric; "I forgive him his descent from the tyrant Duke William."

"The Earl of Leicester was the second," continued the Pilgrim; "Sir Thomas Multon of Gilsland was the third."

"Of Saxon descent, he at least," said Cedric, with exultation.

"Sir Foulk Doilly the fourth," proceeded the Pilgrim.

"Saxon also, at least by the mother's side," continued Cedric; "and who was the fifth?"

"The fifth was Sir Edwin Turneham."

"Genuine Saxon, by the soul of Hengist!" shouted Cedric—"And the sixth?" he continued with eagerness—"how name you the sixth?"

"The sixth," said the Palmer, after a pause, in which he seemed to recollect himself, "was a young knight of lesser renown and lower rank, assumed into that honourable company, less to aid their enterprise than to make up their number—his name dwells not in my memory."

"Sir Palmer," said Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert scornfully, "this assumed forgetfulness, after so much has been remembered, comes too late to serve your purpose. I will myself tell the name of the knight before whose lance fortune and my horse's fault occasioned my falling—it was the Knight of Ivanhoe; nor was there one of the six that, for his years, had more renown in arms.—Yet this will I say, and loudly—that were he in England, and durst repeat, in this week's tournament, the challenge of St. John-de-Acre, I, mounted and armed as I now am, would give him every advantage of weapons, and abide the result."

"Your challenge would be soon answered," replied the Palmer, "were your antagonist near you. If Ivanhoe ever returns from Palestine, I will be his surety that he meets you."

"A goodly security!" said the Knight Templar; "and what do you proffer as a pledge?"

"This reliquary," said the Palmer, taking a small ivory box from his bosom, and crossing himself, "containing a portion of the true cross, brought from the Monastery of Mount Carmel."

The Templar took from his neck a gold chain, which he flung on the board, saying—"Let Prior Aymer hold my pledge and that of this nameless vagrant, in token that when the Knight of Ivanhoe comes within the four seas of Britain, he underlies the challenge

of Brian de Bois-Guilbert, which, if he answer not, I will proclaim him as a coward on the walls of every Temple Court in Europe."

"It will not need," said the Lady Rowena, breaking silence; "my voice shall be heard, if no other in this hall is raised in behalf of the absent Ivanhoe. I affirm he will meet fairly every honourable challenge. Could my weak warrant add security to the inestimable pledge of this holy pilgrim, I would pledge name and fame that Ivanhoe gives this proud knight the meeting he desires."

The grace-cup was now served round, and the guests, after making deep obeisance to their landlord and to the Lady Rowena, arose and mingled in the hall, while the heads of the family, by separate doors, retired with their attendants.

"Unbelieving dog," said the Templar to Isaac the Jew, as he passed him in the throng, "dost thou bend thy course to the tournament?"

"I do so propose," replied Isaac, bowing in all humility, "if it please your reverend valour."

"Ay," said the Knight, "to gnaw the bowels of our nobles with usury, and to gull women and boys with gauds and toys—I warrant thee store of shekels in thy Jewish serip."

"Not a shekel, not a silver penny, not a halfling—so help me the God of Abraham!" said the Jew, elapsing his hands; "I go but to seek the assistance of some brethren of my tribe to aid me to pay the fine which the Exchequer of the Jews have imposed upon me—Father Jacob be my speed! I am an impoverished wretch."

The Templar smiled sourly as he replied, "Beshrew thee for a false-hearted liar!" and passing onward, as if disdaining further conference, he communed with his Moslem slaves in a language unknown to the bystanders.

IV.—The Palmer and the Jew

ANWOLD conducted the Palmer to an ignoble part of the building, where a number of small apartments, or rather cells, served for sleeping places to the lower order of domestics, and to strangers of mean degree.

"In which of these sleeps the Jew?" said the Pilgrim.

"The unbelieving dog," answered Anwold, "kennels in the cell next your holiness.—St. Dunstan, how it must be scraped and cleansed ere it be again fit for a Christian!"

"And where sleeps Gurth the swineherd?" said the stranger.

"Gurth," replied the bondsman, "sleeps in the cell on your right, as the Jew on that to your left."

The Palmer, having extinguished his torch, threw himself on the rude couch, and slept till the earliest sunbeams found their way through the little grated window. He then started up, and after repeating his matins, and adjusting his dress, he left the cell, and entered that of Isaac the Jew, lifting the latch gently.

The inmate was lying in troubled slumber upon a couch. His hands and arms moved convulsively, as if struggling with the nightmare; and the following ejaculations were distinctly heard: "For the sake of the God of Abraham, spare an unhappy old man! I am poor, I am penniless—should your irons wrench my limbs asunder, I could not gratify you!"

The Palmer awaited not the end of the Jew's vision, but stirred him with his pilgrim's staff. The old man started up, and fixed upon the Palmer his keen black eyes, expressive of wild surprise and apprehension.

"Fear nothing from me, Isaac," said the Palmer, "I come as your friend."

"The God of Israel requite you," said the Jew; "I dreamed—but Father Abraham be praised, it was but

a dream! And what may it be your pleasure to want at so early an hour with the poor Jew?"

"It is to tell you," said the Palmer, "that if you leave not this mansion instantly, and travel not with some haste, your journey may prove a dangerous one."

"Holy father!" said the Jew, "whom could it interest to endanger so poor a wretch as I am?"

"The purpose you can best guess," said the Pilgrim: "but rely on this, that when the Templar crossed the hall yesternight, he spoke to his Mussulman slaves in the Saracen language, which I well understand, and charged them this morning to watch the journey of the Jew, to seize upon him when at a convenient distance from the mansion, and to conduct him to the castle of Reginald Front-de-Bœuf."

It is impossible to describe the extremity of terror which seized upon the Jew at this information, and seemed at once to overpower his whole faculties.

"Holy God of Abraham! O holy Moses! O blessed Aaron! the dream is not dreamed for nought, and the vision cometh not in vain; I feel their irons already tear my sinews! I feel the rack pass over my body!"

"Stand up, Isaac, and hearken to me," said the Palmer; "you have cause for your terror; but stand up, I say, and I will point out to you the means of escape. Leave this mansion instantly. I will guide you by the secret paths of the forest, known as well to me as to any forester that ranges it, and I will not leave you till you are safe."

He led the way to the adjoining cell, which was occupied by Gurth the swineherd. "Arise, Gurth," said the Pilgrim, "arise quickly. Undo the postern gate, and let out the Jew and me."

"The Jew leaving Rotherwood," said Gurth. "Both Jew and Gentile must be content to abide the opening of the great gate—we suffer no visitors to depart by stealth at these unseasonable hours."

"Nevertheless," said the Pilgrim, in a commanding tone, "you will not, I think, refuse me that favour."

So saying, he stooped over the bed of the recumbent swineherd, and whispered something in his ear in Saxon. Gurth started up as if electrified. The Pilgrim added, "Gurth, beware—thou art wont to be prudent. I say, undo the postern—thou shalt know more anon."

With hasty alacrity Gurth obeyed him, while the Jew followed, wondering at the sudden change in the swineherd's demeanour.

"My mule, my mule!" said the Jew, as soon as they stood without the postern.

"Fetch him his mule," said the Pilgrim; "and, hearest thou,—let me have another, that I may bear him company till he is beyond these parts—I will return it safely to some of Cedric's train at Ashby. And do thou"—he whispered the rest in Gurth's ear.

"Willingly, most willingly shall it be done," said Gurth, and instantly departed to execute the commission.

He presently appeared on the opposite side of the moat with the mules. The travellers crossed the ditch upon a drawbridge, and no sooner had they reached the mules, than the Jew, with hasty and trembling hands, secured behind the saddle a small bag of blue buckram,¹ which he took from under his cloak, containing, as he muttered, "a change of raiment—only a change of raiment." Then getting upon the animal with alacrity, he lost no time in so disposing of the skirts of his gaberdine² as to conceal completely from observation the burden which he had thus deposited.

¹ Buckram : coarse, stiff cloth.

² Gaberdine : a coarse, loose garment.

V.—The Jew's Gratitude

WHEN the travellers had pushed on at a rapid rate through many devious paths, the Palmer at length broke silence.

"That large decaying oak," he said, "marks the boundaries over which Front-de-Bœuf claims authority. There is now no fear of pursuit. Our road should here separate; for it beseems not men of my character and thine to travel together longer than needs must be. Besides, what succour couldst thou have from me, a peaceful Pilgrim, against two armed heathens?"

"O good youth," answered the Jew, "thou canst defend me, and I know thou wouldst. Poor as I am, I will requite it—not with money, for money, so help me my father Abraham, I have none—but——"

"Money and recompense," said the Palmer, interrupting him, "I have already said I require nought of thee. Guide thee I can; and, it may be, even in some sort defend thee. Therefore, Jew, I will see thee safe under some fitting escort. We are now not far from the town of Sheffield, where thou mayest easily find many of thy tribe with whom to take refuge."

"The blessing of Jacob be upon thee, good youth!" said the Jew; "in Sheffield I can harbour with my kinsman Zareth, and find some means of travelling forth with safety."

"Be it so," said the Palmer; "at Sheffield then we part, and half-an-hour's riding will bring us in sight of that town."

The half-hour was spent in perfect silence on both parts. They paused on the top of a gently rising bank, and the Pilgrim, pointing to the town of Sheffield, which lay beneath them, repeated the words, "Here, then, we part."

"Not till you have had the poor Jew's thanks," said Isaac; "for I presume not to ask you to go with me to my kinsman Zareth's, who might aid me with some means of repaying your good offices."

"I have already said," answered the Pilgrim, "that I desire no recompense."

"Stay, stay," said the Jew, laying hold of his garment. "God knows the Jew is poor—yes, Isaac is the beggar of his tribe—but forgive me should I guess what thou most lack at this moment."

"If thou wert to guess truly," said the Palmer, "it is what thou canst not supply, wert thou as wealthy as thou sayest thou art poor."

"As I say?" echoed the Jew; "oh! believe it, I say but the truth; I am a plundered, indebted, distressed man. Yet I can tell thee what thou lackest, and, it may be, supply it too. Thy wish even now is for a horse and armour."

The Palmer started, and turned suddenly towards the Jew;—"What fiend prompted that guess?" said he hastily.

"No matter," said the Jew, smiling, "so that it be a true one—and, as I can guess thy want, so I can supply it."

And drawing forth his writing materials in haste, he began to write upon a piece of paper which he supported on the top of his yellow cap, without dismounting from his mule. When he had finished he delivered the scroll to the Pilgrim, saying, "In the town of Leicester all the rich Jew, Kirjath Jairam of Lombardy; giveth this scroll—he hath on sale six Milan harnesses, the worst would suit a crowned head—ten goodly steeds, the worst might mount a king. Of these he will give thee thy choice, with everything else that can furnish thee forth for the tournament: when it is over thou wilt return

¹ *Harnesses*: complete suits of armour for man and horse.

them safely—unless thou shouldst have wherewith to pay their value to the owner.”

“But, Isaac,” said the Pilgrim, smiling, “dost thou know that in these sports, the arms and steed of the knight who is unhorsed are forfeit to his victor? Now I may be unfortunate, and so lose what I cannot replace or repay.”

The Jew looked somewhat astounded at this possibility; but collecting his courage, he replied hastily, “No—no—no—it is impossible—I will not think so. The blessing of Our Father will be upon thee. Thy lance will be powerful as the rod of Moses.”

So saying, he was turning his mule's head away, when the Palmer, in his turn, took hold of his gaberdine. “Nay, but Isaac, thou knowest not all the risk. The steed may be slain, the armour injured—for I will spare neither horse nor man. Besides, those of thy tribe give nothing for nothing; something there must be paid for their use.”

The Jew twisted himself in the saddle, like a man in a fit of the colic; but his better feelings predominated over those which were most familiar to him. “I care not,” he said, “I care not—let me go. If there is damage, it will cost you nothing—if there is usage money, Kirjath Jairam will forgive it for the sake of his kinsman Isaac. Fare thee well!—Yet hark thee, good youth,” said he, turning about, “thrust thyself not too forward into this vain hurly-burly—I speak not for endangering the steed, and the coat of armour, but for the sake of thine own life and limbs.”

“Gramercy¹ for thy caution,” said the Palmer, again smiling: “I will use thy courtesy frankly, and it will go hard with me but I will requite it.”

They parted, and took different roads for the town of Sheffield.

¹ Gramercy: many thanks.

VI.—The Tournament

At length the barriers were opened, and five knights, chosen by lot, advanced slowly into the arena; a single champion riding in front, and the other four following in pairs. They advanced up the platform upon which the tents of the challengers stood, and there separating themselves, each touched slightly, and with the reverse of his lance, the shield of the antagonist to whom he wished to oppose himself.

Having intimated their more pacific purpose, the champions retreated to the extremity of the lists, where they remained drawn up in a line; while the challengers, sallying each from his pavilion, mounted their horses, and, led by Brian de Bois-Guilbert, descended from the form, and opposed themselves individually to the knights who had touched their respective shields.

At the flourish of clarions and trumpets, they started out against each other at full gallop; and such was the superior dexterity or good fortune of the challengers, that those opposed to Bois-Guilbert, Malvoisin, and Front-de-Bœuf, rolled on the ground. The fifth knight alone maintained the honour of his party, and parted fairly with Ralph de Vipont, the Knight of St. John, both splintering their lances without advantage on either side.

A second and a third party of knights took the field; and although they had various success, yet, upon the whole, the advantage decidedly remained with the challengers, not one of whom lost his seat or swerved from his charge—misfortunes which befell one or two of their antagonists in each encounter. The spirits, therefore, of those opposed to them, seemed to be considerably damped by their continued success. After this there was a considerable pause; nor did

it appear that any one was very desirous of renewing the contest.

At length, as the Saracenic music of the challengers concluded one of the long and high flourishes with which they had broken the silence of the lists, it was answered by a solitary trumpet, which breathed a note of defiance from the northern extremity and no sooner were the barriers opened than a new champion paced into the lists. The adventurer did not greatly exceed the middle size, and seemed to be rather slender than strongly made. His suit of armour was formed of steel, richly inlaid with gold, and the device on his shield was a young oak-tree pulled up by the roots, with the Spanish word *Desdichado*, signifying Disinherited.

He ascended the platform by the sloping alley which led to it from the lists, and, riding straight up to the central pavilion, struck with the sharp end of his spear the shield of Brian de Bois-Guilbert until it rang again. All stood astonished at his presumption, but none more than the redoubted Knight whom he had thus defied to mortal combat, and who, little expecting so rude a challenge, was standing carelessly at the door of the pavilion.

"Have you confessed yourself, brother," said the Templar, "and have you heard mass this morning, that you peril your life so frankly?"

"I am fitter to meet death than thou art," answered the Disinherited Knight.

"Then take your place in the lists," said Bois-Guilbert, "and look your last upon the sun; for this night thou shalt sleep in paradise."

"Gramercy for thy courtesy," replied the Disinherited Knight, "and to requite it, I advise thee to take a fresh horse and a new lance, for by my honour you will need both."

Having expressed himself thus confidently, he reined his horse backward down the slope which he had

ascended, and compelled him in the same manner to move backward through the lists, till he reached the northern extremity, where he remained stationary in expectation of his antagonist.

Brian de Bois-Guilbert did not neglect his adversary's advice; he changed his horse for a proved and fresh one of great strength and spirit. He chose a new and tough spear, lest the wood of the former might have been strained in the previous encounters he had sustained. Lastly, he laid aside his shield, which had received some little damage, and received another from his squires.

When the two champions stood opposed to each other at the two extremities of the lists, the public expectation was strained to the highest pitch. Few augured the possibility that the encounter could terminate well for the Disinherited Knight, yet his courage and gallantry secured the general good wishes of the spectators.

The trumpets had no sooner given the signal, than the champions vanished from their posts with the speed of lightning, and closed in the centre of the lists with the shock of a thunderbolt. The lances burst into shivers up to the very grasp, and it seemed at the moment that both knights had fallen, for the shock had made each horse recoil backwards upon its haunches. The address of the riders recovered their steeds by use of the bridle and spur; and having glared on each other for an instant with eyes which seemed to flash fire through the bars of their visors, each made a demivolte,¹ and, retiring to the extremity of the lists, received a fresh lance from the attendants.

A loud shout from the spectators, waving of scarfs and handkerchiefs, and general acclamations, attested the interest taken by the spectators in this encounter; the most equal, as well as the best performed, which

¹ Demivolte : half-wheel.

had graced the day. But no sooner had the knights resumed their station than the clamour of applause was hushed into a silence, so deep and so dead, that it seemed the multitude were afraid even to breathe.

A few minutes' pause having been allowed, that the combatants and their horses might recover breath, Prince John with his truncheon¹ signed to the trumpets to sound the onset. The champions a second time sprung from their stations, and closed in the centre of the lists, with the same speed, the same dexterity, the same violence, but not the same equal fortune as before.

In this second encounter, the Templar aimed at the centre of his antagonist's shield, and struck it so fair and forcibly, that his spear went to shivers, and the Disinherited Knight reeled in his saddle. On the other hand, that champion had, in the beginning of his career, directed the point of his lance towards Bois-Guilbert's shield, but, changing his aim almost in the moment of encounter, he addressed it to the helmet, a mark more difficult to hit, but which, if attained, rendered the attack more irresistible. Fair and true he hit the mark on the visor, where his lance's point kept bound of the bars. Yet, even at this disadvantage, the Templar sustained his high reputation; and had not the girths of his saddle burst, he might not have been unhorsed. As it chanced, however, saddle, horse, and man rolled on the ground under a cloud of dust.

To extricate himself from the stirrups and fallen steed, was to the Templar scarce the work of a moment; and, stung with madness, he drew his sword and waved it in defiance of his conqueror. The Disinherited Knight sprung from his steed, and also unsheathed his sword. The marshals of the field, however, spurred their horses between them, and reminded them that the laws of the tournament

¹ Truncheon : staff of authority.

did not, on the present occasion, permit this species of encounter.

"We shall meet again, I trust," said the Templar, casting a resentful glance at his antagonist; "and where there are none to separate us."

"If we do not," said the Disinherited Knight, "the fault shall not be mine. On foot or horseback, with spear, with axe, or with sword, I am alike ready to encounter thee."

More and angrier words would have been exchanged, but the marshals, crossing their lances betwixt them, compelled them to separate. The Disinherited Knight returned to his first station, and Bois-Guillart to his tent, where he remained for the rest of the day in an agony of despair.

VII.—The Queen of Honour

WITHOUT alighting from his horse, the conqueror called for a bowl of wine, and opening the beaver, or lower part of his helmet, announced that he quaffed it, "To all true English hearts, and to the confusion of foreign tyrants." He then commanded his trumpet to sound a defiance to the challengers, and desired a herald to announce to them, that he was willing to encounter them in the order in which they pleased to advance against him.

The gigantic Front-de-Bœuf, armed in sable armour, was the first who took the field. Over this champion the Disinherited knight obtained a slight but decisive advantage. Both knights broke their lances fairly, but Front-de-Bœuf, who lost a stirrup in the encounter, was adjudged to have the disadvantage.

In the stranger's third encounter, with Sir Philip Malvoisin, he was equally successful; striking that baron so forcibly on the casque,¹ that the laces of

¹ *Casque*. helmet.

the helmet broke, and Malvoisin, only saved from falling by being unhelmeted, was declared vanquished like his companions.

In his fourth combat, with De Grantmesnil, the Disinherited Knight showed as much courtesy as he had hitherto evinced courage and dexterity. De Grantmesnil's horse, which was young and violent, reared and plunged in the course of the career so as to disturb the rider's aim, and the stranger, declining to take the advantage which this accident afforded him, raised his lance, and passing his antagonist without touching him, wheeled his horse and rode back again to his own end of the lists, offering his antagonist, by a herald, the chance of a second encounter. This De Grantmesnil declined, avowing himself vanquished as much by the courtesy as by the address of his opponent.

Ralph de Vipont summed up the list of the stranger's triumphs, being hurled to the ground with such force that the blood gushed from his nose and his mouth, and he was borne senseless from the lists.

The marshals of the field were the first to offer their congratulations to the victor, praying him that he would raise his visor ere they conducted him to receive the prize of the day's tourney from the hands of Prince John. The Disinherited Knight, with all knightly courtesy, declined their request, alleging that he could not at this time suffer his face to be seen, for reasons which he had assigned to the heralds when he entered the lists. The marshals were perfectly satisfied by this reply; they therefore pressed no further into the mystery of the Disinherited Knight, but, announcing to Prince John the conqueror's desire to remain unknown, they requested permission to bring him before his Grace, in order that he might receive the reward of his valour.

The marshals brought forward the Disinherited

Knight to the foot of a wooden flight of steps, which formed the ascent from the lists to Prince John's throne. With a short eulogy upon his valour, he caused to be delivered to him the war-horse assigned as the prize. The Disinherited Knight spoke not a word in reply to the compliment of the Prince, which he only acknowledged with a profound obeisance.

The horse was led into the lists by two grooms richly dressed, the animal itself being fully accoutred with the richest war-furniture. Laying one hand upon the pommel of the saddle, the Disinherited Knight vaulted at once upon the back of the steed without making use of the stirrup, and, brandishing aloft his lance, rode twice around the lists, exhibiting the points and paces of the horse with the skill of a perfect horseman.

The Prince made a sign with his truncheon, as the Knight passed him in his second career around the lists. The Knight turned towards the throne, and, sinking his lance, until the point was within a foot of the ground, remained motionless, as if expecting John's commands; while all admired the sudden dexterity with which he instantly reduced his fiery steed from a state of violent emotion and high excitation to stillness.

"Sir Disinherited Knight," said Prince John, "it is now your duty, as well as privilege, to name the fair lady, who, as Queen of Honour and of Love, is to preside over next day's festival. It is your prerogative to confer on whom you please this crown, by the delivery of which to the lady of your choice, the election of to-morrow's Queen will be formal and complete.—Raise your lance."

The Knight obeyed: and Prince John placed upon its point a coronet of green satin, having around its edge a circlet of gold, the upper edge of which was relieved by arrow-points and hearts placed interchangeably.

The Disinherited Knight, pacing forwards as slowly as he had hitherto rode swiftly around the lists, at length paused beneath the balcony in which the Lady Rowena was placed.

Cedric the Saxon, overjoyed at the discomfiture of the Templar, and of his malevolent neighbour, Front-de-Bœuf, had, with his body half stretched over the balcony, accompanied the victor in each course, not with his eyes only, but with his whole heart and soul. The Lady Rowena had watched the progress of the day with equal attention, though without openly betraying the same intense interest.

Another group, stationed under the gallery occupied by the Saxons, had shown no less interest in the fate of the day.

"Father Abraham!" said Isaac of York, when the first course was run, "how fiercely that Gentile rides! Ah, the good horse that was brought all the long way from Barbary,¹ he takes no more care of him than if he were a wild ass's colt."

"If he risks his own person and limbs, father," said Rebecca, "in doing such a dreadful battle, he can scarce be expected to spare his horse and armour."

"Child!" replied Isaac, somewhat heated, "thou knowest not what thou speakest—His neck and limbs are his own, but his horse and armour belong to—Holy Jacob! what was I about to say!—Nevertheless, it is a good youth—See, Rebecca! see, he is again about to go up to battle against the Philistine—Pray, child—pray for the safety of the good youth,—and of the speedy horse, and the rich armour.—God of my fathers!" he again exclaimed, "he hath conquered, and the Philistine hath fallen before his lance,—even as Og the King of Bashan, and Sihon, King of the Amorites, fell before the sword of our fathers!—

¹ *Barbary*: in the north of Africa, famed for its splendid Arabian horses.

Surely he shall take their gold and their silver, and their war-horses, and their armour of brass and of steel, for a prey and for a spoil.

The same anxiety did the worthy Jew display during every course that was run.

The champion of the day remained stationary for more than a minute; and then, gradually and gracefully sinking the point of his lance, he deposited the coronet which it supported at the feet of the fair Rowena. The trumpets instantly sounded, while the heralds proclaimed the Lady Rowena the Queen of Beauty and of Love for the ensuing day, menacing with suitable penalties those who should be disobedient to her authority.

VIII.—The Gratitude of Rebecca

WE must now change the scene to the village of Ashby, or rather to a country house in its vicinity belonging to a wealthy Israelite, with whom Isaac, his daughter, and retinue, had taken up their quarters.

In an apartment, small indeed but richly furnished with decorations of an Oriental taste, Rebecca was seated on a heap of embroidered cushions, which, piled along a low platform that surrounded the chamber, served instead of chairs and stools.

The evening was now becoming dark, when a Jewish servant entered the apartment, and placed upon the table two silver lamps, fed with perfumed oil. At the same time the servant informed Isaac that a Nazarene (so they termed Christians, while conversing among themselves) desired to speak with him. Isaac, saying hastily to his daughter, "Rebecca, veil thyself," commanded the stranger to be admitted.

"Art thou Isaac the Jew of York?" said Gurth, in Saxon,

"I am," replied Isaac, in the same language—"and who art thou?"

"That is not to the purpose," answered Gurth.

"As much as my name is to thee," replied Isaac; "for without knowing thine, how can I hold intercourse with thee?"

"Easily," answered Gurth; "I, being to pay money, must know that I deliver it to the right person; thou, who art to receive it, will not, I think, care very greatly by whose hands it is delivered."

"Oh," said the Jew, "you are come to pay moneys? That altereth our relation to each other. And from whom dost thou bring it?"

"From the Disinherited Knight," said Gurth, "victor in this day's tournament. It is the price of the armour supplied to him by Kirjath Jairam of Leicester, on thy recommendation. The steed is restored to thy stable. I desire to know the amount of the sum which I am to pay for the armour."

"I said he was a good youth!" exclaimed Isaac, with joyful exultation. "A cup of wine will do thee no harm," he added, filling and handing to the swineherd a richer draught than Gurth had ever before tasted. "And how much money," continued Isaac, "hast thou brought with thee?"

"What money have I brought with me?" said the Saxon; "even but a small sum; something in hand the whilst. What, Isaac! thou must bear a conscience, though it be a Jewish one."

"Nay, but," said Isaac, "thy master has won goodly steeds and rich armours with the strength of his lance, and of his right hand—but 'tis a good youth—the Jew will take these in present payment, and render him back the surplus."

"My master has disposed of them already," said Gurth.

"Ah! that was wrong," said the Jew, "that was the part of a fool. No Christians here could buy

so many horses and armour; no Jew except myself would give him half the values. But thou hast a hundred zecchins with thee in that bag," said Isaac, prying under Gurth's cloak, "it is a heavy one."

"I have heads for cross-bolts in it," said Gurth readily.

"Well, then," said Isaac, "if I should say that I would take eighty zecchins for the good steed and the rich armour, which leaves me not a guilders profit, have you money to pay me?"

"Barely," said Gurth, though the sum demanded was more reasonable than he expected, "and it will leave my master nigh penniless. Nevertheless, if such be your least offer, I must be content."

"Fill thyself another goblet of wine," said the Jew. "Ah! eighty zecchins is too little. It leaveth no profit for the usages of the money; and, besides, the good horse may have suffered wrong in this day's encounter."

"And I say," replied Gurth, "he is sound, wind and limb; and you may see him now in your stable. And I say, over and above, that seventy zecchins is enough for the armour, and I hope a Christian's word is as good as a Jew's. If you will not take seventy, I will carry this bag"—and he shook it till the contents jingled—"back to my master."

"Nay, nay!" said Isaac; "lay down the talents—the shekels—the eighty zecchins, and thou shalt see I will consider thee liberally."

Gurth at length complied; and telling out eighty zecchins upon the table, the Jew delivered out to him an acquittance for the horse and suit of armour. The Jew's hand trembled for joy as he wrapped up the first seventy pieces of gold. The last ten he told over with much deliberation, pausing, and saying something as he took each piece from the table, and dropped it into his purse. His whole speech ran nearly thus—

"Seventy-one—seventy-two; thy master is a good youth—seventy-three, an excellent youth—seventy-four—that piece hath been clipt within the ring—seventy-five—and that looketh light of weight—seventy-six—when thy master wants money, let him come to Isaac of York—seventy-seven—that is, with reasonable security." He made a considerable pause, and Gurth had good hope that the last three pieces might escape the fate of their comrades; but the enumeration proceeded.—"Seventy-eight—thou art a good fellow—seventy-nine—and deservest something for thyself——"

Here the Jew paused again, and looked at the last zecchin, intending, doubtless, to bestow it upon Gurth. He weighed it upon the tip of his finger, and made it ring by dropping it upon the table. Had it rung too flat, or had it felt a hair's-breadth too light, generosity had carried the day; but, unhappily for Gurth, the chime was full and true, the zecchin plump, newly coined, and a grain above weight. Isaac could not find in his heart to part with it, so he dropt it into his purse as if in absence of mind, with the words—

"Eighty completes the tale, and I trust thy master will reward thee handsomely. Surely," he added, looking earnestly at the bag, "thou hast more coins in that pouch?"

Gurth grinned, which was his nearest approach to a laugh, as he replied—

"About the same quantity which thou hast just told over so carefully." He then folded the quit-tance, and put it under his cap, adding, "Peril of thy beard, Jew, see that this be full and ample!" He filled himself, unbidden, a third goblet of wine, and left the apartment without ceremony.

Gurth had descended the stair, and having reached the dark ante-chamber or hall, was puzzling about to discover the entrance, when a figure in white, shown by a small silver lamp which she held in her hand,

beckoned him into a side apartment. Gurth had some reluctance to obey the summons. Nevertheless, after a moment's pause, he followed her into the apartment which she indicated, where he found, to his joyful surprise, that his fair guide was the beautiful Jewess whom he had seen at the tournament, and a short time in her father's apartment.

She asked him the particulars of his transaction with Isaac, which he detailed accurately.

"My father did but jest with thee, good fellow," said Rebecca; "he owes thy master deeper kindness than these arms and steed could pay, were their value tenfold. What sum didst thou pay my father even now?"

"Eighty zecchins," said Gurth, surprised at the question.

"In this purse," said Rebecca, "thou wilt find a hundred. Restore to thy master that which is his due, and enrich thyself with the remainder. Haste—begone—stay not to render thanks! and beware how you pass through this crowded town, where thou may'st easily lose both thy burden and thy life. Reuben," she added, clapping her hands together, "light forth this stranger, and fail not to draw lock and bar behind him."

"By St. Dunstan," said Gurth, as he stumbled up the dark avenue, "this is no Jewess, but an angel from heaven! Ten zecchins from my brave young master—twenty from this pearl of Zion. Oh, happy day! Such another, Gurth, will redeem thy bondage, and make thee a brother as free of thy guild as the best. And then do I lay down my swineherd's horn and staff, and take the freeman's sword and buckler, and follow my young master to the death, without hiding either my face or my name."

IX.—Gurth Captured by Outlaws.

THE nocturnal adventures of Gurth were not yet concluded; indeed he himself became partly of that mind, when, after passing one or two straggling houses which stood on the outskirts of the village, he found himself in a deep lane, running between two banks overgrown with hazel and holly. Just as he had attained the upper end of the lane, where the underwood was thickest, four men sprung upon him, two from each side of the road, and seized him so fast, that resistance would have been now too late.

"Surrender your charge," said one of them; "we are the deliverers of the commonwealth, who ease every man of his burden."

"You should not ease me of mine so lightly," muttered Gurth, "had I it but in my power to give three strokes in its defence."

"We shall see that presently," said the robber; and, speaking to his companions, he added, "Bring along the knave. I see he would have his head broken, as well as his purse cut, and so be let blood in two veins at once."

Gurth was hurried along agreeably to this mandate, and having been dragged somewhat roughly over the bank, found himself in a straggling thicket. He was compelled to follow his rough conductors into the very depth of this cover, where they stopped unexpectedly in an irregular open space. Here his captors were joined by two other persons, apparently belonging to the gang. They had short swords by their sides, and quarter-staves in their hands, and all six wore visors, which rendered their occupation a matter of no question.

"What money hast thou, churl?" said one of the thieves.

"Thirty zecchins of my own property," answered Gurth doggedly.

"A forfeit—a forfeit," shouted the robbers; "a Saxon hath thirty zecchins, and returns sober from a village!"

"I hoarded it to purchase my freedom," said Gurth.

"Thou art an ass," replied one of the thieves; "three quarts of double ale had rendered thee as free as thy master, ay, and freer too, if he be a Saxon, like thyself."

"A sad truth," replied Gurth; "but if these same thirty zecchins will buy my freedom from you, unloose my hands and I will pay them to you."

"Hold," said one who seemed to exercise some authority over the others; "this bag which thou bearest, as I can feel through thy cloak, contains more coin than thou hast told us of."

"It is the good knight my master's," answered Gurth, "of which, assuredly, I would not have spoken a word, had you been satisfied with working your will upon mine own property."

"Thou art an honest fellow," replied the robber, "I warrant thee. Meantime render up thy trust for the time." So saying, he took from Gurth's breast the large leathern pouch, in which the purse given him by Rebecca was enclosed, as well as the rest of the zecchins, and then continued his interrogation. "Who is thy master?"

"The Disinherited Knight," said Gurth.

"Whose good lance," replied the robber, "won the prize in to-day's tourney! What is his name and lineage?"

"It is his pleasure," answered Gurth, "that they be concealed; and from me, assuredly, you will learn nought of them."

"What is thine own name and lineage?"

"To tell that," said Gurth, "might reveal my master's."

"Thou art a saucy groom," said the robber. "How comes thy master by this gold?"

"By his good lance," answered Gurth. "These bags contain the ransom of four good horses, and four good suits of armour."

"How much is there?" demanded the robber.

"Two hundred zecchins."

"Only two hundred zecchins!" said the bandit; "your master has dealt liberally by the vanquished, and put them to a cheap ransom. Name those who paid the gold."

Gurth did so.

"The armour and horse of the Templar Brian de Bois-Guilbert—at what ransom were they held? Thou seest thou canst not deceive me."

"My master," replied Gurth, "will take nought from the Templar save his life's blood. They are on terms of mortal defiance, and cannot hold courteous intercourse together."

"Indeed!" repeated the robber, and paused after he had said the word. "And what wert thou now doing at Ashby with such a charge in thy custody?"

"I went thither to render to Isaac the Jew of York," replied Gurth, "the price of a suit of armour with which he fitted my master for this tournament."

"And how much didst thou pay to Isaac? Methinks, to judge by weight, there is still two hundred zecchins in that pouch."

"I paid to Isaac," said the Saxon, "eighty zecchins, and he restored me a hundred in lieu thereof."

"How! what!" exclaimed all the robbers at once; "darest thou trifle with us, that thou tellest such improbable lies?"

"What I tell you," said Gurth, "is as true as the moon is in heaven. You will find the just sum in a silken purse within the leathern pouch, and separate from the rest of the gold."

"Bethink thee, man," said the Captain; "thou

speakest of a Jew—of an Israelite, as unapt to restore gold as the dry sand of his deserts to return the cup of water which the pilgrim spills upon them.”

“There is no more mercy in them,” said another of the banditti, “than in an unbribed sheriff’s officer.”

“It is, however, as I say,” said Gurth.

“Strike a light instantly,” said the Captain; “I will examine this said purse; and if it be as the fellow says, the Jew’s bounty is little less miraculous than the stream which relieved his fathers in the wilderness.”

A light was procured accordingly, and the robber proceeded to examine the purse. The others crowded around him, and even two who had hold of Gurth relaxed their grasp while they stretched their necks to see the issue of the search. Availing himself of their negligence, by a sudden exertion of strength and activity, Gurth shook himself free of their hold, and might have escaped could he have resolved to leave his master’s property behind him. He wrenched a quarter-staff from one of the fellows, struck down the Captain, and had well-nigh repossessed himself of the pouch and treasure. The thieves, however, were too nimble for him, and again secured both the bag and the trusty Gurth.

“Knave,” said the Captain, getting up, “thou hast broken my head; and with other men of our sort thou wouldst fare the worse for thy insolence. But thou shalt know thy fate instantly. First let us speak of thy master; the knight’s matter must go before the squire’s, according to the due order of chivalry. Stand thou fast in meantime; if thou stir again, thou shalt have that will make thee quiet for thy life. Comrades!” he then said, addressing his gang, “this purse is embroidered with Hebrew characters, and I well believe the yeoman’s tale is true. The errant knight, his master, must pass us toll-free. He is too like ourselves for us to make booty of him, since dogs

should not worry dogs where wolves and foxes are to be found in abundance."

"Like us?" answered one of the gang; "I should like to hear how that is made good."

"Why, thou fool," answered the Captain, "is he not poor and disinherited as we are? Doth he not win his substance at the sword's point as we do? Hath he not beaten Front-de-Bœuf and Malvoisin, even as we would beat them if we could? Is he not the enemy to life and death of Brian de Bois-Guilbert, whom we have so much reason to fear? And were all this otherwise, wouldst thou have us show a worse conscience than an unbeliever, a Hebrew Jew?"

"Nay, that were a shame," muttered the other fellow; "and yet when I served in the band of scout old Gandelyn, we had no such scruples of conscience. And this insolent peasant—he too, I warrant me, is to be dismissed scatheless?"

"Not if *thou* canst scathe him," replied the Captain. "Here, fellow," continued he, addressing Gurth, "canst thou use the staff that thou starts to it so readily?"

"I think," said Gurth, "thou shouldst be best able to reply to that question."

"Nay, by my troth, thou gavest me a round knock," replied the Captain; "do as much for this fellow, and thou shalt pass scot-free; and if thou dost not—why, by my faith, as thou art such a sturdy knave, I think I must pay thy ransom myself. Take thy staff, Miller," he added, "and keep thy head; and do you others let the fellow go, and give him a staff—there is light enough to lay on load by."

The two champions being alike armed with quarter-staves, stepped forward into the centre of the open space, in order to have the full benefit of the moonlight; the thieves in the meantime laughing, and crying to their comrade, "Miller! beware thy toll-dish."

The Miller, on the other hand, holding his quarter-staff by the middle, and making it flourish round his head, exclaimed boastfully—

“Come on, churl, an thou darest: thou shalt feel the strength of a miller’s thumb!”

“If thou be’st a miller,” answered Gurth, “thou art doubly a thief, and I, as a true man, bid thee defiance.”

So saying, the two champions closed together, and for a few minutes they displayed great equality in strength, courage, and skill, intercepting and returning the blows of their adversary with the most rapid dexterity.

Long they fought equally, until the Miller began to lose temper at finding himself so stoutly opposed, and at hearing the laughter of his companions, who, as usual in such cases, enjoyed his vexation. This was not a state of mind favourable to the noble game of quarter-staff, in which the utmost coolness is requisite; and it gave Gurth, whose temper was steady, the opportunity of acquiring a decided advantage in availing himself of which he displayed great mastery.

Thus did he maintain the defensive, until, observing his antagonist to lose wind, he darted the staff at his face with his left hand, and with the full swing of the weapon struck his opponent on the left side of the head, who instantly measured his length upon the greensward.

“Well and yeomanly done!” shouted the robbers; “fair play and Old England for ever! The Saxon hath saved both his purse and his hide, and the Miller has met his match.”

“Thou mayst go thy ways, my friend,” said the Captain, addressing Gurth, “and I will cause two of my comrades to guide thee by the best way to thy master’s pavilion, and to guard thee from night-walkers that might have less tender consciences than ours. Take heed, however,” he added sternly; “re-

member thou hast refused to tell thy name; ask not after ours, nor endeavour to discover who or what we are."

The thieves guided him straight forward to the top of a little eminence, whence he could see, spread beneath him in the moonlight, the palisades of the lists, and the glimmering pavilions pitched at either end, with the pennons which adorned them fluttering in the moonbeams.

Here the thieves stopt. "We go with you no farther," said they; "it were not safe that we should do so. Remember the warning you have received: keep secret what has this night befallen you, and you will have no room to repent it."

"Good night to you, kind sirs," said Gurth; "I shall remember your orders, and trust that there is no offence in wishing you a safer and an honester trade."

X.—The Second Day

ABOUT the hour of ten o'clock, the whole plain was crowded with horsemen, horsewomen, and foot-passengers, hastening to the tournament; and shortly after, a grand flourish of trumpets announced Prince John and his retinue, attended by many of those knights who meant to take share in the game, as well as others who had no such intention.

About the same time arrived Cedric the Saxon, with the Lady Rowena, unattended, however, by Athelstane. This Saxon lord had arrayed his tall and strong person in armour, in order to take his place among the combatants; and, considerably to the surprise of Cedric, had chosen to enlist himself on the part of the Knight Templar.

According to due formality, the heralds proclaimed silence until the laws of the tourney should be rehearsed. These were calculated in some degree to

abated the dangers of the day; a precaution the more necessary as the conflict was to be maintained with sharp swords and pointed lances.

The proclamation having been made, the heralds withdrew to their stations. The knights, entering at either end of the lists in long procession, arranged themselves in a double file, precisely opposite to each other, the leader of each party being in the centre of the foremost rank, a post which he did not occupy until each had carefully arranged the ranks of his party, and stationed every one in his place.

As yet the knights held their long lances upright, their bright points glancing to the sun, and the streamers with which they were decorated fluttering over the plume of the helmets. Thus they remained while the marshals of the field surveyed their ranks with the utmost exactness, lest either party had more or fewer than the appointed number. The tale was found exactly complete. The marshals then withdrew from the lists, and William de Wyvil, with a voice of thunder, pronounced the signal words—*Laissez aller!*¹ The trumpets sounded as he spoke; the spears of the champions were at once lowered and placed in their rests; the spurs were dashed into the flanks of the horses; and the foremost rank of either party rushed upon each other in full gallop, and met in the middle of the lists with a shock the sound of which was heard at a mile's distance.

The tumult was presently increased by the advance of the second rank on either side, which, acting as a reserve, now rushed on to aid their companions. The followers of Brian de Bois-Guilbert shouted—“*Ha! Beau-seant! Beau-seant!*—For the Temple! For the Temple!” The opposite party shouted in answer—“*Desdichado! Desdichado!*” which watchword they took from the motto upon their leader's shield.

The champions thus encountering each other with

¹ *Laissez aller*: let them go.

the utmost fury, and with alternate success, the tide of battle seemed to flow now toward the southern, now toward the northern extremity of the lists, as the one or the other party prevailed. Meantime the clang of the blows and the shouts of the combatants mixed fearfully with the sound of the trumpets, and drowned the groans of those who fell, and lay rolling defenceless beneath the feet of the horses. The splendid armour of the combatants was now defaced with dust and blood, and gave way at every stroke of the sword and battle-axe. The gay plumage, shorn from the crests, drifted upon the breeze like snowflakes. All that was beautiful and graceful in the martial array had disappeared, and what was now visible was only calculated to awake terror or compassion.

Between every pause was heard the voice of the heralds, exclaiming—

“Fight on, brave knights! Man dies, but glory lives! Fight on; death is better than defeat! Fight on, brave knights! for bright eyes behold your deeds!”

Amid the varied fortunes of the combat, the eyes of all endeavoured to discover the leaders of each band, who, mingling in the thick of the fight, encouraged their companions both by voice and example. Both displayed great feats of gallantry, nor did either Bois-Guilbert or the Disinherited Knight find in the ranks opposed to them a champion who could be termed his unquestioned match. They repeatedly endeavoured to single out each other, spurred by mutual animosity, and aware that the fall of either leader might be considered as decisive of victory. Such, however, was the crowd and confusion, that, during the earlier part of the conflict, their efforts to meet were unavailing, and they were repeatedly separated by the eagerness of their followers, each of whom was anxious to win honour, by measuring his strength against the leader of the opposite party.

But when the field became thin by the numbers on either side who had yielded themselves vanquished or been otherwise rendered incapable of continuing the strife, the Templar and the Disinherited Knight at length encountered hand to hand, with all the fury that mortal animosity, joined to rivalry of honour, could inspire.

But at this moment the party of the Disinherited Knight had the worst; the gigantic arm of Front-de-Bœuf on the one flank, and the ponderous strength of Athelstane on the other, bearing down and dispersing those immediately exposed to them. Finding themselves freed from their immediate antagonists, it seems to have occurred to both these knights at the same instant, that they would render the most decisive advantage to their party, by aiding the Templar in his contest with his rival. Turning their horses, therefore, at the same moment, the Norman spurred against the Disinherited Knight on the one side, and the Saxon on the other.

"Beware! beware! Sir Disinherited!" was shouted so universally, that the knight became aware of his danger; and striking a full blow at the Templar, he reined back his steed in the same moment, so as to escape the charge of Athelstane and Front-de-Bœuf. These knights, therefore, their aim being thus eluded, rushed from opposite sides betwixt the object of their attack and the Templar, almost running their horses against each other ere they could stop their career. Recovering their horses, however, and wheeling them round, the whole three pursued their united purpose of bearing to the earth the Disinherited Knight.

Nothing could have saved him except the remarkable strength and activity of the noble horse which he had won on the preceding day.

This stood him in the more stead, as the horse of Bois-Guilbert was wounded, and those of Front-de-Bœuf and Athelstane were both tired with the weight

of their gigantic masters, and with the preceding exertions of the day.

But although the lists rang with the applause of his dexterity, it was evident that he must at last be overpowered; and the nobles around Prince John implored him with one voice to throw down his warder,¹ and to save so brave a knight from the disgrace of being overcome by odds.

"Not I, by the light of Heaven!" answered Prince John; "this same springal, who conceals his name, and despises our proffered hospitality, has already gained one prize, and may now afford to let others have their turn." As he spoke thus, an unexpected incident changed the fortune of the day.

There was among the ranks of the Disinherited Knight a champion in black armour, mounted on a black horse, large of size, tall, and to all appearance powerful and strong like the rider by whom he was mounted. This knight, who bore on his shield no device of any kind, had hitherto evinced very little interest in the event of the fight, beating off with seeming ease those combatants who attacked him, but neither pursuing his advantages nor himself assailing any one. In short, he had hitherto acted the part rather of a spectator than of a party in the tournament, a circumstance which procured him among the spectators the name of *Le Noir Faineant*, or the Black Sluggard.

At once this knight seemed to throw aside his apathy, when he discovered the leader of his party so hard bested; for setting spurs to his horse, he came to his assistance like a thunderbolt, exclaiming in a voice like a trumpet-call, "*Desdichado*, to the rescue!" It was high time; for, while the Disinherited Knight was pressing upon the Templar, Front-de-Bœuf had got nigh to him with his uplifted sword; but ere the blow could descend, the Sable Knight dealt a stroke

¹ Warder : truncheon.

on his head, which glancing from the polished helmet, lighted with violence scarcely abated on the chamfron of the steed, and Front-de-Bœuf rolled on the ground, both horse and man equally stunned by the fury of the blow. *Le Noir Faineant* then turned his horse upon Athelstane of Coningsburgh; and his own sword having been broken in his encounter with Front-de-Bœuf, he wrenched from the hand of the bulky Saxon the battle-axe which he wielded, and bestowed him such a blow upon the crest that Athelstane also lay senseless on the field. Having achieved this double feat, the knight seemed to resume the sluggishness of his character, returning calmly to the northern extremity of the lists, leaving his leader to cope as he best could with Brian de Bois-Guilbert. This was no longer matter of so much difficulty as formerly. The Templar's horse had bled much, and gave way under the shock of the Disinherited Knight's charge. Brian de Bois-Guilbert rolled on the field, encumbered with the stirrup, from which he was unable to draw his foot. His antagonist sprang from horseback, waved his fatal sword over the head of his adversary, and commanded him to yield himself; when Prince John, more moved by the Templar's dangerous situation than he had been by that of his rival, saved him the mortification of confessing himself vanquished, by casting down his warder, and putting an end to the conflict. Thus ended the memorable field of Ashby-de-la-Zouche, one of the most gallantly contested tournaments of that age; for although only four knights, including one who was smothered by the heat of his armour, had died upon the field, yet upwards of thirty were desperately wounded, four or five of whom never recovered. Several more were disabled for life; and those who escaped best carried the marks of the conflict to the grave with them. Hence it is always mentioned in the old records as the "gentle and joyous passage of arms of Ashby."

It being now the duty of Prince John to name the knight who had done best, he determined that the honour of the day remained with the knight whom the popular voice had termed *Le Noir Faineant*. It was pointed out to the Prince that the victory had been in fact won by the Disinherited Knight, who, in the course of the day, had overcome six champions with his own hand, and who had finally unhorsed and struck down the leader of the opposite party. But Prince John adhered to his own opinion, on the ground that the Disinherited Knight and his party had lost the day but for the powerful assistance of the Knight of the Black Armour, to whom, therefore, he persisted in awarding the prize.

To the surprise of all present, however, the knight thus preferred was nowhere to be found. He had left the lists immediately when the conflict ceased, and had been observed by some spectators to move down one of the forest glades with the same slow pace which had procured him the epithet of the Black Sluggard. After he had been summoned twice by sound of trumpet, and proclamation of the heralds, it became necessary to name another to receive the honours which had been assigned to him. Prince John had now no further excuse for resisting the claim of the Disinherited Knight, whom, therefore, he named the champion of the day.

Through a field slippery with blood, and enumbered with broken armour and the bodies of slain and wounded horses, the marshals of the lists again conducted the victor to the foot of Prince John's throne.

"Disinherited Knight," said Prince John, "since by that title only you will consent to be known to us, we a second time award to you the honours of this tournament, and announce to you your right to claim and receive from the hands of the Queen of Love and Beauty the chaplet of honour which your valour has justly deserved."

The knight bowed low and gracefully, but returned no answer.

While the trumpets sounded, the marshals conducted the Disinherited Knight across the field to the foot of that throne of honour which was occupied by the Lady Rowena.

On the lower step of this throne the champion was made to kneel down. Rowena, descending from her station with a graceful and dignified step, was about to place the chaplet which she held in her hand upon the helmet of the champion, when the marshals exclaimed with one voice—

“It must not be thus; his head must be bare.”

When the helmet was removed, the well-formed, yet sunburnt features of a young man of twenty-five were seen, amidst a profusion of short fair hair. His countenance was as pale as death, and marked in one or two places with streaks of blood.

Rowena had no sooner beheld him than she uttered a faint shriek; but at once summoning up the energy of her disposition, she placed upon the drooping head of the victor the splendid chaplet which was the destined reward of the day, and pronounced, in a clear and distinct tone, these words—

“I bestow on thee this chaplet, Sir Knight, as the meed of valour assigned to this day’s victor.” And then firmly added, “And upon brows more worthy could a wreath of chivalry never be placed.”

The knight stooped his head, and kissed the hand of the lovely sovereign by whom his valour had been rewarded; and then, sinking yet farther forward, lay prostrate at her feet.

There was a general consternation. Cedric, who had been struck mute by the sudden appearance of his banished son, now rushed forward, as if to separate him from Rowena. But this had been already accomplished by the marshals of the field, who, guessing the cause of Ivanhoe’s swoon, had hastened to undo his

armour, and found that the head of a lance had penetrated his breast-plate, and inflicted a wound in his side.

XI.—Archery in the Olden Time

THE sound of the trumpets soon recalled those spectators who had already begun to leave the field; and proclamation was made that Prince John was pleased to appoint the yeomen, before leaving the ground, presently to execute the competition of archery intended for the morrow.

The list of competitors for silvan fame amounted to eight. Prince John stepped from his royal seat to view more nearly the persons of these chosen yeomen, several of whom wore the royal livery. Having satisfied his curiosity by this investigation, he looked for the object of his resentment, whom he observed standing on the same spot, and with the same composed countenance which he had exhibited upon the preceding day.

"Fellow," said Prince John, "I guessed by thy insolent babble thou wert no true lover of the long-bow, and I see thou darest not adventure thy skill among such merry-men as stand yonder."

"I know not," replied the woodsman, "if these yeomen and I are used to shoot at the same marks; and, moreover, I know not how your Grace might relish the winning of a third prize by one who has unwittingly fallen under your displeasure."

Prince John coloured as he put the question, "What is thy name, yeoman?"

"Locksley," answered the yeoman.

"Then, Locksley," said Prince John, "thou shalt shoot in thy turn, when these yeomen have displayed their skill. If thou carriest the prize, I will add to it twenty nobles; if thou refusest my fair proffer the Provost¹ of the lists shall cut thy bowstring, break

¹ *Provost*: officer of the sports.

thy bow and arrows, and expel thee from the presence as a faint-hearted craven."

"This is no fair chance you put on me, proud Prince," said the yeoman. "Nevertheless I will obey your pleasure."

A target was placed at the upper end of the southern avenue which led to the lists.

One by one the archers, stepping forward, delivered their shafts yeomanlike and bravely. Of the ten shafts which hit the target, two within the inner ring were shot by Hubert, a forester in the service of Malvoisin, who was accordingly pronounced victorious.

"Now, Looksley," said Prince John with a bitter smile, "wilt thou try conclusions with Hubert?"

"Sith¹ it be no better," said Looksley, "I am content to try my fortune; on condition that when I have shot two shafts at yonder mark of Hubert's, he shall be bound to shoot one at that which I shall propose."

"That is but fair," answered Prince John, "and it shall not be refused thee.—If thou dost beat this braggart, Hubert, I will fill the bagle with silver pennies for thee."

"A man can do but his best," answered Hubert; "but my grandsire drew a good long-bow at Hastings, and I trust not to dishonour his memory."

The former target was now removed, and a fresh one of the same size placed in its room. Hubert took his aim with great deliberation, long measuring the distance with his eye, while he held in his hand his bended bow, with the arrow placed on the string. At length he made a step forward, and raising the bow at the full stretch of his left arm, till the centre or grasping-place was nigh level with his face, he drew his bowstring to his ear. The arrow whistled through the air, and lighted within the inner ring of the target, but not exactly in the centre.

"You have not allowed for the wind, Hubert," said

¹ *Sith*: since.

his antagonist, bending his bow, "or that had been a better shot."

So saying, and without showing the least anxiety to pause upon his aim, Locksley stept to the appointed station, and shot his arrow as carelessly in appearance as if he had not even looked at the mark. He was speaking almost at the instant that the shaft left the bowstring, yet it alighted in the target two inches nearer to the white spot which marked the centre than that of Hubert.

"By the light of heaven!" said Prince John to Hubert, "an¹ thou suffer that runagate knave to overcome thee, thou art worthy of the gallows!"

"An your highness were to hang me," said Hubert, "a man can but do his best. Nevertheless, my grandsire drew a good bow——"

"The foul fiend on thy grandsire and all his generation!" interrupted John; "shoot, knave, and shoot thy best, or it shall be the worse for thee!"

Thus exhorted, Hubert resumed his place, and making the necessary allowance for a very light air of wind, which had just arisen, shot so successfully that his arrow alighted in the very centre of the target.

"Thou canst not mend that shot, Locksley," said the Prince with an insulting smile.

"I will notch his shaft for him, however," replied Locksley.

And letting fly his arrow with a little more precaution than before, it lighted right upon that of his competitor, which it split to shivers.

"And now," said Locksley, "I will crave your Grace's permission to plant such a mark as is used in the North Country; and welcome every brave yeoman who shall try a shot at it."

He then turned to leave the lists. "Let your guards attend me," he said, "if you please—I go but to cut a rod from the next willow-bush."

¹ An: if.

Locksley returned almost instantly with a willow wand about six feet in length, perfectly straight, and rather thicker than a man's thumb. He began to peel this, observing that to ask a good woodsman to shoot at a target so broad as had hitherto been used, was to put shame upon his skill. "For his own part," he said, "and in the land where he was bred, men would as soon take for their mark King Arthur's round-table, which held sixty knights around it. A child of seven years old," he said, "might hit yonder target with a headless shaft; but," added he, walking deliberately to the other end of the lists, and sticking the willow wand upright in the ground, "he that hits that rod at five-score yards, I call him an archer fit to bear both bow and quiver before a king."

"My grandsire," said Hubert, "drew a good bow at the battle of Hastings, and never shot at such a mark in his life—and neither will I. If this yeoman can cleave that rod, I give him the bucklers—or rather, I yield to the devil that is in his jerkin,¹ and not to any human skill; a man can but do his best, and I will not shoot where I am sure to miss. I might as well shoot at a sunbeam, as at a twinkling white streak which I can hardly see."

"Cowardly dog!" said Prince John.—"Sirrah² Locksley, do thou shoot; but if thou hittest such a mark, I will say thou art the first man ever did so. Howe'er it be, thou shalt not crow over us with a mere show of superior skill."

"I will do my best, as Hubert says," answered Locksley; "no man can do more."

So saying, he again bent his bow, but on the present occasion looked with attention to his weapon, and changed the string, which he thought was no longer truly round, having been a little frayed by the two former shots. He then took his aim with some

¹ *Jerkin*: short outer coat.

² *Sirrah*: fellow.

deliberation, and the multitude awaited the event in breathless silence. The archer vindicated their opinion of his skill: his arrow split the willow rod against which it was aimed. A jubilee of acclamations followed; and even Prince John, in admiration of Locksley's skill, lost for an instant his dislike to his person. "These twenty nobles," he said, "which, with the bugle, thou hast fairly won, are thine own; we will make them fifty, if thou wilt take livery and service with us as a yeoman of our body-guard, and be near to our person. For never did so strong a hand bend a bow, or so true an eye direct a shaft."

"Pardon me, noble Prince," said Locksley; "but I have vowed, that if ever I take service, it should be with your royal brother, King Richard. These twenty nobles I leave to Hubert, who has this day drawn as brave a bow as his grandsire did at Hastings. Had his modesty not refused the trial, he would have hit the wand as well as I."

Hubert shook his head as he received with reluctance the bounty of the stranger; and Locksley, anxious to escape further observation, mixed with the crowd, and was seen no more.

XII.—The Attack on the Saxons

WHEN Cedric the Saxon saw his son drop down senseless in the lists at Ashby, his first impulse was to order him into the custody and care of his own attendants, but the words choked in his throat. He could not bring himself to acknowledge, in presence of such an assembly, the son whom he had renounced and disinherited. He ordered, however, Oswald to keep an eye upon him; but it was in vain that Cedric's cup-bearer looked around for his young master—he saw the bloody spot on which he had lately sunk down, but himself he saw no longer.

The only information which he could collect from the bystanders was, that the knight had been raised with care by certain well-attired grooms, and placed in a litter belonging to a lady among the spectators, which had immediately transported him out of the press.

Cedric, Athelstane, with the Lady Rowena and their attendants, had reached the verge of the wooded country, on their return from Ashby, when they were alarmed by repeated cries for assistance; and when they rode up to the place from whence they came, they were surprised to find a horse-litter¹ placed upon the ground, beside which sat a young woman, richly dressed in the Jewish fashion, while an old man, whose yellow cap proclaimed him to belong to the same nation, walked up and down with gestures expressive of the deepest despair, and wrung his hands, as if affected by some strange disaster.

When he began to come to himself out of this agony of terror, Isaac of York (for it was our old friend) was at length able to explain, that he had hired a body-guard of six men at Ashby, together with mules for carrying the litter of a sick friend. They had come thus far in safety; but having received information from a wood-cutter that there was a strong band of outlaws lying in wait in the woods before them, Isaac's mercenaries had not only taken flight, but had carried off with them the horses which bore the litter, and left the Jew and his daughter without the means either of defence or of retreat, to be plundered, and probably murdered, by the banditti.

"Would it but please your valours," added Isaac, in a tone of deep humiliation, "to permit the poor Jews to travel under your safeguard, I swear by the tables of our law, that never has favour been conferred upon a child of Israel since the days of our captivity, which shall be more gratefully acknowledged."

¹ *Litter* : couch or bed slung on poles.

"The man is old and feeble," said Rowena to her guardian, "the maiden young and beautiful, their friend sick and in peril of his life—Jews though they be, we cannot as Christians leave them in this extremity. Let them unload two of the sumpter-mules,¹ and put the baggage behind two of the serfs. The mules may transport the litter, and we have led horses for the old man and his daughter."

Cedric readily assented to what she proposed. The path upon which the party travelled was now so narrow, as not to admit above two riders abreast, and began to descend into a dingle,² traversed by a brook whose banks were broken and swampy. Cedric and Athelstane saw the risk of being attacked at this pass, but no better mode of preventing the danger occurred to them than that they should hasten through the defile as fast as possible. Advancing, therefore, without much order, they had just crossed the brook with a part of their followers, when they were assailed in front, flank, and rear at once, with an impetuosity to which, in their confused and ill-prepared condition, it was impossible to offer effectual resistance. The shout of "A white dragon!—a white dragon!—Saint George for merry England!" war-cries adopted by the assailants, as belonging to their assumed character of Saxon outlaws, was heard on every side, and on every side enemies appeared with a rapidity of advance and attack which seemed to multiply their numbers.

Both the Saxon chiefs were made prisoners at the same moment. The attendants, embarrassed with baggage, surprised and terrified at the fate of their masters, fell an easy prey to the assailants; while the Lady Rowena, in the centre of the cavalcade, and the Jew and his daughter in the rear, experienced the same misfortune.

¹ *Sumpter-mules* : for carrying baggage.

² *Dingle* : small valley.

XIII.—Locksley's Followers

OF all the train none escaped except Wamba and Gurth. A third person suddenly made his appearance, and commanded them both to halt. From his dress and arms, Wamba would have conjectured him to be one of those outlaws who had just assailed his master; but, besides that he wore no mask, the glittering baldric¹ across his shoulder, with the rich bugle-horn which it supported, as well as the calm and commanding expression of his voice and manner, made him, notwithstanding the twilight, recognise Locksley the yeoman.

"What is the meaning of all this," said he, "or who is it that rifle, and ransom, and make prisoners, in these forests?"

"You may look at their cassocks² close by," said Wamba, "and see whether they be thy children's coats or no—for they are as like thine own, as one green pea-cod is to another."

"I will learn that presently," answered Locksley; "and I charge ye, on peril of your lives, not to stir from the place where ye stand, until I have returned.—Yet stay, I must render myself as like these men as possible."

So saying, he unbuckled his baldric with the bugle, took a feather from his cap, and gave them to Wamba; then drew a vizard from his pouch, and, repeating his charges to them to stand fast, went to execute his purposes of reconnoitring. He returned in the course of a few minutes.

"Friend Gurth," he said, "I have mingled among yon men, and have learnt to whom they belong, and whither they are bound. There is, I think, no chance

¹ Baldric: belt.

² Cassock: long loose coat.

that they will proceed to any actual violence against their prisoners. For three men to attempt them at this moment, were little else than madness, but I trust soon to gather such a force, as may act in defiance of all their precautions. You are both servants, and, as I think, faithful servants of Cedric the Saxon; he shall not want English hands to help him in this extremity. Come then with me till I gather more aid."

So saying, he walked through the wood at a great pace, followed by the jester and the swineherd. After three hours they arrived at a small opening in the forest, in the centre of which grew an enormous oak-tree, beneath which four or five yeomen lay stretched on the ground, while another, as sentinel, walked to and fro in the moonlight shade.

Upon hearing the sound of feet, the watch instantly gave the alarm, and the sleepers started up and bent their bows. Six arrows placed on the string were pointed towards the quarter from which the travellers approached, when their guide, being recognised, was welcomed with every token of respect and attachment.

"Where is the Miller?" was his first question.

"On the road towards Rotherham."

"With how many men?" demanded the leader, for such he seemed to be.

"With six men, and good hope of booty, if it please St. Nicholas."

"Devoutly spoken," said Locksley; "and where is Allan-a-dale?"

"Walked up towards the Watling Street, to watch for the Prior of Jorvaulx."

"That is well thought on also," replied the Captain. "Disperse and seek your companions. Collect what force you can, and meet me here by daybreak.—And, stay," he added, "I have forgotten what is most necessary of the whole. Two of you take the road quickly towards Torquilstone, the Castle of Front-de-Bœuf. A set of gallants, who have been masquerading in such

guise as our own, are carrying a band of prisoners thither. Keep a close watch on them therefore; and despatch one of your comrades, the lightest of foot, to bring the news of the yeomen thereabout."

They promised implicit obedience, and departed with alacrity on their different errands.

XIV.—In Torquilstone Castle

THE guards continued to hurry Cedric along, travelling at a very rapid rate, until, at the end of an avenue of huge trees, arose Torquilstone, the castle of Reginald Front-de-Bœuf. De Bracy winded his horn three times, and the archers and cross-bow men, who had manned the wall upon seeing their approach, hastened to lower the drawbridge, and admit them. The prisoners were compelled to alight by their guards, who gave Athelstane and Cedric to understand that they were to be imprisoned in a chamber apart from Rowena.

The Lady Rowena was conducted, with courtesy, indeed, but still without consulting her inclination, to a distant apartment. The same alarming distinction was conferred on Rebecca, in spite of her father's entreaties, who offered even money, in this extremity of distress, that she might be permitted to abide with him. "Base unbeliever," answered one of his guards, "when thou hast seen thy lair, thou wilt not wish thy daughter to partake it."

And, without further discussion, the old Jew was forcibly dragged off in a different direction from the other prisoners and hastily thrust into a dungeon-vault of the castle, the floor of which was deep beneath the level of the ground, and very damp being lower than even the moat itself. The only light was received through one or two loop-holes far above the reach of the captive's hand. At one end of this apartment was

a large fire-grate, over the top of which were stretched some transverse iron bars, half devoured with rust.

With his garment collected beneath him to keep his limbs from the wet pavement, Isaac sat in a corner of his dungeon, where his folded hands, his dishevelled hair and beard, his furred cloak and high cap, seen by the broken light, would have afforded a study for Rembrandt, had that celebrated painter existed at the period. The Jew remained without altering his position for nearly three hours, at the expiry of which steps were heard on the dungeon stair. The bolts screamed as they were withdrawn—the hinges creaked as the wicket opened, and Reginald Front-de-Bœuf, followed by the two Saracen slaves of the Templar, entered the prison.

He paused within three steps of the corner in which the unfortunate Jew had now, as it were, coiled himself up into the smallest possible space, and made a sign for one of the slaves to approach. The black satellite came forward accordingly, laid a large pair of scales at the feet of Front-de-Bœuf, and again retired to the respectful distance, at which his companion had already taken his station. Front-de-Bœuf himself opened the scene by thus addressing his ill-fated captive.

"Most accursed dog of an accursed race," he said, "seest thou these scales?"

The unhappy Jew returned a feeble affirmative.

"In these very scales shalt thou weigh me out a thousand silver pounds, after the just measure and weight of the Tower of London."

"Holy Abraham!" returned the Jew, finding voice through the very extremity of his danger, "heard man ever such a demand?—Who ever heard, even in a minstrel's tale, of such a sum as a thousand pounds of silver?—What human sight was ever blessed with the vision of such a mass of treasure?—Not within the walls of York, ransack my house and that of all my

tribe, wilt thou find the tithe¹ of that huge sum of silver that thou speakest of."

"I am reasonable," answered Front-de-Bœuf, "and if silver be scant, I refuse not gold. At the rate of a mark of gold for each six pounds of silver, thou shalt free thy unbelieving carcass from such punishment as thy heart has never even conceived."

"Have mercy on me, noble knight!" exclaimed Isaac; "I am old, and poor, and helpless. It were unworthy to triumph over me—It is a poor deed to crush a worm."

Front-de-Bœuf again made a signal for the slaves to approach, and spoke to them apart, in their own language. The Saracens produced a quantity of charcoal, a pair of bellows, and a flask of oil. While the one struck a light with a flint and steel, the other disposed the charcoal in the large rusty grate which we have already mentioned, and exercised the bellows until the fuel came to a red glow.

"Seest thou, Isaac," said Front-de-Bœuf, "the range of iron bars above that glowing charcoal?—on that warm couch thou shalt lie, stripped of thy clothes as if thou wert to rest on a bed of down. One of these slaves shall maintain the fire beneath thee, while the other shall anoint thy wretched limbs with oil, lest the roast should burn. Now, choose betwixt such a scorching bed and the payment of a thousand pounds of silver; for, by the head of my father, thou hast no other option."

XV.—Isaac in Torture

THE assistants, taking their directions more from the Baron's eye and his hand than his tongue, once more stepped forward, laid hands on the unfortunate Isaac, plucked him up from the ground, and, holding him

¹ *Tithe*: tenth part.

between them, waited the hard-hearted Baron's further signal. The unhappy Jew eyed their countenances and that of Front-de-Bœuf, in hope of discovering some symptoms of relenting, then looked at the glowing furnace, over which he was presently to be stretched, and seeing no chance of his tormentor's relenting, his resolution gave way.

"I will pay," he said, "the thousand pounds of silver—That is," he added, after a moment's pause, "I will pay it with the help of my brethren; for I must beg as a mendicant at the door of our synagoguo ere I make up so unheard-of a sum.—When and where must it be delivered?"

"Here," replied Front-de-Bœuf, "here it must be delivered—weighed it must be—weighed and told down on this very dungeon floor.—Thinkest thou I will part with thee until thy ransom is secure?"

"Let my daughter, Rebecca, go forth to York," answered Isaac, "with your safe conduct, noble knight, and so soon as man and horse can return, the treasure"—here he groaned deeply, but added, after the pause of a few seconds—"the treasure shall be told down on this very floor."

"Thy daughter!" said Front-de-Bœuf, as if surprised. "By heavens, Isaac, I would I had known of this. I deemed that yonder black-browed girl had been thy wife, and I gave her to be a slave to Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert."

The yell which Isaac raised at this unfeeling communication made the very vault to ring, and astounded the two Saracens so much that they let go their hold of the Jew. He availed himself of his enlargement to throw himself on the pavement, and clasp the knees of Front-de-Bœuf.

"Take all that you have asked," said he, "Sir Knight—take ten times more—reduce me to ruin and to beggary, if thou wilt,—nay, pierce me with thy poniard, broil me on that furnace, but spare my daughter,

deliver her in safety and honour!—She is the image of my deceased Rachel, she is the last of six pledges of her love—will you deprive a widowed husband of his sole remaining comfort?”

“I would,” said the Norman, somewhat relenting, “that I had known of this before. I thought your race had loved nothing save their money bags.”

“Think not so vilely of us, Jews though we be,” said Isaac; “the hunted fox, the tortured wild-cat, loves its young—the despised and persecuted race of Abraham love their children!”

“Be it so,” said Front-de-Bœuf; “I will leave it in future, Isaac, for thy very sake—but it aids us not now, I cannot help what has happened, or what is to follow; my word is passed to my comrade in arms, nor would I break it for ten Jews and Jewesses to boot.”

“Robber and villain!” said the Jew, retorting the insults of his oppressor with passion, which, however impotent, he now found it impossible to bridle, “I will pay thee nothing—not one silver penny will I pay thee, unless my daughter is delivered to me in safety and honour!”

“Art thou in thy senses, Israelite?” said the Norman sternly—“has thy flesh and blood a charm against heated iron and scalding oil?”

“I care not!” said the Jew, rendered desperate by paternal affection; “do thy worst. My daughter is my flesh and blood, dearer to me a thousand times than those limbs which thy cruelty threatens. No silver will I give thee, unless I were to pour it molten down thy avaricious throat—no, not a silver penny will I give thee, Nazarene, were it to save thee from the deep damnation thy whole life has merited! Take my life if thou wilt, and say, the Jew, amidst his tortures, knew how to disappoint the Christian.”

“We shall see that,” said Front-de-Bœuf; “for by the blessed rood, which is the abomination of thy accursed tribe, thou shalt feel the extremities of fire

and steel!—Strip him, slaves, and chain him down upon the bars.”

In spite of the feeble struggles of the old man, the Saracens had already torn from him his upper garment, and were proceeding totally to disrobe him, when the sound of a bugle, twice winded without the castle, penetrated even to the recesses of the dungeon, and immediately after loud voices were heard calling for Sir Reginald Front-de-Bœuf. Unwilling to be found engaged in his hellish occupation, the savage Baron gave the slaves a signal to restore Isaac's garment, and, quitting the dungeon with his attendants, he left the Jew to thank God for his deliverance.

XVI.—Rowena's Choice

THE apartment to which the Lady Rowena had been introduced was fitted up with some rude attempts at ornament and magnificence, and her being placed there might be considered as a peculiar mark of respect not offered to the other prisoners. It was about the hour of noon, when De Bracy, for whose advantage the expedition had been first planned, appeared to prosecute his views upon her hand and possessions.

He saluted the lady by doffing his velvet bonnet. With this, he gently motioned her to a seat; and, as she still retained her standing posture, the knight ungloved his right hand, and motioned to conduct her thither. But Rowena declined, by her gesture, the proffered compliment, and replied, “If I be in the presence of my jailor Sir Knight—nor will circumstances allow me to think otherwise—it best becomes his prisoner to remain standing till she learns her doom.”

“Alas! fair Rowena,” returned De Bracy, “you are

in presence of your captive, not your jailor; and it is from your fair eyes that De Bracy must receive that doom which you fondly expect from him."

"I know you not, sir," said the lady; "I know you not—and the insolent familiarity with which you apply to me the jargon of a troubadour, forms no apology for the violence of a robber."

"Proud damsel," said De Bracy, "thou shalt be as proudly encountered. Know then, that I have supported my pretensions to your hand in the way that best suited my character. It is meet for thy humour to be wooed with bow and bill, than in set terms, and in courtly language. I tell thee, thou shalt never leave this castle, or thou shalt leave it as Maurice de Bracy's wife. Thou art proud, Rowena, and thou art the fitter to be my wife. By what other means couldst thou be raised to high honour and to princely place, saving by my alliance? How else wouldst thou escape from the mean precincts of a country grange, where Saxons herd with the swine which form their wealth?"

"Sir Knight," replied Rowena, "trust me, when I leave the grange which hath been my shelter from infancy—should that day ever arrive—it shall be with one who has not learnt to despise the dwelling and manners in which I have been brought up."

"I guess your meaning, lady," said De Bracy; "but dream not that Richard Cœur-de-Lion will ever resume his throne, far less that Wilfred of Ivanhoe, his minion, will ever lead thee to his footstool, to be there welcomed as the bride of a favourite. Know, lady, that this rival is in my power, and that it rests but with me to betray the secret of his being within the castle to Front-de-Bœuf, whose jealousy will be more fatal than mine."

"Wilfred here?" said Rowena, in disdain; "that is as true as that Front-de-Bœuf is his rival."

De Bracy looked at her steadily for an instant.

"Wert thou really ignorant of this?" said he; "didst thou not know that Wilfred of Ivanhoe travelled in the litter of the Jew?"

"And if he is here," said Rowena, compelling herself to a tone of indifference, though trembling with apprehension, "in what is he the rival of Front-de-Bœuf? or what has he to fear beyond a short imprisonment, and an honourable ransom, according to the use of chivalry?"

"Rowena," said De Bracy, "knowest thou not there is a jealousy of ambition and of wealth, as well as of love; and that this our host, Front-de-Bœuf, will push from his road him who opposes his claim to the fair barony of Ivanhoe, as eagerly and unscrupulously as if he were preferred to him by some blue-eyed damsel? But smile on my suit, lady, and the wounded champion shall have nothing to fear from Front-de-Bœuf."

"Save him, for the love of Heaven!" said Rowena.

"I can—I will—it is my purpose," said De Bracy; "for, when Rowena consents to be the bride of De Bracy, who is it shall dare to put forth a violent hand upon her kinsman—the son of her guardian—the companion of her youth? But it is thy love must buy his protection. Use thine influence with me in his behalf, and he is safe,—refuse to employ it, Wilfred dies, and thou thyself art not the nearer to freedom."

"Thy language," answered Rowena, "hath in its indifferent bluntness something which cannot be reconciled with the horrors it seems to express. I believe not that thy purpose is so wicked, or thy power so great."

"Flatter thyself, then, with that belief," said De Bracy, "until time shall prove it false. Thy lover lies wounded in this castle—thy preferred lover. He is a bar betwixt Front-de-Bœuf and that which Front-de-Bœuf loves better than either ambition or beauty.

What will it cost beyond the blow of a poniard, or the thrust of a javelin, to silence his opposition for ever? Cedric also——”

“And Cedric also,” said Rowena, repeating his words; “my noble—my generous guardian! I deserved the evil I have encountered, for forgetting his fate even in that of his son!”

“Cedric’s fate also depends upon thy determination,” said De Bracy; “and I leave thee to form it.”

Hitherto, Rowena had sustained her part in this trying scene with undismayed courage, but it was because she had not considered the danger as serious and imminent. After casting her eyes around as if to look for the aid which was nowhere to be found, and after a few broken interjections, she raised her hands to heaven, and burst into a passion of uncontrolled vexation and sorrow. It was impossible to see so beautiful a creature in such extremity without feeling for her, and De Bracy was not unmoved, though he was yet more embarrassed than touched. He had, in truth, gone too far to recede; and yet, in Rowena’s present condition, she could not be acted on either by argument or threats.

Agitated by his thoughts, he could only bid her be comforted, and assure her, that as yet she had no reason for the excess of despair to which she was now giving way. But in this task of consolation De Bracy was interrupted by the horn, which had at the same time alarmed the other inmates of the castle, and interrupted their several plans.

XVII.—Wamba’s Challenge

“LET us see the cause of this clamour,” said Front-de-Bœuf—“here is a letter, and, if I mistake not, it is in Saxon.”

He looked at it, turning it round and round, as

if he had had really some hopes of coming at the meaning by inverting the position of the paper, and then handed it to De Braey.

"It may be magic spells for aught I know," said De Braey.

"Give it me," said the Templar. "We have that of the priestly character, that we have some knowledge to enlighten our valour."

The Templar accordingly read it as follows:

"I, Wamba, the son of Witless, Jester to a noble and free-born man, Cedric of Rotherwood, called the Saxon,—And I, Gurth, the son of Beowulph, swineherd unto the said Cedric, with the assistance of our allies and confederates, namely, the good knight, called for the present *Le Noir Faineant*, and the stout yeoman, Robert Loeksley, Do you, Reginald Front-de-Bœuf, and your accomplices, to wit, that whereas you have wrongfully and by mastery seized upon the person of our lord and master the said Cedric; also upon the person of a noble and free-born damsel, the Lady Rowena of Hargottstandstede; also upon the person of a noble and free-born man, Athelstane of Coningsburgh; also upon a certain Jew, named Isaac of York, together with his daughter, a Jewess, and certain horses and mules: therefore we require and demand that the persons aforesaid, together with all goods and chattels to them pertaining, be, within an hour after the delivery hereof, delivered to us, untouched and unharmed. Failing of which, we do pronounce to you, that we hold ye as robbers and traitors, and will wager our bodies against ye in battle, siege, or otherwise, and do our utmost to your annoyance and destruction. Wherefore may God have you in His keeping.—Signed by us upon the eve of St. Withold's day, under the great trysting oak in the Hart-hill Walk, the above being written by a holy man, Clerk to St. Dunstan, in the Chapel of Copmanhurst."

The knights heard this uncommon document read from end to end, and then gazed upon each other in silent amazement, as being utterly at a loss to know what it could portend. De Bracy was the first to break silence by an uncontrollable fit of laughter, wherein he was joined, though with more moderation, by the Templar. Front-de-Bœuf, on the contrary, seemed impatient of their ill-timed jocularity.

"By St. Michael," he said, "I would thou couldst stand the whole brunt of this adventure thyself, De Bracy. These fellows dared not have acted with such inconceivable impudence, had they not been supported by some strong bands.—Here, fellow," he added, to one of his attendants, "hast thou sent out to see by what force this precious challenge is to be supported?"

"There are at least two hundred men assembled in the woods," answered a squire who was in attendance.

"Let us summon our people," said the Templar, "and sally forth upon them. One knight—ay, one man-at-arms, were enough for twenty such peasants."

"Sally, saidst thou?" answered Front-de-Bœuf; "we have scarce men enough to defend the castle. The best of mine are at York; so is all your band, De Bracy; and we have scarcely twenty, besides the handful that were engaged in this mad business."

"Send to thy neighbours," said the Templar; "let them assemble their people, and come to the rescue of three knights, besieged by a jester and a swineherd in the baronial castle of Reginald Front-de-Bœuf!"

"You jest, Sir Knight," answered the Baron; "but to whom should I send?—Malvoisin is by this time at York with his retainers, and so are my other allies."

"Then send to York, and recall our people," said De Bracy.

"And who shall bear such a message?" said Front-de-Bœuf; "they will beset every path, and rip the

errand out of his bosom.—I have it," he added, after pausing for a moment. "Sir Templar, thou canst write as well as read, and thou shalt return an answer to this bold challenge."

"I would rather do it at the sword's point than at that of the pen," said Bois-Guilbert; "but be it as you will."

He sat down accordingly, and indited, in the French language, an epistle of the following tenor:

"Sir Reginald Front-de-Bœuf, with his noble and knightly allies and confederates, receives no defiance at the hands of slaves, bondsmen, or fugitives. Touching the prisoners we have made, we do in Christian charity require you to send a man of religion, to receive their confession, and reconcile them with God; since it is our fixed intention to execute them this morning before noon."

This letter being folded, was delivered to the squire, and by him to the messenger who waited without, as the answer to that which he had brought.

The yeoman having thus accomplished his mission, returned to the headquarters of the allies, which were for the present established under a venerable oak-tree, about three arrow-flights distant from the castle. Here Wamba and Gurth, with their allies, the Black Knight and Locksley, and the jovial hermit, awaited with impatience an answer to their summons.

The Black Knight, taking the letter from Locksley, first read it over to himself, and then explained the meaning in Saxon to his confederates.

"Execute the noble Cedric!" exclaimed Wamba; "by the rood, thou must be mistaken, Sir Knight."

"Not I, my worthy friend," replied the Knight, "I have explained the words as they are here set down."

"'Tis but a contrivance to gain time," said Locksley;

"they dare not do a deed for which I could exact a fearful penalty."

"I would," said the Black Knight, "there were some one among us who could obtain admission into the castle, and discover how the case stands with the besieged. Methinks, as they require a confessor to be sent, the holy hermit might at once exercise his pious vocation, and procure us the information we desire."

All looked on each other and were silent.

"I see," said Wamba, after a short pause, "that the fool must be still the fool, and put his neck in a venture. You must know, my dear cousins and countrymen, that I wore russet before I wore motley, and was bred to be a friar, until a brain-fever came upon me and left me just wit enough to be a fool. I trust, with the assistance of the good hermit's frock, I shall be found qualified to administer both worldly and ghostly comfort to our worthy master Cedric, and his companions in adversity."

"On with the frock, then, good fellow," quoth the knight, "and let thy master send us an account of their situation within the castle. Time wears—away with thee."

"*Pax vobiscum*," said Wamba, who was now muffled in his religious disguise.

And so saying, he imitated the solemn and stately deportment of a friar, and departed to execute his mission.

XVIII.—The Jester's Heroism

WHEN the Jester, arrayed in the cowl and frock of the hermit, stood before the portal of the castle of Front-de-Bœuf, the warder demanded of him his name and errand.

"*Pax vobiscum*," answered the Jester, "I am a poor

brother of the order of St. Francis, who come hither to do my office to certain unhappy prisoners now secured within this castle."

When Wamba found himself in the presence of Reginald Front-de-Bœuf, he brought out his *Pax vobiscum* with more hesitation than had hitherto accompanied it. But Front-de-Bœuf was accustomed to see men tremble in his presence, so that the timidity of the supposed father did not give him any cause of suspicion. "Who and whence art thou, priest?" said he.

"*Pax vobiscum*," reiterated the Jester, "I am a poor servant of St. Francis, who, travelling through this wilderness, have fallen among thieves, which thieves have sent me unto this castle in order to do my ghostly office on two persons condemned by your honourable justice."

"Ay, right," answered Front-de-Bœuf; "and canst thou tell me, holy father, the number of those banditti?"

"Gallant sir," answered the Jester, "*nomen illis legio*, their name is legion."

"Tell me in plain terms what numbers there are."

"Alas!" said the supposed friar, "I was like to burst with fear! but I conceive they may be—what of yeomen—what of commons, at least five hundred men."

"What!" said the Templar, who came into the hall that moment, "muster the wasps so thick here? it is time to stifle such a mischievous brood." Then taking Front-de-Bœuf aside, "Knowest thou the priest?"

"He is a stranger from a distant convent," said Front-de-Bœuf; "I know him not."

"Then trust him not with thy purpose in words," answered the Templar. "Let him carry a written order to De Bracy's company of Free Companions, to repair instantly to their master's aid. In the

meantime, that the shaveling¹ may suspect nothing, permit him to go freely about his task of preparing these Saxon hogs for the slaughter-house."

"It shall be so," said Front-de-Bœuf. And he forthwith appointed a domestic to conduct Wamba to the apartment where Cedric and Athelstane were confined.

"*Pax vobiscum*," said the Jester, entering the apartment; "the blessing of St. Dunstan, and all other saints whatsoever, be upon ye."

"Enter freely," answered Cedric to the supposed friar; "with what intent art thou come hither?"

"To bid you prepare yourselves for death," answered the Jester.

"It is impossible!" replied Cedric, "they dare not attempt such cruelty!"

"Alas!" said the Jester, "to restrain them by their sense of humanity, is the same as to stop a runaway horse with a bridle of silk thread. Bethink ye, therefore, what crimes you have committed; for this very day will ye be called to answer at a higher tribunal."

"Hearest thou this, Athelstane?" said Cedric; "we must rouse up our hearts to this last action, since better it is we should die like men, than live like slaves. Let us then unto our holy gear, father."

"Wait yet a moment, good uncle," said the Jester, in his natural tone; "better look long before you leap in the dark."

"By my faith," said Cedric, "I should know that voice!"

"It is that of your trusty slave and jester," answered Wamba, throwing back his cowl. "Had you taken a fool's advice formerly, you would not have been here at all. Take a fool's advice now, and you will not be here long."

"How mean'st thou, knave?" answered the Saxon.

¹ The crown of the priest's head is always shaven.

"Even thus," replied Wamba; "take thou this frock and cord, which are all the orders I ever had, and march quietly out of the castle, leaving me your cloak and girdle to take the long leap in thy stead."

"Leave thee in my stead!" said Cedric, astonished at the proposal; "why, they would hang thee, my poor knave."

"E'en let them do as they are permitted," said Wamba.

"Well, Wamba," answered Cedric, "for one thing will I grant thy request. And that is, if thou wilt make the exchange of garments with Lord Athelstane instead of me."

"No, by St. Dunstan," answered Wamba, "I'll hang for no man but my own born master."

"Go, noble Cedric," said Athelstane. "Your presence without may encourage friends to our rescue—your remaining here would ruin us all."

"And is there any prospect, then, of rescue from without?" said Cedric, looking to the Jester.

"Prospect, indeed!" echoed Wamba; "let me tell you, when you fill my cloak, you are wrapped in a general's cassock. Five hundred men are there without, and I was this morning one of their chief leaders. Well, we shall see what good they will make by exchanging a fool for a wise man. And so farewell, master! and let my cockscumb¹ hang in the hall at Rotherwood, in memory that I flung away my life for my master, like a faithful—fool."

The last word came out with a sort of double expression, betwixt jest and earnest. The tears stood in Cedric's eyes.

"Thy memory shall be preserved," he said, "while fidelity and affection have honour upon earth!"

The exchange of dress was now accomplished, when a sudden doubt struck Cedric.

¹ *Cockscumb*: an ornament worn on the jester's cap.

"I know no language," he said, "but my own, and a few words of their mincing Norman. How shall I bear myself like a reverend brother?"

"The spell lies in two words," replied Wamba—"Pax vobiscum will answer all queries. If you go or come, eat or drink, bless or ban, *Pax vobiscum* carries you through it all. It is as useful to a friar as a broomstick to a witch. Speak it but thus, in a deep grave tone,—*Pax vobiscum*!—it is irresistible."

"If such prove the case," said his master, "my religious orders are soon taken—*Pax vobiscum*. I trust I shall remember the pass-word.—Noble Athelstane, farewell; and farewell, my poor boy. I will save you or return and die with you. One hair shall not fall from the head of the kind knave who risked himself for his master, if Cedric's peril can prevent it.—Farewell."

"Farewell, uncle," added Wamba; "and remember *Pax vobiscum*."

XIX.—The Attack on the Castle

"To the battlements!" cried De Braey, "and let us mark what these knaves do without;" and so saying, he opened a window, and immediately called from thence to those in the apartment—"Saint Dennis! the archers muster on the skirts of the wood like a dark cloud before a hailstorm."

Reginald Front-de-Bœuf also looked out upon the field, and immediately snatched his bugle; and, after winding a long and loud blast, commanded his men to their posts on the walls.

"De Braey, look to the eastern side, where the walls are lowest—Noble Bois-Guilbert, thy trade hath well taught thee how to attack and defend, look thou to the western side—I myself will take post at the barbican."

The Templar had in the meantime been looking out on the proceedings of the besiegers. "See ye how dexterously," he said, "they avail themselves of every cover which a tree or bush affords, and shun exposing themselves to the shot of our cross-bows? I will gage my golden chain, that they are led on by some noble knight or gentleman, skillful in the practice of wars."

"I espy him," said De Bracy; "I see the waving of a knight's crest, and the gleam of his armour. See yon tall man in the black mail—by St. Dennis, I hold him to be the same whom we called *Le Noir Faineant*, who overthrew thee, Front-de-Bœuf, in the lists at Ashby."

"So much the better," said Front-de-Bœuf, "that he comes here to give me my revenge."

The demonstrations of the enemy's immediate approach cut off all further discourse. Each knight repaired to his post, and at the head of the few followers whom they were able to muster they awaited with calm determination the threatened assault.

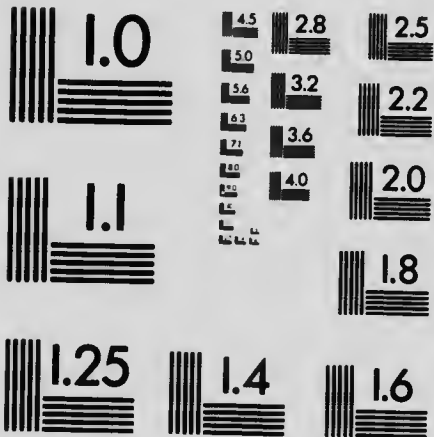
The noise within the castle, occasioned by the defensive preparations, which had been considerable for some time, now increased into tenfold bustle and clamour. The voices of the knights were heard, animating their followers, or directing means of defence, while their commands were often drowned in the clashing of armour, or the clamorous shouts of those whom they addressed. Rebecca's eye kindled, as she repeated, half whispering to herself, the sacred text,— "The quiver rattleth—the glittering spear and the shield—the noise of the captains and the shouting!"

Ivanhoe was glowing with impatience at his inactivity, and with his ardent desire to mingle in the affray.

"If I could but drag myself," he said, "to yonder



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window, that I might see how this brave game is like to go.—It is in vain—it is in vain—I am alike nerveless and weaponless!”

“Fret not thyself, noble knight,” answered Rebecca, “the sounds have ceased of a sudden—it may be they join not battle.”

“Thou knowest nought of it,” said Wilfred; “this dead pause only shows that the men are at their posts on the walls, and expecting an instant attack; what we have heard was but the instant muttering of the storm—it will burst anon in all its fury.—Could I but reach yonder window!”

“Thou wilt but injure thyself by the attempt, noble knight,” replied his attendant. “I myself will stand at the lattice, and describe to you as I can what passes without.”

“You must not—you shall not!” exclaimed Ivanhoe; “each lattice, each aperture, will be soon a mark for the archers; some random shaft——”

“It shall be welcome!” murmured Rebecca, as with firm pace she ascended two or three steps, which led to the window of which they spoke.

“Rebecca, dear Rebecca!” exclaimed Ivanhoe, “do not expose thyself to wounds and death; at least, cover thyself with yonder ancient buckler, and show as little of your person at the lattice as may be.”

Following with wonderful promptitude the directions of Ivanhoe, and availing herself of the protection of the large ancient shield, which she placed against the lower part of the window, Rebecca, with tolerable security to herself, could witness part of what was passing without the castle, and report to Ivanhoe the preparations which the assailants were making for the storm. Being placed on an angle of the main building, she could not only see what passed beyond the precincts of the castle, but also commanded a view of the outwork likely to be the first object of the meditated assault. In the out-

work was a sallyport corresponding to the postern of the castle, and the whole was surrounded by a strong palisade. Rebecca could observe, from the number of men placed for the defence of this post, that the besieged entertained apprehensions for its safety.

These appearances she hastily communicated to Ivanhoe, and added, "The skirts of the wood seem lined with archers, although only a few are advanced from its dark shadow."

"Under what banner?" asked Ivanhoe.

"Under no ensign of war which I can observe," answered Rebecca.

"A singular novelty," muttered the knight, "to advance to storm such a castle without pennon or banner displayed!—Seest thou who they be that act as leaders?"

"A knight, clad in sable armour, is the most conspicuous," said the Jewess; "he alone is armed from head to heel, and seems to assume the direction of all around him."

"What device does he bear on his shield?" replied Ivanhoe.

"Something resembling a bar of iron, and a padlock painted blue on the black shield."

"A fetterlock and shacklebolt azure,"¹ said Ivanhoe; "I know not who may bear the device, but well I ween it might now be mine own. Canst thou not see the motto?"

"Scarce the device itself at this distance," replied Rebecca; "but when the sun glances fair upon his shield, it shows as I tell you. They appear even now preparing to advance—God of Zion, protect us!—What a dreadful sight!—Those who advance first bear huge shields and defences made of plank; the others follow, bending their bows as they come on.—They raise their bows!—God of Moses, forgive the creatures Thou hast made!"

¹ *Fetterlock*: lock for fetters.—*Shacklebolt azure*: blue padlock.

Her description was here suddenly interrupted by the signal for assault, which was given by the blast of a shrill bugle, and at once answered by a flourish of the Norman trumpets from the battlements. The shouts of both parties augmented the fearful din, the assailants crying, "Saint George for merry England!" and the Normans answering according to the war-cries of their different commanders.

XX.—The Black Knight

THE archers shot, to use the appropriate phrase of the time, so "wholly together," that no point at which a defender could show the least part of his person escaped their eloth-yard shafts. By this sustained discharge, two or three of the garrison were slain, and several others wounded. But, confident in their armour of proof, and in the cover which their situation afforded, the followers of Front-de-Bœuf, and his allies, showed an obstinacy in defence proportioned to the fury of the attack. The whizzing of shafts and of missiles, on both sides, was only interrupted by the shouts which arose when either side inflicted or sustained some notable loss.

"And I must lie here like a bedridden monk," exclaimed Ivanhoe, "while the game that gives me freedom or death is played out by the hand of others!—Look from the window once again, kind maiden, but beware that you are not marked by the archers beneath—Look out once more, and tell me if they yet advance to the storm. What dost thou see, Rebecca?"

"Nothing but the eloud of arrows flying so thiek as to dazzle mine eyes, and to hide the bowmen who shoot them."

"That cannot endure," said Ivanhoe; "if they press not right on to capture the castle by pure force

of arms, the archery may avail but little against stone walls and bulwarks. Look for the Knight of the Fetterlock, fair Rebecca, and see how he bears himself; for as the leader is, so will his followers be."

"I see him not," said Rebecca.

"Foul craven!" exclaimed Ivanhoe; "does he blench from the helm when the wind blows highest?"

"He blenches not! he blenches not!" said Rebecca. "I see him now; he leads a body of men close under the outer barrier of the barbican. They pull down the piles and palisades; they hew down the barriers with axes. His high black plume floats abroad over the throng, like a raven over the field of the slain. They have made a breach in the barriers—they rush in—they are thrust back!—Front-de-Bœuf heads the defenders; I see his gigantic form above the press. They throng again to the breach, and the pass is disputed hand to hand, and man to man. God of Jacob! it is the meeting of two fierce tides—the conflict of two oceans moved by adverse winds!"

She turned her head from the lattice, as if unable longer to endure a sight so terrible.

"Look forth again, Rebecca," said Ivanhoe, mistaking the cause of her retiring; "the archery must in some degree have ceased, since they are now fighting hand to hand. Look again, there is now less danger."

Rebecca again looked forth, and almost immediately exclaimed, "Holy prophets of the law!¹ Front-de-Bœuf and the Black Knight fight hand to hand on the breach, amid the roar of their followers, who watch the progress of the strife—Heaven strike with the cause of the oppressed and of the captive!" She then uttered a loud shriek, and exclaimed, "He is down!—he is down!"

"Who is down?" cried Ivanhoe; "for our dear Lady's sake, tell me which has fallen?"

¹ Moses and Aaron.

"The Black Knight," answered Rebecca faintly; then instantly again shouted with joyful eagerness—"But no—but no!—the name of the Lord of Hosts be blessed!—he is on foot again, and fights as if there were twenty men's strength in his single arm—His sword is broken—he snatches an axe from a yeoman—he presses Front-de-Bœuf with blow on blow—The giant stoops and totters like an oak under the steel of the woodman—he falls—he falls!"

"Front-de-Bœuf?" exclaims Ivanhoe.

"Front-de-Bœuf!" answered the Jewess; "his men rush to the rescue, headed by the haughty Templar—their united force compels the champion to pause—they drag Front-de-Bœuf within the walls."

"The assailants have won the barriers, have they not?" said Ivanhoe.

"They have—they have!" exclaimed Rebecca—"and they press the besieged hard upon the outer wall; some plant ladders, some swarm like bees, and endeavour to ascend upon the shoulders of each other—down go stones, beams and trunks of trees upon their heads, and as fast as they bear the wounded to the rear, fresh men supply their places in the assault—Great God! hast Thou given men Thine own image, that it should be thus cruelly defaced by the hands of their brethren!"

"Think not of that," said Ivanhoe; "this is no time for such thoughts—Who yield?—who push their way?"

"The ladders are thrown down," replied Rebecca, shuddering; "the soldiers lie grovelling under them like crushed reptiles—The besieged have the better."

"Saint George strike for us!" exclaimed the knight; "do the false yeomen give way?"

"No!" exclaimed Rebecca, "they bear themselves right yeomanly—the Black Knight approaches the postern with his huge axe—the thundering blows which he deals, you may hear them above all the

din and shouts of the battle—Stones and beams are hailed down on the bold champion—he regards them no more than if they were thistle-down or feathers!”

“By Saint John of Acre,” said Ivanhoe, “ne thought there was but one man in England that might do such a deed!”

“The postern gate shakes,” continued Rebecca; “it crashes—it is splintered by his blows—they rush in—the outwork is won—O God!—they hurl the defenders from the battlements—they throw them into the moat—O men, if ye be indeed men, spare them that can resist no longer!”

“The bridge—the bridge which communicates with the castle—have they won that pass?” exclaimed Ivanhoe.

“No,” replied Rebecca, “the Templar has destroyed the plank on which they crossed—a few of the defenders escaped with him into the castle—the shrieks and cries which you hear tell the fate of the others—Alas! I see it is still more difficult to look upon victory than upon battle.”

“What do they now, maiden?” said Ivanhoe; “look forth yet again—this is no time to faint at bloodshed.”

“It is over for the time,” answered Rebecca; “our friends strengthen themselves within the outwork which they have mastered, and the garrison only bestow a few bolts on it from interval to interval.”

“Our friends,” said Wilfred, “will surely not abandon an enterprise so gloriously begun and so happily attained. O no! I will put my faith in the good knight whose axe hath rent heart of oak and bars of iron. A fetterlock and a shacklebolt on a field sable—what may that mean?—seest thou nought else, Rebecca, by which the Black Knight may be distinguished?”

“Nothing,” said the Jewess; “all about him is

black as the wing of the night raven. Nothing can I spy that can mark him further—but having once seen him put forth his strength in battle, methinks I could know him among a thousand warriors. It is fearful, yet magnificent, to behold how the arm and heart of one man can triumph over hundreds."

"Rebecca," said Ivanhoe, "thou hast painted a hero; surely they rest but to refresh their force, or to provide the means of crossing the moat. I swear by the honour of my house—I vow by the name of my bright lady-love, I would endure ten years' captivity to fight one day by that good knight's side in such a quarrel as this!"

XXI.—Fire

"ALL is lost, De Bracy, the castle burns."

"Thou art mad to say so!" replied the knight.

"It is all in a light flame on the western side. I have striven in vain to extinguish it. Lead thy men down, as if to a sally; throw the postern-gate open—There are but two men who occupy the float, fling them into the moat, and push across for the barbican. I will charge from the main gate, and attack the barbican on the outside; and if we can regain that post, be assured we shall defend ourselves until we are relieved, or at least till they grant us fair quarter."

De Bracy hastily drew his men together, and rushed down to the postern-gate, which he caused instantly to be thrown open. But scarce was this done ere the portentous strength of the Black Knight forced his way inward in despite of De Bracy and his followers. Two of the foremost instantly fell, and the rest gave way notwithstanding all their leader's efforts to stop them.

"Dogs!" said De Bracy, "will ye let *two* men win our only pass for safety? The castle burns behind

us, villains!—let despair give you courage, or let me forward! I will cope with this champion myself.”

The vaulted passage to which the postern gave entrance, and in which these two redoubted champions were now fighting hand to hand, rung with the furious blows which they dealt each other, De Bracy with his sword, the Black Knight with his ponderous axe. At length the Norman received a blow, which descended with such violence on his crest, that he measured his length on the paved floor.

“Yield thee, Maurice De Bracy,” said the Black Champion, “rescue or no rescue, or thou art but a dead man.”

“I will not yield,” replied De Bracy faintly, “to an unknown conqueror. Tell me thy name, or work thy pleasure on me.”

The Black Knight whispered something into the ear of the vanquished.

“I yield me to be true prisoner, rescue or no rescue,” answered the Norman.

“Go to the barbican,” said the victor, in a tone of authority, “and there wait my further orders.”

“Ye—let me say,” said De Bracy, “what it import—know. Wilfred of Ivanhoe is wounded and a—, and will perish in the burning castle without—help.”

“Wilfred of Ivanhoe!” exclaimed the Black Knight—“The life of every man in the castle shall answer it if a hair of his head be singed—Show me his chamber!”

“Ascend yonder winding stair,” said De Bracy; “it leads to his apartment.”

Ivanhoe had been awakened from his brief slumber by the noise of the battle; and his attendant had, at his anxious desire, again placed herself at the window to watch and report to him the fate of the attack. At length the volumes of smoke which rolled into the apartment—the cries for water, which were heard

even above the din of the battle, made them sensible of the progress of this new danger.

"The castle burns," said Rebecca; "it burns—What can we do to save ourselves?"

"Fly, Rebecca, and save thine own life," said Ivanhoe, "for no human aid can avail me."

"I will not fly," answered Rebecca; "we will be saved or perish together—And yet, great God!—my father, my father—what will be his fate!"

At this moment the door of the apartment flew open, and the Templar presented himself,—a ghastly figure, for his gilded armour was broken and bloody, and the plume was partly shorn away, partly burnt from his casque. "I have found thee," said he to Rebecca; "thou shalt prove I will keep my word to share weal and woe with thee—up and instantly follow me!"

"Alone," answered Rebecca, "I will not follow thee. If thy heart be not hard as thy breastplate—save my aged father—save this wounded knight!"

"A knight," answered the Templar, with his characteristic calmness, "a knight, Rebecca, must encounter his fate, whether it meet him in the shape of sword or flame—and who recks how or where a Jew meets with his?"

"Savage warrior," said Rebecca, "rather will I perish in the flames than accept safety from thee!"

"Thou shalt not choose, Rebecca—once didst thou foil me, but never mortal did so twice."

So saying, he seized on the terrified maiden, who filled the air with her shrieks, and bore her out of the room in his arms without regarding her cries, or the menaces which Ivanhoe thundered against him. "Hound of the Temple—stain to thine Order—set free the damsel! Traitor of Bois-Guilbert, it is Ivanhoe commands thee!—Villain, I will have thy heart's blood!"

"I had not found thee, Wilfred," said the Black

Knight, who at that instant entered the apartment, "but for thy shouts."

"If thou be'st true knight," said Wilfred, "think not of me—pursue yon ravisher—save the Lady Rowena—look to the noble Cedric!"

"In their turn," answered he of the fetterlock, "but thine is first."

And seizing upon Ivanhoe, he bore him off with as much ease as the Templar had carried off Rebecca, rushed with him to the postern, and having there delivered his burden to the care of two yeomen, he again entered the castle to assist in the rescue of the other prisoners.

Meantime Athelstane had made his escape into the court of the castle, where sat the fierce Templar, mounted on horseback, surrounded by several of the garrison. Rebecca was in the midst of the little party; and Bois-Guilbert, notwithstanding the confusion of the bloody fray, showed every attention to her safety. Athelstane doubted not that it was Rowena whom the knight was carrying off, in despite of all resistance which could be offered.

"By the will of Saint Edward," he said, "I will rescue her from yonder over-proud knight, and he shall die by my hand!"

To snatch a mace from the pavement, to rush on the Templar's band, and to strike in quick succession to the right and left, levelling a warrior at each blow, was, for Athelstane's great strength, but the work of a single moment; he was soon within two yards of Bois-Guilbert, whom he defied in his loudest tone.

"Turn, false-heart'd Templar! let go her whom thou art unworthy to touch—turn, limb of a band of murdering and hypocritical robbers!"

"Dog!" said the Templar, grinding his teeth, "I will teach thee to blaspheme the holy Order of the Temple of Zion;" and with these words, half

wheeling his steed, he discharged a fearful blow upon the head of Athelstane. So trenchant was his weapon that it shore asunder the mace which the Saxon reared to parry the blow, and, descending on his head, levelled him with the earth.

XXII.—The Trial of Rebecca

THE tribunal, erected for her trial, occupied the days or elevated part of the upper end of the great hall. On an elevated seat, directly before the accused, sat the Grand Master of the Temple, in full and ample robes of flowing white, holding in his hand the mystic staff, which bore the symbol of the Order. The Preceptors, of whom there were four present, occupied seats lower in height, and somewhat drawn back behind that of their superior; and the knights, who enjoyed no such rank in the Order, were placed on benches still lower, and preserving the same distance from the Preceptors as these from the Grand Master. Behind them, but still upon the days or elevated portion of the hall, stood the esquires of the Order, in white dresses of an inferior quality.

The remaining and lower part of the hall was filled with guards, holding partisans, and with other attendants whom curiosity had drawn thither, to see at once a Grand Master and a Jewish sorceress.

The Grand Master raised his voice, and addressed the assembly.

"Reverend and valiant men, Knights, Preceptors, and Companions of this Holy Order, my brethren and my children! We have summoned to our presence a Jewish woman, by name Rebecca, daughter of Isaac of York—a woman infamous for witcheries; whereby she hath maddened the blood, and besotted the brain, not of a churl, but of a knight—not of a secular knight, but of one devoted to the service of

the Holy Temple—not of a Knight Companion, but of a Preceptor of our Order, first in honour as in place. Our brother, Brian de Bois-Guilbert, is well known as a true and zealous champion of the Cross, by whose arm many deeds of valour have been wrought in the Holy Land. If we were told that such a man, so honoured, and so honourable, suddenly casting away regard for his character, his vows, his brethren, and his prospects, had associated to himself a Jewish damsel, defended her person in preference to his own, and, finally, was so utterly blinded and besotted by his folly, as to bring her even to one of our own Preceptories, what should we say but that the noble knight was possessed by some evil demon, or influenced by some wicked spell?—If we could suppose it otherwise, Brian de Bois-Guilbert should be cut off and cast out from our congregation, were he the right hand and right eye thereof.”

He paused. A low murmur went through the assembly, and all anxiously waited what the Grand Master was next to propose.

“Such,” he said, “and so great should indeed be the punishment of a Knight Templar, who willfully offended against the rules of his Order. But if, by means of charms and of spells, Satan had obtained dominion over the knight, penance because he cast his eyes too lightly upon a damsel’s beauty, we are then rather to lament than chastise his backsliding; and, imposing on him only such penance as may purify him from his iniquity, we are to turn the full edge of our indignation upon the accursed instrument, which had so well-nigh occasioned his utter falling away.—Stand forth, therefore, and bear witness, ye who have witnessed these unhappy doings, that we may judge of the sum and bearing thereof.”

Several witnesses were called upon to prove the

risk to which Bois-Guilbert exposed himself in endeavouring to save Rebeeca from the blazing castle, and his neglect of his personal defence in attending to her safety. The dangers which Bois-Guilbert surmounted, in themselves sufficiently great, became portentous in their narrative. The devotion of the knight to Rebeeca's defence was exaggerated beyond the bounds, not only of discretion, but even of the most frantic excess of chivalrous zeal.

The Preeptor of Templestowe was then called on to describe the manner in which Bois-Guilbert and the Jewess arrived at the Preceptory. The evidence of Malvoisin was skilfully guarded. But while he apparently studied to spare the feelings of Bois-Guilbert, he threw in, from time to time, such hints, as seemed to infer that he laboured under some temporary alienation of mind, so deeply did he appear to be enamoured of the damsel whom he brought along with him. With sighs of penitence, the Preeptor avowed his own contrition for having admitted Rebecca and her lover within the walls of the Preceptory—"But my defence," he concluded, "has been made in my confession to our most reverend father the Grand Master; he knows my motives were not evil, though my conduct may have been irregular."

"Thou hast spoken well, Brother Albert," said Beaumanoir; "thy motives were good, but thy conduct was wrong. Were it not well, brethren, that we examine something into the former life and conversation of this woman, specially that we may discover whether she be one likely to use magical charms and spells?"

There was a bustle in the lower part of the hall, and when the Grand Master inquired the reason, it was replied, there was in the crowd a bedridden man, whom the prisoner had restored to the perfect use of his limbs, by a miraculous balsam.

The poor peasant, a Saxon by birth, was dragged forward to the bar. Perfectly cured he certainly was not, for he supported himself forward on crutches to give evidence. Most unwilling was his testimony, and given with many tears; but he admitted that two years since, when residing at York, he was suddenly afflicted with a sore disease, while labouring for Isaac the rich Jew, in his vocation of a joiner; that he had been unable to stir from his bed until the remedies applied by Rebecca's directions, and especially a warming and spiey-smelling balsam, had in some degree restored him to the use of his limbs. "And may it please your gracious reverence," said the man, "I cannot think the damsel meant harm by me, though she hath the ill hap to be a Jewess; for even when I used her remedy, I said the Pater and the Creed, and it never operated a whit less kindly."

"What is thy name, fellow?" said the Grand Master to the cripple.

"Higg, the son of Snell," answered the peasant.

"Then, Higg, son of Snell," said the Grand Master, "I tell thee it is better to be bedridden, than to accept the benefit of unbelievers' medicine that thou mayest arise and walk."

Higg, the son of Snell, withdrew into the crowd, but, interested in the fate of his benefactress, lingered until he should learn her doom.

Two men-at-arms were now called forward; one of them had seen Rebecca work a cure upon a wounded man, brought with them to the castle of Torquilstone. She did, he said, make certain signs upon the wound, and repeated certain mysterious words, when the iron head of a square cross-bow bolt disengaged itself from the wound, the bleeding was stanch'd, the wound was closed, and the dying man was, within the quarter of an hour, walking upon the ramparts, and assisting the witness in

managing a mangonel, or machine for hurling stones. This legend was probably founded upon the fact, that Rebecca had attended on the wounded Ivanhoe when in the castle of Torquilstone. The witness drew from his pouch the very bolt-head, which, according to his story, had been miraculously extracted from the wound; and as the iron weighed a full ounce, it completely confirmed the tale, however marvellous.

The Grand Master had collected the suffrages, and now in a solemn tone demanded of Rebecca what she had to say against the sentence of condemnation, which he was about to pronounce.

"To invoke your pity," said the lovely Jewess, with a voice somewhat tremulous with emotion, "would, I am aware, be as useless as I should hold it mean. To state that to relieve the sick and wounded of another religion, cannot be displeasing to the acknowledged Founder of both our faiths, were also unavailing! to plead that many things which these men (whom may Heaven pardon!) have spoken against me are impossible, would avail me but little, since you believe in their possibility. There is yet one chance of life left to me," said Rebecca, "even by your own fierce laws. Life has been miserable—miserable, at least of late—but I will not cast away the gift of God, while He affords me the means of defending it. I deny this charge—I maintain my innocence, and I declare the falsehood of this accusation. I challenge the privilege of trial by combat, and will appear by my champion."

"So be it then, in the name of Heaven," said the Grand Master; "and may God show the right!"

"Amen," replied the Preceptors around him, and the word was deeply echoed by the whole assembly.

XXIII.—Richard Cœur-de-Lion

THE Black Knight held his way straight to a neighbouring religious house, called the Priory of Saint Botolph, to which the wounded Ivanhoe had been removed when the castle was taken, under the guidance of the faithful Gurth and the magnanimous Wamba. On the succeeding morning he was about to set forth on his journey, accompanied by the jester Wamba, who attended as his guide.

"Sir Knight of the Fetterlock, since it is your pleasure so to be distinguished," said Ivanhoe, "I fear me you have chosen a talkative and a troublesome fool to be your guide. But he knows every path and alley in the woods as well as e'er a hunter who frequents them; and the poor knave, as thou hast partly seen, is as faithful as steel."

"Nay," said the knight, "and he have the gift of showing my road, I shall not grumble with him that he desires to make it pleasant. Fare thee well, kind Wilfred—I charge thee not to attempt to travel till to-morrow at earliest."

So saying, he extended his hand to Ivanhoe, who pressed it to his lips, took leave of the Prior, mounted his horse, and departed, with Wamba for his companion.

"If I mistake not, there are company in yonder brake that are on the look-out for us."

"What makes thee judge so?" said the knight.

"Because I have twice or thrice noticed the glance of a morrion from amongst the green leaves. Had they been honest men, they had kept the path. But yonder thicket is a choice chapel for the clerks of Saint Nicholas."

"By my faith," said the knight, closing his visor, "I think thou be'st in the right on't."

And in good time did he close it, for three arrows flew at the same instant from the suspected spot against his head and breast, one of which would have penetrated to the brain, had it not been turned aside by the steel visor.

"Thanks, trusty armourer," said the knight.—"Wamba, let us close with them,"—and he rode straight to the thicket. He was met by six or seven men-at-arms, who ran against him with their lances at full career. Three of the weapons struck against him, and splintered with as little effect as if they had been driven against a tower of steel. The Black Knight's eyes seemed to flash fire even through the aperture of his visor. He raised himself in his stirrups with an air of inexpressible dignity, and exclaimed, "What means this, my masters?"—The men made no other reply than by drawing their swords and attacking him on every side, crying, "Die, tyrant!"

"Ha! Saint Edward! Ha! Saint George!" said the Black Knight, striking down a man at every invocation; "have we traitors here?"

A knight in blue armour, who had hitherto kept himself behind the other assailants, spurred forward with his lance, and taking aim, not at the rider but at the steed, wounded the noble animal mortally.

"That was a felon stroke!" exclaimed the Black Knight, as the steed fell to the earth, bearing his rider along with him.

And at this moment, Wamba winded the bugle, for the whole had passed so speedily, that he had not time to do so sooner. The sudden sound made the murderers bear back, and Wamba, though so imperfectly weaponed, did not hesitate to rush in and assist the Black Knight to rise.

"Shame on ye, false cowards!" exclaimed he in the blue harness, who seemed to lead the assailants,

"do ye fly from the empty blast of a horn blown by a Jester?"

Animated by his words, they attacked the Black Knight anew, whose best refuge was now to place his back against an oak, and defend himself with his sword. The felon knight, who had taken another spear, watching the moment when his formidable antagonist was most closely pressed, galloped against him in hopes to nail him with his lance against the tree, when his purpose was again intercepted by Wamba. The Jester hovered on the skirts of the fight, and effectually checked the fatal career of the Blue Knight, by hamstringing his horse with a stroke of his sword. Horse and man went to the ground; yet the situation of the Knight of the Fetterlock continued very precarious, when a grey-goose shaft suddenly stretched on the earth one of the most formidable of his assailants, and a band of yeomen broke forth from the glade, headed by Locksley and the jovial Friar, who soon disposed of the ruffians, all of whom lay on the spot dead or mortally wounded. The Black Knight thanked his deliverers with a dignity they had not observed in his former bearing.

"It concerns me much," he said, "even before I express my full gratitude to my ready friends, to discover, if I may, who have been my unprovoked enemies.—Open the visor of that Blue Knight, Wamba, who seems the chief of these villains."

"Come, valiant sir," said Wamba, "I must be your armourer as well as your equerry—I have dismounted you, and now I will unhelm you."

So saying, with no very gentle hand he undid the helmet of the Blue Knight, which, rolling to a distance on the grass, displayed to the Knight of the Fetterlock grizzled locks, and a countenance he did not expect to have seen under such circumstances.

"Waldemar Fitzurse!" he said in astonishment;

"say me the truth—confess who set thee on this traitorous deed."

"Thy father's son," answered Waldemar, "who, in so doing, did but avenge on thee thy disobedience to thy father."

The Black Knight's eyes sparkled with indignation, but his better nature overcame it. He pressed his hand against his brow, and remained an instant gazing on the face of the humbled baron, in whose features pride was contending with shame.

"Thou dost not ask thy life, Waldemar," he said.

"He that is in the lion's clutch," answered Fitzurse, "knows it were needless."

"Take it, then, unasked; the lion preys not on prostrate carcasses.—Take thy life, but with this condition, that in three days thou shalt leave England, and go to hide thine infamy in thy Norman castle, and that thou wilt never mention the name of John of Anjou as connected with thy felony.—Let this knight have a steed, Locksley, for I see your yeomen have caught those which were running loose, and let him depart unharmed."

"But that I judge I listen to a voice whose behests must not be disputed," answered the yeoman, "I would send a shaft after the skulking villain that should spare him the labour of a long journey."

"Thou bearest an English heart, Locksley," said the Black Knight, "and well dost judge thou art the more bound to obey my behest—I am Richard of England!"

At these words, pronounced in a tone of majesty, the yeomen at once kneeled down before him, and at the same time tendered their allegiance, and implored pardon for their offences.

"Rise, my friends," said Richard. "Your misdemeanours, whether in forest or field, have been atoned by the loyal services you rendered my distressed subjects before the walls of Torquilstone,

and the rescue you have this day afforded to your sovereign. Arise, my liegemen, and be good subjects in future.—And thou, brave Locksley——”

“Call me no longer Locksley, my liege, but know me under the name, which, I fear, fame hath blown too widely not to have reached even your royal ears—I am Robin Hood of Sherwood Forest.”

XXIV.—The Trial by Combat

OUR scene now returns to the exterior of the Castle, or Preceptory, of Templestowe, about the hour when the bloody die was to be cast for the life or death of Rebecca. It was a scene of bustle and life, as if the whole vicinity had poured forth its inhabitants to a village wake, or rural feast. A throne was erected for the Grand Master at the east end of the tilt-yard, surrounded with seats of distinction for the Preceptors and Knights of the Order. At the opposite end of the lists was a pile of faggots, so arranged around a stake, deeply fixed in the ground, as to leave a space for the victim whom they were destined to consume, to enter within the fatal circle, in order to be chained to the stake by the fetters which hung ready for that purpose.

At length the drawbridge fell, the gates opened, and a knight, bearing the great standard of the Order, sallied from the castle, preceded by six trumpets, and followed by the Knights Preceptors, two and two, the Grand Master coming last, mounted on a stately horse, whose furniture was of the simplest kind. Behind him came Brian de Bois-Guilbert, armed *cap-à-pie* in bright armour, but without his lance, shield, or sword, which were borne by his two esquires behind him.

The unfortunate Rebecca was conducted to the black chair placed near the pile. On her first glance

at the terrible spot where preparations were making for a death alike dismaying to the mind and painful to the body, she was observed to shudder and shut her eyes, praying internally doubtless, for her lips moved though no speech was heard. In the space of a minute she opened her eyes, looked fixedly on the pile as if to familiarise her mind with the object, and then slowly and naturally turned away her head.

Meanwhile, the Grand Master had assumed his seat. Malvoisin, then, acting as godfather of the champion, stepped forward, and laid the glove of the Jewess, which was the pledge of battle, at the feet of the Grand Master.

The Grand Master commanded the herald to stand forth and do his devoir. The trumpets then again flourished, and a herald, stepping forward, proclaimed aloud,—“Oyez, oyez, oyez.¹—Here standeth the good knight, Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert, ready to do battle with any knight of free blood, who will sustain the quarrel allowed and allotted to the Jewess Rebecca.”

“No champion appears for the appellant,” said the Grand Master. “Go, herald, and ask her whether she expects any one to do battle for her in this her cause.”

“Say to the Grand Master,” replied Rebecca, “that I maintain my innocence, and do not yield me as justly condemned, lest I become guilty of mine own blood. Say to him, that I challenge such delay as his forms will permit, to see if God, whose opportunity is in man’s extremity, will raise me up a deliverer; and when such uttermost space is passed, may His holy will be done!” The herald retired to carry this answer to the Grand Master.

“God forbid,” said Lucas Beaumanoir, “that Jew or Pagan should impeach us of injustice!—Until the shadows be cast from the west to the eastward, will

¹ *Oyez*: hear.

we wait to see if a champion shall appear for this unfortunate woman. When the day is so far passed, let her prepare for death."

The judges had now been two hours in the lists, awaiting in vain the appearance of a champion.

It was, however, the general belief that no one could or would appear for a Jewess, accused of sorcery; and the knights whispered to each other, that it was time to declare the pledge of Rebecca forfeited. At this instant a knight, urging his horse to speed, appeared on the plain advancing towards the lists. A hundred voices exclaimed, "A champion! a champion!" And the multitude shouted unanimously as the knight rode into the tilt-yard. The second glance, however, served to destroy the hope that his timely arrival had excited. His horse, urged for many miles to its utmost speed, appeared to reel from fatigue, and the rider, either from weakness, weariness, or both, seemed scarce able to support himself in the saddle.

To the summons of the herald, who demanded his rank, his name, and purpose, the stranger knight answered readily and boldly, "I am a good knight and noble, come hither to sustain with lance and sword the just and lawful quarrel of this damsel, Rebecca, daughter of Isaac of York; to uphold the doom pronounced against her to be false and truthless, and to defy Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert, as a traitor, murderer, and liar; as I will prove in this field with my body against his, by the aid of God, of Our Lady, and of Monseigneur Saint George, the good knight."

"The stranger must first show," said Malvoisin, "that he is good knight and of honourable lineage. The Temple sendeth not forth her champions against nameless men."

"My name," said the knight, raising his helmet, "is better known, my lineage more pure, Malvoisin, than thine own. I am Wilfred of Ivanhoe."

"I will not fight with thee at present," said the

Templar, in a changed and hollow voice. "Get thy wounds healed, purvey thee a better horse, and it may be I will hold it worth my while to scourge out of thee this boyish spirit of bravado."

"Ha! proud Templar," said Ivanhoe, "hast thou forgotten that twice didst thou fall before this lance? Remember the lists at Acre—remember the Passage of Arins at Ashby—remember thy proud vaunt in the hall of Rotherwood, and the gage of your gold chain against my reliquary, that thou wouldst do battle with Wilfred of Ivanhoe, and recover the honour thou hadst lost! By that reliquary, and the holy relic it contains, I will proclaim thee, Templar, a coward in every court in Europe—in every Preceptory of thine Order—unless thou do battle without further delay."

Bois-Guilbert turned his countenance irresolutely towards Rebecca, and then exclaimed, looking fiercely at Ivanhoe, "Dog of a Saxon! take thy lance, and prepare for the death thou hast drawn upon thee!"

"Does the Grand Master allow me the combat?" said Ivanhoe.

"I may not deny what thou hast challenged," said the Grand Master, "provided the maiden accepts thee as her champion. Yet I would thou wert in better plight to do battle. An enemy of our Order hast thou ever been, yet would I have thee honourably met with."

"Thus—thus as I am, and not otherwise," said Ivanhoe; "it is the judgment of God—to His keeping I commend myself.—Rebecca," said he, riding up to the fatal chair, "dost thou accept of me for thy champion?"

"I do," she said—"I do," fluttered by an emotion which the fear of death had been unable to produce, "I do accept thee as the champion whom Heaven hath sent me. Yet, no—no—thy wounds are uncured—Meet not that proud man—why shouldst thou perish also?"

But Ivanhoe was already at his post, and had closed his visor, and assumed his lance. Bois-Guilbert did the same; and his esquire remarked, as he clasped his visor, that his face, which had, notwithstanding the variety of emotions by which he had been agitated, continued during the whole morning of an ashy paleness, was now become suddenly very much flushed.

The Grand Master, who held in his hand the gage of battle, Rebecca's glove, threw it into the lists, and pronounced the fatal signal words, *Laissez aller*.

The trumpets sounded, and the knights charged each other in full career. The wearied horse of Ivanhoe, and its no less exhausted rider, went down, as all had expected, before the well-aimed lance and vigorous steed of the Templar. This issue of the combat all had foreseen; but although the spear of Ivanhoe did but, in comparison, touch the shield of Bois-Guilbert, that champion, to the astonishment of all who beheld it, reeled in his saddle, lost his stirrups, and fell in the lists.

Ivanhoe, extricating himself from his fallen horse, was soon on foot, hastening to mend his fortune with his sword; but his antagonist arose not. Wilfred, placing his foot on his breast, and the sword's point to his throat, commanded him to yield him, or die on the spot. Bois-Guilbert returned no answer.

"Slay him not, Sir Knight," cried the Grand Master, "unshriven and unabsolved—kill not body and soul! We allow him vanquished."

He descended into the lists, and commanded them to unhelm the conquered champion. His eyes were closed—the dark red flush was still on his brow. As they looked on him in astonishment, the eyes opened—but they were fixed and glazed. The flush passed from his brow, and gave way to the pallid hue of death. Unscathed by the lance of his enemy, he had died a victim to the violence of his own contending passions.

"This is indeed the judgment of God," said the Grand Master, looking upwards — "*Fiat voluntas tua!*"¹

XXV.—Rebecca's Farewell

BRIEFLY after the judicial combat, Cedric the Saxon was summoned to the court of Richard, which, for the purpose of quieting the counties that had been disturbed by the ambition of his brother, was then held at York. Cedric tushed and pshawed more than once at the message—but he refused not obedience. In fact, the return of Richard had quenched every hope that he had entertained of restoring a Saxon dynasty in England. His aversion to the Norman race of kings was much undermined,—first, by consideration of the impossibility of ridding England of the new dynasty; and, secondly, by the personal attention of King Richard, who delighted in the blunt humour of Cedric, and so dealt with the noble Saxon, that, ere he had been a guest at court for seven days, he had given his consent to the marriage of his ward Rowena and his son Wilfred of Ivanhoe.

The nuptials of our hero, thus formally approved by his father, were celebrated in the most august of temples, the noble Minster of York.

It was upon the second morning after this happy bridal, that the Lady Rowena was made acquainted by her handmaid Elgitha, that a damsel desired admission to her presence, and solicited that their parley² might be without witness. Rowena wondered, hesitated, became curious, and ended by commanding the damsel to be admitted, and her attendants to withdraw.

She entered—a noble and commanding figure, the long white veil, in which she was shrouded, over-

¹ May Thy (*i.e.* God's) will be done.

² Parley: conversation.

shadowing rather than concealing the elegance and majesty of her shape. Her demeanour was that of respect, unmingled by the least shade either of fear, or of a wish to propitiate favour; but Elgitha had no sooner retired with unwilling steps, than, to the surprise of the Lady of Ivanhoe, her fair visitant kneeled on one knee, pressed her hands to her forehead, and bending her head to the ground, in spite of Rowena's resistance, kissed the embroidered hem of her tunic.

"What means this, lady?" said the surprised bride; "or why do you offer to me a deference so unusual?"

"Because to you, Lady of Ivanhoe," said Rebecca, rising up and resuming the usual quiet dignity of her manner, "I may lawfully, and without rebuke, pay the debt of gratitude which I owe to Wilfred of Ivanhoe. I am—forgive the boldness which has offered to you the homage of my country—I am the unhappy Jewess for whom your husband hazarded his life against such fearful odds in the tilt-yard of Templestowe."

"Damsel," said Rowena, "Wilfred of Ivanhoe on that day rendered back but in slight measure your unceasing charity towards him in his wounds and misfortunes. Speak, is there aught remains in which he or I can serve thee?"

"Nothing," said Rebecca calmly, "unless you will transmit to him my grateful farewell."

"You leave England, then?" said Rowena, scarce recovering the surprise of this extraordinary visit.

"I leave it, lady, ere this moon again changes. My father hath a brother high in favour with Mohammed Boabdil, King of Granada—thither we go, secure of peace and protection, for the payment of such ransom as the Moslem exact from our people."

"And are you not then as well protected in England?" said Rowena. "My husband has favour

with the King—the King himself is just and generous.”

“Lady,” said Rebecca, “I doubt it not—but the people of England are a fierce race, quarrelling ever with their neighbours or among themselves, and ready to plunge the sword into the bowels of each other. Such is no safe abode for the children of my people.”

“But you, maiden,” said Rowena—“you surely can have nothing to fear. She who nursed the sick-bed of Ivanhoe,” she continued, rising with enthusiasm—“she can have nothing to fear in England, where Saxon and Norman will contend who shall most do her honour.”

“Thy speech is fair, lady,” said Rebecca, “and thy purpose fairer; but it may not be—there is a gulf betwixt us. Our breeding, our faith, alike forbid either to pass over it. Farewell—yet, ere I go, indulge me one request. The bridal-veil hangs over thy face; deign to raise it, and let me see the features of which fame speaks so highly.”

“They are scarce worthy of being looked upon,” said Rowena; “but, expecting the same from my visitant, I remove the veil.”

She took it off accordingly; and, partly from the consciousness of beauty, partly from bashfulness, she blushed so intensely, that cheek, brow, neck, and bosom, were suffused with crimson.

“Lady,” said Rebecca, “the countenance you have deigned to show me will long dwell in my remembrance. Long, long will I remember your features, and bless God that I leave my noble deliverer united with——”

She stopped short—her eyes filled with tears. She hastily wiped them, and answered to the anxious inquiries of Rowena—“I am well, lady—well. But my heart swells when I think of Torquilstone and the lists of Templestowe.—Farewell. One, the most

trifling part of my duty, remains undischarged. Accept this casket—startle not at its contents.”

Rowena opened the small silver-chased casket, and perceived a carcanet or necklace, with ear-jewels, of diamonds, which were obviously of immense value.

“It is impossible,” she said, tendering back the casket. “I dare not accept a gift of such consequence.”

“Yet keep it, lady,” returned Rebecca. “You have power, rank, command, influence; we have wealth, the source both of our strength and weakness; the value of these toys, ten times multiplied, would not influence half so much as your slightest wish. Accept them, lady—to me they are valueless. I will never wear jewels more.”

“You are then unhappy!” said Rowena, struck with the manner in which Rebecca uttered the last words. “Oh, remain with us—the counsel of holy men will wean you from your erring law, and I will be a sister to you.”

“No, lady,” answered Rebecca, the same calm melancholy reigning in her soft voice and beautiful features—“that may not be. I may not change the faith of my fathers. He, to whom I dedicate my future life, will be my comforter, if I do His will.”

“Have you then convents, to one of which you mean to retire?” asked Rowena.

“No, lady,” said the Jewess; “but among our people, since the time of Abraham downwards, have been women who have devoted their thoughts to Heaven, and their actions to works of kindness to men, tending the sick, feeding the hungry, and relieving the distressed. Among these will Rebecca be numbered. Say this to thy lord, should he chance to inquire after the fate of her whose life he saved.”

There was an involuntary tremor in Rebecca's voice, and a tenderness of accent, which perhaps

betrayed more than she would willingly have expressed. She hastened to bid Rowena adieu.

"Farewell," she said. "May He, who made both Jew and Christian, shower down on you His choicest blessings! The bark that wafts us hence will be under weigh ere we can reach the port."

TALES FROM SHAKESPEARE

TOLD BY CHARLES LAMB

I.—The Merchant of Venice

SHYLOCK, the Jew, lived at Venice: he was an usurer, who had amassed an immense fortune by lending money at great interest to Christian merchants. Shylock, being a hard-hearted man, exacted the payment of the money he lent with such severity, that he was much disliked by all good men, and particularly by Antonio, a young merchant of Venice; and Shylock as much hated Antonio, because he used to lend money to people in distress, and would never take any interest for the money he lent; therefore there was great enmity between this covetous Jew and the generous merchant Antonio. Whenever Antonio met Shylock on the Rialto (or Exchange), he used to reproach him with his usuries and hard dealings, which the Jew would bear with seeming patience, while he secretly meditated revenge.

Antonio was the kindest man that lived, and had the most unwearied spirit in doing courtesies; indeed, he was one in whom the ancient Roman honour more appeared than in any that drew breath in Italy. He was greatly beloved by all his fellow-citizens; but the friend who was nearest and dearest

to his heart was Bassanio, a noble Venetian, who, having but a small patrimony, had nearly exhausted his little fortune by living in too expensive a manner for his slender means, as young men of high rank with small fortunes are too apt to do. Whenever Bassanio wanted money, Antonio assisted him; and it seemed as if they had but one heart and one purse between them.

One day Bassanio came to Antonio, and told him that he wished to repair his fortune by a wealthy marriage with a lady whom he dearly loved, whose father, that was lately dead, had left her sole heiress to a large estate; and that in her father's lifetime he used to visit at her house, when he thought he had observed this lady had sometimes from her eyes sent speechless messages, that seemed to say he would be no unwelcome suitor; but not having money to furnish himself with an appearance befitting the lover of so rich an heiress, he besought Antonio to add to the many favours he had shown him, by lending him three thousand ducats.

Antonio had no money by him at that time to lend his friend; but expecting soon to have some ships come home laden with merchandise, he said he would go to Shylock, the rich money-lender, and borrow the money upon the credit of those ships.

Antonio and Bassanio went together to Shylock, and Antonio asked the Jew to lend him three thousand ducats upon any interest he should require, to be paid out of the merchandise contained in his ships at sea. On this, Shylock thought within himself, "If I can once catch him on the hip, I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him; he hates our Jewish nation; he lends out money gratis, and among the merchants he rails at me and my well-earned bargains, which he calls interest. Cursed be my tribe if I forgive him!" Antonio finding he was musing within himself and did not answer, and

being impatient for money, said, "Shylock, do you hear? will you lend the money?" To this question the Jew replied, "Signior Antonio, on the Rialto many a time and often you have railed at me about my moneys and my usuries, and I have borne it with a patient shrug, for sufferance is the badge of all our tribe; and then you have called me unbeliever, cut-throat dog, and spit upon my Jewish garments, and spurned at me with your foot, as if I was a cur. Well then, it now appears you need my help; and you come to me, and say, *Shylock, lend me moneys*. Has a dog money? Is it possible a cur should lend three thousand ducats? Shall I bend low and say, Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last, another time you called me dog, and for these courtesies I am to lend you moneys?" Antonio replied, "I am as like to call you so again, to spit on you again, and spurn you too. If you will lend me this money, lend it not to me as to a friend, but rather lend it to me as to an enemy, that, if I break, you may with better face exact the penalty." "Why, look you," said Shylock, "how you storm! I would be friends with you, and have your love. I will forget the shames you have put upon me. I will supply your wants, and take no interest for my money." This seemingly kind offer greatly surprised Antonio; and then Shylock, still pretending kindness, and that all he did was to gain Antonio's love, again said he would lend him the three thousand ducats, and take no interest for his money; only Antonio should go with him to a lawyer, and there sign in merry sport a bond, that if he did not repay the money by a certain day, he would forfeit a pound of flesh, to be cut off from any part of his body that Shylock pleased.

"Content," said Antonio: "I will sign to this bond, and say there is much kindness in the Jew."

Bassanio said Antonio should not sign to such a

bond for him; but still Antonio insisted that he would sign it, for that before the day of payment came, his ships would return laden with many times the value of the money.

Shylock, hearing this debate, exclaimed, "O father Abraham, what suspicious people these Christians are! Their own hard dealings teach them to suspect the thoughts of others. I pray you tell me this, Bassanio: if he should break his day, what should I gain by the exaction of the forfeiture? A pound of man's flesh, taken from a man, is not so estimable, nor profitable neither, as the flesh of mutton or beef. I say, to buy his favour I offer this friendship: if he will take it, so; if not, adieu."

At last, against the advice of Bassanio, who, notwithstanding all the Jew had said of his kind intentions, did not like his friend should run the hazard of this shocking penalty for his sake, Antonio signed the bond, thinking it really was (as the Jew said) merely in sport.

The rich heiress that Bassanio wished to marry lived near Venice, at a place called Belmont: her name was Portia.

Bassanio being so kindly supplied with money by his friend Antonio, at the hazard of his life, set out for Belmont with a splendid train, and attended by a gentleman of the name of Gratiano.

Bassanio proving successful in his suit, Portia in a short time consented to accept of him for a husband.

Bassanio confessed to Portia that he had no fortune, and that his high birth and noble ancestry was all that he could boast of: she, who loved him for his worthy qualities, and had riches enough not to regard wealth in a husband, answered with a graceful modesty, that she would wish herself a thousand times more fair, and ten thousand times more rich, to be more worthy of him; and then the accom-

plished Portia prettily dispraised herself, and said she was an unlessoned girl, unschooled, unpractised, yet not so old but that she could learn, and that she would commit her gentle spirit to be directed and governed by him in all things; and she said, "Myself and what is mine, to you and yours is now converted. But yesterday, Bassanio, I was the lady of this fair mansion, queen of myself, and mistress over these servants; and now this house, these servants, and myself, are yours, my lord; I give them with this ring;" presenting a ring to Bassanio.

Bassanio was so overpowered with gratitude and wonder at the gracious manner in which the rich and noble Portia accepted of a man of his humble fortunes, that he could not express his joy and reverence to the dear lady who so honoured him, by anything but broken words of love and thankfulness; and taking the ring, he vowed never to part with it.

Gratiano and Nerissa, Portia's waiting-maid, were in attendance upon their lord and lady, when Portia so gracefully promised to become the obedient wife of Bassanio; and Gratiano, wishing Bassanio and the generous lady joy, desired permission to be married at the same time.

"With all my heart, Gratiano," said Bassanio, "if you can get a wife."

Gratiano then said that he loved the lady Portia's fair waiting gentlewoman, Nerissa, and that she had promised to be his wife, if her lady married Bassanio. Portia asked Nerissa if this was true. Nerissa replied, "Madam, it is so, if you approve of it." Portia willingly consenting. Bassanio pleasantly said, "Then our wedding-feast shall be much honoured by your marriage, Gratiano."

The happiness of these lovers was sadly crossed at this moment by the entrance of a messenger, who brought a letter from Antonio containing fearful tidings. When Bassanio read Antonio's letter, Portia

feared it was to tell him of the death of some dear friend, he looked so pale; and inquiring what was the news which had so distressed him, he said, "O sweet Portia, here are a few of the unpleasantest words that ever blotted paper: gentle lady, when I first imparted my love to you, I freely told you all the wealth I had ran in my veins; but I should have told you that I had less than nothing, being in debt." Bassanio then told Portia what has been here related, of his borrowing the money of Antonio, and of Antonio's procuring it of Shylock the Jew, and of the bond by which Antonio had engaged to forfeit a pound of flesh, if it was not repaid by a certain day: and then Bassanio read Antonio's letter; the words of which were, "*Sweet Bassanio, my ships are all lost, my bond to the Jew is forfeited, and since in paying it is impossible I should live, I could wish to see you at my death; notwithstanding, use your pleasure; if your love for me do not persuade you to come, let not my letter.*" "Oh, my dear love," said Portia, "despatch all business and be gone; you shall have gold to pay the money twenty times over, before this kind friend shall lose a hair by my Bassanio's fault; and as you are so dearly bought, I will dearly love you." Portia then said she would be married to Bassanio before he set out, to give him a legal right to her money; and that same day they were married, and Gratiano was also married to Nerissa; and Bassanio and Gratiano, the instant they were married, set out in great haste for Venice, where Bassanio found Antonio in prison.

The day of payment being past, the cruel Jew would not accept of the money which Bassanio offered him, but insisted upon having a pound of Antonio's flesh. A day was appointed to try this shocking cause before the Duke of Venice, and Bassanio awaited in dreadful suspense the event of the trial.

When Portia parted with her husband, she spoke cheerfully to him, and bade him bring his dear friend along with him when he returned; yet she feared it would go hard with Antonio, and when she was left alone, she began to think and consider within herself, if she could by any means be instrumental in saving the life of her dear Bassanio's friend: and notwithstanding when she wished to honour her Bassanio, she had said to him with such a meek and wifelike grace, that she would submit in all things to be governed by his superior wisdom, yet being now called forth into action by the peril of her honoured husband's friend, she did nothing doubt her own powers, and by the sole guidance of her own true and perfect judgment, at once resolved to go herself to Venice, and speak in Antonio's defence.

Portia had a relation who was a counsellor in the law; to this gentleman, whose name was Bellario, she wrote, and stating the case to him, desired his opinion, and that with his advice he would also send her the dress worn by a counsellor. When the messenger returned, he brought letters from Bellario of advice how to proceed, and also everything necessary for her equipment.

Portia dressed herself and her maid Nerissa in men's apparel, and putting on the robes of a counsellor, she took Nerissa along with her as her clerk; and setting out immediately, they arrived at Venice on the very day of the trial. The cause was just going to be heard before the duke and senators of Venice in the senate-house, when Portia entered this high court of justice, and presented a letter from Bellario, in which that learned counsellor wrote to the duke, saying he would have come himself to plead for Antonio, but that he was prevented by sickness, and he requested that the learned young doctor Balthasar (so he called Portia) might be per-

mitted to plead in his stead. This the duke granted, much wondering at the youthful appearance of the stranger, who was prettily disguised by her counsellor's robes and her large wig.

And now began this important trial.

Enter PORTIA, dressed like a Doctor of Laws

Duke. Came you from old Bellario?

Portia. I did, my lord.

Duke. You're welcome: take your place.

Are you acquainted with the difference

That holds this present question¹ in the court?

Portia. I am informèd throughly² of the cause.

Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?

Duke. Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth.

Portia. Is your name Shylock?

Shy. Shylock is my name.

Portia. Of a strange nature is the suit you follow;

Yet in such rule, that the Venetian law

Cannot impugn³ you as you do proceed.—

[*To ANTO.*] You stand within his danger,⁴ do you not?

Anto. Ay, so he says.

Portia. Do you confess the bond?

Anto. I do.

Portia. Then must the Jew be merciful.

Shy. On what compulsion must I? tell me that.

Portia. The quality of mercy is not strain'd;⁵

It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven

Upon the place beneath: it is twice bless'd;

¹ "The controversy for the deciding of which the present inquiry or investigation is held." Question in its proper Latin sense.

² *Through* and *thorough* are but different forms of the same word.

³ To *impugn* is to *controvert*, to *oppose*; literally, to *fight against*.

⁴ "Within one's danger" properly meant within one's power or control, liable to a penalty which he might impose.

⁵ That is, the nature of mercy is to act freely, not from constraint. Portia had used *must* in a moral sense, and the Jew purposely mistook it in a legal sense. This gives a natural occasion and impulse for her strain of "heavenly eloquence."

It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes :¹
 'Tis mightiest in the mightiest :² it becomes
 The thronèd monarch better than his crown ;
 His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
 The attribute to awe and majesty,
 Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings ;
 But mercy is above this sceptred sway ;
 It is enthronèd in the hearts of kings,
 It is an attribute to God himself ;
 And earthly power doth then show likest God's
 When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,
 Though justice be thy plea, consider this,—
 That in the course of justice none of us
 Should see salvation : we do pray for mercy ;
 And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
 The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much,
 To mitigate the justice of thy plea ;
 Which if thou follow,³ this strict court of Venice
 Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.

Shy. My deeds upon my head ! I crave the law,
 The penalty and forfeit of my bond.

Portia. Is he not able to discharge the money ?

Bass. Yes, here I tender't for him in the court ;
 Yea, thrice the sum : if that will not suffice,
 I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,
 On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart :
 If this will not suffice, it must appear
 That malice bears down truth.⁴ And, I beseech you,
 Wrest once the law to your authority :
 To do a great right, do a little wrong ;
 And curb this cruel devil of his will.

¹ A beautiful version of the divine Christian axiom, Acts xx. 35, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

² This may mean, either that mercy exists in the greatest plenitude in Him who is omnipotent, or that the more power one has to inflict pain, the more he bows and subdues the heart by showing mercy.

³ "If you rigidly insist upon the plea of justice."

⁴ *Truth is honesty* here. A true man in old language is an *honest* man. And the honesty here shown is in offering to pay thrice the money.

Portia. It must not be; there is no power in Venice
Can alter a decree establishèd:

'Twill be recorded for a precedent;
And many an error, by the same example,
Will rush into the State. It cannot be.

Shy. A Da come to judgment! yea, a Daniel:-
O wise young judge, how I do honour thee!

Portia. I pray you, let me look upon the bond.

Shy. Here 'tis, most reverend Doctor; here it is.

Portia. Shylock, there's thrice thy money offer'd
thee.

Shy. An oath, an oath, I have an oath in Heaven:
Shal I lay perjury upon my soul?
No, not for Venice!

Portia. Why, this bond is forfeit;¹
And lawfully by this the Jew may claim
A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off
Nearest the merchant's heart.—Be merciful;
Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond.

Shy. When it is paid according to the tenour.
It doth appear you are a worthy judge;
You know the law, your exposition
Hath been most sound: I charge you by the law,
Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,
Proceed to judgment. By my soul I swear
There is no power in the tongue of man
To alter me: I stay here on my bond.

Anto. Most heartily I do beseech the court
To give the judgment.

Portia. Why, then thus it is:
You must prepare your bosom for his knife;—

Shy. O noble judge! O excellent young man!

Portia. —For the intent and purpose of the law
Hath full relation to the penalty;²
Which here appeareth due upon the bond.

¹ *Forfeit for forfeited.*

² That is, the law relating to contracts is fully applicable in this case.

Shy. 'Tis very true. O wise and upright judge!
How much more elder art thou than thy looks!

Portia. Therefore lay bare your bosom.

Shy.

Ay, his breast:

So says the bond:—doth it not, noble judge?—

Nearest his heart: those are the very words.

Portia. It is so. Are there balance here to weigh
The flesh?

Shy. I have ~~some~~ ready.¹

Portia. Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your
charge,

To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.

Shy. Is it so nominated in the bond?

Portia. It is not so expressed; but what of that?

'Twere good you do so much for charity.

Shy. I cannot find it; 'tis not in the bond.

Portia. Come, merchant, have you anything to say?

Anto. But little: I am arm'd and well prepared.—

Give me your hand, Bassanio: fare you well!

Grieve not that I am fall'n to this for you;

For herein Fortune shows herself more kind

Than is her custom: it is still her use²

To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,

To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow

An age of poverty; from which lingering penance

Of such a misery doth she cut me off.

Commend me to your honourable wife:

Tell her that I am of Antonio's end;

Say how I do, and speak me fair in death;³

And, when the old, bid her be judge

Whether Bassanio had not once a lover.

Repent not you that you shall lose your friend,

And he repents not that he pays your debt;

¹ *Balance*, though singular in form, is used in a plural sense, referring to the two scales which make the balance.

² It is *ever* her custom or wont.

³ "Speak well of me when I am dead." or, perhaps, "Tell the world that I died like a man."

For, if the Jew do cut but deep enough,
I'll pay it instantly with all my heart.

Bass. Antonio, I am married to a wife
Which¹ is as dear to me as life itself;
But life itself, my wife, and all the world,
Are not with me esteem'd above thy life:
I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all
Here to this devil, to deliver you.

Portia. Your wife would give you little thanks for
that,

If she were by, to hear you make the offer.

Grati. I have a wife, whom, I protest, I love:
I would she were in Heaven, so she could
Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.

Neris. 'Tis well you offer it behind her back;
The wish would make, else, an unquiet house.

Shy. [*Aside.*] These be the Christian husbands. I
have a daughter;

Would any of the stock of Barabbas²
Had been her husband rather than a Christian!—

[*To PORTIA.*] We trifle time: I pray thee, pursue sen-
tence.

Portia. A pound of that same merchant's flesh is
thine:

The court awards it, and the law doth give it.

Shy. Most rightful judge!

Portia. And you must cut this flesh from off his
breast:

The law allows it, and the court awards it.

Shy. Most learned judge! A sentence!—Come,
prepare.

Portia. Tarry a little; there is something else.
This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood;
The words expressly are, a pound of flesh:

¹ Which and who were used indifferently, both of persons and things. So in the Lord's Prayer: "Our Father which art in Heaven."

² Mark xv. 7.

Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh;
 But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed
 One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods
 Are by the laws of Venice confiscate
 Unto the State of Venice.

Grati. O upright judge!—Mark, Jew: O learned judge!

Shy. Is that the law?

Portia. Thyself shalt see the Act:
 For, as thou urgest justice, be assured
 Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest.

Grati. O learned judge!—Mark, Jew: a learned judge!

Shy. I take his offer, then;—pay the bond thrice,
 And let the Christian go.

Bass

Here is the money.

Portia. Soft!

The Jew all have all justice; soft! no haste:
 He shall have nothing but the penalty.

Grati. O Jew, an upright judge, a learned judge!

Portia. Therefore prepare thee to cut off the flesh.
 Shed thou no blood; nor cut thou less nor more
 But just a pound of flesh: if thou takest more
 Or less than just a pound,¹—be't but so much
 As makes it light or heavy in the substance
 Or the division of the twentieth part
 Of one poor scruple; nay, if the scale do turn
 But in the estimation of a hair,—
 Thou diest, and all thy goods are confiscate.

Grati. A second Daniel, a Daniel, Jew!
 Now, infidel, I have thee on the hip.

Portia. Why doth the Jew pause? take thy forfeiture.

Shy. Give me my principal, and let me go.

Bass. I have it ready for thee; here it is.

Portia. He hath refused it in the open court:
 He shall have merely justice and his bond.

¹ An exact pound: the same as "just a pound."

Grati. A Daniel, still say I; a second Daniel!—
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.

Shy. Shall I not have barely my principal?

Portia. Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture,
To be so taken at thy peril, Jew.

Shy. Why, then, the devil give him good of it!
I'll stay no longer question.

Portia. Tarry, Jew:
The law hath yet another hold on you.

It is enacted in the laws of Venice,
If it be proved against an alien
That by direct or indirect attempts
He seek the life of any citizen,
The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive
Shall seize one half his goods; the other half
Comes to the privy coffer of the State;
And the offender's life lies in the mercy
Of the Duke only, 'gainst all other voice.
In which predicament I say thou stand'st;
For it appears, by manifest proceeding,
That indirectly, and directly too,
Thou hast contrived against the very life
Of the defendant; and thou hast incurr'd
The danger formally by me rehearsed.
Down, therefore, and beg mercy of the Duke.

Grati. Beg that thou mayst have leave to hang
thyself:

And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the State,
Thou hast not left the value of a cord;
Therefore thou must be hang'd at the State's charge.

Duke. That thou shalt see the difference of our
spirit,

I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it:
For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's;
The other half comes to the general State,
Which humbleness may drive unto a fine.¹

¹ "Submission on your part may move me to reduce it to a fine."

Portia. Ay, for the State; not for Antonio.¹

Shy. Nay, take my life and all; pardon not that:
You take my house, when you do take the prop
That doth sustain my house; you take my life,
When you do take the means whereby I live.

Portia. What mercy can you render him, Antonio?

Grati. A halter gratis; nothing else.

Anto. So please my lord the Duke and all the court
To quit the fine² for one half of his goods,
I am content; so he will let me have
The other half in use, to render it,
Upon his death, unto the gentleman
That lately stole his daughter:³

Two things provided more: That, for this favour,
He presently become a Christian;
The other, that he do record a gift,
Here in the court, of all he dies possess'd,
Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter.

Duke. He shall do this; or else I do recant
The pardon that I late pronouncèd here.

Portia. Art thou contented, Jew? what dost thou
say?

Shy. I am content.

Portia. Clerk, draw a deed of gift.

Shy. I pray you, give me leave to go from hence;
I am not well: send the deed after me,
And I will sign it.

Duke. Get thee gone, but do it.

[Exit SHYLOCK.]

The duke now released Antonio, and dismissed
the court. He then highly praised the wisdom and

¹ Meaning, apparently, that the reduction of the forfeiture to a fine should apply only to that half of his goods which was to come to the coffer of the State, not that which fell to Antonio.

² If the court will *remit* the fine, or *acquit* Shylock of the forfeiture so far as the claim of the State is concerned.

³ "That is, in trust for Shylock during his life, for the purpose of securing it at his death to Lorenzo."

ingenuity of the young counsellor, and invited him home to dinner. Portia, who meant to return to Belmont before her husband, replied, "I humbly thank your grace, but I must away directly." The duke said he was sorry he had not leisure to stay and dine with him: and turning to Antonio, he added, "Reward this gentleman; for in my mind you are much indebted to him."

The duke and his senators left the court; and then Bassanio said to Portia, "Most worthy gentleman, I and my friend Antonio have by your wisdom been this day acquitted of grievous penalties, and I beg you will accept of three thousand ducats due unto the Jew." "And we shall stand indebted to you over and above," said Antonio, "in love and service evermore."

Portia could not be prevailed upon to accept the money; but upon Bassanio still pressing her to accept of some reward, she said, "Give me your gloves; I will wear them for your sake;" and then Bassanio taking off his gloves, she espied the ring which she had given him upon his finger. Now it was the ring the duke had wanted to get from him, to make a merry jest when she saw her Bassanio again, that made her ask him for his gloves; and she said, when she saw the ring, "And for your love I will take this ring from you." Bassanio was sadly distressed that the counsellor should ask him for the only thing he could not part with, and he replied in great confusion, that he could not give him that ring, because it was his wife's gift, and he had vowed never to part with it; but that he would give him the most valuable ring in Venice, and find it out by proclamation. On this Portia affected to be affronted, and left the court, saying, "You teach me, sir, how a beggar should be answered."

"Dear Bassanio," said Antonio, "let him have

the ring; let my love and the great service he has done for me be valued against your wife's displeasure." Bassanio, ashamed to appear so ungrateful, yielded, and sent Gratiano after Portia with the ring; and the *clerk* Nerissa, who had also given Gratiano a ring, she begged his ring, and Gratiano (not choosing to be outdone in generosity by his lord) gave it to her. And there was laughing among these ladies to think, when they got home, how they would tax their husbands with giving away their rings, and swear that they had given them as a present to some woman.

Portia, when she returned, was in that happy temper of mind which never fails to attend the consciousness of having performed a good action; her cheerful spirits enjoyed everything she saw: the moon never seemed to shine so bright before; and when that pleasant moon was hid behind a cloud, then a light which she saw from her house at Belmont as well pleased her charmed fancy, and she said to Nerissa, "That light we saw is burning in my hall; how far that little candle throws its beams, so shines a good deed in a naughty world;" and hearing the sound of music from her house, she said, "Methinks that music sounds much sweeter than by day."

And now Portia and Nerissa entered the house, and dressing themselves in their own apparel they awaited the arrival of their husbands, who soon followed them with Antonio; and Bassanio presenting his dear friend to the lady Portia, the congratulations and welcomings of that lady were hardly over, when they perceived Nerissa and her husband quarrelling in a corner of the room. "A quarrel already?" said Portia. "What is the matter?" Gratiano replied, "Lady, it is about a paltry gilt ring that Nerissa gave me, with words upon it like the poetry on a cutler's knife; *Love me, and leave me not.*"

"What does the poetry or the value of the ring signify?" said Nerissa. "You swore to me, when I gave it to you, that you would keep it till the hour of death; and now you say you gave it to the lawyer's clerk. I know you gave it to a woman." "By this hand," replied Gratiano, "I gave it to a youth, a kind of boy, a little scrubbed boy no higher than yourself; he was clerk to the young counsellor that by his wise pleading saved Antonio's life: this prating boy begged it for a fee, and I could not for my life deny him." Portia said, "You were to blame, Gratiano, to part with your wife's first gift. I gave my lord Bassanio a ring, and I am sure he would not part with it for all the world." Gratiano in excuse for his fault now said, "My lord Bassanio gave his ring away to the counsellor, and then the boy, his clerk, that took some pains in writing, he begged my ring."

Portia, hearing this, seemed very angry, and reproached Bassanio for giving away her ring; and she said Nerissa had taught her what to believe, and that she knew some women had the ring. Bassanio was very unhappy to have so offended his dear lady, and he said with great earnestness, "No, by my honour, no woman had it, but a civil doctor, who refused three thousand ducats of me, and begged the ring, which when I denied him, he went displeased away. What could I do, sweet Portia? I was so beset with shame for my seeming ingratitude, that I was forced to send the ring after him. Pardon me, good lady; had you been there, I think you would have begged the ring of me to give the worthy doctor."

"Ah!" said Antonio, "I am the unhappy cause of these quarrels."

Portia bid Antonio not to grieve at that, for that he was welcome notwithstanding; and then Antonio said, "I once did lend my body for Bassanio's sake;

and but for him to whom your husband gave the ring, I should have now been dead. I dare be bound again, my soul upon the forfeit, your lord will never more break his faith with you."—"Then you shall be his surety," said Portia; "give him this ring and bid him keep it better than the other."

When Bassanio looked at this ring, he was strangely surprised to find it was the same he gave away; and then Portia told him how she was the young counsellor, and Nerissa was her clerk; and Bassanio found, to his unspeakable wonder and delight, that it was by the noble courage and wisdom of his wife that Antonio's life was saved.

And Portia again welcomed Antonio, and gave him letters which by some chance had fallen into her hands, which contained an account of Antonio's ships, that were supposed lost, being safely arrived in the harbour. So these tragical beginnings of this rich merchant's story were all forgotten in the unexpected good fortune which ensued; and there was leisure to laugh at the comical adventure of the rings, and the husbands that did not know their own wives: Gratiano merrily swearing, in a sort of rhyming speech, that

"while he lived, he'd fear no other thing,
So sore, as keeping safe Nerissa's ring."

II.—King Lear

LEAR, King of Britain, had three daughters; Goneril, wife to the Duke of Albany; Regan, wife to the Duke of Cornwall; and Cordelia, a young maid for whose love the King of France and the Duke of Burgundy were joint suitors, and were at this time making stay for that purpose in the court of Lear.

The old king, worn out with age and the fatigues

of government, he being more than fourscore years old, determined to take no further part in state affairs, but to leave the management to younger strengths, that he might have time to prepare for death, which must at no long period ensue. With this intent he called his three daughters to him, to know from their own lips which of them loved him best, that he might part his kingdom among them in such proportions as their affection for him should seem to deserve.

Goneril, the eldest, declared that she loved her father more than words could give out, that he was dearer to her than the light of her own eyes, dearer than life and liberty, with a deal of such professing stuff, which is easy to counterfeit where there is no real love, only a few fine words delivered with confidence being wanted in that case. The king, delighted to hear from her own mouth this assurance of her love, and thinking that truly her heart went with it, in a fit of fatherly fondness bestowed upon her and her husband one-third of his ample kingdom.

Then calling to him his second daughter, he demanded what she had to say. Regan, who was made of the same hollow metal as her sister, was not a whit behind in her professions, but rather declared that what her sister had spoken came short of the love which she professed to bear for his highness: insomuch that she found all other joys dead, in comparison with the pleasure which she took in the love of her dear king and father.

Lear blessed himself in having such loving children, as he thought: and could do no less, after the handsome assurance which Regan had made, than bestow a third of his kingdom upon her and her husband, equal in size to that which he had already given away to Goneril.

Then turning to his youngest daughter, Cordelia, whom he called his joy, he asked what she had to

say, thinking, no doubt, that she would glad his ears with the same loving speeches which her sisters had uttered, or rather that her expressions would be so much stronger than theirs, as she had always been his darling, and favoured by him above either of them. But Cordelia, disgusted with the flattery of her sisters, whose hearts she knew were far from their lips, and seeing that all their coaxing speeches were only intended to wheedle the old king out of his dominions, that they and their husbands might reign in his lifetime, made no other reply but this,—that she loved his majesty according to her duty, neither more nor less.

The king, shocked with this appearance of ingratitude in his favourite child, desired her to consider her words, and to mend her speech, lest it should mar her fortunes.

Cordelia then told her father, that he was her father, that he had given her breeding, and loved her; that she returned those duties back as was most fit, and did obey him, love him, and most honour him. But that she could not frame her mouth to such large speeches as her sisters had done, or promise to love nothing else in the world. Why had her sisters husbands, if (as they said) they had no love for anything but their father? If she should ever wed, she was sure the lord to whom she gave her hand would want half her love, half her care and duty; she should never marry like her sisters, to love her father all.

Cordelia, who in earnest loved her old father, even almost as extravagantly as her sisters pretended to do, would have plainly told him so at any other time, in more daughter-like and loving terms, and without these qualifications, which did indeed sound a little ungracious: but after the crafty flattering speeches of her sisters, which she had seen draw such extravagant rewards, she thought the hand-

somest thing she could do was to love and be silent. This put her affection out of suspicion of mercenary ends, and showed that she loved, but not for gain; and that her professions, the less ostentatious they were, had so much the more of truth and sincerity than her sisters'.

This plainness of speech, which Lear called pride, so enraged the old monarch—who in his best of times always showed much of spleen and rashness, and in whom the dotage incident to old age had so eluded over his reason that he could not discern truth from flattery, nor a gay painted speech from words that came from the heart—that in a fury of resentment he retracted the third part of his kingdom which yet remained, and which he had reserved for Cordelia, and gave it away from her, sharing it equally between her two sisters and their husbands, the Dukes of Albany and Cornwall: whom he now called to him, and in presence of all his courtiers, bestowing a coronet between them, invested them jointly with all the power, revenue, and execution of government, only retaining to himself the name of king; all the rest of royalty he resigned; with this reservation, that himself, with a hundred knights for his attendants, was to be maintained by monthly course in each of his daughters' palaces in turn.

So preposterous a disposal of his kingdom, so little guided by reason, and so much by passion, filled all his courtiers with astonishment and sorrow; but none of them had the courage to interpose between this incensed king and his wrath, except the Earl of Kent, who was beginning to speak a good word for Cordelia, when the passionate Lear on pain of death commanded him to desist; but the good Kent was not so to be repelled. He had been ever loyal to Lear, whom he had honoured as a king, loved as a father, followed as a master; and he had never esteemed his life further than as a pawn to wage

against his royal master's enemies, nor feared to lose it when Lear's safety was the motive; nor now that Lear was most his own enemy, did this faithful servant of the king forget his old principles, but manfully opposed Lear, to do Lear good; and was unmannerly only because Lear was mad. He had been a most faithful counsellor, in times past, to the king, and he besought him now, that he would see with his eyes (as he had done in many weighty matters), and go by his advice still; and in his best consideration recall this hideous rashness; for he would answer with his life, his judgment that Lear's youngest daughter did not love him least, nor were those empty-hearted whose low sound gave no token of hollowness. When power bowed to flattery, honour was bound to plainness. For Lear's threats, what could he do to him, whose life was already at his service? That should not hinder duty from speaking.

The honest freedom of this good Earl of Kent only stirred up the king's wrath the more, and like a frantic patient who kills his physician, and loves his mortal disease, he banished this true servant, and allotted him but five days to make his preparations for departure; but if on the sixth his hated person was found within the realm of Britain, that moment was to be his death. And Kent bade farewell to the king, and said, that since he chose to show himself in such fashion, it was but banishment to stay there; and before he went, he recommended Cordelia to the protection of the gods, the maid who had so rightly thought, and so discreetly spoken; and only wished that her sisters' large speeches might be answered with deeds of love; and then he went, as he said, to shape his old course to a new country.

The King of France and Duke of Burgundy were now called in to hear the determination of Lear about his youngest daughter, and to know whether

they would persist in their courtship to Cordelia, now that she was under her father's displeasure, and had no fortune but her own person to recommend her; and the Duke of Burgundy declined the match, and would not take her to wife upon such conditions: but the King of France, understanding what the nature of the fault had been which had lost her the love of her father, that it was only a tardiness of speech, and the not being able to frame her tongue to flattery like her sisters, took this young maid by the hand, and saying that her virtues were a dowry above a kingdom, bade Cordelia to take farewell of her sisters, and of her father, though he had been unkind, and she should go with him, and be queen of him and of fair France, and reign over fairer possessions than her sisters: and he called the Duke of Burgundy in contempt a waterish duke, because his love for this young maid had in a moment run all away like water.

Then Cordelia with weeping eyes took leave of her sisters, and besought them to love their father well, and make good their professions; and they sullenly told her not to prescribe to them, for they knew their duty; but to strive to content her husband, who had taken her (as they tauntingly expressed it) as Fortune's alms. And Cordelia with a heavy heart departed, for she knew the cunning of her sisters, and she wished her father in better hands than she was about to leave him in.

Cordelia was no sooner gone, than the evil dispositions of her sisters began to show themselves in their true colours. Even before the expiration of the first month, which Lear was to spend by agreement with his eldest daughter Goneril, the old king began to find out the difference between promises and performances. This wretch having got from her father all that he had to bestow, even to the giving away of the crown from off his head, began to

grudge even those small remnants of royalty which the old man had reserved to himself, to please his fancy with the idea of being still a king. She could not bear to see him and his hundred knights. Every time she met her father she put on a frowning countenance; and when the old man wanted to speak with her, she would feign sickness, or anything, to be rid of the sight of him; for it was plain that she esteemed his old age a useless burden, and his attendants an unnecessary expense; not only she herself slackened in her expressions of duty to the king, but by her example (it is to be feared, not without her private instructions), her very servants affected to treat him with neglect, and would either refuse to obey his orders, or still more contemptuously pretend not to hear them. Lear could not but perceive this alteration in the behaviour of his daughter, but he shut his eyes against it as long as he could, as people commonly are unwilling to believe the unpleasant consequences which their own mistakes and obstinacy have brought upon them.

True love and fidelity are no more to be estranged by ill, than falsehood and hollow-heartedness can be conciliated by good, usage. This eminently appears in the instance of the good Earl of Kent, who, though banished by Lear, and his life made forfeit if he were found in Britain, chose to stay, and abide all consequences, as long as there was a chance of his being useful to the king his master. See to what mean shifts and disguises poor loyalty is forced to submit sometimes; yet it counts nothing base or unworthy, so as it can but do service where it owes an obligation! In the disguise of a serving-man, all his greatness and pomp laid aside, this good earl proffered his services to the king, who, not knowing him to be the Kent in that disguise, but pleased with a certain plainness, or rather bluntness in his answers, which the earl put on (so different from

that smooth oily flattery which he had so much reason to be sick of, having found the effects not answerable in his daughter), a bargain was quickly struck, and Lear took Kent into his service by the name of Caius, as he called himself, never suspecting him to be his once great favourite, the high and mighty Earl of Kent.

This Caius quickly found means to show his fidelity and love to his royal master; for Goneril's steward that same day behaving in a disrespectful manner to Lear, and giving him sauey looks and language, as no doubt he was secretly encouraged to do by his mistress, Caius not enduring to hear so open an affront put upon his majesty, made no more ado but presently tripped up his heels, and laid the unmannerly slave in the kennel; for which friendly service Lear became more and more attached to him.

Nor was Kent the only friend Lear had. In his degree, and as far as so insignificant a personage could show his love, the poor fool, or jester, that had been of his palace while Lear had a palace, as it was the custom of kings and great personages at that time to keep a fool (as he was called) to make them sport after serious business: this poor fool elung to Lear after he had given away his crown, and by his witty sayings would keep up his good-humour, though he could not refrain sometimes from jeering at his master for his imprudence in uncrowning himself, and giving all away to his daughters; at which time, as he rhymingly expressed it, these daughters

“For sudden joy did weep,
And he for sorrow sung,
That such a king should play bo-peep,
And go the fools among.”

And in such wild sayings, and scraps of songs, of which he had plenty, this pleasant honest fool poured

out his heart even in the presence of Goneril herself, in many a bitter taunt and jest which cut to the quick: such as comparing the king to the hedge-sparrow, who feeds the young of the cuckoo till they grow old enough, and then has its head bit off for its pains; and saying, that an ass may know when the cart draws the horse (meaning that Lear's daughters, that ought to go behind, now ranked before their father); and that Lear was no longer Lear, but the shadow of Lear; for which free speeches he was once or twice threatened to be whipped.

The coolness and falling off of respect which Lear had begun to perceive, were not all which this foolish fond father was to suffer from his unworthy daughter: she now plainly told him that his staying in her palace was inconvenient so long as he insisted upon keeping up an establishment of a hundred knights; that this establishment was useless and expensive, and only served to fill her court with riot and feasting; and she prayed him that he would lessen their number, and keep none but old men about him, such as himself, and fitting his age.

Lear at first could not believe his eyes or ears, nor that it was his daughter who spoke so unkindly. He could not believe that she who had received a crown from him could seek to cut off his train, and grudge him the respect due to his old age. But she persisting in her undutiful demand, the old man's rage was so excited, that he called her a detested kite, and said that she spoke an untruth; and so indeed she did, for the hundred knights were all men of choice behaviour and sobriety of manners, skilled in all particulars of duty, and not given to rioting and feasting as she said. And he bid his horses to be prepared, for he would go to his other daughter, Regan, he and his hundred knights; and he spoke of ingratitude, and said it was a marble-hearted devil, and showed more hideous in a child

than the sea-monster. And he cursed his eldest daughter Goneril so as was terrible to hear; praying that she might never have a child, or if she had, that it might live to return that scorn and contempt upon her which she had shown to him; that she might feel how sharper than a serpent's tooth it was to have a thankless child. And Goneril's husband, the Duke of Albany, beginning to excuse himself for any share which Lear might suppose he had in the unkindness, Lear would not hear him out, but in a rage ordered his horses to be saddled, and set out with his followers for the abode of Regan, his other daughter. And Lear thought to himself how small the fault of Cordelia (if it was a fault) now appeared, in comparison with her sister's, and he wept; and then he was ashamed that such a creature as Goneril should have so much power over his manhood as to make him weep.

Regan and her husband were keeping their court in great pomp and state at their palace; and Lear despatched his servant Caius with letters to his daughter, that she might be prepared for his reception, while he and his train followed after. But it seems that Goneril had been beforehand with him, sending letters also to Regan, accusing her father of waywardness and ill-humours, and advising her not to receive so great a train as he was bringing with him. This messenger arrived at the same time with Caius, and Caius and he met; and who should it be but Caius's old enemy the steward, whom he had formerly tripped up by the heels for his saucy behaviour to Lear. Caius not liking the fellow's look, and suspecting what he came for, began to revile him, and challenged him to fight, which the fellow refusing, Caius in a fit of honest passion beat him soundly, as such a mischief-maker and carrier of wicked messages deserved; which coming to the ears of Regan and her husband, they ordered Caius

to be put in the stocks, though he was a messenger from the king her father, and in that character demanded the highest respect; so that the first thing the king saw when he entered the castle was his faithful servant Caius sitting in that disgraceful situation.

This was but a bad omen of the reception which he was to expect; but a worse followed, when, upon inquiry for his daughter and her husband, he was told they were weary with travelling all night, and could not see him; and when lastly, upon his insisting in a positive and angry manner to see them, they came to greet him, whom should he see in their company but the hated Goneril, who had come to tell her own story, and set her sister against the king her father!

This sight much moved the old man, and still more to see Regan take her by the hand; and he asked Goneril if she was not ashamed to look upon his old white beard. And Regan advised him to go home again with Goneril and live with her peaceably, dismissing half of his attendants, and to ask her forgiveness; for he was old and wanted discretion, and must be ruled and led by persons that had more discretion than himself. And Lear showed how preposterous that would sound, if he were to down on his knees, and beg of his own daughter for food and raiment, and he argued against such an unnatural dependence, declaring his resolution never to return with her, but to stay where he was with Regan, and his hundred knights; for he said that she had not forgot the half of the kingdom which he had endowed her with, and that her eyes were not fierce like Goneril's, but mild and kind. And he said that rather than return to Goneril with half his train cut off, he would go over to France, and beg a wretched pension of the king there, who had married his youngest daughter without a portion.

But he was mistaken in expecting kinder treatment of Regan than he had experienced from her sister Goneril. As if willing to outdo her sister in unfilial behaviour, she declared that she thought fifty knights too many to wait upon him; that five-and-twenty were enough. Then Lear, nigh heart-broken, turned to Goneril, and said that he would go back with her, for her fifty doubled five-and-twenty, and so her love was twice as much as Regan's. But Goneril excused herself and said, what need of so many as five-and-twenty? or even ten? or five? when he might be waited upon by her servants, or her sister's servants? So these two wicked daughters, as if they strove to exceed each other in cruelty to their old father who had been so good to them, by little and little would have abated him of all his train, all respect (little enough for him that once commanded a kingdom), which was left him to show that he had once been a king! Not that a splendid train is essential to happiness, but from a king to a beggar is a hard change, from commanding millions to be without one attendant; and it was the ingratitude in his daughters denying it, more than what he would suffer by the want of it, which pierced this poor king to the heart; insomuch, that with this double ill-usage, and vexation for having so foolishly given away a kingdom, his wits began to be unsettled, and while he said he knew not what, he vowed revenge against those unnatural hags, and to make examples of them that should be a terror to the earth!

While he was thus idly threatening what his weak arm could never execute, night came on, and a loud storm of thunder and lightning with rain; and his daughters still persisting in their resolution not to admit his followers, he called for his horses, and chose rather to encounter the utmost fury of the storm abroad, than stay under the same roof with these ungrateful daughters: and they, saying that the

injuries which wilful men procure to themselves are their just punishment, suffered him to go in that condition, and shut their doors upon him.

The winds were high, and the rain and storm increased, when the old man sallied forth to combat with the elements, less sharp than his daughters' unkindness. For many miles about there was scarce a bush; and there upon a heath, exposed to the fury of a storm in a dark night, did King Lear wander out, and defy the winds and the thunder; and he bid the winds to blow the earth into the sea, or swell the waves of the sea, till they drowned the earth, that no token might remain of any such ungrateful animal as man. The old king was now left with no other companion than the poor fool, who still abode with him, with his merry conceits striving to outjest misfortune, saying it was but a naughty night to swim in, and truly the king had better go in and ask his daughter's blessing:—

“But he that has a little tiny wit,
With heigh ho, the wind and the rain!
Must make content with his fortunes fit,
Though the rain it raineth every day:”

and swearing it was a brave night to cool a lady's pride.

Thus poorly accompanied, this once great monarch was found by his ever-faithful servant the good Earl Kent, now transformed to Caius, who ever followed close at his side, though the king did not know him to be the earl; and he said, “Alas! sir, are you here? creatures that love night, love not such nights as these. This dreadful storm has driven the beasts to their hiding-places. Man's nature cannot endure the affliction or the fear.” And Lear rebuked him, and said, these lesser evils were not felt, where a greater malady was fixed. When the mind is at ease, the body has leisure to be delicate; but the tempest in

his mind did take all feeling else from his senses, but of that which beat at his heart. And he spoke of filial ingratitude, and said it was all one as if the mouth should tear the hand for lifting food to it; for parents were hands and food and everything to children.

But the good Caius still persisting in his entreaties that the king would not stay out in the open air, at last persuaded him to enter a little wretched hovel which stood upon the heath, where the fool first entering, suddenly ran back terrified, saying that he had seen a spirit. But upon examination the spirit proved to be nothing more than a poor Bedlam beggar, who had crept into this deserted hovel for shelter, and with his talk about devils frightened the fool, one of those poor lunatics who are either mad, or feign to be so, the better to extort charity from the compassionate country people, who go about the country, calling themselves poor Tom and poor Turly-good, saying, "Who gives anything to poor Tom?" sticking pins and nails and sprigs of rosemary into their arms to make them bleed; and with such horrible actions, partly by prayers, and partly with lunatic curses, they move or terrify the ignorant country-folks into giving them alms. This poor fellow was such a one; and the king seeing him in so wretched a plight, with nothing but a blanket about his loins to cover his nakedness, could not be persuaded but that the fellow was some father who had given all away to his daughters, and brought himself to that pass; for nothing, he thought, could bring a man to such wretchedness but the having unkind daughters.

And from this and many such wild speeches which he uttered, the good Caius plainly perceived that he was not in his perfect mind, but that his daughters' ill-usage had really made him go mad. And now the loyalty of this worthy Earl of Kent showed itself in

more essential services than he had hitherto found opportunity to perform. For with the assistance of some of the king's attendants who remained loyal, he had the person of his royal master removed at day-break to the Castle of Dover, where his own friends and influence, as Earl of Kent, chiefly lay: and himself embarking for France, hastened to the court of Cordelia, and did there in such moving terms represent the pitiful condition of her royal father, and set out in such lively colours the inhumanity of her sisters, that this good and loving child with many tears besought the king her husband, that he would give her leave to embark for England, with a sufficient power to subdue these cruel daughters and their husbands, and restore the king her father to his throne; which being granted, she set forth, and with a royal army landed at Dover.

Lear having by some chance escaped from the guardians which the good Earl of Kent had put over him to take care of him in his lunacy, was found by some of Cordelia's train, wandering about the fields near Dover, in a pitiable condition, stark mad and singing aloud to himself, with a crown upon his head which he had made of straw, and nettles, and other wild weeds that he had picked up in the corn-fields. By the advice of the physicians, Cordelia, though earnestly desirous of seeing her father, was prevailed upon to put off the meeting, till by sleep and the operation of herbs which they gave him, he should be restored to greater composure. By the aid of these skilful physicians, to whom Cordelia promised all her gold and jewels for the recovery of the old king, Lear was soon in a condition to see his daughter.

A tender sight it was to see the meeting between this father and daughter: to see the struggles between the joy of this poor old king at beholding again his once darling child, and the shame at receiving

such filial kindness from her whom he had cast off for so small a fault in his displeasure; both these passions struggling with the remains of his malady, which in his half-crazed brain sometimes made him that he scarce remembered where he was, or who it was that so kindly kissed him and spoke to him; and then he would beg the standers-by not to laugh at him if he were mistaken in thinking this lady to be his daughter Cordelia! And then to see him fall on his knees to beg pardon of his child; and she, good lady, kneeling all the while to ask a blessing of him, and telling him that it did not become him to kneel, but it was her duty, for she was his child, his true and very child Cordelia! And she kissed him (as she said) to kiss away all her sisters' unkindness, and said that they might be ashamed of themselves, to turn their old kind father with his white beard out into the cold' air, when her enemy's dog, though it had bit her (as she prettily expressed it), should have stayed by her fire such a night as that, and warmed himself. And she told her father how she had come from France with purpose to bring him assistance; and he said, that she must forget and forgive, for he was old and foolish, and did not know what he did; but that to be sure she had great cause not to love him, but her sisters had none. And Cordelia said, that she had no cause, no more than they had.

So we will leave this old king in the protection of this dutiful and loving child, where, by the help of sleep and medicine, she and her physicians at length succeeded in winding up the untuned and jarring senses which the cruelty of his other daughters had so violently shaken. Let us return to say a word or two about those cruel daughters.

These monsters of ingratitude, who had been so false to their old father, could not be expected to prove more faithful to their own husbands. They

soon grew tired of paying even the appearance of duty and affection, and in an open way showed they had fixed their loves upon another. It happened that the object of their guilty loves was the same. It was Edmund, a natural son of the late Earl of Gloucester, who by his treacheries had succeeded in disinheriting his brother Edgar, the lawful heir, from his earldom, and by his wicked practices was now earl himself; a wicked man, and a fit object for the love of such wicked creatures as Goneril and Regan. It falling out about this time that the Duke of Cornwall, Regan's husband, died, Regan immediately declared her intention of wedding the Earl of Gloucester, which rousing the jealousy of her sister, to whom as well as to Regan this wicked earl had at sundry times professed love, Goneril found means to make away with her sister by poison; but being detected in her practices, and imprisoned by her husband, the Duke of Albany, for this deed, and for her guilty passion for the earl, which had come to his ears, she in a fit of disappointed love and rage, shortly, put an end to her own life. Thus the justice of Heaven at last overtook these wicked daughters.

While the eyes of all men were upon this event, admiring the justice displayed in their deserved deaths, the same eyes were suddenly taken off from this sight to admire at the mysterious ways of the same power in the melancholy fate of the young and virtuous daughter, the lady Cordelia, whose good deeds did seem to deserve a more fortunate conclusion; but it is an awful truth that innocence and piety are not always successful in this world. The forces which Goneril and Regan had sent out under the command of the bad Earl of Gloucester were victorious, and Cordelia, by the practices of this wicked earl, who did not like that any should stand between him and the throne, ended her life in prison. Thus Heaven took this innocent lady to

itself in her young years, after showing her to the world an illustrious example of filial duty. Lear did not long survive this kind child.

Before he died, the good Earl of Kent, who had still attended his old master's steps from the first of his daughters' ill-usage to this sad period of his decay, tried to make him understand that it was he who had followed him under the name of Caius; but Lear's care-crazed brain at that time could not comprehend how that could be, or how Kent and Caius could be the same person: so Kent thought it needless to trouble him with explanations at such a time; and Lear soon after expiring, this faithful servant to the king, between age and grief for his old master's vexations, soon followed him to the grave.

How the judgment of Heaven overtook the bad Earl of Gloucester, whose treasons were discovered, and himself slain in single combat with his brother, the lawful earl; and how Goneril's husband, the Duke of Albany, who was innocent of the death of Cordelia, and had never encouraged his lady in her wicked proceedings against her father, ascended the throne of Britain after the death of Lear, it is needless here to narrate; Lear and his Three Daughters being dead, whose adventures alone concern our story.

III.—As You Like It

DURING the time that France was divided into provinces (or dukedoms, as they were called), there reigned in one of these provinces a usurper, who had deposed and banished his elder brother, the lawful duke.

The duke, who was thus driven from his dominions, retired with a few faithful followers to the Forest of Arden; and here the good duke lived with his loving

friends, who had put themselves into a voluntary exile for his sake, while their land and revenues enriched the false usurper; and custom soon made the life of careless ease they led here more sweet to them than the pomp and uneasy splendour of a courtier's life. Here they lived like the old Robin Hood of England, and to this forest many noble youths daily resorted from the court, and did fleet the time carelessly, as they did who lived in the golden age. In the summer they lay along under the fine shade of the large forest trees, marking the playful sports of the wild deer; and so fond were they of these poor dappled fools, who seemed to be the native inhabitants of the forest, that it grieved them to be forced to kill them to supply themselves with venison for their food. When the cold winds of winter made the duke feel the change of his adverse fortune, he would endure it patiently, and say, "These chilling winds which blow upon my body are true counsellors; they do not flatter, but represent truly to me my condition; and, though they bite sharply, their tooth is nothing like so keen as that of unkindness and ingratitude. I find that howsoever men speak against adversity, yet some sweet uses are to be extracted from it; like the jewel, precious for medicine, which is taken from the head of the venomous and despised toad." In this manner did the patient duke draw a useful moral from everything that he saw; and by the help of this moralising turn, in that life of his, remote from public haunts, he could find tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything.

The banished duke had a only daughter, named Rosalind, whom the usurper, Duke Frederick, when he banished her father, still retained in his court as a companion for his own daughter, Celia. A strict friendship subsisted between these ladies, which the

disagreement between their fathers did not in the least interrupt, Celia striving by every kindness in her power to make amends to Rosalind for the injustice of her own father in deposing the father of Rosalind; and whenever the thoughts of her father's banishment, and her own dependence on the false usurper, made Rosalind melancholy, Celia's whole care was to comfort and console her.

One day, when Celia was talking in her usual kind manner to Rosalind, saying, "I pray you, Rosalind, my sweet cousin, be merry," a messenger entered from the duke, to tell them that if they wished to see a wrestling match, which was just going to begin, they must come instantly to the court before the palace; and Celia, thinking it would amuse Rosalind, agreed to go and see it.

In those times wrestling, which is only practised now by country clowns, was a favourite sport even in the courts of princes, and before fair ladies and princesses. To this wrestling match, therefore, Celia and Rosalind went. They found that it was likely to prove a very tragical sight; for a large and powerful man, who had been long practised in the art of wrestling, and had slain many men in contests of this kind, was just going to wrestle with a very young man, who, from his extreme youth and inexperience in the art, the beholders all thought would certainly be killed.

When the duke saw Celia and Rosalind, he said, "How now, daughter and niece, are you crept hither to see the wrestling? You will take little delight in it, there is such odds in the men; in pity to this young man, I would wish to persuade him from wrestling. Speak to him, ladies, and see if you can move him."

The ladies were well pleased to perform this humane office, and first Celia entreated the young stranger that he would desist from the attempt; and

then Rosalind spoke so kindly to him, and with such feeling consideration for the danger he was about to undergo, that instead of being persuaded by her gentle words to forego his purpose, all his thoughts were bent to distinguish himself by his courage in this lovely lady's eye. He refused the request of Celia and Rosalind in such graceful and modest words, that they felt still more concern for him; he concluded his refusal with saying, "I am sorry to deny such fair and excellent ladies anything. But let your fair eyes and gentle wishes go with me to my trial, wherein if I be conquered there is one shamed that was never gracious; if I am killed, there is one dead that is willing to die; I shall do my friends no wrong, for I have none to lament me; the world no injury, for in it I have nothing; for I only fill up a place in the world which may be better supplied when I have made it empty."

And now the wrestling match began. Celia wished the young stranger might not be hurt; but Rosalind felt most for him. The friendless state which he said he was in, and that he wished to die, made Rosalind think that he was like herself, unfortunate; and she pitied him so much, and so deep an interest she took in his danger while he was wrestling, that she might almost be said at that moment to have fallen in love with him.

The kindness shown this unknown youth by these fair and noble ladies gave him courage and strength, so that he performed wonders; and in the end completely conquered his antagonist, who was so much hurt, that for a while he was unable to speak or move.

The Duke Frederick was much pleased with the courage and skill shown by this young stranger; and desired to know his name and parentage, meaning to take him under his protection.

The stranger said his name was Orlando, and that he was the youngest son of Sir Rowland de Boys.

Sir Rowland de Boys, the father of Orlando, had been dead some years; but when he was living, he had been a true subject and dear friend of the banished duke; therefore, when Frederick heard Orlando was the son of his banished brother's friend, all his liking for this brave young man was changed into displeasure, and he left the place in very ill humour. Hating to hear the very name of any of his brother's friends, and yet still admiring the valour of the youth, he said, as he went out, that he wished Orlando had been the son of any other man.

Rosalind was delighted to hear that her new favourite was the son of her father's old friend; and she said to Celia, "My father loved Sir Rowland de Boys, and if I had known this young man was his son, I would have added tears to my entreaties before he should have ventured."

The ladies then went up to him; and seeing him abashed by the sudden displeasure shown by the duke, they spoke kind and encouraging words to him; and Rosalind, when they were going away, turned back to speak some more civil things to the brave young son of her father's old friend; and taking a chain from off her neck, she said, "Gentleman, wear this for me. I am out of suits with fortune, or I would give you a more valuable present."

When the ladies were alone, Rosalind's talk being still of Orlando, Celia began to perceive her cousin had fallen in love with the handsome young wrestler; and she said to Rosalind, "Is it possible you should fall in love so suddenly?"—Rosalind replied, "The duke, my father, loved his father dearly."—"But," said Celia, "does it therefore follow that you should love his son dearly? for then I ought to hate him, for my father hated his father: yet I do not hate Orlando."

Frederick being enraged at the sight of Sir Rowland de Boys's son, which reminded him of the many friends the banished duke had among the nobility, and having been for some time displeased with his niece, because the people praised her for her virtues, and pitied her for her good father's sake, his malice suddenly broke out against her; and while Celia and Rosalind were talking of Orlando, Frederick entered the room, and with looks full of anger ordered Rosalind instantly to leave the palace, and follow her father into banishment; telling Celia, who in vain pleaded for her, that he had only suffered Rosalind to stay upon her account. "I did not then," said Celia, "entreat you to let her stay, for I was too young at that time to value her; but now that I know her worth, and that we so long have slept together, rose at the same instant, learned, played, and eat together, I cannot live out of her company." Frederick replied, "She is too subtle for you; her smoothness, her very silence, and her patience, speak to the people, and they pity her. You are a fool to plead for her, for you will seem more bright and virtuous when she is gone; therefore open not your lips in her favour, for the doom which I have passed upon her is irrevocable."

When Celia found she could not prevail upon her father to let Rosalind remain with her, she generously resolved to accompany her; and leaving her father's palace that night, she went along with her friend to seek Rosalind's father, the banished duke, in the Forest of Arden.

Before they set out, Celia considered that it would be unsafe for two young ladies to travel in the rich clothes they then wore; she therefore proposed that they should disguise their rank by dressing themselves like country maids. Rosalind said it would be a still greater protection if one of them was to be dressed like a man; and so it was quickly agreed on

between them, that as Rosalind was the tallest, she should wear the dress of a young countryman, and Celia should be habited like a country lass, and that they should say they were brother and sister; and Rosalind said she would be called Ganymede, and Celia chose the name of Aliena.)

In this disguise, and taking their money and jewels to defray their expenses, these fair princesses set out on their long travel; for the Forest of Arden was a long way off, beyond the boundaries of the duke's dominions.

The lady Rosalind (or Ganymede as she must now be called) with her manly garb seemed to have put on a manly courage. The faithful friendship Celia had shown in accompanying Rosalind so many weary miles made the new brother, in recompense for this true love, exert a cheerful spirit, as if he were indeed Ganymede, the rustic and stout-hearted brother of the gentle village maiden, Aliena.

When at last they came to the Forest of Arden, they no longer found the convenient inns and good accommodations they had met with on the road; and being in want of food and rest, Ganymede, who had so merrily cheered his sister with pleasant speeches and happy remarks all the way, now owned to Aliena that he was so weary he could find in his heart to disgrace his man's apparel, and cry like a woman; and Aliena declared she could go no farther. And then again Ganymede tried to recollect that it was a man's duty to comfort and console a woman, as the weaker vessel; and to seem courageous to his new sister, he said, "Come, have a good heart, my sister Aliena; we are now at the end of our travel, in the Forest of Arden." But feigned manliness and forced courage would no longer support them; for though they were in the Forest of Arden, they knew not where to find the duke; and here the travel of these weary ladies might have come to a sad con-

clusion, for they might have lost themselves, and perished for want of food; but providentially, as they were sitting on the grass, almost dying with fatigue and hopeless of any relief, a countryman chanced to pass that way, and Ganymede once more tried to speak with a manly boldness, saying, "Shepherd, if love or gold can in this desert place procure us entertainment, I pray you bring us where we may rest ourselves; for this young maid, my sister, is much fatigued with travelling, and faint for want of food."

The man replied that he was only a servant to a shepherd, and that his master's house was just going to be sold, and therefore they would find but poor entertainment; but that if they would go with him, they should be welcome to what there was. They followed the man, the near prospect of relief giving them fresh strength; and bought the house and sheep of the shepherd, and took the man who conducted them to the shepherd's house to wait on them; and being by this means so fortunately provided with a neat cottage, and well supplied with provisions, they agreed to stay here till they could learn in what part of the forest the duke dwelt.

When they were rested after the fatigue of their journey, they began to like their new way of life, and almost fancied themselves the shepherd and shepherdess they feigned to be; yet sometimes Ganymede remembered he had once been the same lady Rosalind who had so dearly loved the brave Orlando, because he was the son of old Sir Rowland, her father's friend; and though Ganymede thought that Orlando was many miles distant, even so many weary miles as they had travelled, yet it soon appeared that Orlando was also in the Forest of Arden; and in this manner this strange event came to pass:

Orlando was the youngest son of Sir Rowland de Boys, who, when he died, left him (Orlando being

then very young) to the care of his eldest brother Oliver, charging Oliver on his blessing to give his brother a good education, and provide for him as became the dignity of their ancient house. Oliver proved an unworthy brother; and disregarding the commands of his dying father, he never put his brother to school, but kept him at home untaught and entirely neglected. But in his nature and in the noble qualities of his mind Orlando so much resembled his excellent father, that without any advantages of education he seemed like a youth who had been bred with the utmost care; and Oliver so envied the fine person and dignified manners of his untutored brother, that at last he wished to destroy him; and to effect this he set on people to persuade him to wrestle with the famous wrestler, who, as has been before related, had killed so many men. Now, it was this cruel brother's neglect of him which made Orlando say he wished to die, being so friendless.)

When, contrary to the wicked hopes he had formed, his brother proved victorious, his envy and malice knew no bounds, and he swore he would burn the chamber where Orlando slept. He was overheard making this vow by one that had been an old and faithful servant to their father, and that loved Orlando because he resembled Sir Rowland. This old man went out to meet him when he returned from the duke's palace, and when he saw Orlando, the peril his dear young master was in made him break out into these passionate exclamations: "O my gentle master, my sweet master, O you memory of old Sir Rowland! Why are you virtuous? why are you gentle, strong, and valiant? and why would you be so fond to overcome the famous wrestler? Your praise has come too swiftly home before you." Orlando, wondering what all this meant, asked him what was the matter. And then the old man told him how his wicked brother,

envying the love all people bore him, and now hearing the fame he had gained by his victory in the duke's palace, intended to destroy him by setting fire to his chamber that night; and, in conclusion, advised him to escape the danger he was in by instant flight; and knowing Orlando had no money, Adam (for that was the good old man's name) had brought out with him his own little hoard, and he said, "I have five hundred crowns, the thrifty hire I saved under your father, and laid by to be provision for me when my old limbs should become unfit for service; take that, and he that doth the ravens feed be comfort to my age! Here is the gold; all this I give to you: let me be your servant; though I look old I will do the service of a younger man in all your business and necessities."—"O good old man!" said Orlando, "how well appears in you the constant service of the old world! You are not for the fashion of these times. We will go along together, and before your youthful wages are spent, I shall light upon some means for both our maintenance."

Together then this faithful servant and his loved master set out; and Orlando and Adam travelled on, uncertain what course to pursue, till they came to the Forest of Arden, and there they found themselves in the same distress for want of food that Ganymede and Aliena had been. They wandered on, seeking some human habitation, till they were almost spent with hunger and fatigue. Adam at last said, "O my dear master, I die for want of food; I can go no farther!" He then laid himself down, thinking to make that place his grave, and bade his dear master farewell. Orlando, seeing him in this weak state, took his old servant up in his arms, and carried him under the shelter of some pleasant trees; and he said to him, "Cheerily, old Adam, rest your weary limbs here awhile, and do not talk of dying!"

Orlando then searched about to find some food, and he happened to arrive at that part of the forest where the duke was; and he and his friends were just going to eat their dinner, this royal duke being seated on the grass, under no other canopy than the shady covert of some large trees.

Orlando, whom hunger had made desperate, drew his sword, intending to take their meat by force, and said, "Forbear, and eat no more; I must have your food!" The duke asked him if distress had made him so bold, or if he were a rude despiser of good manners? On this Orlando said he was dying with hunger; and then the duke told him he was welcome to sit down and eat with them. Orlando, hearing him speak so gently, put up his sword, and blushed with shame at the rude manner in which he had demanded their food. "Pardon me, I pray you," said he; "I thought that all things had been savage here, and therefore I put on the countenance of stern command; but whatever men you are, that in this desert, under the shade of melancholy boughs, lose and neglect the creeping hours of time; if ever you have looked on better days; if ever you have been where bells have knolled to church; if you have ever sat at any good man's feast; if ever from your eyelids you have wiped a tear, and know what it is to pity or be pitied,—may gentle speeches now move you to do me human courtesy!" The duke replied, "True it is that we are men (as you say) who have seen better days, and though we have now our habitation in this wild forest, we have lived in towns and cities, and have with holy bell been knolled to church, have sat at good men's feasts, and from our eyes have wiped the drops which sacred pity has engendered; therefore sit you down, and take of our refreshment as much as will minister to your wants."—"There is an old, poor man," answered Orlando, "who has limped after me many a weary step in pure love, oppressed

at once with two sad infirmities, age and hunger; till he be satisfied, I must not touch a bit."—"Go, find him out, and bring him hither," said the duke, "we will forbear to eat till you return." Then Orlando went like a doe to find its fawn and give it food; and presently returned, bringing Adam in his arms; and the duke said, "Set down your venerable burden! you are both welcome;" and they fed the old man, and cheered his heart, and he revived, and recovered his health and strength again.

The duke inquired who Orlando was; and when he found that he was the son of his old friend, Sir Rowland de Boys, he took him under his protection, and Orlando and his old servant lived with the duke in the forest.

Orlando arrived in the forest not many days after Ganymede and Aliena came there, and (as has been before related) bought the shepherd's cottage.

Ganymede and Aliena were strangely surprised to find the name of Rosalind carved on the trees, and love-sonnets fastened to them, all addressed to Rosalind; and while they were wondering how this could be, they met Orlando, and they perceived the chain which Rosalind had given him about his neck.

Orlando little thought that Ganymede was the fair princess Rosalind, who by her noble condescension and favour had so won his heart that he passed his whole time in carving her name upon the trees, and writing sonnets in praise of her beauty; but being much pleased with the graceful air of this pretty shepherd-youth, he entered into conversation with him, and he thought he saw a likeness in Ganymede to his beloved Rosalind, but that he had none of the dignified deportment of that noble lady; for Ganymede assumed the forward manners often seen in youths when they

are between boys and men, and with much archness and humour talked to Orlando of a certain lover, "who," said he, "haunts our forest, and spoils our young trees with carving Rosalind upon their barks; and he hangs odes upon hawthorns, and elegies on brambles, all praising this same Rosalind. If I could find this lover, I would give him some good counsel that would soon cure him of his love."

Orlando confessed that he was the fond lover of whom he spoke, and asked Ganymede to give him the good counsel he talked of. The remedy Ganymede proposed, and the counsel he gave him, was that Orlando should come every day to the cottage where he and his sister Aliena dwelt; "And then," said Ganymede, "I will feign myself to be Rosalind, and you shall feign to court me in the same manner as you would do if I was Rosalind, and then I will imitate the fantastic ways of whimsical ladies to their lovers, till I make you ashamed of your love; and this is the way I propose to cure you." Orlando had no great faith in the remedy, yet he agreed to come every day to Ganymede's cottage, and feign a playful courtship; and every day Orlando visited Ganymede and Aliena, and Orlando called the shepherd Ganymede his Rosalind, and every day talked over all the fine words and flattering compliments which young men delight to use when they court their mistresses. It does not appear, however, that Ganymede made any progress in curing Orlando of his love for Rosalind.

Though Orlando thought all this was but a sportive play (not dreaming that Ganymede was his very Rosalind), yet the opportunity it gave him of saying all the fond things he had in his heart, pleased his fancy almost as well as it did Ganymede's, who enjoyed the secret jest in knowing these fine love-speeches were all addressed to the right person. ☉

In this manner many days passed pleasantly on with these young people; and the good-natured Aliena, seeing it made Ganymede happy, let him have his own way, and was diverted at the mock-courtship, and did not care to remind Ganymede that the lady Rosalind had not yet made herself known to the duke her father, whose place of resort in the forest they had learned from Orlando. Ganymede met the duke one day, and had some talk with him, and the duke asked of what parentage he came. Ganymede answered that he came of as good parentage as he did, which made the duke smile, for he did not suspect the pretty shepherd-boy came of royal lineage. Then seeing the duke look well and happy, Ganymede was content to put off all further explanation for a few days longer.

One morning, as Orlando was going to visit Ganymede, he saw a man lying asleep on the ground, and a large green snake had twisted itself about his neck. The snake, seeing Orlando approach, glided away among the bushes. Orlando went nearer, and then he discovered a lioness lie crouching, with her head on the ground, with a cat-like watch, waiting till the sleeping man awaked (for it is said that lions will prey on nothing that is dead or sleeping). It seemed as if Orlando was sent by Providence to free the man from the danger of the snake and lioness; but when Orlando looked in the man's face, he perceived that the sleeper who was exposed to this double peril was his own brother Oliver, who had so cruelly used him, and had threatened to destroy him by fire; and he was almost tempted to leave him a prey to the hungry lioness; but brotherly affection and the gentleness of his nature soon overcame his first anger against his brother; and he drew his sword, and attacked the lioness, and slew her, and thus preserved his brother's life both from the venomous snake and

from the furious lioness; but before Orlando could conquer the lioness, she had torn one of his arms with her sharp claws.

While Orlando was engaged with the lioness, Oliver awaked, and perceiving that his brother Orlando, whom he had so cruelly treated, was saving him from the fury of a wild beast at the risk of his own life, shame and remorse at once seized him, and he repented of his unworthy conduct, and besought with many tears his brother's pardon for the injuries he had done him. Orlando rejoiced to see him so penitent, and readily forgave him; they embraced each other, and from that hour Oliver loved Orlando with a true brotherly affection, though he had come to the forest bent on his destruction.

The wound in Orlando's arm having bled very much, he found himself too weak to go to visit Ganymede, and therefore he desired his brother to go and tell Ganymede, "whom," said Orlando, "I in sport do call my Rosalind," the accident which had befallen him.

Thither then Oliver went, and told to Ganymede and Aliena how Orlando had saved his life; and when he had finished the story of Orlando's bravery, and his own providential escape, he owned to them that he was Orlando's brother, who had so cruelly used him; and then he told them of their reconciliation.

The sincere sorrow that Oliver expressed for his offences made such a lively impression on the kind heart of Aliena, that she instantly fell in love with him; and Oliver observing how much she pitied the distress he told her he felt for his fault, he as suddenly fell in love with her. But while love was thus stealing into the hearts of Aliena and Oliver, he was no less busy with Ganymede, who, hearing of the danger Orlando had been in, and that he was wounded by the lioness, fainted; and

when he recovered, he pretended that he had counterfeited the swoon in the imaginary character of Rosalind; and Ganymede said to Oliver, "Tell your brother Orlando how well I counterfeited a swoon." But Oliver saw by the paleness of his complexion that he did really faint, and much wondering at the weakness of the young man, he said, "Well, if you did counterfeit, take a good heart, and counterfeit to be a man."—"So I do," replied Ganymede truly, "but I should have been a woman by right."•

Oliver made this visit a very long one, and when at last he returned back to his brother, he had much news to tell him; for besides the account of Ganymede's fainting at the hearing that Orlando was wounded, Oliver told him how he had fallen in love with the fair shepherdess, Aliena, and that she had lent a favourable ear to his suit, even in this their first interview; and he talked to his brother, as of a thing almost settled, that he should marry Aliena, saying that he so well loved her, that he would live here as a shepherd, and settle his estate and house at home upon Orlando.

"You have my consent," said Orlando. "Let your wedding be to-morrow, and I will invite the duke and his friends. Go and persuade your shepherdess to agree to this; she is now alone; for look, here comes her brother." Oliver went to Aliena; and Ganymede, whom Orlando had perceived approaching, came to inquire after the health of his wounded friend.

When Orlando and Ganymede began to talk over the sudden love which had taken place between Oliver and Aliena, Orlando said he had advised his brother to persuade his fair shepherdess to be married on the morrow, and then he added how much he could wish to be married on the same day to his Rosalind. 6

Ganymede, who well approved of this arrangement, said that if Orlando really loved Rosalind as well as he professed to do, he should have his wish; for on the morrow he would engage to make Rosalind appear in her own person, and also that Rosalind should be willing to marry Orlando.

This seemingly wonderful event, which, as Ganymede was the lady Rosalind, he could so easily perform, he pretended he would bring to pass by the aid of magie, which he said he had learnt of an uncle who was a famous magician.

The fond lover Orlando, half believing and half doubting what he heard, asked Ganymede if he spoke in sober meaning. "By my life I do," said Ganymede; "therefore put on your best clothes, and bid the duke and your friends to your wedding; for if you desire to be married to-morrow to Rosalind, she shall be here."

The next morning, Oliver having obtained the consent of Aliena, they came into the presence of the duke, and with them also came Orlando.

They being all assembled to celebrate this double marriage, and as yet only one of the brides appearing, there was much of wondering and conjecture, but they mostly thought that Ganymede was making a jest of Orlando.

The duke, hearing that it was his own daughter that was to be brought in this strange way, asked Orlando if he believed the shepherd-boy could really do what he had promised; and while Orlando was answering that he knew not what to think, Ganymede entered, and asked the duke if he brought his daughter, whether he would consent to her marriage with Orlando. "That I would," said the duke, "if I had kingdoms to give with her." Ganymede then said to Orlando, "And you say you will marry her if I bring her here."—"That I would," said Orlando, "if I were king of many kingdoms."

Ganymede and Aliena then went out together, and Ganymede throwing off his male attire, and being once more dressed in woman's apparel, quickly became Rosalind without the power of magic; and Aliena, changing her country garb for her own rich clothes, was with as little trouble transformed into the lady Celia.

While they were gone, the duke said to Orlando that he thought the shepherd Ganymede very like his daughter Rosalind; and Orlando said, he also had observed the resemblance.

They had no time to wonder 'till all this would end, for Rosalind and Celia in their own clothes entered; and no longer pretending that it was by the power of magic that she came there, Rosalind threw herself on her knees before her father, and begged his blessing. It seemed so wonderful to all present that she should so suddenly appear, that it might well have passed for magic; but Rosalind would no longer trifle with her father, and told him the story of her banishment, and of her dwelling in the forest as a shepherd-boy, her cousin Celia passing as her sister.

The duke ratified the consent he had already given to the marriage; and Orlando and Rosalind, Oliver and Celia, were married at the same time. And though their wedding could not be celebrated in this wild forest with any of the parade or splendour usual on such occasions, yet a happier wedding-day was never passed: and while they were eating their venison under the cool shade of the pleasant trees, as if nothing should be wanting to complete the felicity of this good duke and the true lovers, an unexpected messenger arrived to tell the duke the joyful news, that his dukedom was restored to him.

The usurper, enraged at the flight of his daughter Celia, and hearing that every day men of great worth

resorted to the Forest of Arden to join the lawful duke in his exile, much envying that his brother should be so highly respected in his adversity, put himself at the head of a large force, and advanced towards the forest, intending to seize his brother, and put him with all his faithful followers to the sword. But, by a wonderful interposition of Providence, this bad brother was converted from his evil intention; for just as he entered the skirts of the wild forest, he was met by an old religious man, a hermit, with whom he had much talk, and who in the end completely turned his heart from his wicked design. Thenceforward he became a true penitent, and resolved, relinquishing his unjust dominion, to spend the remainder of his days in a religious house. The first act of his newly conceived penitence was to send a messenger to his brother (as has been related) to offer to restore to him his dukedom, which he had usurped so long, and with it the lands and revenues of his friends, the faithful followers of his adversity.

This joyful news, as unexpected as it was welcome, came opportunely to heighten the festivity and rejoicings at the wedding of the princesses. Celia complimented her cousin on this good fortune which had happened to the duke, Rosalind's father, and wished her joy very sincerely, though she herself was no longer heir to the dukedom, but by this restoration, which her father had made, Rosalind was now the heir: so completely was the love of these two cousins unmingled with anything of jealousy or of envy.

The duke had now an opportunity of rewarding those true friends who had stayed with him in his banishment; and these worthy followers, though they had patiently shared his adverse fortune, were very well pleased to return in peace and prosperity to the palace of their lawful duke.

SELECTIONS FROM SHAKESPEARE

I.—The Seven Ages of Man

ALL the world's a stage,
 And all the men and women merely players:
 They have their exits and their entrances;
 And one man in his time plays many parts,
 His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,
 Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.
 And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel
 And shining morning face, creeping like snail
 Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,
 Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
 Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then a soldier,
 Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard;¹
 Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,
 Seeking the bubble reputation
 Even in the cannon's mouth. And then the justice,
 In fair round belly with good capon² lined,
 With eyes severe, and beard of formal cut,³
 Full of wise saws and modern instances;
 And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
 Into the lean and slippered pantaloons,⁴
 With spectacles on nose and pouch on side,
 His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide
 For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice,
 Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
 And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,
 That ends this strange eventful history,
 Is second childishness, and mere oblivion;
 Sans⁵ teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

As You Like It.

¹ *The pard*: the panther.

² *Capon*: fowl fattened for the table.

³ *Beard of formal cut*: this is the pointed "legal" beard of the sixteenth century, such as we see in portraits of Lord Bacon, as well as of Raleigh and Spenser, and of Shakespeare himself.

⁴ *Pantaloons*: a lean and foolish old man.

⁵ *Sans*: without.

II.—Speech of Henry V. at the Siege of Harfleur

ONCE more unto the breach, dear friends, once more;
 Or close the wall up with our English dead!
 In peace, there's nothing so becomes a man
 As modest stillness and humility;
 But when the blast of war blows in our ears,
 Then imitate the action of the tiger—
 Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood,
 Disguise fair nature with hard-favoured rage:
 Then lend the eye a terrible aspect;
 Let it pry through the portage of the head,
 Like the brass cannon; let the brow o'erwhelm it,
 As fearfully as doth a gallèd rock
 O'erhang and jutty his confounded base,
 Swilled with the wild and wasteful ocean.
 Now set the teeth, and stretch the nostril wide;
 Hold hard the breath, and bend up every spirit
 To his¹ full height!—On! on, you noblest English,
 Whose blood is fetched from fathers of war-proof!
 Fathers, that, like so many Alexanders,
 Have, in these parts, from morn till even fought,
 And sheathed their swords for lack of argument.—
 Dishonour not your mothers: now attest
 That those whom you called fathers did beget you!
 Be copy now to men of grosser blood,
 And teach them how to war!—And you, good yeomen
 Whose limbs were made in England, show us here
 The mettle of your pasture; let us swear
 That you are worth your breeding: which I doubt not;
 For there is none of you so mean and base,
 That hath not noble lustre in your eyes.
 I see you stand like greyhounds in the slips,
 Straining upon the start. The game's afoot;
 Follow your spirit: and, upon this charge,
 Cry—"Heaven for Harry! England! and St. George!"

Henry V.

¹ *His*, for *its*.

III.—Soliloquy of Henry IV.

O SLEEP, O gentle Sleep,
 Nature's soft nurse, how have I frightened thee,
 That thou no more wilt weigh my eyelids down,
 And steep my senses in forgetfulness?
 Why rather, Sleep, liest thou in smoky cribs,
 Upon uneasy pallets stretching thee,
 And hushed with buzzing night-flies to thy slumber,
 Than in the perfumed chambers of the great,
 Under the canopies of costly state,
 And lulled with sounds of sweetest melody?
 O thou dull god! why liest thou with the vile,
 In loathsome beds, and leav'st the kingly couch
 A watch-case¹ or a common 'larum-bell?
 Wilt thou upon the high and giddy mast
 Seal up the ship-boy's eyes, and rock his brains
 In cradle of the rude imperious surge
 And in the visitation of the winds,
 Who take the ruffian billows by the top,
 Curling their monstrous heads, and hanging them
 With deafening clamour in the slippery shrouds,
 That, with the hurly,² Death itself awakes?
 Canst thou, O partial Sleep! give thy repose
 To the wet sea-boy in an hour so rude,
 And in the calmest and most stillest night,
 With all appliances and means to boot,
 Deny it to a king? Then, happy low, lie down!³
 Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.

Henry IV., Part II.

¹ *A watch-case* : a sentry-box.

² *Hurly* : noise, confusion.

³ *Then, happy low, lie down* : then lie down in comfort, happy in being low ; for, "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown."

JOHN GILPIN

JOHN GILPIN was a citizen
Of credit and renown,
A train-band¹ captain eke was he
Of famous London town.

John Gilpin's spouse said to her dear,
"Though wedded we have been
These twice ten tedious years, yet we
No holiday have seen.

"To-morrow is our wedding-day,
And we will then repair
Unto the Bell² at Edmonton,
All in a chaise and pair.

"My sister, and my sister's child,
Myself, and children three,
Will fill the chaise; so you must ride
On horseback after we."

He soon replied, "I do admire
Of womankind but one,
And you are she, my dearest dear,
Therefore it shall be done.

"I am a linen-draper bold,
As all the world doth know,
And my good friend the calender
Will lend his horse to go."

Quoth Mrs. Gilpin, "That's well said;
And for that wine is dear,
We will be furnished with our own,
Which is both bright and clear."

¹ *Train-band* : militia.

² *Bell* : the name of an inn or hotel.

11 6
16 3

John Gilpin kissed his loving wife ;
O'erjoyed was he to find,
That, though on pleasure she was bent,
She had a frugal mind.

The morning came, the chaise was brought,
But yet was not allowed
To drive up to the door, lest all
Should say that she was proud.

So, three doors off the chaise was stayed,
Where they did all get in ;
Six precious souls, and all agog
To dash through thick and thin.

Smack went the whip, round went the wheels,
Were never folk so glad ;
The stones did rattle underneath,
As if Cheapside were mad.

John Gilpin, at his horse's side,
Seized fast the flowing mane,
And up he got, in haste to ride,—
But soon came down again ;

For saddle-tree scarce reached had he,
His journey to begin,
When, turning round his head, he saw
Three customers come in.

So down he came ; for loss of time
Although it grieved him sore,
Yet loss of pence, full well he knew,
Would trouble him much more.

'Twas long before the customers
Were suited to their mind,
When Betty, screaming, came downstairs,
"The wine is left behind !"

"Good lack!" quoth he—"yet bring to me
My leathern belt likewise,
In which I bear my trusty sword
When I do exercise."

Now Mistress Gilpin (careful soul!)
Had two stone bottles found,
To hold the liquor that she loved,
And keep it safe and sound.

Each bottle had a curling ear,
Through which the belt he drew,
And hung a bottle on each side,
To make his balance true.

Then over all, that he might be
Equipped from top to toe,
His long red cloak, well brushed and neat,
He manfully did throw.

Now see him mounted once again
Upon his nimble steed,
Full slowly pacing o'er the stones,
With caution and good heed.

But finding soon a smoother road
Beneath his well-shod feet,
The snorting beast began to trot,
Which galled him in his seat.

So "fair" and "softly," John he cried,
But John he cried in vain,
That trot became a gallop soon, ✓
In spite of curb and rein.

So stooping down, as needs he must
Who cannot sit upright,
He grasped the mane with both his hands
And eke¹ with all his might.

¹ *Eke* : also.

His horse, who never in that sort
Had handled been before,
What thing upon his back had got
Did wonder more and more.

Away went Gilpin, neck or nought;
Away went hat and wig!
He little dreant, when he set out,
Of running such a rig.

The wind did blow, the cloak did fly,
Like streamers long and gay,
Till, loop and button failing both,
At last it flew away!

Then might all people well discern
The bottles he had slung;
A bottle swinging at each side,
As hath been said or sung.

The dogs did bark, the children screamed,
Up flew the windows all;
And every soul cried out, "Well done!"
As loud as he could bawl.

Away went Gilpin—who but he?
His fame soon spread around:
"He carries weight!—he rides a race!
'Tis for a thousand pound!"

And still, as fast as he drew near,
'Twas wonderful to view,
How in a trice¹ the turnpike men
Their gates wide open threw.

And now, as he went bowing down
His reeking head full low,
The bottles twain behind his back
Were shattered at a blow!

¹ *Trice* : instant.

Down ran the wine into the road,
Most piteous to be seen;
Which made his horse's flanks to smoke
As they had basted been.

But still he seemed to carry weight
With leathern girdle braced;
For all might see the bottle necks
Still dangling at his waist.

Thus all through merry Islington
These gambols he did play,
Until he came unto the Wash
Of Edmonton so gay;

And there he threw the Wash about
On both sides of the way,
Just like unto a trundling mop,
Or a wild goose at play.

At Edmonton his loving wife
From the balcony spied
Her tender husband, wond'ring much
To see how he did ride.

"Stop, stop, John Gilpin!—here's the house,"
They all at once did cry:
"The dinner waits, and we are tired:"
Said Gilpin—"So am I!"

But yet his horse was not a whit
Inclined to tarry there:
For why?—his owner had a house
Full ten miles off, at Ware.

So like an arrow swift he flew,
Shot by an archer strong;
So did he fly—which brings me to
The middle of my song.

Away went Gilpin out of breath,
And sore against his will,
Till at his friend the calender's¹
His horse at last stood still.

The calender, amazed to see
His neighbour in such trim,
Laid down his pipe, flew to the gate,
And thus accosted him :

"What news? what news? your tidings tell;
Tell me you must and shall—
Say why bareheaded you are come,
Or why you've come at all?"

Now Gilpin had a pleasant wit,
And loved a timely joke;
And thus unto the calender
In merry guise he spoke :

"I came because your horse would come;
And, if I well forebode,
My hat and wig will soon be here,—
They are upon the road."

The calender, right glad to find
His friend in merry pin,
Returned him not a single word
But to the house went in ;

Whence straight he came with hat and wig;
A wig that flowed behind,
A hat not much the worse for wear,—
Each comely in its kind.

He held them up, and in his turn
Thus showed his ready wit :
"My head is twice as big as yours,
They therefore needs must fit !

¹ *Calender* : one who presses cloth.

"But let me scrape the dirt away
That hangs upon your face;
And stop and eat, for well you may
Be in a hungry case."

Said John, "It is my wedding-day,
And all the world would stare,
If wife should dine at Edmonton,
And I should dine at Ware."

So, turning to his horse, he said,
"I am in haste to dine;
'Twas for your pleasure you came here,
You shall go back for mine."

Ah, luckless speech, and bootless boast!
For which he paid full dear;
For, while he spake, a braying ass
Did sing most loud and clear;

Whereat his horse did snort, as he
Had heard a lion roar,
And galloped off with all his might,
As he had done before!

Away went Gilpin, and away
Went Gilpin's hat and wig!
He lost them sooner than at first,
For why?—they were too big.

Now Mistress Gilpin, when she saw
Her husband posting down
Into the country far away,
She pulled out half-a-crown;

And thus unto the youth she said,
That drove them to the Bell,
"This shall be yours, when you bring back
My husband safe and well."

The youth did ride, and soon did meet
John coming back amain;¹
Whom in a trice he tried to stop,
By catching at his rein;

But not performing what he might
And gladly would have done,
The frightened steed he frightened more,
And made him faster run.

Away went Gilpin, and away
Went post-boy at his heels,
The post-boy's horse right glad to miss
The lumbering of the wheels.

Six gentlemen upon the road,
Thus seeing Gilpin fly,
With post-boy scampering in the rear,
They raised the hue and cry:—

“Stop thief! stop thief!—a highwayman!”
Not one of them was mute;
And all and each that passed that way
Did join in the pursuit!

And now the turnpike gates again
Flew open in short space;
The toll-men thinking, as before,
That Gilpin rode a race.

And so he did, and won it too,
For he got first to town;
Nor stopped till, where he had got up,
He did again get down.

Now let us sing, long live the king;
And Gilpin, long live he;
And when he next doth ride abroad,
May I be there to see!

COWPER

¹ *Amain* : in full force.

