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THE DAYS OF CHARLES THE FIRST:

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE.

BY

[Emma Robinson]

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WHITEHALL.

CHAPTER I.

IT was sunrise, on a serenely beautiful morning, A.D. 1643, when two travellers, well mounted and accoutred, halted to breathe their horses on the brow of the eminence which descends into the vale of the Cherwell.

Oxford, with all its airy spires and pinnacles, its towers and domes, bosomed in forest masses of verdure, shone below in the clear morning light, like a magic city rising from a crystal sea. The landscape, hooped in by the woody hills, seemed waking as fresh and smiling from its slumbers as living beauty. Rivers sparkling, green woods waving, silvery mists floating over the meadows and vanishing in brightness, smoke curling in grey columns from hidden hamlets and scattered cottages, composed a scene of pastoral tranquillity which few would have imagined to be, as then it was, the headquarters of a devastating civil war.

More accurate attention, nevertheless, discovered signs of a less peaceful nature. Sentinels paraded the lofty walls, which, in the seventeenth century, made Oxford a place of strength. Cannon pointed with their black mouths at every point of vantage; a standard floated on the summit of the castle, which dominated the town; and banderols, streaming at various distances, marked the position of numerous outposts.

At the period we take up our history, this vigilance might have seemed superfluous, but for the greatness of the interests it protected. It was immediately after the formation of the siege of Gloucester, when the armies of the king were everywhere triumphant, and the shattered levies of the parliament scarcely presented front in any direction. The defeat of the earl of Essex in the south, of Waller in the west, the marquis of Newcastle's successes in the north, and the recent storming of Bristol, had raised the hopes of the king's adherents so high, and depressed those of the parliament so low, that an

easy triumph was confidently expected by the former, and dreaded by the latter.

Still no precautions seemed too great to satisfy the fears and importance of the heterogeneous population now assembled in the monastic city. Besides being the head-quarters of the army, and the court of a king, once the most splendid in Europe, unnumbered fugitives had fled thither from the justice or severity of the parliament, or the outbreaks of a people which began to comprehend, that the war was not one alone of prerogative and privilege, but of freedom and feudality. That part of the parliament which had seceded from the deliberations at Westminster, were then assembled in Oxford, where their inefficiency offered only a ridiculous contrast to the terrific energy of the body which they strove to rival in public estimation. The queen, the beautiful and domineering Henriette Marie, also held her court within its walls; and, despite the severe distresses to which circumstances had subjected many of its members, with much of her wonted taste and magnificence. Meanwhile, the king was engaged in the siege of Gloucester, the fall of which, it was confidently believed, would complete the ruin of the parliament.

The travellers we have mentioned were, in garb and outward presentment, persons not likely to obtain any particular notice. One, who seemed to be the master, was an elderly man, dressed with the formality and sober neatness of a substantial citizen of the time; the other might be his apprentice or clerk, being a young man of a jolly, careless mien, but garbed still more plainly, and without arms; a circumstance which stamped his quality, or rather lack of it, and was, besides, remarkable in that age of strife.

But, despite this unpretending appearance, few glanced once at the elder personage who did not feel themselves prompted by curiosity to take a second survey. He was about the middle stature, had he stood upright, but there was a certain degree of malformation in his figure, which, although it did not amount to a hump-back, forced his head and shoulders forward in an awkward stoop. For the rest, he was very strongly built, his head unusually large, but his features were noble and massively cast; yet there was something wild and terrible in the gleam of his eyes, which almost seemed to lighten over his dark, sun-scorched visage, whose tints had evidently been taken in remote and burning climates. The great length and quantity of his grizzled black hair contributed to the effect of this singular physiognomy.

The pause which the travellers allowed their horses was very brief; in fact, it seemed rather taken by the elder one to indulge in a reverie, which, from the expression of his countenance, seemed to be very painful. But he said not a word, and his attendant seemed either afraid or unwilling to disturb his thoughts, whatever they might be.

A few moments elapsed, and they continued their way. Crossing the Cherwell, on which were two pieces of cannon, and as many sentinels asleep on them, they reached the city gates. A soldier on the wall instantly challenged, and was answered by a request to be admitted; to which he carelessly rejoined that it was not yet time, and that the commandant was not astir. But, even as the fellow spoke, the grinding of bolts and bars was heard, and the gates opened, slowly swinging back on their massive hinges.

The first object that presented itself was the figure of a man with a lean, weasel-like visage, mounted on a horse whose ribs could be distinctly counted, and whose tail was as stiff and scanty as a birch-rod. He was very slovenly and meanly dressed, partly in rusty armour, and had a long naked dagger in his hand, with which he goaded on his spiritless beast. Miserable as was this figure, some soldiers who followed seemed to be attending him. Among the latter came a man naked to the waist, his arms strapped behind him, whose perfectly bloodless features formed a ghastly contrast to a profusion of wild red hair, standing out in every direction about his head.

“Soh! What have we here?” exclaimed the leader, who seemed not to expect the apparition of our two travellers.

Without deigning any verbal reply, the elder handed over a paper, which his interrogator read aloud, though with considerable hesitation, as if not accustomed to efforts so literary.

“The lord-general’s pass for one Master Stonehenge, gold-merchant, jeweller, and citizen of London, concerning the loan of divers moneys in this city,” said the Oxford man in a grumbling tone. “I do marvel their lordships suffer the king’s friends to be harried for debts to the king’s enemies!—But, so, go on your way.”

“How dost know we are not here rather to lend than to recal moneys?” said the Londoner’s attendant. “I trow there are not many among ye so rich at present as to be above the borrowing!”

“Peace, Joyce, that is our business, not this worthy gentleman’s,” said the citizen, in a tone, the tranquil contempt of which seemed to irritate his examiner.

“ I would have you to know, master usurer, I have often more to do with men’s business in this city than some wot of,” said he. “ For example, this good gentleman, whom I am going to hang on the first oak to the London side of Cherwell, by way of a hint to all such gentry as travel thence for news in Oxford.”

And he snapped his fingers at the wretched being who formed part of his *cortège*, and who cowered down in terror, clasping his hands with a mute expression of despair, while tears streamed down his white visage.

“ You are the hangman, then, of this royal city ?” returned the citizen, without any sign of alarm.

“ No, sir!—but I am the provost-marshal!” exclaimed the dignitary, in a manner intended to strike the most profound awe.

“ Bodikins! you are then the chap the prisoners call old Huncks, for your transcendant cozenings and knaveries,” said the citizen’s attendant, with an undaunted glance of curiosity.

“ As you may chance some day to know, my lad,” returned the provost, with a suspicious look at the speaker, who only answered with a laugh of defiance, as he pricked on his horse to follow his master, who had now entered the gate.

The provost looked after them both for some instants, as if in consideration, and then, turning to his attendants, he said, gruffly, “ There is something more than common about these London rogues, that should be looked after! Dog, dost thou know them ?”

This civil query was addressed to the prisoner, who answered with convulsive eagerness, as if in hopes to merit some stretch of mercy. “ Yea, master, verily I have seen them both in London. The saucy lad is ’prentice to Master Bulstocke, the rich armourer in Ludgate, and is the grand leader of all the ’prentice riots; but for the other—the Lord only knows what he may be!”

“ How mean you, idiot ?” said Huncks, staring surprisedly at his informant.

“ I would not be the first thing he saw in the morning, whatever he be!” returned the spy, with a singular look. “ But he hath not long come over from the popish countries of Mexico and Peru, and he is as rich as Solomon, having already lent the parliament I know not what weight of gold in solid ingots; and Master Pym and the rest of them do consult, and go by his opinion, on sundry matters of moment. ’Tis he who hath proposed to march the city trained bands to the relief of Gloucester.”

“Ay, truly! An enterprise that would puzzle Gustave and his Swedes, were a goodly thing for paunchy citizens to effect,” said Huncks, with a scornful laugh.

“But men say—he hath a witch for his wife!” said the prisoner, looking somewhat fearfully back after the vanishing figures of the merchant and his attendant.

“What! is she so old, withered, and ugly as all that comes to?” returned Huncks, apparently without much attending to his own question.

“Old, master! I’ve seen many a witch, God help me, young and fresh as a milkmaid!” exclaimed the spy, zealously, as if vindicating the honour of the sisterhood. “But I have a trick to know them, which, if you hang me, must die with me, to the great flourishing of that sort of black cattle!”—And, observing the effect which his words seemed to produce, he continued more firmly, “I could teach it you, master provost, if I had time, and you need never fear the evil eye again! Why, for all that Stonehenge’s Spanish wife be to the eye young and pleasant to look at,—duskily beautiful as a fallen angel, and with a voice as sweet and sad as a blind man’s viol, I knew her at once to be,—what she is!”

“Truly, did’st thou?” said Huncks, looking at the prisoner with a puzzled expression. “This is a strange matter to hear, and these are men to be looked to; and, but that the marquis’s orders are precise, I could be tempted to give thee an hour or so’s further spell of it, were it but to hear the tale out.”

Encouraged by this glimpse of hope, the captive renewed his entreaties for mercy, or at least for some delay in his departure, with the most abject debasement. Mercy, however, was not the feeling which prompted Huncks to accede to the poor wretch’s supplications; which he did at last, by ordering him back to his confinement until noonday. The singular appearance of the travellers had fixed his attention, and he deemed it an object of more immediate interest to ascertain their real purposes in Oxford, than to hang a paltry spy whom he had at all times in his grasp, whenever he felt inclined for the recreation.

CHAPTER II.

MEANWHILE, the citizen and his attendant proceeded slowly up High Street, like men who did not expect or fear to be followed. It was still very early in the morning, but the town was all astir, and there was a general air of gaiety and flutter, as if it were a fair-day, or some great festival. The bells rung merrily from all the numerous churches, and now and then the booming of cannon from the ramparts seemed to announce some joyful news.

The strangers halted at a little obscure inn down a by-street, where the host received them at the door; and, after an exchange of what appeared to be some sort of private signals, ushered them into a little back-parlour. Unlike most of his tribe, he was a dark, melancholy-looking little man, strongly suspected of puritanical leanings, a crime of a deep dye in that most loyal city. Accordingly, his business was very limited, and lay chiefly among persons who, like the present visitors, were of the same tenets.

Some food and wine were produced, of which the citizen ate sparingly, and his attendant with a ravenous appetite which only our forefathers boasted, and they not often. The former, meantime, addressed some queries to his host as to the cause of the evident excitement in the town, intimating his hope that no ill news had arrived from Gloucester.

This question was evidently answered in the sense in which it was put, for mine host replied, that the worst he had heard was that rats sold at a crown a head in the public market of that faithful city. It could not in reason long hold out, but the rejoicings were occasioned by the news of the king's arrival in Oxford, late the night before, from the siege. It was, rumoured in the town that this was at the express desire of the queen, although the operations against Gloucester were thereby much retarded; but it was disputed whether any political object was to be attained by this, or merely that the queen might display her influence over her husband, against that of his officers, of which she had lately taken it into her royal head to be jealous.

“Since the parliament have proclaimed her a traitress to king and kingdom, we hear she hath gone mad against us, and is fearful lest some should prevail on his majesty to grant us a mercy—we have not yet asked,” said the citizen, with a

stern smile. "But enough of that. My business is with a young student of one of the colleges here—a certain Master Dethewarre. Know you of such a gentleman?"

"Surely; if gentleman you call him that hath neither money nor means!" replied the host. "They call him commonly 'the queen's poet,' forasmuch as he is ever writing sonnets and songs to the Frenchwoman's praise; though where her wondrous beauty lies, folks have better spectacles than mine that see. Why, at this present, they say, 'tis he who has penned the masque wherewith this carnal court do intend to worship Baal to-night, as of old, with dances and songs, and bonfires and timbrels, and what not, to welcome Pharaoh's return."

"Say you so?" exclaimed the citizen, starting up with visible surprise, not unmingled with more unpleasant feelings. "Nay, then, I must see him instantly. Joyce, thou wilt tarry my return here. In which of the colleges may I expect to find him?"

"In Merton's, whereof he is a student," replied the host; "but if he owes your worship moneys, I wish you well quit of the bargain, for they say his allowance from his father was never of the plentifullest, and now these troublesome times have come".....

"His father! who is that?" said Master Stonehenge, wrapping his cloak about his face, and stepping out, followed by his loquacious entertainer.

"Oh! 'tis well enough known, he is son to my lord marquis of Montacute, but not by the parson's leave; and so, to please the king's sobriety, he disowns him; ay, both in word and deed!" said Boniface, confidentially drawing up to his guest. "So, if you went on that security, you have taken a rotten reed for a walking-stick."

"What! I did ever hear the marquis was a nobleman of great wealth! Hath he not, by hook or by crook, acquired the whole estate of his kinsfolk, the De la Poles?" said the citizen, with some appearance of anxiety.

"Nay, I never heard but he got all fairly enough, being the immediate heir of the last De la Pole, that was attained," replied the host, with a look of great curiosity; but finding no answer was returned, he continued, "I meant but to say, my lord has a lawful heir of his own, something younger than this Master Dethewarre, who hath abilities to spend any three estates in Christendom, were they as wide as Prester John's; and, being his father's dotage, there's but little left, as you may guess, for charity."

“For charity!” muttered Master Stonehenge, audibly, within his teeth.

“So you may see there is but little to be hoped in licking a deal board,” continued the lean Boniface; “but if you have money to lend, and will take the hazard of the times, methinks I know one who, for a small matter, would help you to a meeting with this rash young lord; and then you may shear him to your heart’s content.”

“I thank thee, friend, but my business is with the young man whose poverty moves so justly your contempt,” replied Stonehenge, in a tone which his hearer felt as a rebuke, for he slunk behind for a few paces; but the merchant seemed not to notice the circumstance, and renewed his inquiries with a minuteness which showed the interest he took in the subject.

The answers embodied but little matter of importance. It appeared that the student had been in Oxford nearly three years, and for much of that period had been chiefly remarkable for a reserved and melancholy deportment, and for habits of excessive study. But a change came over him, as well as over most other persons and things in the once monastic city, when its quiet cloisters were suddenly deluged with all the pomp and riot of a royal and military residence, by the breaking-out of the civil war. The grave and (in the seventeenth century) heavily pedantic city put on altogether a new aspect. Although Charles himself and his favoured counsellors were men of severe and stately demeanour, it had become the fashion, in contradiction to the gloomy asceticism of the puritans, to affect all contrary extremes of licence and gaiety. The natural bent of a numerous and idle court was but too much in that direction; but when vice and prodigality became political badges, the excess to which they were carried could excite little wonder.

Fine natures, like diamonds, are apt to take the hues of the objects surrounding them; but it did not appear that Dethewarre, although celebrated as a poet in that polished court, had shared in the wild excesses in which its younger members indulged, and for which his more fortunate brother was famous. Whether it was from poverty or principle, the worst fault alleged against him, even by the puritan inn-keeper, was the poetical flatteries by which he had attained his favour at court.

Discussing these matters, the citizen and his guide turned into the quadrangle of Merton College, under the noble archway. A guard was posted at the entrance, who suffered them to pass on learning their business, but not without

some hesitation; the queen and a part of the court being lodged in this college.

In an obscure and remote pile belonging to, but separated from the main building of Merton's, it seemed that Dethe-warre resided. Mine host paused at the foot of a narrow stone staircase, which he said led, after three flights were ascended, to the scholar's apartment. He seemed to expect some solicitation for the pleasure of his company in the ascent, but Master Stonehenge thanked him with an air of dismissal, and quietly continued his quest alone. The inn-keeper grumbled his sense of this want of taste, as soon as he imagined his guest was out of hearing, and then slowly retraced his way, intent on obtaining more satisfaction to his curiosity, if possible, from the youth left behind, who he thought would not have the skill to hide anything he knew. But in that he was mistaken.

The citizen wound up his way with great perseverance, each of the flats he mounted being apparently fully occupied, and by persons of some rank. He reached the highest at last, and was soon satisfied he had stumbled on the dwelling of the poet, for one of the doors was partially ajar, and the sound of a voice in enthusiastic recitation came forth. Stonehenge paused, not to listen, but apparently to take breath, though rather from agitation than weariness, to judge by the expression of his countenance. Meanwhile the voice continued, reciting some such lines as these, preserved in the rare MS. from which we transcribe.

“ Fear not, O Psyche! beauty's sway
Is strongest where the heart would least obey.
And thence flush passion's conquering kiss
Equals not, in frenzied bliss,
The merest touch of love despairing,
Nothing hoping—nothing daring!

“ Fear not! obedient as the blue-down waves
To the throned moon, we stand around thy slaves:
Name what thou wilt, in earth or air,
Silver-rimmed ocean, sky above,
The nimble ministers of love
Shall ride to bring it on the lightning's glare!

“ The universe is mine,
Therefore a thousandfold is thine!
What though invisible to sight?
In all things am I shadowed with delight;
The violet stars which gem the night,
The musky lily's breath,
The sunset's glories, and the rapturous gush
Of nightingales, at twilight's hush,
Yea, even death,
Share of my being, and, reflecting thee,
Are mingled and dissolved with all that's me.
Ask me no name, call me but what I prove,
But being beauty thou, what can I be but love?”

“A Platonic reverie rhymed!” said the unseen auditor to himself, and, quietly pushing the door open, he entered.

An antique-looking chamber, but scantily furnished, and with articles much worn in their passage from a remote period from tenant to tenant, appeared. A number of books lay scattered about, open at various places; two or three manuscripts seemed taking their ease in the dust; a lute, two foils, a withered nosegay, and a beautiful Italian hound sleeping on a rug, completed the inventory of the student's possessions. A deep window in front was open, and set as if in a frame the gardens of the college, with their lofty chesnut trees, all snowy over with blossoms.

The student was leaning against the sill, inhaling the sunny air, and so absorbed in his recital that he noted not the quiet entry of his visitor. He was tall and well-made, and his figure was displayed to advantage in his flowing costume as a student of civil law. Stonehenge purposely stumbled over a book to attract attention, and raising his eyes with some amazement, the student revealed, under the shade of his large square cap, a finely-carved regular countenance, shaded by long black hair, with that dark glowing complexion indicative of a passionate temperament; but there was a melancholy in the expression of his eyes, and in the curves of his finely-formed lips, which seemed remarkable in a man who was evidently very young.

But before repeating the conversation which ensued, it will be necessary, for its clearer comprehension, to mention some particulars as yet unknown to the reader.

CHAPTER III.

It is seldom that the historian deigns to trouble himself with inquiries concerning the childhood of his hero, however certain it is that that period influences the whole tide of being; and we, who are fully alive to the dignity of our office, should certainly suppress what is about to follow, but that the circumstances of Ingulph Dethewarre's early youth are essential to the comprehension of his subsequent career.

Most men remember their childhood with regret, simply because they can remember little in it, so placidly and wavelessly the winds of passion or guilt glide past the waters of time. But Ingulph's memory furnished him with no such halcyon period; his first experiences of life were painful. The oblivious years of infancy over, it seemed to him as if he

awoke one morning and found himself a sickly, neglected boy, almost the lonely tenant of a huge old castle, on the northern borders of Yorkshire. As it was situated in a very wild and dreary country, scantily cultivated, his first impressions of nature were likely to foster the constitutional disposition to melancholy which he probably brought with him into the world.

Those to whom the charge of his infancy was confided, were not qualified to diminish this tendency. An old man and a still older woman, his wife, were with himself the only inhabitants of the great castle of De la Pole; and so it continued for many years. Its owner, the marquis of Montacute, was an assiduous courtier, and spent all his time and revenues in London, or (having married a Frenchwoman) on his wife's estates in France.

This great nobleman, Ingulph learned, but how he could not remember, so mysteriously the fact seemed regarded, was his father. Child as he was, almost with his first thoughts mingled a strange conviction that his very existence was a crime which he himself had committed. Shame, and contempt, and concealment, were inexplicably mixed with all that related to the subject, which he could not but conclude was his own delinquency, for no one else bore the penalties, no one else was hinted at as being in fault in the matter.

So deeply had this impression sunk into his mind, that until his reason had been illuminated by other theologians than Adam Rising, the old steward or reeve we have mentioned, and who was far gone in religious furor, he imagined that the original sin so frequently mentioned and denounced was, in his case, the mere fact that he had presumed to be born.

In these first confused dawnings of sense and sensibility there was a remarkable epoch. For the first time during several years the lord of the castle and his haughty wife visited this remote property. Ingulph well remembered the homage and awe which their presence excited in the poor and submissive vassalage among whom they deigned to descend from their courtly grandeurs. He himself thought at first there was something of stupendous and supernatural about them, when he beheld that even the vicar, who, in their absence, had ever been a tyrant of the first magnitude, sunk into a submissive slave.

With these prepossessions it long seemed to him perfectly fitting and natural that the great marquis should scarcely deign to notice him, and that his still greater lady should, on

the contrary, treat him with frequent marks of dislike and contempt, which resembled hatred. In no manner did it occur to the unhappy child to account for this; it seemed to be his natural portion; he took it as resignedly and uncomplainingly as the birds the winter snows. But something it did surprise and puzzle him to find that there was another child, scarcely a year younger than himself, by no means so well shaped or with a face prettier to look at than his own, except that his hair was lighter, which Ingulph was far from acknowledging to be a superior beauty, who was clad in a splendid garb, sedulously watched and attended, and whose birth, so far from being a sin of magnitude, was the subject of great and general rejoicings every year.

Of course as Ingulph waxed in years this perplexity vanished, but it was succeeded in his imagination by gloomier tenants. The rest of his recollections of this period were haunted with feelings of suffering and indignation, neglect and slights, and injustice of various species. He had been for some time what was technically called "whip-boy" to the young heir; that is, whenever his lordship committed or omitted aught that required chastisement, the worthy chaplain, their tutor, beat Ingulph until he was pleased to own his fault. But as the young heir had a natural turn for the ludicrous, far exceeding his years, and was besides obstinate and wilful as became the only child of his mother, these exhibitions, from one cause or another, were sometimes barbarously severe. This sometimes led to acts of mutiny and furious resistance on the victim's part, which always ended of course in the increase of his sufferings.

By this process the very tenderness and goodness of Ingulph's nature—the fine emotions with which it originally gushed at the lightest touch—were likely only to harden it. But fortunately the marchioness abhorred the country, and as she absolutely disposed of her lord's movements, she was an infrequent and generally very short sojourner at De la Pole Castle. Ingulph understood in general that his accompanying his tormentors to the court was a thing not to be thought of, on account of the king's rigid notions of morality. How he could clash with the monarch's severity of principle, he was late in divining. Nor did he trouble himself for some time on the subject, since he owed to it the blessed peace which remained to him when my lord and my lady, and the mischievous heir and the relentless chaplain, and all their retinue of minor tormentors, vanished. Still it infused into his mind a dim feeling of dislike and terror for the distant

and awful authority which thus aided and abetted in the work of oppression.

The love and veneration natural to such temperaments as Ingulph's found thus but little scope. The old steward, as we have said, was a man of gloomy manners and narrow intellect, deeply imbued with the fanatic spirit into which the puritanism of the times was fast deepening. His wife was a peevish old drudge, who, although she loved Ingulph better than anything else in the world, vented on him all the peevishness and ill-temper which infirmities and solitude could foster.

The character of his reputed sire, the marquis, was not such as to excite reverence in the absence of any warmer feeling. He was a man who had contrived to unite all the most odious meannesses of the courtier to the worst characteristics of the feudal noble. His situation in early life somewhat accounted for this rare union. He was born the son of a younger branch of the great family whose estates he now possessed, and with but a very remote chance of the succession. But on the attainder of the knight of De la Pole, he managed to secure the whole inheritance by his marriage with the heiress of the barony, and being a favourite with the duke of Buckingham, whom he abetted in most of his follies and wickedness, he finally gilded his villanies with the more imposing title of marquis.

It was said that this fortunate marriage had only been achieved by the exertion of a cruel despotism on the part of King James. The lady was a woman of extraordinary beauty, even in a court where personal charms were held in such high esteem, and she was reported to have absolutely hated the man to whom the sovereign's mandate compelled her to give her hand. She did not long survive the marriage, and there were not wanting some who alleged that it was hastened by her husband's ill-usage. But she died in giving birth to a child, who shared her early grave.

Be that as it may, the marquis scarcely allowed a decent period to elapse ere he wedded his second wife, a woman more suitable to his own character, to judge from outward shows of unanimity. Their haughtiness and tyranny of disposition were at least equal, and their mutual extravagance exhausted even the vast revenues they possessed in common. Consequent oppressions and exactions increased their unpopularity, especially in the northern estates, which they seldom visited, and which therefore derived no benefits to counterbalance. This dislike was heightened by recollections of the time of the

“good old lord,” as he was called, and of his son, the unfortunate knight of De la Pole.

The old baron had almost constantly resided at De la Pole, where he kept up all the ancient state and hospitality of an English noble. Hunting, hawking, and feasting, were his chief delights and occupations; unnumbered retainers found food and shelter under his capacious roofs; no beggars were sent empty away from his gates; and men paid their rents when it suited them. He was not, indeed, considered a man of remarkably bright intellect; he never made a speech in parliament but once in his life, which was to thank King James, in the peers' names, for a noble present of venison which he made them on the first day of their sessions; neither did he write poetry, nor introduce dances; but he lived and died honoured and loved by his tenantry, and there was not a dry eye when they quaffed the rich old De la Pole ale at his lordship's funeral, preparatory to accompanying his corpse into the family vault.

But it was the character of the old lord's son, after whom he seemed to be named, that riveted Ingulph's chief curiosity, among all the legends which abounded of the family in the district which they had so long possessed. The peasantry preserved his remembrance with a strange and mingled sentiment of awe and affection; and old Adam, who had been his servant of yore, had many strange anecdotes to relate of him, of a kind well calculated to stir the imagination of youth.

The sire and son had apparently but little resembled each other, excepting in the general benevolence of their dispositions, and a vehement heat of temper, which occasionally broke forth in violences which to sober men resembled madness, and led at times to serious quarrels between them. The old baron, as we have hinted, was not remarkable for wisdom where his passions were concerned; and it happened that, after undergoing the martyrdom of two marriages with ladies of the highest rank in the kingdom, but of strangely despotic tempers, he found himself heirless, and verging on an age when he must expect to continue so. It also happened, that he utterly detested the cousin who was apparently to succeed him, and that by a combination of circumstances the daughter of one of his farmers possessed a person which, if Hebe had ever been a dairymaid, would have been a very suitable one for the blooming divinity herself. How it happened he scarcely knew himself, but the baron De la Pole committed an unheard-of atrocity in that most aristocratic age, when he

allied his antique honours to the beauty of the cowslips by a lawful marriage.

Two children were the issue of this marriage, the knight of De la Pole and the lady Editha. But the stain of the *mésalliance* could not be wiped away, and the king's displeasure, with the contempt into which he fell among his peers, probably conduced as much as his own fondness for rural sports to keep the baron so constant a resident at a distance from the court. But he comforted himself well under his losses with the sight of his fair young wife and handsome children, drinking probably but a few stoups of claret the deeper for any uneasy recollections. Some trouble, indeed, he had in satisfactorily rebutting the many attempts made by his disappointed cousin to prove his heirs illegitimate; but all failed, notwithstanding the visible and exceedingly unjust partiality of the court judges against him, influenced by the mighty duke of Buckingham.

It was probably these circumstances, as well as the natural indignation of a noble and patriotic mind, which induced the knight of De la Pole to join, or rather to lead, the various oppositions formed against the magnificent, but corrupt and incapable, favourite. This naturally led him to an intimacy with the Puritans, who were gradually increasing in numbers and strength, and whose religious fervour was unconsciously taking a political direction. Their principles assimilated well with the severely moral and enthusiastic tone of De la Pole's character, and he was long one of their most beloved and intrepid leaders, and shared much of the odium liberally dealt out to the party.

Whilst in high opposition to the tyranny of King James and his abandoned ministers, the knight of De la Pole was singularly enough the bosom friend and companion of Prince Charles. But at that time Buckingham had not gained his fatal influence over the prince's mind, and the latter was disgusted equally with his father's follies and the favourite's insolence. Congeniality of temper and pursuits attached the prince in the first place to the knight of De la Pole, who was several years his senior, and had a strong taste for those arts and sciences in which Charles delighted. In addition, it was said, that in common with many illustrious intellects in that age, the knight of De la Pole was a believer in magic and other occult sciences, and secretly pursued them.

The circumstances which broke off the intimacy between the prince and his friend were not clearly known. It was

believed that Buckingham, growing jealous of the influence acquired by the knight, and apprehending its future consequences, employed very indirect means to separate them. The principal instrument in this bad success was said to be the marquis of Montacute, then a needy dependent on the family which his father had endeavoured to illegitimate; and who, to use the words of old Adam Rising, "was glad to warm himself with my lord's brach." But the evil star of Buckingham prevailed, and perverted much of the nobler part of Charles's character, and all the effect of his virtuous friend's counsels and example.

Some alleged that an accident which happened at the time produced the first open breach between them. In his proud resolution to return the scorn of his mother's contemners with defiance, De la Pole caused a daughter of one of her brothers to be brought up with his sister. The cousin betrayed the rights of hospitality and relationship, by seducing this unhappy girl, and then refusing all reparation on the score of her plebeian birth. Adam Rising positively asserted, that in a transport of passion, the knight had drawn his sword and severely wounded the offender in the prince's own presence! For this offence he was visited with all the severities of Star Chamber law, and was finally adjudged to banishment for ten years. The only favour which his father could obtain was, that he might accompany Raleigh on his expedition to Guiana. But such was his ungovernable disposition, that he excited a mutiny on board the vessel in which he sailed, seized upon it, and spent several years, as was reported, engaged in piracies against the Spaniards.

The influence of Gondomar procured the disavowal and recal of this turbulent spirit; but, at least to believe the recital of the act of attainder, so far from submitting, he had formed the project to intercept the prince's vessel, on his return from Spain, as a hostage for his imagined wrongs. But the terrible storm which accompanied the prince's departure, did him, at least, the service to baffle this conspiracy; and on its failure, the knight was said to have returned to his old piratical courses. But being hotly pursued by cruisers of both nations, from sea to sea, he and his vessel, and all his crew, were lost in a desperate attempt to escape by running on some desert coast of South America.

This strange and violent career, contrasted with the anecdotes which abounded of the benevolence and nobleness of the knight of De la Pole's early character, naturally fixed the attention of young Ingulph. It seemed as if what was gene-

rous, free, and good, must necessarily be the enemy and the victim of all the forms of power. An inexplicable sympathy continually renewed the interest that even in his merest childhood he took in Adam's long narrations, which had his ancient master for the hero. The old man, on his part, was inexhaustible on the subject; to him he owed all, even his call to grace; for he had in his youth been as godless as the rest of mankind, until it was his blessed fortune to enter the service of the knight of De la Pole.

CHAPTER IV.

THE first memorable event which diversified the recollections of Ingulph's childhood, was certainly one which exercised a strong influence on his subsequent life. Charles the First, returning from his coronation in Scotland, in the year 1633, came, in the course of his progress, to the castle of De la Pole. Besides the honour which he thereby intended to confer on a favourite servant, the king had another purpose in view.

Charles was then in the prime of manhood and of his early prosperity. He had succeeded in crushing his parliament, and in establishing his own power on the ruins of the common liberties, while affecting to use them as its foundations; and was proceeding rapidly in his strides towards despotism, seemingly with little opposition. Policy was not the lever of that stupendous age; it was a principle still mightier, more general, and that finally proved irresistible—religion.

If Charles and his advisers had understood their times, they would have left this principle untouched, and they might have done with them what they pleased. The mass of the people had a profound and superstitious reverence for all constituted authority; and, notwithstanding the enormous crimes and weaknesses which had of late rendered the wielders of the sceptre both odious and contemptible, the man was ever confounded, in the popular estimate, with the office, and the glories and sacredness of one covered all the debasement of the other.

The principles of the Reformation had sunk deeply into the minds of the masses of the people, long after the work was done for which they had been originally instilled and supported by their superiors. The crown and the great nobles, who had divided the plunder of the Catholic church among them, felt now secure in their tenures, and were disposed to

check the severer consequences which the disinterested enthusiasm and zeal of the first reformers had anticipated. As those principles regained their strength after the exhaustion of triumph, and prepared to renew their course, these more selfish ones, which had halted, began to assume a conservative and hostile front, and even to retrace much of the ground they had occupied in common, till at length, like Jacob and Esau, they seemed inclined to part company as far as east and west could separate them.

Unfortunately for the monarchy, even its despotic tendencies took the common stamp of the age, and appeared in a religious form. The attempt of Laud to restore the ancient religion in substance, was almost the only possible engine which could have roused the great resistance and overthrow which Charles's political plans sustained.

Remote as was the De la Pole district, tidings of the religious persecution, for as such only were the measures of the court as yet considered, continually arrived there. A zealous correspondence was carried on among all divisions of the suffering sects by means of the itinerant preachers whom the enthusiasm of the times sent forth. Adam Rising, as a faithful brother of the faith, was well acquainted with the most interesting circumstances which befel them, their plans and sufferings in the cause. The whole village district finally received the news by means of the perpetual wrangles which Adam maintained with the schoolmaster of the village, a man who was held to be a profound scholar, who was exceedingly fond of deep potations, and was entirely devoted to all things constituted, both in church and state.

It was principally in listening to the pros and cons of these luminaries that Ingulph's heart learned to glow with the most vehement feelings against the king and his tyrannous supporters. Not that the arguments in favour of both, which the schoolmaster arrayed and decked out with all the attractive graces of logic and Latin, might not have been very good; but Ingulph felt that he was born on the side of the weaker, which is, perhaps, the reason why women always take it, right or wrong; and whatever excellent authorities there might be against it in the learned languages, seemed to him but little to the point.

The moving pictures which his imagination shaped out of the rude materials thus furnished to it, sometimes deprived him of rest. Above all, the sufferings of Sir John Eliot—the gallant, the faithful, the determined champion of the people, confined by the arbitrary will of the tyrant in the Tower,

and lingering out his glorious existence gradually like an imprisoned eagle—affected Ingulph beyond the poor power of words to delineate. Burning tears suffused his lids at the mere name of the beloved patriot; every word that came forth from his prison seemed an oracle of light. To die in an attempt to redeem him was not only a duty, but a most pleasant and delightful privilege! Hours on hours did he pass in childish plans and visions to effect the liberation of the glorious captive from that gloomy prison, which his imagination shaped, like those of old romance, a huge difform mass of steel and adamant. Oh, for the ship of his famous relative, the knight of De la Pole, but for one hour, to bear away the noble fugitive to some far realm of perpetual peace and freedom!

But meanwhile Eliot died, and while still mourning in his young heart over the hero's doom, news of his oppressor's intended visit to De la Pole Castle spread far and wide. To heighten his indignation, if that were possible, Ingulph learned that the king's object was to be present at the solemn betrothal of the marquis's heir to the daughter of Sir Thomas Wentworth, a man whose mean secession from the popular party had materially aided in its ruin. It was thus that Charles rewarded treason and apostacy by contracting the child of his new favourite to the heir of the great house of Montacute.

Adam increased Ingulph's feeling on the subject by arguments deduced from his own peculiar views. "It was an infamous tying of the Lord's hands," he said, "thus to unite a child of seven years old to another of twelve, so as to trammel up all future choice, ere they had attained any light of reason to understand the nature of the contract to which they were parties. Moreover, it was a popish ceremonial, and not to be tolerated in a gospel-walking church."

But despite all this, and much more, the matter advanced. For weeks previously the ancient castle resounded with the din of preparation. The marquis and his lady, with their son and a large retinue, arrived; and, in the general turmoil, Ingulph's existence seemed scarcely noticed. But when it was certainly known that the royal party approached, the marquis, for nearly the first time, spoke to him, but it was merely to admonish him, under severe penalties, to keep carefully out of the monarch's sight. Ingulph's brow crimsoned, but he made no reply.

Despite this prohibition, he witnessed from the summit of one of the towers the triumphal entry of the king. The gor-

geous pomp and state with which this was accompanied, was certainly well calculated to make a strong impression on the youthful gazer. Charles was usually attended on his progresses by a vast retinue, consisting of many nobles, and nearly a thousand attendants of various degrees. On this occasion, the apostate Wentworth, afterwards the unfortunate earl of Strafford, and nearly all the prime gentry of Yorkshire, were assembled to receive him. Cannon boomed out a welcome from all the ramparts; and when the king himself appeared, amidst the glory of a beauteous summer sunset, mounted on a snowy charger, magnificently attired, surrounded by gorgeous nobles, spears, gilded partisans, and banners, his train extending for several miles down the valleys below; when the vassals waved green branches to greet him, and rent the sky with their shouts—Ingulph for a moment forgot poor Eliot, and tossed up his cap with the rest.

On the next day was the ceremony of the betrothal, and Ingulph's curiosity was so much excited that he braved every apprehension to make one of the splendid spectacle. A circumstance occurred which stamped it indelibly on his mind. It was evening, and, according to custom, the little betrothed bride was brought to the chapel by a multitude of persons bearing torches. She was dressed in white and crowned with lilies; and although himself still but a mere child, Ingulph was struck with her extraordinary beauty and her pensive air, as if she were a grown-up maiden about to be wedded.

Laud pronounced the benediction which, with a plight of hands, was considered a binding ceremony of betrothal. But in the midst of the somewhat long and yet fervid prayer which he was pleased to affix to his blessing, the two children kneeling on a crimson-velvet cushion at his feet, it chanced that a page, who was peculiarly intent in considering the archbishop's rich garb, suffered his torch to droop on the little girl's dress, Ingulph was the first to perceive this circumstance, and the first to rush to the rescue; and he had nearly extinguished the flames, at the cost of some severe burns to himself, before the bystanders comprehended what had happened.

Almost for the first time in his life did Ingulph hear the language of praise, and from the mouth of a king! Charles even inquired who he was, and the marquis began stammering in reply, when his lady wife interrupted him with some observation in French, which set the whole court laughing, except the king. Charles turned away with the cold and contemptuous manner which, perhaps more than his greatest

errors, alienated men from him; and seemed to take no further notice of the subject.

And yet, on the following day, just before his departure, Charles himself came to the chamber in which the boy was confined, more by his father's commands than the pain of his wounds. The king addressed to him several questions, but in so severe and stern a manner that Ingulph was confounded, and answered at random. As these queries were principally on religious topics, and all that Ingulph knew on such was derived from the Calvinist steward, it is very likely that his replies were not at all satisfactory. It is true that Adam lauded him loudly when he afterwards repeated what had passed, but the monarch departed with a caustic observation to Montacute, "I did not know, my lord, that you brought up your dependents as true fanatics as John of Leyden himself!"

After this remarkable event, Ingulph obviously fell into greater dislike among the *parentèle* than before. To weed him of the obnoxious principles he had imbibed, seemed now to be appointed to the chaplain by authority; and to do him justice he used the birch unsparingly for the purpose. As to reasoning or argument, he had little time for them, when the young lord needed him almost continually on his hunting excursions.

Ingulph long remembered with bitterness and indignation one circumstance of this course of purification. Presuming one day to urge some obnoxious tenet which he had learned from old Adam, the tutor was so far struck with it as to demand the name of the rogue who had taught it to him. This Ingulph firmly refused to divulge, and being violently threatened by his master, and at the same time jested at by the young lord, in his rage and mortification he struck the latter. De la Pole, though somewhat younger, was a stronger boy, and very high-spirited. He returned the blow instantly, and a desperate conflict arose, which was only parted by the tutor's throwing himself with all his mature strength on Ingulph.

Not satisfied with the blows which he dealt him in parting the fray, the master caused Ingulph to be immured in a solitary tower, and condemned to be fed on bread and water, until he should acknowledge his fault, and recant on his knees. But it was soon found that the boy's death might sooner be expected than his submission. He took pride in his sufferings, and declared that he would perish, like Sir John Eliot, ere he would yield to tyrannical injustice. It is

truc, that Adam diligently brought him the daintiest morsels he could obtain from the accomplice cooks every night, and supported his courage by long exhortations. But it was rather the weariness than mercy of his enemies which at last released him.

Treatment so severe must, however, in the end, either have subdued the temper or health of Ingulph, but that a period was put to his sufferings by the usually rapid departures of his tyrants. Shortly afterwards, from some unexplained cause, the marquis fell into disgrace at court, and was finally prevailed on by his wife to settle altogether in France.

During several subsequent years, Ingulph was left apparently to run wild, as if an intention had been formed to deprive him of all the advantages which education or society could have afforded him. He was kept meanly attired, with no other instruction than was to be derived from the old schoolmaster, who, with all his great pretensions, had but a slight smattering of the sciences in which he pretended to be an adept. But Ingulph perceived, or imagined that he perceived, the purpose of his unnatural relatives, to keep him degraded by ignorance to the level which they seemed resolved he should not rise above. The thought acted as a perpetual goad on his exertions, and the old schoolmaster knew enough to put him in the right way; and being with all his pedantry a good-hearted man in the main, took singular delight in aiding his indefatigable pupil. In fact, in a weak moment, when overtaken by too much ale, he was once heard to acknowledge that he had learned more in teaching the youth, than he had ever acquired on his own account.

Solitary, indeed, his life was, for Ingulph mingled little with the children of the neighbouring village; at first, from dread of his father's displeasure, for he was treated as if at once too good to be a clown, and not good enough to be a gentleman; afterwards, from disinclination to the coarse and brutal manners prevalent among the rustic classes at the period. But yet it might be truly said, that he never felt the meaning of the word solitude, until he mingled with society. The mountains, the forests, the skies, the streams, were his familiar and constant companions, and silence itself one of his most eloquent conversers. In short, he was a poet without knowing it.

Years, as we have said, passed, and Ingulph was rapidly approaching manhood, neglected and almost forgotten, but not, as was probably hoped, insensible or ignorant of his wrongs. It seemed intended to keep him at De la Pole, a

sort of prisoner at large, dependent for a miserable pittance, and without hope of ever bettering his condition. But Ingulph had secretly determined this should not be.

The political events of the time naturally fanned the flame in his bosom. Resistance to the misgovernment of Charles the First, had been gradually developed. It was no longer altogether a religious movement, although religion still continued to lend the impelling winds. Strange doctrines were broached, and, like the letting out of waters, spread, no man knew whither. Like the sultry atmosphere preceding an earthquake, men felt they knew not what of changed and portentous in the air of opinion. What marvel at the daring thoughts and impulses which began to agitate the breast of Ingulph, standing as he did in the midst of the monuments of the power and glory of that great ancestry from which he was descended, cut off by the injustice of men and their laws from that portion in both, to which his blood had natural claims.

The increased number of fugitives and vehement propagandists which began to appear in the secluded district of De la Pole, marked at once the violence and folly of the persecution which raged. Ingulph, although he despised their narrowness and bigotry, was filled with admiration of their indomitable spirit and self-devotion. He zealously assisted old Adam in concealing many of the martyrs from the pursuit of their enemies; but, amidst the chaos of opinions which were inculcated by these men, it must be confessed he found rather doubts than any strengthening of the vague religious opinions which the Calvinistic steward, and his own imagination, had chiefly formed in his mind.

And yet so powerful was the influence of the age, that Ingulph himself at one time formed the plan of a new sect in his own fancy, to which he seriously intended to dedicate himself. He took it into his head, that all the known varieties of Christianity were spurious; that it was necessary to return to the simple letter of the gospel; and by uniting the deism of the Old Testament with the morality of the New, compound a religion which would restore the peace, brotherhood, happiness, and equality of paradise to the earth.

It was a reverie of youth, soon to be engulfed in stern realities, and as such let it pass. On a sudden, the crater began to vomit fire. The flame burst out in Scotland, which was never to be quenched until it had destroyed the power which struck it out with an iron hoof. There was a lull, indeed, in the short pacification which followed the outbreak

in 1638, but it was only temporary. The headstrong counsels of Strafford and Laud precipitated the king into his fatal Scottish war, and compelled the assembly of the long disused English parliament.

One of Charles's by-gone notions was, that he was still a feudal king. He summoned his nobles and vassals to meet him with their armed retinues, as if it were still the age of Edward the Third. Among the rest, Montacute and his son were called upon to appear, and they accordingly arrived at De la Pole to comply with the command, wisely conjecturing that obedience was the best policy, but very unwilling to leave their delights in France.

The marquis was little altered. At best he was a man of unprepossessing and sinister aspect, and had a peculiar twitch of the visage, which did not add to his good looks, and was said to be one of the results of his rencontre with the knight of De la Pole. But his son was now a tall handsome youth, and already famous for all the follies, to give them no harsher name, to be expected in a spoilt heir, brought up amidst the contagion of the French court. His faults were, indeed, redeemed, or at least varnished over, by wit and subtlety of intellect, an infinite talent for intrigue, and all the outward brilliancy and accomplishments of a perfect courtier.

Ingulph was of course deficient in all these showy qualities, but his father seemed not at all pleased when he discovered what a diamond in the rough he was. To the contrary, his alienation and neglect seemed to increase. The young lord treated Ingulph precisely as he treated every one else. He studied if he could be of any use to him for any purpose; found that he might be useful in raising the recruits; and on his refusal to be in all respects his humble servant, crossed and insulted him as far as he thought it convenient, without producing an open quarrel.

But Ingulph was now thoroughly tired of his dependent situation, and determined to come to some explanation on it. This feeling was quickened by the intolerable oppressions which he was now destined daily to witness. The marquis had probably but little desire to be of assistance to his sovereign, from whom he had received some slights; but his summons furnished him with an excellent excuse for putting the full rigour of the feudal code in operation, and he levied great sums in the fines and other oppressions with which it is amply stored. The luckless vassals naturally applied for aid and intercession to Ingulph, who was much loved by them, and to whom they had always been eager to offer kindness.

But Ingulph found that he had not even the comfort to do his friends no harm, if he could do them no good, for his intercession seemed always to produce the contrary results to those besought.

At last, on some complaint of harbouring the disaffected itinerants, the old steward and his wife were expelled from the castle, and obliged to take refuge in a miserable hut in the village. Being both of them very old, and endeared to him more by the affectionateness of his own nature than their deservings, Ingulph was driven to fury by this outrage. But his vehement remonstrances were answered by the marquis, with an assurance, that if he held not his peace, he should share their fate.

Provoked now beyond endurance, Ingulph retorted, that rather than remain the beggar he was, he would do so, and explicitly demanded to know what was intended should become of him. The marquis replied by whistling to his hounds, and leaving the hall in which the interview took place; and on the same night Ingulph was on his way, on foot, to York.

The king with a part of his array was there, and under the royal banner Ingulph intended to enlist as a common soldier. It is true that the war against the Scots was apparently against civil and religious liberty; but national feelings had so far overcome political ones, that, after the rout at Newburn and the invasion of Northumberland, the ancient hatred of the Scots revived in men's bosoms to the extinction of other motives, especially in so young a man.

Accordingly, he found means to enter a body commanded, as it happened, by Strafford himself, and lay *perdu* for some time, studying the art military by trailing a pike in the ranks. His escape, however, was but brief. Montacute arrived in York, and immediately caused the truant to be proclaimed. Still the event was not so unfavourable to Ingulph as the latter expected. It happened that Charles himself discovered the fugitive by chance, when reviewing Strafford's levies.

Ingulph long remembered the searching gaze with which he singled him out, and the terrible effect of his command for him to come forward. Eight years had elapsed, and yet the king seemed to have him in distinct recollection, for he turned to Strafford, and exclaimed, "This is Montacute's lad—and yet he told me he was dead!"

Strafford apologised for his absent adherent by observing that the marquis had probably mistaken his majesty's queries, and had, perhaps, more "lads" in a similar relation, to whom he might have alluded. Charles was dissatisfied with the

reply, and returned somewhat sharply, "I marvel, Strafford, you have forgotten one to whom you owe your daughter's preservation from a barbarous death."

Touched with this reproach, the favourite affected to recollect the incident, and smilingly addressed the young recruit with a slight reproof for not having consulted his father's will in his sally forth, and promised to be a mediator for his pardon. But Charles, who had been watching with attention the play of thought in the ingenuous countenance of the youth, drily intimated that he would take the office upon himself.

The result was, that in a few days Ingulph received the satisfactory information that his father *had made a present of him* to the king.

It was in these very words that the announcement was made, nor was it thought in the least a degrading expression, so eminent were the paternal and kingly authorities considered in that age. But Ingulph, who had little cause to cherish either, submitted in silent indignation, because he had no possible resource. The pacification with the Scots was hastened by the inextricable difficulties in which the king now found himself engaged—for the Long Parliament had commenced its awful career.

Consulting only his favourite ideas, and without the least reference to those of his *protégé*, Charles decided on sending him to Oxford, to study divinity. Perhaps it was even the recollection of the heterodox opinions he had found in the boy, that made him determine that the man should be transferred to that seat of orthodoxy. A scholarship was conferred by Laud upon him, a small additional allowance granted by the king, who probably thought that poverty would be the young man's best preservative against temptation, or perhaps concluded that the marquis would take some care of him in pecuniary matters. But Montacute, having gracefully resigned the charge of his son's future provision, included his present wants in the bargain.

The atmosphere of Oxford was certainly not very congenial to the spirit which was now transplanted there. Brief as had been his glimpse of the glories of a court, and of the pomp and glitter of military life, the change to the monastic gloom of Oxford was like leaving the coloured atmosphere of some gorgeous cathedral for the cold and dark air of the cloisters. The unwieldy learning and pedantic ostentation of it which distinguished the period, were at the height in Oxford; no vivifying spirit breathed through the mass of

cumbrous formalities and observances which had so long survived their meaning and purposes. Intolerance and bigotry in their worst forms, because founded on the senseless reason of authorities—the authorities themselves a mountainous mass of subtleties and reasonings to obscure reason, or a scholastic jargon unintelligible to the expounders themselves—were the food offered to satisfy the cravings of the free, inquiring, and bold genius of the new comer.

The result might have been predicted. Ingulph was considered a student in whom there were no hopes, and was publicly reprimanded for his want of proficiency by Laud, on his last visitation. In disgust, he altogether abandoned the study of divinity—if he had ever commenced it—and petitioned his patron, the king, for leave to study the civil law. But no notice was ever taken of his request, for about this time commenced the Commons' prosecution of Strafford.

CHAPTER V.

INGULPH had no reason to rejoice in the measures of the Long Parliament, for their denial of the supplies deprived him even of that slender pittance he received from the king's liberality, if that be the proper word. But with what passionate enthusiasm did he watch its doings, with what rapture devour the remonstrances, petitions, appeals, replies, and eloquent denunciations with which each party accompanied its movements! There is little doubt that he would have made another run-away of it had he seen any possible means by which he could aid in the great work.

But when the civil war broke out, it found Ingulph poised, like Mahomet's coffin, between two loadstones of almost equal power. For a reason which it is not necessary yet to elucidate, the sacrifice of Strafford by the power of the parliament checked Ingulph's zeal in their cause. He owed a debt of gratitude to the king; and, moreover, he had become the delight and admiration of a splendid and chivalrous court.

On his arrival at Oxford, the king remembered his *protégé*, and honoured him with much countenance. He seemed even to take pleasure in his conversation; and, amidst all the distraction of his affairs, frequently amused himself by reasoning with the young man on religious topics, with the double intent of displaying his royal scholarship and of removing certain heterodox opinions which he easily detected in him.

But the young courtiers had discovered qualities more to their taste in the Oxford student. He had a talent for versification which came into notice on a score distinct from the beauty of the compositions; although, as they excited admiration in so learned and elegant a court, that must have been of a high order. But as only few remains of these effusions have rewarded our careful research, we cannot pronounce *ex cathedrâ*.

All that we have certainly discovered is, that the poems were principally sonnets, in the manner of "Master Petrarca, of Arquâ, a city of Italy;" full of passion, but addressed to some unknown and unnamed beauty. It appeared, however, that she was one of the highest rank, and that the poet cherished only the hope, that when he had perished of her scorn, she would honour his memory with a few tears.

The flatterers of the queen, and in especial the marquis of Montacute, had not failed to insinuate that she was the object of this passionate and reverential homage, a fact not at all displeasing to a vain and still beautiful woman. Whether this rumour was encouraged by the De la Poles to their kinsman's service may be doubted; for, in proportion that Ingulph's favour increased with the queen, it declined with the king. A rare circumstance. While, on the contrary, the young lord's courage and devotion to his cause fast restored the whole family to Charles's good graces, out of which they had long been exiled.

There were matters in the sonnets which ought to have refuted the notion we have hinted. The queen was a brunette, but whenever allusions were made to the person of the unknown beauty of the sonnets, they seemed to indicate a fair woman. In especial, there were comparisons of her face to a blush-rose, of her hair to the golden light on a field of ripe corn; and one positive assertion that she diffused infinite peace and delight in the soul by one glance of

"Eyes as blue as in harebells light."

The eyes of Henriette Marie were particularly black, and rather sparkling and expressive than sweet or tender; but Ingulph's friends banished this difficulty by insinuating that this was a respectful artifice to veil the poet's passion for so exalted an object.

Certain it is that Ingulph was rarely, by his own good-will, absent from the court of Henriette Marie, and true it was, that among all the gilded crowds that thronged daily into the gardens of Merton College, in which she frequently took ex-

ercise with a numerous court, the tall dark figure of the student was seldom missing. True it was, that for months he almost forgot that such things as parliaments and rights divine and human existed.

It was a dream of delight! one cloudless sky of ecstasy shone over all things. How he begrudged time every moment of that rapt eternity, and yet how sweet was every moment as it sped past! Yes, poets, you have the recompense of your sufferings, for you taste nectar in your cups of bliss, and common men but wine! Frequently were Ingulph's eyes feasted with the banquet of that beauty which inspired his muse and his soul ever with the passionate musings, the hopes, the vague ecstasy of youthful love.

And yet we are not sure that he was not happiest when not in her presence, but only certain to be in it soon again. The actual sight of her loveliness affected him with a sensation of pleasure so deep as to be a kind of pain; her laugh, her blush, the indescribable play of her charms, kindled his senses into a tumult which could only be called a rapturous agony. The timidity and pride of worth alike discouraged him; the distance which ceremony and rank imposed heightened his feelings to torture. But imagination levels mountains; and when he was alone, and had leisure to survey the treasures of hope he had collected, what vision of paradise could have equalled the delight of these reveries, which mingled the essence at once of all that is voluptuous and pure.

CHAPTER VI.

To resume at the point in which we broke off, in this somewhat lengthened biographical sketch, we return to the arrival of the London citizen in Master Dethewarre's apartment.

"I marvel not that you stare at me thus amazedly," said the citizen, after a moment's pause, during which he returned the questioning look of Ingulph with a long, earnest, and scrutinizing gaze. "My name is Stonehenge, a citizen of London, and brother to your departed mother; but, having been long abroad, we are strangers."

"We are indeed!" replied Ingulph, with astonishment. "Nor did I ever hear that I had any relative of the kind."

"Probably not," returned the citizen, calmly. "You have been hitherto in the hands of men who had an interest to conceal it from you. Had I not been absent so long in re-

mote countries, you should have learned the fact long ago; and also that you have two aunts in London, one of whom is married to a wealthy armourer."

Whatever was the effect intended to be produced by this announcement, it certainly seemed to give but little satisfaction to the person to whom the joyful intelligence was addressed.

"I have neither begged nor borrowed of him; what is his wealth to me, Master Stonehenge, if such be your name?" he returned, haughtily.

"Such is *not* my name!" said the citizen with a smile. "It is a name I have assumed; but trusting some day to resume mine own, when the parliament is strong enough to support me openly against an unjust sentence which banished me from my native land. My name is the same as your own—your mother's."

Ingulph coloured deeply. "You share the disgrace then—or rather decline your share by assuming another!" he replied, bitterly. "But be it so; I have lived so long alone, that methinks I have learned to die alone. As for any injustice of which you may have to complain, if you be the Stonehenge of whose riches the talk runs so much of late, you cannot long want for redress from a parliament so much in want of money."

"It shall be seen," replied the citizen. "Meantime, you see, I am not so rich as to think it necessary to forget my poorer kindred. I have been on a search after you at De la Pole Castle; and there I learned so much of you that I desired to know more."

"I am beholden to you, master, but I am not so poor as yet as to need charity," returned Ingulph, still more surprised.

"Marry, and say you so that live on the alms-dole of a tyrant?" said Stonehenge, suddenly. "Scanty indeed it must now be, when, to raise the little sum you were wont to allow old Adam Rising, he tells me you have been compelled to part with all your books."

"He told you so!" said Ingulph.

"Let this certify," replied Master Stonehenge, and he produced a letter in the crabbed, illiterate hand of poor old Adam, which not only affirmed the fact, but introduced the bearer to Ingulph as his mother's brother, by whose liberality he was now amply provided for the remainder of his days. To be sure, this was not likely to be a long period, for the poor old man declared that he weakened every day, and ex-

pected soon to follow his dear Sarah to glory; but he forgot that Ingulph could not have heard of her death.

"I am beholden to you for this charity, for such it is," said Ingulph. "But if you come to confer the like on me, I must again reiterate I need it not, and will not accept it."

"The refusal mislikes me not," replied the citizen, with a placid smile. "'Tis true, as I have told you, that I am enormously rich, and that I have no heir whom I would prefer to the son of my wronged sister. I am on my way to Gloucester, on the parliament's business, and have it in commission from some of its chiefs, my friends, to propose that you shall enter their service."

"Know you not that you are speaking treason, in Oxford, master citizen?" exclaimed Ingulph.

"Yea, but I know to whom I am speaking it," replied Stonehenge, calmly. "If you have the common blood of humanity in your veins, you too are a traitor—if such be the name they give the generosity that impels, and the courage that dares, to combat tyranny!"

Ingulph was troubled, but he somewhat evasively replied, "To Gloucester?—for what purpose? A city in arms against the king would surely give an ill welcome to a dependant of the king's, which you say I am. And being so reverend a citizen, methinks a beleaguered town will be scarcely the stronger for your presence."

"I do not go thither to do battle in the cause; it were indeed not possible for me," replied Stonehenge, raising his right arm with a mournful glance, and Ingulph started to see that his hand was curiously clasped in an intricate silver machinery, which seemed contrived to supply the loss of the tendons. Recollecting the kinds of offence for which the punishment of mutilation was inflicted, Ingulph turned pale.

"I understand your thought; but I have told you I was the victim of injustice—of the injustice of that order of things which I call upon you to aid me to subvert," continued Master Stonehenge, with rising vehemence.

"To subvert!" repeated Ingulph. "To subvert what? I understand you not! If to resist tyranny be lawful, and that be the cause in which you have embarked, to subvert is a word which expresses another idea."

"We will not dispute the nice meaning of a word, master student," replied Stonehenge, smiling austerely. "But do you alone, who are the destined instrument, comprehend not what is coming? See you not that the ancient pillars of the world are rotten, that the nations have drained their

cup of bitterness, and that at length the chalice is to pass away?"

"I apprehend you not, Master Stonehenge; neither do I know what instrument I am, nor how destined," replied Ingulph.

"And yet it is so written! Is it possible that the stars of heaven can lie, so far above our human passions as they dwell in their blue serenity?" said Stonehenge, in a rapt tone.

"But earthly interpreters may!" replied Ingulph, with an involuntary smile. "But to what, I pray you, do these stars destine me, with whom you seem to have so intimate a conversation that they confide to you all their secrets?"

"You are the destined avenger—of your mother's wrongs—of mine—perchance of this great nation's!" replied the citizen, with some slight pauses of hesitation; "certainly of your own."

"Wrongs? Alas, they are common enough—too common—to excite aught but men's laughter," said Ingulph, mournfully.

"Common!—nay, they are not common," replied Stonehenge, in a low but inexpressibly bitter tone. "But are you assured we have no listeners? What I have to say admits of none."

Struck with the solemnity of his manner, Ingulph stepped hastily to the door, examined without, and returned, after carefully closing it.

He found Stonehenge apparently lost in reverie, which continued for some moments, with evident marks of strong mental emotions depicting themselves on his countenance.

"But he must be," he said, in a mournful tone, as if to himself. "I must fasten the vulture to this pure and noble heart; the bitter inheritance must be shared. Harken," he continued in a louder voice; "harken, retainer of monarchies, flatterer of nobles, servant of priests! your mother was betrayed to ignominy by the artifice of a false marriage; and yet from neither king, nor nobles, nor priests, was ever any other justice obtained—but this maimed limb, by her brother!"

And he struck his silver-bound hand with violence on Ingulph's.

"A false marriage!—what mean you?" exclaimed the young student, staring aghast.

"Patience, and I will make me plain enough," replied Stonehenge, relapsing from his excited tone. "Your mother was very young—beautiful—too innocent to suspect the foul

treachery to which she fell a victim. And oh, what a villanous craft was that! Under pretext of a private marriage, your father's rank being so much above hers,—by night, in masks, at the Fleet,—they married her to one of his basest menials, who happened to resemble him in stature and form."

"My mother was not then—not willingly—in God's name, understand me!" gasped Ingulph.

"She died of a broken heart," continued Stonehenge, in the calm hard tone of habitual sorrow; "and her betrayer lives, blazing in honours, wealth, and power, with a flourishing offspring to inherit all. And say you that this world needs no altering?"

Stonehenge fixed his glowing eyes, which seemed actually to reflect fire, on the young man's countenance, and watched the fluctuations of its expression through all the shades of rage, shame, and despair, until he exclaimed, "Needs altering!—it needs destroying!—of a broken heart! Let destruction loosen all her bloodhounds; let hell rage on the earth; let chaos come again, as it must ere even Omnipotence can set this ill creation right again! Henceforth I dedicate myself to the destruction of the foul mass which breeds these vermin of pride and luxury; all hail to thy discrowned head, republic that shall be!"

"You are too fast and hasty; perchance we may light upon a mean that stretches not so far, but shall yet cover all the justice of our cause," replied Stonehenge. "Your mother's marriage was valid in the sight of heaven; and this illustrious parliament now assembled has taken heaven's office on itself, judging by the sublime essentials of justice, and not by the crafty sounds of words. I have many friends in it; and, would you appear before it to plead your own and your mother's cause, I doubt not that they will pronounce her marriage valid, and restore you to the honours and rights of which you have been basely deprived."

Ingulph stood for some moments lost in a chaos of thought. At first there came over him a desolation of feeling, which seemed to deprive him of all motive for action, or resolve of any sort; but on a sudden the golden atmosphere of his imagination thronged full of hopes, and splendid phantasmata of the glories, pleasures, beauty, triumph, love, which had often glared on him in despairing reveries, rather as a grisly cloud of fiends mocking and jeering him out of the universe.

While he stood in this silence of emotion, more than of irresolution, a tap was heard at the door, and a rude hand pushed it suddenly open, and two figures entered.

One of these visitors was the provost, Huncks ; the other was a very different sort of a personage, being a squat little dwarf, of wonderfully small proportions, arrayed in helmet and cuirass, like an ancient Roman, and with a gilded fasces in his hand.

“Sir Jeffrey Hudson !” exclaimed Stonehenge, as if involuntarily.

“Your poor servant, sir,” returned the dwarf, with a courteous bend. “But how is this, Master Dethewarre, incomparable mirror of the Muses ! I am sent to tell you that the queen’s majesty is much amazed at your absence, and desires you to attend her momentarily in the presence.”

Ingulph glanced at Stonehenge, who replied, significantly, “Nay, my business can well abide her majesty’s pleasure ; for I do not leave the city until sunset.”

“And perhaps not then, my master,” said Huncks, stepping boldly forward.

“This is an unexpected, and, I may add, an undesired honour, master provost,” said Ingulph, looking at the newcomer with an expression of aught but welcome.

“I know I stand not very high in your good graces, and I am sorry for it, Master Dethewarre,” said Huncks, in a humbler tone. “But if this good citizen be, like most of his tribe, a hard creditor, I have done you a good turn for the ill one you did me with the council,—as if I could prevent my prisoners from dying, when their time is up ! I have an order from my lord, your father, to bring this stranger before him.”

“For what purpose ?” returned Ingulph, much startled.

“Mayhap to give him a lodging for the night under my care,” said the provost, with a malicious grin.

“If you threaten, master hangman-in-chief, with no better authority than your own impudence, mayhap I shall not sufficiently respect it,” said Ingulph, with a visible kindling of eye and cheek.

“My message is from the marquis of Montacute, his majesty’s lieutenant within this walled city of Oxford,” replied the provost, stoutly. “His excellency likes not these sly visits of London gentry within his charge.”

“I will be the marquis of Montacute’s bondman for my friend, if he came from—whither you are going,” said Ingulph, with a burst of passion. “But, look you, Master Huncks, if you have no better bail for yourself than that miserable carcass, take it with what speed you may out of my sight.”

The provost, observing that Ingulph advanced towards

him in a passionate manner, thought proper instantly to take the hint, and disappeared with an ironical bow. The dwarf, laughing heartily at the scene, followed his example, excepting that his farewell was more stately and solemn.

“I must depart instantly; I would not trust myself in that man’s presence with the recollections that throng upon me,” said Stonehenge. “Moreover, though years and toil have changed, he might recognise me; and ’tis not yet time. But do you assent to my proposal, or have you too much of your father’s blood in your veins?”

“I will come to you in London—but to go to Gloucester and to serve against the king—I owe him some gratitude,” said Ingulph, with troubled hesitation. “But I promise, by an oath, which shall henceforth be the most sacred of all to me—by my mother’s memory!—many days shall not elapse ere I follow you.”

“’Tis false then—the legend of your devotion to the Jezebel of France?” said Stonehenge. “’Tis not that I doubt in your word thus pledged, but I would fain disbelieve in this.”

“Yes, ’tis false!—a perfidious invention of my enemies, which yet I dared not contradict,” replied Ingulph, colouring deeply, and with a cloud of painful thought sweeping over his brow.

Stonehenge sighed audibly, and, after an instant of thought, continued, “There are horses and a guide furnished, with all that is necessary for a journey, at the Pot of Frankincense; which slight dispense, if it vex your pride, you can repay me when you have larger means; I will send the man to you, to receive your orders, as to the when and where of your departure.”

Ingulph uttered a hasty acquiescence to this proposal, as if he were glad to be debarred the power of hesitation; and the merchant, apparently content with the success of his enterprise, shortly after bade his newly-claimed relative farewell.

CHAPTER VII.

Soon after the conversation just detailed, Master Stonehenge’s fellow-traveller, the jolly apprentice, Joyce, was left to what, above all things else he loved,—his own liberty. It is true he had received certain instructions to regulate his conduct; but as he conceived he understood quite as well as his master all the essentials of prudence, he made no scruple to

sally forth to see what was to be seen, almost as soon as the former had quitted Oxford, on his renewed journey.

The city seemed pouring out its motley population to the dregs. Gay cavaliers, solemn gownsmen, students, soldiers, grandees, and rabble, flooded the streets, whose holiday-garbs and general hilarity denoted that it was a day of festival.

Fearlessly following the general flow, Joyce entered the gardens of Christchurch, the guards posted at the entrance offering no check, and he found himself one of a merry throng, apparently awaiting some spectacle. On inquiry, Joyce learned that the king was out, either hunting or hawking, and his return was expected.

Joyce had a very great curiosity to see the monarch, who, from the terrible manner in which his qualities were usually described, he expected to find some monster. But meantime, as the king seemed in no hurry to gratify his curiosity, he amused himself with wandering about the gardens, and admiring the splendid costumes of the courtiers, college dignitaries, and lackeys.

Joyce observed divers preparations in progress, which, from his own experience of the city shows, he very wisely concluded to be for some nocturnal revelry. Innumerable lamps hung among the trees, grotesque figures and machines, not meant to sustain the eye of day, peeped out in various parts; tables were lighted, as if in due season to be covered with viands; and grave officials appeared directing the most insignificant operations, as if they were matters of life and death.

He was inspecting these arrangements with a judicious and critical eye, when a distant flourish of trumpets admonished him to take up some point of vantage, whence to gratify his higher curiosity.

In a few minutes the royal hunting-party appeared, the foremost being a party of the king's foresters, all clad in woodland green, and bearing among them the carcass of a noble stag, slung on the verdant branches of an oak, and borne in triumph on men's shoulders. A scattered multitude of cavaliers, rangers, and other attendants of the chase followed.

Among these the king was easily distinguishable, from alone wearing his hat, which he occasionally lifted carelessly, in answer to the enthusiastic shouts which greeted his approach. Joyce was surprised to remark the mild expression of the monarch's countenance, not, however, unmingled with

that of haughtiness and gloom. But the stout apprentice had scarcely time to note the general cast of his handsome, melancholy visage, his curling chesnut hair, pointed beard, and rich garb of dark maroon velvet, ere his attention was caught by a more engaging object.

It was a youthful huntress, mounted on a spirited horse, which she rode with a grace and boldness sufficient in itself to attract the gaze. But her beautiful face fixed it, with its pure rose-tinted complexion, delicate and finely-outlined features, lighted by the soft sparkle of eyes in which tenderness and gaiety alternated so rapidly that it was hardly possible to say which predominated. The elegant fulness and moulded grace of her form completed the indescribable charm of this lovely apparition.

Joyce was so much delighted with the young huntress's appearance, that he inquired who she was of an old cavalier, who stood beside him, and who seemed gazing with equal transport.

"The Lady Marie, as his majesty calls her," replied the gentleman; "daughter of the late poor martyred earl of Strafford; but she was named after the queen—Henriette Marie."

Joyce, aware that it was not his business to attract attention to himself, almost repented of his question as soon as he had asked it, and made off immediately it was answered.

After a time he observed, that the tide had now set in towards a stately building, which he perceived, peeping at such far intervals as marked its great extent, among the lofty oaks in which it was embosomed. Joyce demurely joined the procession, and found that it conducted him to a scene which he had long desired to witness—the king and his family, dining in what was technically called the presence.

This public repast was one of the most august and stately ceremonies of the ancient court, but to a modern it would probably seem the least delightful. On these occasions the greatest nobles were present only as servitors to fulfil offices, mostly hereditary, relating to the sovereign's eating and drinking. Grand carvers, cup-bearers, tasters, and other dignitaries of the mouth, appeared in splendid and peculiar costumes; and the whole court assisted in solemn state, by standing around to witness apparently the disappearance of the viands.

As this feast was considered almost as one given to celebrate the parliament's overthrow, seldom was the court of Charles the First displayed to greater advantage since his expulsion from London. Unlike that of his airy successor, the severest

etiquette regulated its festivals. The sober magnificence and stateliness of the Spanish manners, which the king had studied in his youth, and which suited his proud and melancholy temperament, were imitated in many particulars, and all the queen's French vivacity could not dispel their influence.

The dinner was served in the majestic hall of Christchurch, on the knee, with all the ceremonies of the say, which consisted in the king's giving command to uncover the courses as they were presented. Joyce's unaccustomed eye eagerly perused the splendour before him. The queen he perceived to be still a young and very pretty woman, with a vivacity of expression which gave a sparkling effect to her dark complexion. The prince of Wales sat on her right hand, a tall dark youth, distinguished by his three-feathered cap, with its jewelled aigrette, and an already free and careless demeanour.

Numerous ladies, amongst whom the bright Marie was conspicuous, stood around the queen, and shed the glory of loveliness on the spectacle. Among the cavaliers, Joyce specially noticed one attired in a costume then nearly unknown in England, that of a Highland chief. The materials were of fine stuffs, the dirk and belt wrought in a costly style, in silver; and the noble figure of the wearer was well calculated to display its garb. Another he noticed for his rakish and debauched, but very handsome countenance, lit up with wanton gaiety, whom he afterwards learned to be the Lord De la Pole.

The king from time to time addressed some grave observation, seldom chequered by a smile, among his courtiers; and if he unbent the austere dignity of his deportment, it was only when the queen, with the play of her French vivacity, seemed in a manner to vanquish his natural repugnance to all that partook of the levelling character of social enjoyment and familiarity. Much of this reserve might be imputed to a conscious deficiency in the lighter graces of language and thought; more to pride, and to the early disgust he had contracted in witnessing the boisterous jovialities and indecencies of his father's court. Joyce was not a very refined judge of manners, but he remarked, despite this habitual coldness, a general tone of high-bred courtesy in the king's demeanour; and in noticing the daughter of his unfortunate minister, which he frequently did, there was something even partaking of tenderness and self-reproach in the gentleness and marked distinction of his tone.

His consent to the destruction of Strafford, it is well known, was a life-long source of regret and sorrow to Charles, more

especially as circumstances continued daily to demonstrate how useless the great sacrifice had been, and how valuable the talents, devotion, and courage of the man would have been to the master who had reluctantly but cruelly abandoned him. He evinced this remorse by all possible means, and chiefly by his regard and care for the children of the departed victim, and especially for the sole issue of his first marriage, the Lady Henriette Marie. On their part, the family of Strafford never considered the king as answerable for the fate of their progenitor, however vehement the hatred they cherished against the parliament and its supporters. The Lady Marie was an enthusiast so passionate in the sovereign's cause, that the queen sometimes laughingly affected jealousy; and professed her fears that she should finally be obliged to remove her from the court. The queen was believed to have had some hand in persuading Charles, from her own selfish fears, to consent to his minister's destruction; and it was, perhaps, the consciousness of this fact which induced her frequently, although jestingly, to ascribe the shade of melancholy which, since her father's death, had at times darkened the natural gaiety of Marie's disposition, to the effect of a supposed secret passion. In fact, this was one of the standing court jests with all but the king, who knew nothing at all about it, and would have been in a high degree offended by it; although the certainty of the groundlessness of any suspicion of the sort heightened the savour of the raillery with the initiated.

With all his prejudices, Joyce could not but acknowledge, as he surveyed the scene, that it was a fine thing to be courtier, to compose a part in so splendid and stately an assemblage. The preponderance of the sober magnificence of the Spanish dress marked the influence of the monarch's taste, and its contrast to the garish fopperies of the French costume, as displayed by De la Pole and some other of the young courtiers, was entirely to its advantage in point of regal, and at the same time chaste, effect. The grandeur of the noble hall in which the feast was held, contributed largely to the general stateliness of the spectacle,—the high painted windows, shedding broad masses of light over its details, and harmonizing its diversified groups of courtiers, ladies, scholastic dignitaries, priests (among whom, infinitely to the scandal of Joyce, was a Romish cardinal, in his scarlet robes, in amicable discourse, alas! with a bishop of the English church), scholars, soldiers, pages, and other servitors, with a great mass of spectators, men and women, who were all in their best holiday attire, and

for the most part with nosegays in their hats or at their breast-knots, in which the lily preponderated,—for it was the queen's birthday.

The royal dinner concluded at last about the time when Joyce began to wonder if it ever would, and a magnificent dessert was spread, which, amidst a glorious clangour of trumpets, was handed about among the more distinguished guests, or rather gazers, with silver goblets of spiced wines, and information that his majesty drank to their healths. In the midst of this ceremonial, it was announced that a deputation from the university had arrived, to congratulate the king's visit and success.

An order was instantly given for their admittance, and amidst a body of grave dignitaries, gownsmen, and students, in various and sometimes splendid costumes, came Ingulph Dethewarre. Joyce did not know him, but his peculiarly fitful and absent manner, and the attention which was shortly afterwards directed to him very soon fixed his notice.

The orator of the deputation, after a long and inflated harangue, describing the university's share and joy in the complete triumph achieved over the enemies of his majesty's prerogative, and of all decency and subordination in church and state, begged his royal acceptance of an ancient manuscript Virgil, a wonderful and unique specimen of the caligraphical art, as a token of his daughter, the university's, unfeigned duty and joyful welcome. The king thanked their love in a short speech, and graciously accepted the present. It seemed that Ingulph, probably from a notion that he was a favourite at court, had been selected to present it, and he stepped forward with the richly-emblazoned tome in his hand. The queen's eye sparkled, and a slight colour visited her cheek, as she said, with a smiling nod, "Here is our new Benserade, sire!—your Majesty will be glad to recognize your favoured servant in so accomplished a poet."

"Stink-pot of prelacy!" muttered Joyce, as Ingulph knelt at the feet of his royal patroness, and kissed her jewelled hand, with a pale glow overspreading his features.

"'Tis Master Dethewarre, who has composed the masque which her majesty is pleased to give to celebrate your happy return and victories—a grace in which we are all honoured," said the marquis of Montacute, with an anxious glance at the king.

An expression of strong displeasure passed over Charles's countenance.

"Soh! you are a poet after the fashion of Master Petrarca,

the Italian,—a love-poet?" he said, after a pause. "Marry, to whom are these nightingale songs of thine warbled?"

"Sire," began Ingulph, somewhat quiveringly, and a deeper blush mantled on his brow—when the Lady Marie interrupted him,—

"Let not your majesty cause so great a jealousy in your court, as to make Master Dethewarre give the apple!" she said, with a bright and yet troubled smile.

"Nay, surely, Marie, you are no pretendant, being De la Pole's betrothed, which word wants but a deeper shade to be—wife!" said Charles, in a displeased tone, but which gradually softened as he spoke.

"But, sire, even that word is no security against a poet's sighs; nor see I why it should, since Waller besings my Lady Sunderland, and my lord carries her the verses!" said the queen, haughtily.

"What is the argument of your masque, master poet?" said Charles, in a somewhat milder tone.

"A Grecian legend,—the tale of Psyche, my liege," replied Ingulph.

"The which fair damsel I am, and have verses sweet as flute music to utter," said the Lady Marie, glancing smilingly at Ingulph, to whose excited flush a leaden paleness instantly succeeded.

"And I am Dan Cupid, and I would not for the world miss my part, 'tis so full of sweet and moving discourse!" said the prince, very eagerly, and with a glance of more expression at Marie than pleased the king.

"Look that there be no license in it! Has our master of the revels overlooked it?" said Charles, hastily.

"No, sire, I have not been so permitted—so commanded," said the stiff old gentleman to whom Joyce had addressed his question, in the gardens.

"Her majesty's sanction was held to be sufficient, please you," said Ingulph, warmly.

"The queen is, perchance, not so sufficiently inbred to the language as to discern what lurking mischiefs may lie now-a-days in phrases and twists of sound," returned the king, sternly.

"Nay, sire, methinks you may fairly take my word that my minstrel's rhymes contain no treason," said the queen, placing her hand on the king's shoulder, and leaning forward on it, as if to remark the beauty of the splendid volume which Ingulph still knelt with at the king's feet. "So, good Sir Thomas can lay aside his spectacles until they are needed for

the inspection of some such poetry as godly Master Milton of London writes."

"Poetry, my liege, is a falcon that never bites but when you check it," said a nobleman who was standing near the king's chair in a rich but somewhat neglected garb, and with a pale, suffering look, as if preyed upon by some mental sorrow.

"True, Falkland, but the master of the revels hath an office which I would not have robbed of its prerogatives, considering that these are times in which whenever we grant an inch there is always one to take an ell," said Charles, with a vexed glance at the kneeling poet.

"It might as well be granted, what the same Milton so impudently demands, in his *Areopagetica*," said the master of the revels, advancing under this encouragement. "He would have it that all men, high and low, gentle and simple, schismatic or faithful, loyal subjects or Jacky Pym plotters, should have the liberty, or rather license, of printing whatever they please, without the inspection of his majesty's chaplains, or of any other grave and judicious authority!"

"Nay, I know not that it requires so much of gravity and white-haired wisdom, to judge in poetry," said the queen; "an owl were an ill judge of the tints of rainbows or flowers; but at all events I am a humble suitor to your majesty that this poem of Master Dethewarre's may, on my word, be held current coin to pass unweighed."

"What Paynim caitiff could refuse so fair a lady's prayer, much less the sovereign of the Garter?" said Charles, tenderly. "Poets, methinks, should be faithful to me, who have ever proved myself a reverent lover of the Muses; and when it shall please heaven to stop the bleeding wounds of this land, I will by all means prompt my English to excel in those beauteous arts of painting, poesy, and sculpture, as much as they do in rugged and mechanic toils. But methinks there should be some order kept in these matters, that the ancient modesty and submission be not overpassed."

"The ancient freedom let us have then, too, sire, for the circle of Shakspeare is the universe!" said Ingulph, in a low but firm tone.

"Freedom indeed, but not license; freedom, but not as they understand the word at Westminster," said Charles, not displeased with the allusion to his favourite poet.

"Would they could understand it as your majesty and all honest and loyal men do!" said Lord Falkland.

"My Lord Falkland is ever sighing out, like a lackadaisical

lover, his mistress's name, Peace! Peace!" said De la Pole, laughing. "But if he waits till honest men bring it to pass, there will be time enough to debate the conditions."

"Falkland has the right to love peace more than any other man, by showing that he fears war less!" said Charles, gravely.

"Truly, sire, I care not how soon the black earth devours me, to use father Homer's phrase, could my dying sense close with the music of that sweet word!" said Falkland, with a deep sigh.

"My Lord Falkland is so great a lover of London and Greek, that he can only bear to lose one for the sake of the other; but to lose both for a word—for it will never be the thing until these rebels are crushed into the dust they sprang from—were, methinks, too much," said Lord De la Pole, and Charles glanced approvingly at him.

"Gloucester cannot hold out; and when that submits, let my proud London look to herself!" said the king, with warmth.

"And let the factious preachers who have made their pulpits resound with abuse of me, look to it that day I set foot again in Whitehall!" said the queen, passionately. "The insolent state-mongers! that have dared to proclaim their queen a traitress because she would have crushed their treason! But we keep Master Dethewarre too long on his knees, were he begging the head of Pym himself, instead of presenting your majesty so noble a gift."

"Rise, sir, we thank our faithful daughter, the university, very heartily," said Charles. "We grieve for the trouble our presence necessarily brings to her learned quiet, but will make some good amends in fitting season. Cambridge, we fear, hath little reason to boast her tranquillity, if those late accounts we hear concerning the robbery of its plate and valuables be true."

"'Tis true enough, sire; that sacrilegious despoiling is confirmed," said a dignitary in episcopal robes. "The robber is one Colonel Oliver Cromwell, who hath of late made himself so infinitely mischievous against your majesty in those parts."

"That man is of an order, who, if peace be not soon concluded, will by-and-by suffer none but of their own making," said Falkland, gloomily. "Is not this the fellow that uttered those strange words to his soldiery, that he would not puzzle them with perplexed expressions as to whom they fought for, king or parliament; but, truly, if his majesty should chance to be in the body of the opposers, he would as soon pistol

him as any private man; and if their consciences would not let them do the like, he did exhort them not to follow him!"

"I would some man would do me that good service to bring me so transcendant a traitor's head!" said Charles, hastily. "If it please God we ever see Whitehall again, we will have it on the gates or ever we eat a meal there! I would, Sir Kenelm," he continued, in a livelier tone, "I would you could show us that day in your beryl, of which you report such notable wonders."

"Oh, that were little to Sir Kenelm, who raises the devil merely to help him make his wife's cosmetics," said the queen, smiling. "But a pageant more gorgeous than that with which they welcomed us last to the city,—just ere they drove us hither,—art magic cannot show. Fie, what a glitter and glisten was there! It did well seem, in those gold-bedaubed habits of the London chandlery, what 'tis that puffs their insolence, and how well they can afford to pay for its indulgence when we return."

"What needs Sir Kenelm's beryl, when we have the *Sortes Virgilianæ* at command?" said Lord Falkland, with a melancholy smile. "Will it please you to try the old Roman divination, sire? It may divert to observe what senselessness these oracles oft prate."

"Nay, my lord, the new light holds all questionings of providence superstition, unless they be pricked for in the Bible," said De la Pole, with mock solemnity of reproof.

"Would you learn, my Lady Derby, how long you can keep your house at Latham, in case the rebels come again before it?" said Charles to a lady of stately presence, who stood erect and stiff behind the queen's chair.

"Let me but know how long I shall have powder to charge a gun, and I need to learn no more, please you," returned the haughty countess.

"We will try our own luck then," said Charles; and taking a jewelled pin from the queen's ruff, he added, "Come, master scholar, you are the fittest man to interpret a Latin oracle; bring Maro hither, and we will dive into him as into that dark well in which truth sits wringing her drenched locks."

Ingulph obeyed, and again knelt before the king with the noble volume in his hands.

Despite the absurdity of the experiment, such was the superstition of the times, that the whole court looked on with eager and undissembled curiosity as Charles pricked in the illuminated tome, and Ingulph opened at the place. All was

mute expectation. Rather regarding the office as an escape from his former embarrassment, Ingulph began reading in an oratorical and somewhat pompous manner, as befitted the enunciation of an oracle. But as he proceeded, and marked the singular aptness of the quotation, the emotion of the king and of the whole auditory, his voice sunk to a depth which unintentionally added solemnity to the words.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE passage lighted on was the denunciation of Dido to Æneas, when, about to sacrifice herself in the despair of her abandonment, she upbraids him with his cruelty, and imprecates vengeance.

“*Et Diræ ultrices, et Di morientis Elisæ,
Accipite hæc, meritumque malis avertite numen,
Et nostras audite preces : Si tangere portus
Infandum caput, ac terris adnare, necesse est,
Et sic fata Jovis poscunt, hic terminus hæret,
At bello audacis populi vexatus et armis,
Finibus extorris, complexu avulsus Iûli,
Auxilium imploret, videatque indigna suorum
Funera ; nec, cum se sub leges pacis iniquæ
Tradiderit, regno aut optata luce fruatur ;
Sed cadat ante diem, mediâque inhumatus arenâ.*”*

In that learned court and audience there were few who did not understand the passage in its energy, and a gloom gathered on men’s minds, which was deepened by the shadows of the now westering sun. But the effect on Charles was singularly great. He fixed his eyes, with a troubled expression, on the young poet’s countenance, and seemed to sink into a sombre reverie as he gazed.

“One would think we were love-sick city wenches, listening to a groat’s-worth of Lilly’s lies,” said Falkland, breaking the silence with a forced appearance of gaiety. “I will speedily show your majesties what a little dependence is to be placed on these predictions, by showing how ill they will fit my case! I warrant I light on some stirring speech for war, and the blood-stained military glories which I do most abominate.”

* “Avenging Furies, and Gods of dying Elisa! receive these my words, turn your divine regard on my wrongs, and accept my prayers. If it must be, and the decrees of Jove compel that the execrable traitor reach the port, and get safe to land: Yet persecuted, at least, by war and the arms of a daring people, expelled from his own lands, torn from the embrace of Iûlus, may he implore aid, and see the ignominious deaths of his friends! And after he shall have submitted to the terms of a disadvantageous peace, let him neither enjoy his crown, nor the wished-for light of life: But die before his time, and lie unburied in the midst of the sandy shore!”

And, taking the Virgil from Ingulph, he flung it open at another place, and read with rapidity—probably expecting something utterly incongruous—but it was the passionate apostrophe of Evander to his slaughtered son.

“ Non hæc, O Palla, dederas promissa parenti,
Cautius ut sævo velles te credere Marti.
Haud ignarus cram, quantum nova gloria in armis,
Et prædulce decus primo certamine posset.
Primitiæ juvenis miseræ bellique propinqui
Dura rudimenta.” *

The consternation of the assembly increased, as was evinced by the profound silence which followed the enunciation of this unlucky passage.

“ Come, my lord, we have had enough of this foolery,” said Charles, with a sudden and forced cheerfulness. “ We will try the Sortes some day when they are in a more obliging mood ; but meanwhile I have been studying these few minutes to remember whom Master Dethewarre so resembles. There is a likeness in my mind as in a dark mirror ; but I cannot distinctly call up the certainty.”

“ Probably—’tis something of the De la Pole feature your majesty traces,” said the marquis, with a spasmodic attempt at a smile.

“ You have some reason, perchance, to look for it there, my lord ?” said Sir Jeffrey Hudson, pushing forward with a cackling chuckle, which set all the young courtiers laughing and the ladies waving their fans, and heightened the king’s gloom.

“ I have little else of theirs, then, sire !” said Ingulph, glaring fiercely round the assembly.

“ Or perhaps your majesty detects some other resemblance ; for I doubt if the De la Poles have an exclusive claim to the honours of the parentage !” said Montacute, with excessive bitterness. Ingulph was silent for an instant, but the insult worked through all his veins like fire.

“ Methinks your lordship took some precaution to insure my mother’s good faith,” he said at last, “ seeing that your cruelty and perfidy brought her to an untimely grave, by the hard death which a broken heart inflicts.”

Montacute looked at the speaker for a moment, with an expression even of fear ; and then he laughed as if it were at some good joke.

* “ These, O Pallas ! are not the promises thou gavest thy parent. that with more caution thou wouldst trust thyself to the bloody combat. I was not ignorant, how far rising fame in arms, and the bewitching charms of honour, in the first action might carry thee. Ah, fatal to the youth have been his first essays, hard his probation of early war !”

"If the lady be dead, 'tis more than I knew," he said, turning grave at the glance which the king cast at him, "The last I heard of her, was to the effect that she was become as great a saint as ever she had been a sinner, and was held to be one of the gifted sisters, and a precious vessel of the elect, in congregations of the godly in London."

"There is some slight mistake in that, my lord; I happen to have better intelligence," said Ingulph, with bitter significance.

"And so, by the way, we learn," said Charles, sternly. "What special business have you with yonder Master Stonehenge, who hath, it seemed, constituted himself chief banker to my traitors in London, and whose word passes for their most extravagant borrowings?"

"Where is he?—I sent one to tell you to bring him before me," said the marquis, anxiously.

"He had a sufficient pass from your majesty's generals; and as his business was of a peremptory description, I saw no reason to detain him as soon as it was settled in Oxford," replied Ingulph, firmly, but more calmly.

"I desire to know his purpose with you, sir! At least I will be obeyed in Oxford, and I think it strange that you should take upon you to judge of the propriety of obeying the orders of one whom you are bound to obey for even a stronger reason than the office he holds in my service," said Charles, with passionate asperity.

"Methinks it could scarcely be to effect a loan with Master Dethewarre, on the mere strength of his resemblance to our family; or I would I knew so confiding a citizen myself," said Lord De la Pole, with a scornful laugh.

"Nay, 'twas on another family score," said Ingulph, whose passion betrayed itself in the tremulous tone of his voice. "Master Stonehenge brought me an invitation from my mother's London relatives to visit them; and as they are rich enough to afford me lodging and entertainment, I think truly to relieve my friends in Oxford of the burden of my maintenance."

"Nay, you will not desert us at this season, when our affairs are prosperous?" said Charles, with a slight sneer.

"If your majesty is pleased to give me a pass to London, I may visit my relatives there without suspicion, at such a juncture," returned the excited poet.

"Tut, Dethewarre, what folly is this? Are you my sworn servant, and speak of going to London without first obtaining my permission?" said the queen, interposing with much sur-

prise. "Yet, truly, marquis, I must tell you that I do not think this gentleman owes you so much duty as to beg yours."

"You shall have your pass when you will, sir! Perchance I may not be long in following you to the capital, whither you go to join my enemies," said Charles, with increasing anger.

"Nay, sire, you wrong Master Dethewarre," at this point interposed the Lady Marie, who had listened to the sharp dialogue with a changing complexion. "There never was true poet but he was a true man too; and you shall as soon find treason in Master Dethewarre's heart as poison-berries on the oak."

Ingulph looked up with such a sparkle of delight in his expression, that the fair Marie coloured till the pure blood overspread her face, and even as much of her bosom as was visible at the open ruff.

"We would the lady to whom your homage is paid should have the honour of it, master poet," said Charles, in a milder tone, as if conscious that this scene was not exactly suited to so public an auditory.

"Nay, sire, that were not according to any rule of the *gaye science* with which we are acquainted," said the queen. "My Lord Montrose shall be the judge, who is so profoundly read in Amadis of Gaul, and in the doings of that spotless mirror of chivalry, Tristan the Sad."

"Moreover, sire, a discovery would deprive Dethewarre of his universal smiles, in exchange only for a particular disdain," said De-la Pole, with a tart smile.

"Beauty is chivalry's sole lawgiver; and when can it pronounce from lips more sovereign?" said the courtly Scot.

"'Tis enough for you men, that all of you understand our poet's love is without success, and without hope," said the queen, with an arch smile at her husband. "Marie, let the king hear that dulcet sonnet, called 'Love's Despair,' commencing—how is't?"

' Like a dark torrent through a sunless cave,
Or joyless dream, passes my youth away;
For love'

What is it that follows, minion? You learned it by heart."

"At your majesty's commendation, for I am to seek for any other reason," said Marie, with affected playfulness, but with an emotion which was visible in spite of her efforts; "but I have forgotten it now."

"Then, too, there is the ballad of the 'Hermit Love,' as

quaintly devised as any fancy of Herrick's," said Falkland, advancing to the rescue. "If I remember aright, it began thus:—

' Deep in my heart's all-silent cell
The hermit Love unblamed may dwell;
No cold stern eye shall there intrude,
To break our dreamy solitude,
Where Love, the rapt religious saint ' " . . .

"Enough, enough, my lord," interrupted Charles at this point. "And yet we own we are not without curiosity in the matter, and therefore command you, Master Dethewarre, to set this ruby into some wreath or other device, and crown therewith the lady of your thoughts, in our presence."

The king took a valuable jewel from his own sleeve, where it was pinned, and handed it to Dethewarre, who hesitated a brief but very observable moment as he bent to receive it.

"Nay, Master Dethewarre, you may use your poet's privilege certes without offence," said the queen, with an encouraging smile. "Were we ourself the lodestar of your verse, we are enough of the humour of our fair sister, the now regent of France, to forgive you; for she would say—she was only offended if any man misliked her. Do you remember the time, sire?"

"Marie, yes," replied the king, with marked tenderness, for the reminiscence carried him back to a happy scene of his youth. "And what was it that Buckingham answered—the madcap! 'There is but one man could mislike you, lady—that hath the best reason to the contrary—your husband!'"

And Charles smiled with some degree of sadness, as the memory of the volatile and splendid favourite crossed him, mingled with that of the bloody catastrophe which so suddenly extinguished his glories. A general gloom shaded the court sunshine.

"Come, my lords, we have had enough of these follies," said Charles, rising suddenly. "You of the council follow me, and we will decide in the matter of the condemned rebel Lilburn, whether 'tis now fit to visit them with the law's execution, or wait till we have no fear of this insolent threatened retaliation; and then, sweetheart, we will witness your masque."

"But meanwhile I will not part with your majesty for a moment, since I am to have your company but for a snatch of heaven, as it were," said the queen, taking her royal spouse's arm. "And, poor as our wit is, we will hope it may be somewhat enlightened by the wisdom which will doubtless be displayed on this occasion."

The spectators, understanding the king's pleasure, made their obeisances, and the queen, giving a smiling admonition to Dethewarre to have all things prepared, retired with the king, her ladies, and some of the principal attendants on the court.

"Fill me a goblet of claret," said the young prince, suddenly changing his attitude from the stately respect with which he stood until his sire had disappeared. "I have scarce tasted this whole dinner while, and truly the French wines are of kin to me, being half French myself."

"'Twas by a mere chance your highness escaped being half Spanish, and then you would have loved sherris, and been dry and adust as any hidalgo of them all," said De la Pole, laughing. "So let us give the glory to God, as the holy have it, and rejoice on earth that we have a gallant young prince who is willing to enjoy it himself, and let the rest of the world have their shares."

"De la Pole, I shall make thee jealous to-day, more especially if I take as many quaffs at this wine as would cure the thirst of yon dry sermon of Juxon's this morning," said the prince. "Oh, I do marvel at thee, De la Pole, that have such fruit in reach, and will not put out thine hand to gather it."

"My Lady Marie will not wed till the wars be over, and the king allows her plea because he fancies she is still mourning for her father, and would satisfy his manes first with the blood of those London traitors," said De la Pole, with a slightly troubled glance at Ingulph. "But when it falls, our moody cousin here shall write us an epithalamium which Sappho herself would find too passionate."

"I thank your lordship—but when I sing again, it shall be of war, battle, destruction, vengeance!" said Ingulph, with strange vehemence. "But again I thank the choice."

"Well, here's to the downfall of the poor old parliament, which is tottering on its last leg at Gloucester," said the prince, taking the opportunity to fill another goblet.

"Yet am I sorry for one thing—that the utter vanquishing of the rogues prevents honest men of an opportunity to show their love and duty," said Montrose. "Tut! had I not been born a gentleman, and so on the king's side, I would have taught them how to die at least with a better grace."

"Therein Dethewarre has the advantage of us all," said De la Pole, with his sarcastic smile. "He is born on both sides, and may take the advantage of either."

"I was born on the side of the wronged and the oppressed,

truly," said Ingulph, sharply. "But whether it must still continue the weaker in England lies still perchance on the edge of as good swords as any that made the Netherlands a free republic."

"I do marvel at the royalties of Europe suffering that most ill example among them," said Montrose.

"They live not by the sufferance of kings, my lord," replied Ingulph. "And you, whom men report well read in antique story, may remember there were such republics as Athens and Rome."

"Think you to find Athens at London?" said Montrose, laughing. "Among those fierce, narrow-hearted, and narrow-headed sectaries, look you to breathe the atmosphere of Pericles?"

"I can breathe any but that of slavery; that indeed would choke me, were the whole sky my prison!" retorted Ingulph.

"Wherever there are wine, women, and wit, surely a man may live to his heart's content," said the prince. "But, rather than sing psalms through my nose, and go to heaven so unpleasantly as they do in London, I would travel the other way with such another graceless rogue as De la Pole here. But, Dethewarre, I shall make a gentleman of thee, too, in spite of fate; marry you to my nurse, Wyndham's daughter, and so make a lady and a gentleman in a lump. For all the lass is plain, she is worth a man's while, for I mean to give her a good tocher, as the canny Scot has it, Montrose."

"I humbly thank your highness!" said Ingulph, biting his lip till the blood came.

"Let us make a betrothal of it, then!" exclaimed De la Pole, gaily. "Brown Bess though she be, I am sure their majesties will not take it amiss if she were married out of his highness's way. Shall I break the matter to the queen, Ingulph?"

"You shall do better to confine your attention to your own affairs!" returned Dethewarre, much exasperated.

"Why, man, I regard thine as part and parcel, especially in this matter, to see thee cozily bedded," said De la Pole.

"Perchance 'tis more your business, De la Pole, than you think," continued the prince, with an arch smile. "It was but yesterday Master Dethewarre presented Marie with a nosegay; and, happening to steal up to her unawares, I found her kissing it—ay, and with the tears standing in her eyes!"

"But what put your highness stealing up to my betrothed unawares?" said De la Pole, with affected carelessness.

“ Besides, our good half-cousin has a privilege ; but from any other inferior, the presumption of such offerings would call for correction.”

“ And would you administer it to any grievous excess, my lord ?” said Ingulph, flushing darkly, and folding his arms.

“ Why, who else should have the precedence, being the Lady Marie’s all but husband ?” replied De la Pole, with a glance which flashed full of the secret hatred in his heart.

“ Look to it then, lest the time arrive on the sudden,” said Ingulph ; and, bending to the prince, he pinned the ruby which the king had given him significantly in his cap, and retired from the circle. But ere he reached the general mass of spectators, a loud and general laugh from the prince’s circle seemed to deride the heroic style of his departure.

CHAPTER IX.

WEDGED among a distant body of spectators, Joyce had but partially overheard what passed in the royal group ; but observing Ingulph’s departure, he thought it was now a good time to introduce himself and his business to his notice. He observed that he clenched his hand as he went, and seemed absorbed in thought ; but Joyce was no great respecter of metaphysics in any form, and he presented himself abruptly before the young student.

“ You come upon me at a good instant ; we will start with daybreak to-morrow,” said Ingulph, after listening to his future guide’s explanation. “ Meanwhile, amuse yourself as you may or can ; or stay !—you are unknown in this city, and may therefore do me a service in delivering a letter which needs an unsuspected messenger. Return hither at nightfall, and I will give such orders as shall admit you to a view of these court festivities, if you have any desire to witness them.”

“ Truly, sir, but that in respect I know not whether it be a sin or not to be present at a masque, being that it is a sort of stage-play,” said the Londoner, in a somewhat puzzled tone ; but his curiosity seemed immediately to overpower the doubt, for he added, “ yet, seeing that it is a fashion of this carnal court—and that we should do at Rome as the Romans do—with your honour’s permission I will make one, though ’tis little better than bear-baiting or cock-fighting on a holiday.”

This weighty matter arranged, Ingulph returned to Merton’s, in the hall of which college it seemed the masque was

to be presented, and Joyce began to think that it was time to return to his inn and his dinner. As he moved off for the purpose he was suddenly joined by a man for whose company he had very little desire, being the provost-marshal, Huncks.

This personage, however, saluted him with the familiarity of an old acquaintance, and immediately invited the Londoner to crush a pottle of sack with him. The invitation was one which it went hard against Joyce's heart to decline; but remembering his master's cautions, he very resolutely announced that he was going to his dinner, and that physicians did strongly recommend the drink to be taken after rather than before that important meal.

"By St. George, you are right; and therefore I will first dine with you," returned the provost; "and so the reckoning will fall the lighter, for I will pay all that is drunk, if thou wilt pay all that is eaten, for I like well to hear the news from London."

"Nay, if you say so, have with you, companion," said Joyce, who was naturally of a very sociable disposition, and thought it was advisable to cultivate the good graces of so formidable a functionary.

They returned together to the Pot of Frankincense, where the excellent repast which Joyce had ordered, for he had ample means left him by Stonehenge, was already smoking on the board. Willing to be revenged on his forced companion, and to show him that he was not the city milksop which he repeatedly called him, Joyce moistened his viands with a full proportion of wine; and the provost, by frequent challenges, increased his libations.

Gradually, and with the skill of one whose natural turn was to artifice and deceit, the provost shifted the conversation to the subject of Master Stonehenge's arrival. He feigned to be ignorant of his departure, and observed that the marquis merely desired to see him to do him service, in case he had any intention of lending Master Dethewarre money, by convincing him of the hopelessness of repayment.

Joyce professed his ignorance of his master's intentions, but between boasting and endeavours to baffle the provost's questions, gave so singular an account of him as rather heightened than satisfied that worthy's curiosity.

It appeared, that the merchant had not long arrived in London from Mexico, where he had realized his immense wealth; but he had already made himself so conspicuous in the parliament's cause, that the custody of Whitehall, and a residence in it, was assigned to him. He had a young and

very beautiful wife, about whom there circulated reports of a strange nature; for she was believed by some to be a witch or fairy, or some such supernatural being, probably from the peculiarities of her appearance, or the foreign manners which she necessarily possessed. Had Joyce stopped short with these particulars, he had not, perhaps, done much harm; but, unhappily, in his desire to shift the conversation, he began, in his turn, to question Huncks about the festivities that were to be celebrated. To get rid of the interruption, the provost instantly offered to admit him to see the spectacle; upon which Joyce answered with some haughtiness, that orders had already been given for his admission by Master Dethewarre. Then, suddenly recollecting that it was not advisable the connection between them should be known, he added, that he was to go to the college merely to receive a letter, and convey it to his master.

Huncks took apparently no farther notice of the circumstance, but there was something in his eye which awakened suspicion in Joyce, who was a shrewd fellow in the main. Shortly afterwards he pretended to be overcome with the wind or with weariness, closed his eyes, and answered the provost's questions so much at random that he at last found it useless to ask any more, and finally left his companion to his slumbers.

However feigned these might have been at first, Joyce gradually sunk into a real repose, from which he did not awake for several hours, and then not by his own agency. Some one plucked him by the sleeve, and, looking up, he beheld master Dethewarre.

"Come with me, I need you now," he said, hastily. "The revelry will soon commence; and, immediately on its conclusion, I desire you to seek out a certain damsel, called Lolotte, a Frenchwoman, who waits on the Lady Marie, to deliver her this paper."

"I understand, master," replied Joyce, with a knowing wink. "But Mistress Lolotte will thank me little for my errand, if it is to bid her farewell in a letter, when a man can do it so much better in person."

"She will understand for whom it is intended, and concerning what," replied Ingulph, somewhat haughtily. "But come with me, and I will give you such farther directions as are necessary."

There was something in the manner of the student which compelled obedience, and Joyce followed him in silence, until they entered the precincts of Merton College.

It was now evening, and rapidly becoming dark ; the common crowd of spectators had long since been excluded from the gardens, but a great number of persons of distinction, in splendid court dresses, glided about in the faint silvery light of the rising moon. Ingulph pointed out to his attendant a part of the college in which the queen's ladies were lodged, and desired Joyce to convey a letter which he handed him, thither, before the court, which was to assemble in the hall of the college, broke up, but not before he had ascertained the commencement of the masque. Joyce, understanding this as a precaution against detection, readily promised obedience ; and Ingulph admitted him with himself through the partizans of a numerous guard into the college.

Entering the hall, Joyce was surprised to find himself one of a large and brilliant assemblage. The whole building was transformed into a species of theatre, hung with tapestry and coloured silk, with wreaths of flowers suspended all round, and lighted with a profusion of wax tapers. In the centre were two rich chairs or thrones, elevated under a canopy, and surrounded by a guard with gilt axes. A piece of tapestry, very beautifully wrought in gold, hung over a species of stage erected at the further end of the hall. The student safely ensconced his attendant amongst the gazers beyond the amphitheatre occupied by the court, and then retired to superintend the preparations behind the scenes.

Shortly after, the king entered, with a large retinue of nobles and ladies, and took his place on one of the thrones. Neither the queen nor prince were there, but the absence of these two great personages was soon explained, when, to a dulcet harmony of voices and flutes, the tapestry before the scene rolled back.

The stage represented a voluptuous landscape in Paphos, with a fountain in the centre, which threw its silvery waters high in the air, falling on a fantastic group of dolphins, nymphs, and a water-god with his urn. Numerous statues stood around, filling the soul with a voluptuous sense of harmony in their marble beauty ; and flowers exhaled their living sweetness in the air. Altogether, the scene was so dreamily poetic and gorgeous, that the spectators held their breath, lest they should dispel some glassy creation of magic.

Scarcely was this illusion produced, ere, to strains of melting music, Venus, and all the chief gods of Olympus, entered in procession. Joyce was scandalized to learn that the goddess was personated by the queen, and all the other heathen divinities by divers lords and ladies of the highest rank. But

even his imagination, or rather notion of such personages, was somewhat shocked by observing that the fair and rosy God of Love was enacted by a youth of swarthy complexion, but whose amorous eyes and demeanour were not ill-sorted to his part.

Joyce understood in general that Venus was reprimanding her son for some misconduct ; but, though the melody of the verse pleased his ear, not being at all familiar with the legend of Psyche, he but partly guessed the meaning. The goddess seemed to threaten her wandering boy ; but, as if appeased by his submissive answers, smoothed her ruffled beauties, and attended by her whole retinue of divinities, approached the king. Infinitely to Joyce's surprise, one of these, whose graceful figure well sustained the personage of Apollo, addressed the king as the father of all the gods ; and in a noble panegyric, welcomed him back from his victory over the Titans to Olympus.

It was the Lord De la Pole, whose eyes seemed all alight at once with mirth and mischief. During the first part of the poetical address, Charles seemed pleased and gratified, but it concluded in so singular a manner, that although pronounced without any visible consciousness by Apollo, it sounded as if the addition of some other hand meant to throw ridicule on all that went before.

“ Thus oft the antique Thunderer, men say,
 Would leave his lightnings slumbering round his throne ;
 And in a wife's fond arms forget to slay :—
 The only wonder is, our's wife 's his own ! ”

The peculiar turn of this compliment caused a general and irrepressible titter. Charles frowned, and the queen herself glanced surprisedly at De la Pole, who kept an unmoved countenance. The queen then took her place beside Charles, who, as he handed her up, said something in a low and displeased tone, to which she replied aloud, and with vivacity—
 “ I marvel at it ; 'tis matter added, and of extreme ill-placing.”

The master of the revels shrugged his shoulders, and smoothened his long grey beard in emphatic silence.

A collation was now served by the noblemen and pages in attendance, consisting of fruit, wine, and sweetmeats, of a variety and delicacy of which scarcely traditions remain in the modern kitchen.

This refreshment disposed of, the masque proceeded : Sir Jeffrey Hudson announced with a loud, manly voice, that the scene was now in Arcadia, although it was not at all changed.

A murmur of delight arose among the spectators when the

beautiful Psyche appeared, stepping as gracefully as a young fawn, her loveliness increased by a pensive expression of countenance, which harmonized well with the character she was to sustain. Her white robes hung with all the simplicity of Grecian sculpture around her form, which might have vied with its most perfect ideals. Her first words, pronounced with witching melody, excited a murmur of delight; and Charles, a monarch of refined taste in poetical excellence, seemed to smoothen his frowning brows as he listened.

The plot was well-knit and rapid, as suited the occasion; but the scene changed not until the palace of Love was announced by the stentorian voice of the dwarf. A sudden darkness veiled the scene; the woods and fountains seemed to melt away; and, to the astonishment of the spectators, the opening of numerous fountains of light, rushing up and overflowing in exact resemblance to sheaves of corn, revealed a scene which the beauteous divinity could scarcely have surpassed, when planning the reception of his earthly love. To such great perfection had these pageantries reached under Charles the First, which all the magnificence of the Grand Monarque never eclipsed.

Psyche lay asleep upon a bed of flowers; an invisible chorus of nymphs warbled with exquisite harmony a song of welcome and triumph. The king's brows again knit, when in the midst of this melody his youthful son entered as the invisible Genius of Love, and with a kiss, which had been ordered to be on the lady's hand, but which he transferred to her lips, awakened the sleeper. The loving dialogue which followed seemed to increase the monarch's dissatisfaction, probably struck by what indeed escaped no one's observation,—the real warmth which animated the royal actor.

Moreover, there was as it were a double current of meaning in the language ascribed to the young divinity. By no definable process was the effect produced, and yet it seemed as if this form of love were the incarnation of some real and substantial passion, which poured itself in torrents of melting eloquence. It seemed as if the lovely Psyche felt this too; her cheek was pallid, and there was a plaintive sadness in her tones which went to the hearts of all present.

The king sat with his usual stately immoveability, excepting that he once or twice spoke to Lord Falkland, who being himself a lover and fosterer of genius, seemed to answer apologetically. De la Pole, who, with the other divinities, were seated round the throne, seemed also gloomy and silent.

But when, after her fatal curiosity, the sorrows of Psyche

commenced, the gloom of the northern imagination mingled in the pure sunlight of the Grecian fable. On a waste of interminable sand, a figure meets Psyche, to predict to her the sufferings she has yet to undergo, and their termination only by his means—and this figure represented Death.

Whether it be that the English temperament is prone to melancholy, despite its robust and jovial outward cheer, or that the griefs and regrets which the civil war had caused in men's hearts disposed them to sadness, we know not; but the harangue of Death was listened to with profound attention. Nor did the pathetic allegory escape notice, that death alone was to unite Psyche with her desolate lover. But when the genius, at the conclusion of the verses which he addressed to Psyche, took a cypress crown from his brows, and put it on hers, tears, in spite of every effort, shone on her pale cheeks.

“Who is it that personates Death?” said the king, in a displeased tone. “I am surely mistaken in imagining that 'tis Ingulph Dethewarre! Marry, lady, and do you admit such companions into a royal show in which you mingle your own person?”

“By the mass! (craving your majesty's pardon), and the varlet hath dared publicly to stigmatise my betrothed wife as the object of his impudent passion!” exclaimed De la Pole. “For look you there, madam, yonder is the heart-ruby set in that cypress crown he hath presented her!”

The queen looked in silent astonishment at the gloomy coronal on Psyche's brow; and after satisfying herself that the ruby indeed glimmered among its black leaves, said, in a tone of expressive pique, “If your majesty dislikes Master Ingulph's presumption so greatly, there is little more in the masque that is worth the hearing, and for mine own part I am weary of it.”

“Nay, let us hear it out, since we have heard thus much,” said Charles, in a more satisfied tone than he had yet used in speaking of the poet, and reverting his eyes to the stage, which was now filled with a chorus of nymphs and dryads. But at this moment the marquis of Montacute made way through the throng, and approached the king, to whom he spoke for some time, in a low voice, and finally handed a paper. The king examined it with deep and marked attention, and suddenly arose.

“We like not the play, and have had too much of it,” he said, in a stern voice. “We will consider at some future time

whether it shall please us to hear it out, but at present let it close : we are weary."

It is impossible that the surprise which this sudden stoppage occasioned could be surpassed. But Joyce waited not to ascertain the results ; for, finding the whole assembly rising and breaking up, he remembered his letter, and the propriety of delivering it. He therefore bustled out with the foremost, and found to his special wonder that the gardens were on every side brilliantly illuminated. The lofty chesnuts were starry to their summits with little lamps, and soft strains of music came floating as if from fairy-land on every breeze.

Joyce now put his hand into the ample pocket in which he had carefully stowed his letter, to bring it forth ; but to his amazement he found neither it nor the purse of gold in his charge. Unwilling to believe in the reality of his misfortune, he searched his pockets again and again, and even turned them inside out ere he would believe in his loss. His consternation then became extreme, but recollecting that his friend, the provost, had stood by him all the time of the masque, and had mentioned that he was appointed with a guard of partizans to prevent any disorders, he determined instantly to apprise him of his loss, and to obtain his assistance in searching for the daring robbers.

CHAPTER X.

WHATEVER were Dethewarre's feelings on this great and public disgrace which the king had inflicted upon him in his capacity of court poet, he allowed few to divine their nature, for he disappeared almost immediately after the announcement of the royal displeasure was made. But he had no great occasion to conceal himself ; he was universally shunned as a man in irremediable disgrace, for courtiers, like deer, always butt their wounded comrade from the herd.

He directed his course remote from the glare and glitter of the illumination and the courtly groups which it lighted up, seeming to have no other motive but to avoid the pity or the scorn of his late admiring coadjutors. But his peregrinations were not destined to be very extensive ; for, returning to the quadrangle in which he had desired Joyce to meet him, he suddenly encountered the provost-marshal, with some dozen of his followers, with lighted torches.

“We seek a rogue, and even as Nathan answered unto David—thou art the man!” exclaimed the provost, stepping boldly forward. “Come, sir, you are my prisoner, in the king’s name!”

“Keep your hand off, ruffian!” said Ingulph, violently shaking himself loose from the provost’s grasp. “Show me some lawful authority, and I will obey.”

Huncks waved his hand to the guard, who instantly closed round Ingulph, with their partizans levelled. Meanwhile the provost rummaged in the breast of his doublet, and finally drew out a paper, which he handed to Ingulph as his warrant.

The emotion of the latter may be imagined when he found it was the letter which he had commissioned Joyce to deliver. But to understand the bitterness which filled his soul when he saw the endorsement in Charles’s own handwriting, “Arrest this impudent traitor, and convey him to Oxon Castle,” signed by the king, with the strange addition that it was countersigned “Marie Wentworth,” it will be necessary to explain the contents.

It seemed that, in anticipation of his immediate departure, the unlucky writer had ventured in this epistle to avow a secret passion which he had long felt for the beautiful Wentworth. He depicted his sufferings with all the extravagance and fervour which youthful love is apt to take from the rich colours of a brilliant imagination; and indignantly repudiated the idea that in his love-poems he had ever addressed any but herself, whatever the vanity of other women might imagine. At the same time the poet acknowledged the absolute hopelessness of his love, and desired only that she would sometimes remember him with pity. Unfortunately this entailed an account of his purpose in going to London, for it seemed that, after all, Ingulph desired to throw some little gleam of light on the darkness of despair in which he professed himself to be nigh lost. He spoke as if there were really some rational chance of recovering his birthright from the justice of the parliament; and, by way of softening the prejudices which he knew that Lady Marie entertained against that assembly, he endeavoured to throw a part of the odium of the destruction of her father on those royal personages who had consented to it. The more he felt this to be the weak part of his pleadings, the more he laboured to fortify it with arguments which could not fail to be in the extremest manner offensive to the sensibility and pride of the king. The whole concluded with the passionate request, which had been urged repeatedly throughout the epistle, to be allowed to see her

once again, were it but for a moment, to be assured that she forgave the presumption of his passion in consideration of its despair.

Concluding instantly that Marie had given this letter to the king, in her anger at the audacity of the writer, Ingulph seemed for a moment annihilated. All that was beautiful or alluring in existence suddenly disappeared from it, and he was left, as it were, in the midst of an universal blank. The hopes which he had formed—for, with all his protestations of despair, and perhaps unconsciousness that he had any, he was but a few hours before inspired by all those myriads which love extracts from glances, blushes, sighs, the ineffable freemasonry of the soul—all vanished, and he stood overwhelmed with contempt and scorn, even in his own sight.

Observing that he made no farther resistance, Huncks directed the soldiers to follow with their prisoner; and, as if to heighten his misery by contrast, as they left the gardens, the explosion of innumerable fireworks, the bursts of music, and the blaze of a distant mass of torches, announced that the court had sallied forth to share the triumphal diversions.

To Oxford Castle the prisoner was now conveyed, which, although even at that period partially in ruins, was still a place of considerable strength, especially in the keep, which remained almost entire. The king's prisoners were chiefly confined in it, and the woes of captivity were not softened by the character of the keeper Huncks, the details of whose cruelty and avarice are historical monuments of the excess to which those passions may be exercised, even on so mean a scale.

Ingulph had no reason to hope for any degree of favour from the provost, in behalf of whose wretched victims he had formerly interfered with some success. But Ingulph's thoughts were remote from any speculation of inconveniences to be endured; that first rude blow of power awoke him from his poetical admiration of its outward glories and fascinations. For the first time, the nature of the principles involved in the civil conflict rushed upon him in tangible, definite, passionate, forms; for the first time he felt the full crush of that order of things, to overthrow which such vast upheavings of the Titanic human heart now agitated the earth.

Although by no means an unusual sight to behold the provost arriving with prisoners, a great crowd attended the entry of Ingulph. The sudden revulsion of his fortune—the extravagant reports spread as to the causes—made him at once an object of curiosity and horror. Some said he had been de-

tected making love to the queen—others, that he had attempted to assassinate his brother—and not a few that he had been engaged in a conspiracy against the king, which was fortunately discovered by an intercepted letter. Hootings, yells, and even missiles, followed the halberdiers with their charge; and the provost only interfered when he found that the pelting sometimes reached himself. He then gave orders to beat the mob back, and, amidst a furious scuffle and uproar, which lasted some time after they entered the gates, they crossed a drawbridge over a moat, and reached a portcullis, which was closed, but had a wicket.

“Well, Master Dethewarre, I know not whether you have been in my keep, although you could give the council such a fine description of it,” said the provost, with a grin of great satisfaction. No reply was deigned; and, stepping over a paved courtyard, in which were a number of dragoons cleaning their horses, they reached the gate of the principal tower. Thence, passing down a passage and some steps, they reached another gate, which Huncks threw open, and welcomed his prisoner with mock ceremony. The moment the hinges turned, there arose a confused murmur, deepening into an uproar of voices yelling for water.

Ingulph essayed to look around, but the darkness visible of a smouldering pan of charcoal burning in the distance, showed objects very indistinctly. But a pestiferous odour, apparently compounded of all the most distasteful, nearly stifled him. He moved for air towards an iron grill on his right, and at the same time something soft under his foot, and a feeble moan, convinced him that he trod on some carcass still living, but in the last stage of insensibility.

Huncks was meanwhile busied in lighting a torch at the charcoal, during which the chance gleams lighted his villanous countenance with a peculiar expression of malignancy. But when he succeeded, and the pinewood lighted up the horrors of the scene, Ingulph gazed for a moment aghast.

It was a chamber, or rather dungeon, of huge dimensions, supported on short massy pillars of granite; the floor was of bare earth, and strewed with every species of filth, so as in parts to form a foul marsh. In the dark windings of the pillars were heaps of rotten straw, and from this, startled by the glimpse of light, numerous wretches raised their heads; some, whose untended wounds were festering into hideous and almost supernatural horrors; some caked in their own blood, gashed, and frightfully disfigured; and one,—distinguished by the space which even the dying had crawled away to leave

him,—bloating to a hideous mass of purple corruption by the plague.

Of this horrible company some were sleeping soundly ; some, perhaps, were dead ; some lay in a state of ghastly insensibility ; but the greater part were raving and clamouring in agonized variety of expressions. But the predominant cry was for 'water, or at least so the conscience of the provost interpreted it.

"Water! you damned roundheaded rogues!" he yelled. "'Slife, are you malcontent even with the king's allowances? Have you not as good small beer as ever was brewed, at your own prices? Water, indeed! Have we nought to do but to bring the river into your kennel? Now, my woodcock," he added, turning to Ingulph, "you see what manner of house-keeping we have here ; but if you have a mind to be civil, we can show you a sunnier side to the hedge."

"If I am brought here to be murdered among these plague-struck wretches, use your knife at once," said Ingulph.

"Why, some of these are gentlemen of good blood on both sides," said Huncks, with a sneering laugh. "But his majesty hath other fish to fry than to be looking after the food, drink, sheets, and clothing of his rebels here ; and so, I trow, will the queen and her ladies in waiting! Times are altered."

"Do thy worst," replied Ingulph.

"Nay, if you be so great, I'll find a way with you, my noble master," said the provost. "What say you to being clapped neck and heels together in irons, like yonder good gentleman in the corner?"

"But hast thou conquered me, Egyptian?" said a figure, raising its head the little that was possible in cramping irons. "Lo! ye now, I do defy and spurn at you and your king, and your nobles, and your queen, and your chains, and the devil, and all his works! I am still free-born Jack Lilburn, that will die a thousand times ere own to any tyranny but death's alone!"

"Thou art he who quarrelled with thine own shadow, for being as ill cut as thyself," said Huncks. "But come, master poet, if you are not to pig in with this gentry, you must let us see the colour of your uncle's ducats."

Ingulph glanced at him with some surprise, and then at the slough of despond around. But he replied, fiercely, "If ye are ordered to murder me thus, e'en make me bedfellow with yonder plague-struck, and get your work done."

"Men's backs are wont to come down here, but his gets higher," said Huncks, much vexed. "But I conjecture the

truth is, you have no money ; so I must lodge you at my own cost, for charity." And, grumbling bitterly at the thought, the provost led the way up a broad flight of steps, ascending in a corkscrew around a huge pillar in the centre, to the very height of the tower. Many prisoners were lying on these stairs, gasping for pure air at the cross-slits in the massive walls, which were the only inlet to that precious commodity.

They reached at length a species of gallery, at a considerable height in the building, at one end of which they found a door, which admitted into a square stone chamber, utterly bare and disfurnished, save that there was an antique bedstead, almost level with the floor, and two or three stools. But in this receptacle were crowded nearly thirty prisoners. Indeed there was scarcely room for all to sit at once ; and how they were to sleep, unless upon one another, was a problem of no easy solution.

"Here's some nice clean air up here, but not too much of it," said Huncks, looking at a narrow opening, which a single bar abundantly secured, in the thick wall. "And there's a very comfortable bed, which you shall have at a crown the night, and none of you, gentle or simple, for less."

"There is one already in it, whom you cannot disturb, Master Huncks," said one of the prisoners. "Heaven has within the hour received another saint, and earth has lost one."

"Is Minister Blage dead? Why then he has cheated the hangman," said the provost, unmovedly. "Well, you may keep him to cant over to-night—though, now I think of it, I'll have him put with the Gloucester clothier, that will not pay garnish. He is a chicken-hearted knave, for he has done nothing but moan about his children since he came."

This happy idea no sooner struck the provost, than he shouted to one of his jailers, who went past to visit another ward, jingling his keys ; and together they removed the body, leaving their new prisoner in its place, and taking great care to bar and lock the ponderous door behind them.

Physical sufferings are said to be powerful antidotes to those of the mind, and Ingulph's were of a nature to absorb any mental anguish less intense. He found himself miserably crowded in his lofty dungeon, and although his fellow prisoners were nearly all in civil garb, and seemed persons of better rank than those below, many of them were evidently labouring under the effects of wounds and diseases engendered by confinement. One or two seemed by their dress to be Presbyterian ministers, probably imprisoned for too

openly preaching against the right divine. Among these—for some reason in Huncks's stowing arrangements—was the spy who so narrowly escaped execution in the morning.

Some slight curiosity was excited by Ingulph's entrance, but it was very slight indeed, and the majority seemed to watch his first restless movements with the apathy of settled despair.

"Wherefore do you fret, wherefore do you fume?" said one, at last. "Art thou worse off than Daniel in the lion's den, or the seven children in the fiery furnace? and cannot the Lord deliver them, too, that, trust in him these latter days? Wherefore what needs chafing thy nose at the bar, like a rat in a trap?"

Notwithstanding this exhortation, and much more, for the same party fluently quoted, not only the most terrible sufferings he could remember in the Bible, but the direst legends of Fox's Martyrology, Ingulph continued his researches: but it was only to satisfy himself that he was in one of the highest chambers of the tower, overlooking great masses of the ruins of the castle, beyond which was Gloucester Green, and a wood which he knew grew along the river. Above the wood shone the fair moon, which he had so lately left lighting the splendours of the court festival.

Very shortly after, Huncks, with one of his jailers, arrived with what it seemed was the supper for the new guest, the former tenants having eaten theirs. It consisted of a lump of unsavoury bread, half a pickled herring, and a pint of very small beer indeed; for which he immediately demanded an exorbitant price. But Ingulph, with a bitter smile, referred him for payment to his kind father, Montacute; and the provost retired with many curses, and vowing vengeance.

Ingulph was in no humour to solicit conversation, and his companions showed no desire to cultivate his acquaintance, perhaps from suspicions of some sinister purpose in the incarceration of one with them who was evidently not of their order. For a while they talked together in an under-tone, which gradually increased in loudness as the argument deepened, and the continued abstraction of Ingulph made his presence be disregarded.

The discourse, like that of Milton's angels, was principally on abstruse points of divinity, but it was seasoned with many singular anecdotes of the experiences, as they were called, of the interlocutors, which, from the strong illustrations of tyranny which they afforded, soon engaged Ingulph's attention, as if involuntarily. The effect was the greater, because

he felt that no one was striving to produce any. The fervour, fanatic as it was, of these victims to religious persecution—the heroic spirit of resistance which animated them—woke answering echoes in his bosom, but like those which rocks return to music, in a purer, vaster, grander, harmony.

The gradual sinking to sleep of all the prisoners who lay on the floor, huddled together on the scanty straw, left Ingulph lost in a silent reverie, in the midst of which he started to hear the distant bell of Christchurch toll midnight. He recollected under what different circumstances he had listened to the solitary stroke on the preceding night, when busied with a task which he fondly imagined was to cover him with honour. Whither had vanished that radiant dream?—could it be himself that was now confined in a narrow feverish dungeon? The snore of his bedfellows, or rather litter-fellows, answering each other like Arcadian shepherds contending for the ivy, emphatically replied.

CHAPTER XI.

INGULPH passed a most miserable night in the unhealthy atmosphere breathed by so many; but his physical sufferings did but exasperate those of his mind. The more he considered his case, the fiercer flamed his indignation at the contumelious oppression which he believed he had suffered. He had offended against no law, in loving and avowing his love, even for one so far elevated above his hopes as the Lady Marie; and yet he was consigned to a prison for apparently no other reason.

To make any submission, even to apply for assistance to the marquis or his brother, he inwardly vowed he never would, in any extremity. The latter, he had little doubt, were now convinced of the real object of his passion, and their former dislike for him would receive no abatement from such a discovery. As to the queen, he had of course irremediably forfeited all claim to her favour, and Marie had evidently joined his enemies.

In this desertion he resolved on a course which he imagined might be of utility, and at all events expressed the dominant feeling in his soul. He determined to write to the lords of the council in Oxford, and demand his liberation as a free-born English subject, or to know of what crime he was accused. The provost usually turned his prisoners out at an

early hour, for he fed them in detachments—at least, those who could pay; the rest, but for the humanity of their companions in misfortune, might possibly have starved. The only exercise allowed to the captives in this highest division of the dungeon was to walk along the ruined bulwarks, which were so shattered and lofty that there was no danger of an escape.

Pen, ink, and paper, were the first things demanded by Ingulph; and on a solemn promise that he would not mention a word concerning him or his prison-house, Huncks consented to let him have them. Yet he did not bring them till the day and Ingulph's patience were almost spent. The grief and indignation of his reflections were then heightened almost to madness by the misery of his captivity; and he penned a petition to the council, which breathed the very essence of those feelings which had prompted the armed resistance to Charles, heightened by the glow and vehemence of a poetic imagination.

The king, he learned, had departed to the siege of Gloucester, and the provost, after hearing the petition read, consented, under promise of a handsome remuneration, to forward it to its destination. As Ingulph reserved this gratuity until he should receive some certainty that it was earned, he had considerable hope that Huncks would fulfil his contract.

And yet several days elapsed without any notice whatever being taken of his application. Ingulph had little doubt that it had gone on a tour after the king, and the thought that he had thus proclaimed his defiance somewhat comforted him. Meanwhile his sufferings in that loathsome prison, the conversation of his fellow-captives, and his own bitter thoughts and recollections, contributed to destroy whatever lingering feelings might yet attach him to the royalist cause.

But suddenly a reply to his petition, if so his manifesto might be styled, arrived. The lords had examined the petition, were disgusted with its insolent and treasonable spirit; declared the king's commands, in such a time, were to be obeyed, not canvassed; but had nevertheless humbly asked his majesty's orders on the subject. These now consigned the prisoner to solitary imprisonment, in which he was to remain until brought to a sense of duty and submission; unless he would immediately take the protestation, and acknowledge his fault.

The protestation was framed in direct contradiction to the Scottish covenant, and contained an assertion of the royal opinions in state and church, to which all were bound to give their assent, and moreover to defend to their utmost. It may

be imagined with what loathing and wrath Ingulph refused to swallow this draught, infinitely to Huncks's delight, who immediately put the sentence in operation.

Ingulph was at first not sorry that he was to have his dungeon to himself; but when hour after hour passed, and day after day, and he had exhausted the thoughts which love, despair, jealousy, and resentment could supply—solitude began to exercise its terrible influence upon him. The visions of his boyhood had now received a tangible explanation: it seemed as if in his person he had suffered the worst forms of tyranny, for even at his birth it had met him; and frequently did Stonehenge's assertion, that he was born to work its overthrow, occur to him with a strange and incessantly increasing force.

Ingulph's only distractions to these dark reveries was in gazing from his barred window upon the fair expanse which extended beyond the ruins below to the blue undulations of the Welsh hills. Contrasting the beauty and tranquillity of nature with the misery and despair of his situation, a thought, which afterwards exercised great influence on his destinies, forced itself continually upon him. All things were good as they came from the hands of God, all things became evil as they passed through the hands of man. To restore all things to their natural excellence, it was therefore only necessary to destroy whatever man had done; and to carry out this theory, which feasted at once the benevolent and evil passions of Ingulph's heart, plunged him in fathomless reveries, which nevertheless diminished the dreary sense of desertion and solitude.

His health, however, began to suffer by the anguish of his mind, as much as the confinement of his body; and these musings began to take a hue of darker gall. Projects of escape and vengeance haunted him, which were flushed into hope by the tidings which the provost, who, when he was drunk—a circumstance which frequently happened—deigned sometimes to discourse with him, communicated of the continued and sturdy resistance of Gloucester.

Engaged in some such cogitations, Ingulph was one morning surprised by an unexpected visitor, whom the provost ushered in with much state and deference. It was Sir Jeffrey Hudson, in a splendid court dress, gracefully waving his plumed hat in salute as he entered. Performing this ceremony with flourishing formality, his stout little legs got entangled with his sword; and if Ingulph had not stepped

forward and caught him by the hand, the dwarf must have carried his courtesies even to prostration.

"Why, this it is to have a friend!—I mean I am heartily glad to kiss your hand, cavalier, with reservation, that I am sorry for the time and place," said the polite dwarf, somewhat confusedly. "But in truth one's Toledo will oft play a man a shrewd turn, unless he carries it as demurely as a bear his stick. By command," he continued, waving his hand to the provost.

"No man shall speak to my prisoners in corners, knight; but I heed no man's business but my own," replied Huncks, with a degree of surly respect due to the queen's favourite.

"Nay, sir, I do but my bidding, and I care not who hears me—though if any man is advised to take offence at my English, I wear an answer on my thigh!" replied Sir Jeffrey, lustily slapping his little leg.

"What is your pleasure with me, good knight?" said Ingulph, somewhat eagerly.

"I come from the Lady Marie!" whispered the dwarf, stretching up his little figure to Ingulph's ear. "She bade me tell you that, though a woman, she perfectly apprehends you did mean her to deliver the ruby and cypress to the queen; and she sends you earnest word that now is a fitting season; and if 'tis done in some sweet, despairing, passionate sonnet, it shall do you much good in a quarter where you are utterly out of sunshine."

Ingulph looked with astonishment at the dwarf, and perceived that his countenance was full of more meaning than he trusted to his words.

"If the Lady Marie despises me, I will not give her reason," he replied, with bitterness. "I am not so poor a slave, that for the sake of the most fragile of all things, court favour,—ay, and a woman's court favour,—I should give the lie to my soul."

"There is more in this than you wot of!" exclaimed Sir Jeffrey. "We have had no peace in the court since the masque, and a woman's revenge—but *verbum sat*.—only I do indeed pity that so bright a star should drop from the heaven of the court into the vulgar mire which will extinguish it."

"By'r lady, a fair shuttlecock game at compliments!" growled the provost.

"'Tis none to me; I am more ashamed of my poetical name than glory in it!" said Ingulph, with asperity. "These are times which demand action, not thought. Sir Jeffrey,

inform my Lady Marie that, worthless though it be, the wreath is hers, and hers only, and that she may reserve it to mock my temples withal, when the traitor, as her monarch styles me, has finished his life and his love together on any field which may yet be pitched in England against tyrants and their instruments."

"He is a traitor, as deep-dyed as Lincoln green!" said Huncks, furiously. "So, master dwarf, I do advise you to shun him, lest, courtier as you are, you be tainted too."

The courteous dwarf, finding all remonstrances in vain, shortly after took his departure. But Ingulph scarcely knew what to think of the interview. Sometimes his heart beat quick with imagining that Marie had thus demonstrated some remorse for the part she had taken against him; at others, he glowed with rage at the idea that the courtiers had contrived the expedient to make him a base sacrifice to appease the queen's irritation, the effects of which he had no doubt they had all felt. The thought tickled his fancy, till he laughed aloud, though without much inward pleasure.

But now that Huncks was satisfied that his prisoner's chances of reconciliation with the court were over, he began to allow the insolence and cruelty of his nature full play. Under pretence that the prison was too crowded to admit of one captive's having a whole chamber to himself, a number of new arrivals were unceremoniously introduced. Most of these were wounded, some severely; and among them was Lilburn, just recovering from his pestilential disease.

The prisoners were nearly all fanatics, and of many varieties of opinion; but all united in the most vehement hatred against the king, his ministers, his prelates, his wife, his court, and his tyrannies. Their enthusiastic discourse fed the flame in Ingulph's breast, or rather that joined in the vast conflagration which was its kindred element, but with which he had never yet come into direct contact,—the revolutionary spirit of the age.

Some of the personages in this strangely-assorted group afterwards became of note. Among them was the inspired tinker, Bunyan, and Ludovic Muggleton, the founder of a strange sect. Amidst all his misery, both of body and mind, Ingulph felt an extreme interest in ascertaining and analysing the amazing varieties of these men's opinions, which were yet all one in the effect produced on their conduct. Ranters, who denied all moral obligations; Calvinists, who enforced far more than all, advocates of an unbounded free will in man; predestinarians who denied him any; Fifth Monarchists, who

expected the second coming of Christ momentarily; rationalists, who denied his divinity, and some even his historical existence—were here assembled by a common misfortune.

But there was balm in Gilead, for the latest prisoner added to the number brought news that the Earl of Essex, with a noble army, had marched to the relief of Gloucester.

At first this messenger of good was an object of universal favour; but it was soon found out that he had taken the protestation, and was only detained by Huncks until he could pay his fees, and he became an object of general detestation and scorn.

Perhaps for this very reason Ingulph took him into favour; and he soon discovered that the backslider was a fatalist, and had, moreover, taken it strongly into his head, that, however fair appearances might look, he was destined never to leave Oxford Castle alive. He sat, in general, lost in blank and moody silence, like a condemned man.

Nor was this notion altogether absurd, for, as they were nearly all destitute of money, the provost fed them so scantily, that it seemed to be his intention to starve them gradually to death. Sometimes he even neglected to feed them at all, and the sufferings of hunger and thirst were added to those of the poisonous and burning atmosphere of a chamber continually inhabited by so many persons. In addition to the physical anguish of this treatment, the degradation of it wrought Ingulph nearly to madness.

It happened that for one night and entire day, the provost and his myrmidons never came near the lofty dungeon in which Ingulph was confined, and it really seemed as if he had totally forgotten its inhabitants. The little air which entered at the barred aperture, though cooled by the sunset, could not dissipate the excessive heat, and, combined with an insupportable thirst, gave Ingulph a feeling of suffocation resembling the process of death.

That quality of imagination which makes the poet's joys paradisiacal, lends its vividness to heighten his miseries too. Visions of crystal waters and gushing brooks haunted his fancy, and increased his thirst to a degree of hellish torture. It even seemed that he could hear the tranquil melody of the Isis as it flowed along with a plenteous wave. At last, imagining it possible that some sentinel outside might take compassion on them, or be induced by hope of reward, he began hammering at the door, and shouting. Bunyan and Lilburn aided him in this good work, and anon the tower rung with the uproar.

It was long ere any notice was taken of this vigorous demonstration, but at last the ferocious voice of Huncks was heard on the outside, yelling amidst a torrent of oaths, to know what they meant by that disturbance.

“Water—water—water!” was the unanimous shout in reply.

“If the river flowed at the door, you should not have a drop to-night!” replied the cruel wretch, and the prisoners redoubled their uproar.

“Good night, gentlemen, wishing you a sound sleep,” said the provost, rattling his keys derisively at the door.

“Do you mean to give us nothing to drink nor eat until to-morrow?” cried Lilburn.

“Eat one another!” replied the official.

“Give me but one little measure of water, I will buy it dearer than brandy!” whispered a ghastly prisoner through the keyhole.

“That’s an old tale, friend; but you have no more money than a drone honey,” returned the provost, in an amused tone.

“I will pay for it—and a draught for myself—and a gallon for the rest, at the rate of the best wine!” said Ingulph, for the first time addressing the provost with humility, and even submission.

“Not if you would buy every drop with a pure diamond!” returned the revengeful provost; and they heard him retiring down the stairs ostentatiously jingling his spurs on the stone steps.

“By heaven, but we will be heard!” exclaimed Ingulph, gazing haggardly around; and he forced his way, heeding not over whom, to the cleft of the wall, by courtesy styled window, and, in spite of its narrowness, thrust himself almost to the bar, and shouted till the welkin rang again. Suddenly the apparition of a goat browsing somewhere below the cleft, darted out, and fled in a panic along the ruined bulwarks, until it disappeared in a shadowy part of the walls. Meanwhile the excitement was become general, and amounted to frenzy, the prisoners joining in a chorus of yells, as if the tower was on fire.

This tumult must finally have attracted notice in some quarter, for the provost took the alarm.

“Water, ye roundhead villains!” they heard him shouting up the stairs; and followed by two or three stout jailers, he flung back the bolts and rushed in, with two loaded pistols in hand.

“It is a mutiny!—and the first man that stirs is dead!” he said, levelling both his weapons at Ingulph.

“Inhuman beast, give us water!” shouted he, with reckless fury.

“So, my fine master, you lead the mutiny, as usual,” said the provost, with a moment’s fiendish hesitation. “Seize him, lads; if he resists, I’ll shoot him like a crow. And now, give me the irons, Bob,” he said, when, after a scuffle with the stout jailers, the exhausted prisoner was torn down and handcuffed.

The irons were a species of bilboes, having three rings, one for each ankle, and a third for the neck, joined by a short bar, which kept the whole body miserably cramped, head, knees, and heels, being huddled together. In this artificial paralysis was the unhappy student confined; and not satisfied with this cruelty, his mouth was gagged, and he was left powerless and incapable even of complaint.

“Bear witness, lads, it was a mutiny,” said the provost, eyeing his wrathful antagonist. “Look, even now, what tiger eyes he has!—but I will not deny the rest water, on their submission. Bring a can, or even two.”

The jailers obeyed with alacrity, for their master carried the palm of inhumanity even among the wretches he commanded. The water arrived, in horse-buckets, it is true, but the thirsty captives swallowed it down as if it were nectar; and the very splash increased Ingulph’s drought, till it seemed to consume his vitals. But, proud as an Indian at the stake, he offered no submission, but continued gazing with glaring eyes at his tormentor, and with an expression which the provost thought proper to contradict.

“No, my lad, you will never have the chance; for my lord, your father, assured me that you were so bad a young villain that, with his good will, you should never leave this castle, unless to go immediately to the plantations, if he could obtain so undeserved a favour from his majesty,” he said, with a pleasant grin.

Ingulph nodded.

Then with a loud hyena laugh, which only a jailer can give, he retired with his myrmidons; the bolts growled slowly into their sockets, as if it fed the vengeance of the operator to protract the ceremony.

CHAPTER XII.

THE captives eyed their unfortunate ringleader with much compassion, but there was no disguising the fact,—they were all refreshed and reinvigorated with their delicious draught. Lilburn, whose thoughts were all tinged with political fanaticism, began consoling him in his manner.

“Truly now, Master Dethewarre, you are the veritable image of this unhappy state under arbitrary and prelati- cal power,” he said. “Gagged, shackled, bound neck to heel, we were, and shall be for ever, if the cause in which, blessed be God, he hath permitted us to suffer, be lost, in these latter times.”

“Let us pray for our brethren ; let us pray that grace may come upon him to make these sufferings pleasant to him as a cluster of camphire,” said honest Bunyan. “Come, let us, a little congregation of the saints, join our prayers to the myriads in heaven that are now worrying the Lord with supplications in our behalf !”

This request was zealously responded to ; in fact, there was a contention who should first fulfil the Christian office ; but in turn, almost the whole party contributed their exhortations.

“For what avails to wrestle against destiny ?” said the fatalist, mournfully ; “destiny that hath thrown the arch-angels ?” and he closed his eyes with utter resignation.

“Men are full apt to impute their carnal weakness and backslidings to any but themselves !” said Bunyan, severely ; “wherefore I rejoice that although I have seen the inside of nearly all the gaols in England, I feel that resolution rather to see those of hell in the flesh than deny the light of the Lord as revealed in these latter manifestations.”

“Can one that hath been in a state of grace ever relapse then, deem you ?” said another polemic, hastening to the rescue of the abashed backslider ; “and we must all acknowledge, from the experience he has communicated, that he hath had a call, and been accepted once.”

“And who knows, brother,” said Bunyan, addressing Ingulph, “who knows but that this tribulation in which you suffer, is as it were a seasoning of the vessel in the furnace, that grace may flow in upon it, and no fear to crack the clay ? Indeed, if you knew how I was called as I sat mending an old woman’s tin pot in a field not four miles from Bedford town, and what encouragements I had then in me to under-

take the patching and welding of my own soul, and those of other men, you would know there is no darkness whereto the light of mercy cannot reach."

"We may be puffed up with the fumes of spiritual pride, which is the most damnable of all states of reprobation, into taking on us offices for which we have no other authority than our conceit," said a Presbyterian minister, a sect which, as little as the church it overthrew, approved of self-ordination.

"Whatever is done, is done because it could not be left undone," exclaimed another fanatic. "How else can it be that a man walking with the staff of Jacob, as walked this godly-professing Christian, could stumble into such a pitfall of Satan as the protestation."

"Would that I knew the worst, then,—the eternal fiery gulfs, would they had swallowed me," said the unhappy fatalist, or perhaps madman.

"There was mercy to Peter even after the cock had crowed," said Lilburn, compassionately.

"Mercy!—what mercy?—from the beginning all things were decreed; to the end all things will be fulfilled," replied the fatalist. "I do not refuse my portion, whatever it be; whither can it be fled out of the power of the king of the universe?"

This was the signal for a vehement argument, which was confined but a very short time to the first belligerents. Opinions, various as the shades of colour, but not so cheerful, were freely broached on all sides; even those who shortly before seemed sinking into the apathy of death, joined in the controversy.

"For if your doctrine of special grace be true, friend," said one of the theologians, "what is to become of that soul-comforting doctrine of Master Baxter, that each man hath in his time a sufficient portion of grace to spread out unto salvation, an' he take the pitchfork and diligently labour at the same?"

"False doctrine, false doctrine, brother," said Bunyan, authoritatively: "it is at best but a splitting and a halving of the truth."

"Nay, it is ye who do halve the truth," said a pallid, half-dead-looking being, in a wrathful voice. "Though it be true, as ye say, that all things are of necessity, ye suppress how, in the end, the sinful shall be forgiven, and received into eternal life with the elect in paradise."

"Another lure of Satan to lime souls, akin to the vision of

those who even now expect the kingdom of heaven on earth," said Lilburn.

"Yea, and with good cause, for the signs and portents are thickening as bats in the night," said an enthusiast, rising with difficulty from his straw. "The tyranny of the beast is nigh over, and the prophesying in sackcloth, and the days of the kingdom are at hand; yea, the bridegroom is coming, and woe unto the virgin that hath her lamp untrimmed."

"Nay, Venner, the time is not yet come; the 6, 6, 6, 6, where is that?" replied a lean fanatic, his whole countenance illumining. "Moreover, the Turk doth rather triumph than is confounded; and Antichrist is still enthroned at Rome, drunk with the blood of the saints."

"Of a verity the kingdom of peace is nigh, though it come with a bloody spear," replied Venner, stubbornly.

"It is thus that the children of darkness rejoice on the brink of damnation," shouted a new voice from a corner. "Ye are even all feasting and laughing as the earth on the eve of the deluge; the second destruction of fire is at hand; yet, from its hideous prodigies and forerunners, ye pretend that the saints' reign is coming. Mark ye all my words, for I am Ludovic Muggleton, one of the two last witnesses, (and John Reeves is the other,) to certify destruction to the earth and all things on it.

"If you speak of the *final* destruction of the wicked, brother, that shall not be until the day of judgment, when they shall receive eternal death, and the elect eternal life," interposed a wounded soldier. "But, speaking as you do, 'tis plain you have but dim view of the light, and do but gaze, like Moses, on the promised land at a distance."

"The wicked, who are they?" exclaimed Muggleton, disdainfully. "The elect cannot fall from grace; wickedness in them becomes goodness; do what they will, they cannot displease the Lord."

"This is sheer infidelity and Antinomian madness," exclaimed the presbyter.

"Except a man believe in it, assuredly he is damned!" retorted his opponent.

"Methinks we have a lively idea of what that word means here," said Lilburn, with a panting sigh, which was generally echoed; and a deep silence followed, broken only by the groan of some sufferer, or a gasping for air.

During all this conversation, Ingulph paid not the least attention. To heighten his torture, it had occurred to him, with all the force of conviction, that either the king or his

unnatural relatives had resolved on his death, and hoped to effect it without apparent violence by the course adopted towards him. It was impossible else to imagine that the provost would dare to treat him so mercilessly. But at the same time the apparition of the goat on the bulwarks wonderfully haunted him. There was certainly some means of ascending from the ground to the tower, and he remembered that once when sauntering pleasantly in the fields, he had noticed that the ruins of the castle hung about what remained whole, in a manner which might render an escalade by an enemy possible. The idea had only occurred to him in an idle reverie, but now it returned upon him with a glow akin to hope.

But the excessive thirst with which he was tortured soon absorbed every other thought. Fresh streams flowed through his imagination as at the lips of Tantalus. If perchance he sunk for a moment into dreamy stupor, the unbounded ocean seemed to flow around, and mocked his parched lips with its bitter waves. He dreamed of the deluge, and that he hung by a single branch over a vast lake of the freshest water, consumed by thirst, but not daring to relinquish his hold. Again, he was skating down cataracts, and striving with his outstretched tongue to snatch but one drop; and the rapid waters eluded him. Sometimes he was in the midst of a boundless desert of sand, toiling along in the dry, hot effulgence of the sun; again, he was in green fields, and a plenteous April shower poured over the landscape, in the midst of which he alone stood parched and unvisited by a single drop.

But at length the morning came, and with it Huncks, who was perhaps touched by some slight feeling of humanity, or was fearful of consequences. He ordered the bilboes to be removed, and permitted Ingulph to break his fast as usual on the coarse fare served to the other prisoners.

“Ay, ay, my lad,” he said, as he departed, “I thought we should take the bounce out of you at last; and as your friends are getting on so much better at Gloucester, be a good boy, and you shall not have it again.”

The moment he had quenched his raging thirst, Ingulph, knowing he could confide in all present, mentioned the hopes he had conceived from his observations of the goat; and amidst the strongest excitement among his fellow-captives, proceeded to examine the feasibility of his project. Crawling to the mouth of the aperture, Ingulph perceived, with a joy to which no words could do justice, that about seven feet below were the remains of a rampart, which had once gone

round the tower, and which communicated with the mass of ruin beyond. It is true the rampart overhung a great height, but the thick ivy and bushes seemed to promise some stay to the feet in dropping on it, if by any possibility the bar could be removed.

Without the idea that he should be so successful, Ingulph shook the bar, to ascertain its strength; and to his astonishment and delight observed that great pieces of the old freestone were eaten into by its rust, and were ready to yield. He communicated the joyful intelligence, and all the captives who were not insensible or too weak to stir, examined the aperture in turn.

It was resolved by nearly all to attempt the escape which Ingulph had thus devised, and it was only of the fatalist that he had any doubt. But he had no reason; for so persuaded was the poor man that he should perish in Oxford castle, that he was in the highest degree anxious to escape from it.

It was usual with Huncks to visit his prisoners before locking them up for the night, and it was determined to wait until this undesired visitation should be over, before they commenced putting their hazardous project in execution. Ingulph had now taken the position which, in danger, men never fail to yield to natural superiority, and only Lilburn seemed inclined to dispute it at times.

At the usual hour Huncks arrived, with his satellites, and bearing a tankard of wine, which it seemed he intended for Ingulph; a liberality only to be accounted for by the circumstance that he was nearly drunk.

“Come, my master,” said the provost, good-humouredly, “let us be friends again, and I will tell you some good news. I am to convey you to-morrow to Bristol, where you are to embark on some commission for his majesty in Virginia, with the more hurry that we hear old Essex has raised the siege of Gloucester, foul befall him, and our luck has taken a turn.”

This latter intelligence was so generally interesting that the volley of questions which assailed him put the provost on his guard.

“Lie down, dogs!” he exclaimed, “and take ye no hopes from the matter, for his majesty and noble Prince Rupert have only suffered you to reach Gloucester, that they may take a good gripe and finish the war at a throw. But you were right about your father’s liberality, Master Gulph; for methinks this purse will pay our travelling expenses.”

He produced a purse so amply lined, that Ingulph could

not but acknowledge the truth of the observation, and he replied, laughingly, and of course without the least idea of success in his request—"Why, then, you should leave it under my care till we meet again, for 'tis as much as a man can do to take care of himself when his head is not so full of wine as to be steady."

"You speak truly, and are an honest fellow; so take it, for I am sure enough to find thee here in the morning," said the tipsy provost, in a fit of generosity, and he actually handed over his purse to Ingulph. The latter could not forbear laughing, in which, when the provost joined, supposing it was at his own jocular trait, the prisoners chorussed with unwonted hilarity. Ingulph then quaffed at the wine, drinking the provost's health, who in return bottomed the goblet. This finished him off, and it was with difficulty that the jailers bore him away in their arms, singing and roaring out discordant staves of the insulting royalist air, *Lullibolero*.

The moment he was gone, Lilburn proposed that lots should be cast to ascertain who should first attempt the hazardous descent; but Ingulph readily took the office on himself. Lilburn was immediately discontented at the offer, and declared that it should go only by lot; but the fatalist objected as strongly to this measure, as if he thought it would inevitably fall upon him. The dispute began to grow warm, for Lilburn would only consent to what he himself proposed, and would neither himself lead, nor suffer Ingulph. To finish the entanglement, one of the ministers proposed that they should seek the will of the Lord on the matter in prayer.

"We must then seek it jumping, and the noise will summon the Philistines," said one poor wretch, whose head was severely wounded with a pole-axe.

"Jumping! assuredly you mean dancing, as David, the son of Jesse, that acceptable man," said another, vehemently.

"Jumping is a mad and ridiculous excess; shaking alone is efficacious," said a third. "Have any of you your bibles, that I may show you the passage, for mine was shamelessly taken from me at Cirencester fight?"

Almost every man present produced the sacred volume, from some portion of his habiliments.

"Ye are surely all mad," said Ingulph, half frantic with their folly. "Well may the Romish theologians twit ye with their saying that truth is one, and error infinite, for we talk as if at the building of Babel. But settle the matter at your leisure when I am gone."

He pushed his way resolutely to the aperture, and the

theologians, perceiving their folly, quietly submitted. Applying all the strength of desperation to the bar, Ingulph yet experienced great resistance in forcing it out, during which the anxiety of all was intense. But at length he wrenched it out with such violence that a huge stone detached itself from the tower, bounded from the rampart below, and fell with a crashing sound to a great depth on one side.

Ingulph listened for a few moments in mortal terror, lest the noise should have attracted observation. It was a bright starlight, but luckily the moon was clouded, and the ruins below gleamed silent and deserted as death. How they ended, whether breaking off suddenly, or descending to the ground by the bastions, it was impossible to discern through the thick foliage which intervened. But at a considerable space beyond were the grim remains of a tower, corresponding to that in which they were captives, which consisted only of a lofty broken wall, covered with ivy to the battlements.

It was, however, very doubtful whether the parapet below would furnish firm footing, or only a treacherous crust. It was not, therefore, without a deadly throb of the heart that Ingulph laid himself flat, and with feet foremost, began to push himself out into the air. But Lilburn's goodnature had returned, and he crawled after him to hold one of his hands in the descent, in order to keep him up in case he found no footing. This aid was almost as doubtful and fearful as the peril, but it was better than utter abandonment to chance.

Ingulph made no hesitation. He dropped himself at once on the projection,—a dizzy moment passed, and he found that he was safe on a ledge, scarcely two feet wide, over a depth, which in the darkness seemed fathomless. Lilburn hung over him in an agony of expectation, but never abandoned his grasp.

“All is well so far,” said the gallant student, in a whisper. “But wait till I ascertain if there be any means of descending from this crow's gangway.”

Creeping close to the wall, which seemed to repulse him with its granite sides, the shelf, for it was little more, gradually widened, until at last the explorer reached a broad piece of ruined wall, overgrown with chickweed, and such slender saplings as usually shoot in the interstices of ruins.

Ingulph waved his hand in triumph, and Lilburn, taking the signal, immediately followed. The fatalist came next, The latter was deadly pale, but a kind of mad joy lighted his eye as he came up to Ingulph. “Now am I safe, safe from this accursed castle, where I deemed I must needs perish.”

“Whistle when you are out of the wood, master,” said Lilburn, looking dismally around.

In truth there was as yet no great cause for exultation. On all sides were they surrounded by an unknown depth, standing on the summit of a decayed wall, and between them and the bulwark which they had once imagined so near, yawned so wide a chasm, that an oak grew in it, strangely distorted and twisted, having its root apparently in the ruins.

It had been agreed that each man was to shift for himself on leaving the tower, but nearly a dozen had now gathered, who seemed to look to Ingulph as to their leader.

Fearful that such a number must soon attract notice, even in that desolate place, Ingulph lost not a moment. He discerned faintly in the moonlight, that the wall on which they stood, though broken inwards to a great depth, projected over some fragments at scarcely eight or nine feet below. These seemed to be the remains of an arched window, and were narrow, and slippery with moss; but an elderberry grew out of it, and offered some stay. There was no longer time to hesitate, and grasping at ivy and twigs, which tore away with his weight, Ingulph scrambled down. Finding the footing very slippery, he admonished those who were to follow, of the circumstance, and seizing at a slender branch of the oak, swung himself to a stronger one below, at the imminent hazard of life.

The fatalist followed, trembling excessively; and unluckily it happened that his movement startled an owl in one of the ivy tufts. It flew out with an eldritch scream, and the fatalist, who was scrambling down, probably mistaking it for some sentinel leaping out, missed his foot, and fell. Ingulph beheld him make one wild clutch in the open air, and then he disappeared. A breathless moment, and the heavy dash of his body as it struck the earth, announced the direful catastrophe. No voice, no cry, no groan—utter silence.

All listened for some moments with a horror which stopped the beating of their hearts, but again the instinct of self-preservation resumed its mighty sway. Ingulph dropped himself cautiously down from branch to branch of the oak, and found himself on the summit of the much-desired bulwark. It descended by an easy slope to the open fields. He paused and looked back to see what had become of his associates, and at the moment, the moon breaking from behind some clouds, he saw, with a sickness of heart not to be described, the body of the unfortunate fatalist. It was lying on its face among the long rank grass, the hat at a little distance, the hands ex-

tended, and—whether it was imaginary, or not, Ingulph thought he discerned a crimson splash all around.

By this time, Lilburn and several of the fugitives had joined him, and Ingulph undertook to be their guide across the fields to the river. The alarm might soon be raised, and their own chance of escape from out the walls of Oxford lay in keeping the start of any. Ingulph was too well known to hope to escape from the city, and he generously resolved to separate from his companions as soon as he had guided them to a spot whence they could take their own way. Accordingly he led them to a path whence they might unobservedly enter the town, while he himself hastened on with the very doubtful hope of eluding the vigilance of the sentinels at a remote part of the fortifications, which bordered on the river Isis.

The wall in this direction had long been decayed and ruinous; but its great height, and expectation of the speedy termination of the war, had delayed the repairs intended to complete the defences. Ingulph knew this circumstance, and he also knew that the walls were usually strongly guarded. But for once, chance played him a kind turn; they were just changing the guard, and amidst the darkness and confusion, he managed to steal unobserved over the mounds of stone which remained of the ancient wall. He then swam the river, and it may be imagined if he let the grass grow under his feet in his flight from the power of his insolent enemies.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE dawn found Ingulph still journeying on, keeping the line of the Gloucester road, but seldom venturing on it; until at last he became so exhausted that he found it absolutely necessary to rest for a time. He dived into the recesses of a wood, until he came to a spot which he imagined suitable to his purpose, and flung himself down on the thick mossy turf which time had gathered beneath the ancient trees. The dewy glisten of the green foliage over his head, the bright blue sky, the clear air, the song of numerous birds, with the unutterable joy of liberty in his bosom, contributed to make this moment delightful beyond expression. He fell asleep most truly lapped in Elysium.

When he awoke, the day was far advanced, and he raised himself, refreshed and invigorated, from his woodland couch. But happening to glance up at an ancient oak, the trunk of

which was hollow at some little height from the ground, Ingulph was astonished to perceive a youth, of a mild and pleasing physiognomy, seated in it, and apparently engaged in reading. He was attired plainly, but neatly, in gray linsey-woolsey, and was of some mechanic trade, to judge by its cut.

So profound was the abstraction in which this singular student was buried, that although Ingulph must have made some noise, he seemed unconscious of his presence. After a pause of surprise, the latter deemed it expedient to make the fact known.

“You seem to me to be a bird of that kind so favoured by Minerva,” he began; but although the stranger raised his eyes, he seemed scarcely disturbed. “May I trouble to know whether you are other than an enormous specimen of the owl?”

“I am a seeker of the truth, and in simplicity,” replied the youth, placidly; “and I seek it in the only book where it is to be found. My name is George Fox; and who, friend, art thou?”

“I knew not we were such old acquaintances as to thee-and-thou,” said Ingulph, much vexed at having stumbled, as he imagined, on a fanatic itinerant.

“All men are men,—the best is no better, the worst is no worse,” replied the man in the oak. “Wert thou Charles Stuart himself, I will speak with no other respects; why should my sheaf bow down to thine?”

“I have not asked it to do so,” replied Ingulph, somewhat struck with this republican doctrine. “But if you strip a man so bare, what need of a name at all?”

“As a handle to the pipkin, merely,” replied Fox, with perfect placidity. “But art thou not hungry, for I have watched thee sleeping here nearly the whole day?”

“It matters little if I am, for any hope I have of satisfying mine hunger, replied Ingulph, pettishly.

“Here is my wallet at thy service, and a fair stream runs at hand, whose waters are clear as trout’s eyes,” said he of the oak, quietly extending a leather bag to Ingulph, who eagerly opened it, and found some eggs boiled very hard, and a loaf of coarse bread.

“Thou art no longer an owl, but a raven to feed me in the wilderness,” he said, joyfully setting to his simple repast.

“And while thou refreshest thy carnal man, will it irk thee to refresh the spiritual man also with a portion of Scripture?” said the hospitable stranger.

There was a simplicity and earnestness in the young man’s

manner which conciliated Ingulph's kindness, and he replied with a smile, "Read on—I am at your mercy." And he was taken on the word instantly.

It was a singular scene. The stranger read in a mild and equable tone, still perched in his leafy cell, without seeming aware of anything ridiculous in the matter. Meanwhile Ingulph ate and wondered, and the birds chirruped among the trees, and a near brook murmured, all as it were in accompaniment to the gentle voice of the enthusiast.

Ingulph felt interested in his new companion, and when at length he ceased reading, rather from fear of tiring his listener than himself, he entered into conversation with him. The stranger told his story with perfect simplicity, and in the outline it was similar to many others in that age of religious fervour. He was by trade a shoemaker, who, thus early, had received a call to preach the reformation of manners and religion.

But there was something peculiar in the enthusiast's notions which struck Ingulph with surprise, not unmingled with respect. Deism and republicanism seemed main ideas in the vision, although the dreamer dreamed not so; but there was such a calm, milky serenity, such a rest from passion and perturbation, in the peaceful brotherhood to which this reformer meant to bring mankind, that it seemed to lay a cool balm on Ingulph's fevered soul.

"Make the universe colourless, too, that your passionless man may enjoy his soul in peace, and I will be of your followers," he said. "But at present I fear I shall shock your equanimity when I tell you, that I am on my way to become one of the warlike earl of Essex's."

"Thou seemest, indeed, to be a runaway scholar, but I should have deemed rather to the king than to the parliament," replied Fox. "Else, wherefore art thou wending to Gloucester, when 'tis well known the earl and his army are on their way home again from that relieved town, and were passing all last night on the skirts of this very wood, where I find thee asleep in the morn?"

"Are you assured of this?" exclaimed Ingulph, infinitely vexed.

"Forasmuch as I was among them, exhorting them to peace and loving-kindness, and am now waiting their pursuers' coming up, that I may do the like to them," replied Fox, with perfect simplicity.

"It shall be better for thee to travel out of their way with

me, and rejoin the parliament's array, for the movement of so great a body must needs be slow," replied Ingulph, rising abruptly.

"Verily, I will, for the spirit inwardly moves me to take thine offer: not that I quail to face the armed men, but so it stirs me," said the young reformer; and dismounting from his tree, he tranquilly collected some fragments which remained of the repast in his wallet, slung it over his shoulder with a stick, and turned to Ingulph with the brief observation, "I am ready."

Accordingly they set forward, and Ingulph soon found reason to congratulate himself on having secured such a guide, for his habits of itineracy seemed to have made him familiar with every nook and corner of the country they traversed. They met with few traces of an army's progress, for they shunned the high roads as much as possible; but even the rear of Essex's host kept beyond their reach, the march being exceedingly rapid. Ingulph was glad of this, for on the fate of this army depended that of the parliament; were it destroyed, no force remained to prevent the king from rushing on London itself, the heart and head of the war.

In other respects Fox was a pleasant companion, for despite the singularity and fixedness of his opinions, he had neither the violence nor dogmatism which characterized most of the sectaries of the period. At the same time, his republican notions chimed in with the vision which passion and patriotism had inspired in Ingulph's heart.

About noonday of the second after their meeting, it was so intensely hot, that Ingulph proposed they should rest, and eat the simple food they carried with them in the wallet. Fox assented, and they sat down in a field of green corn, under a hedge, from which some lofty trees impended, and spread a verdant shelter above.

When they had finished their repast, Fox, according to his custom, knelt and prayed for some time aloud, while Ingulph basked in the pleasant warmth; he then gave out the first words of a hymn, which he had himself composed, without troubling himself whether Ingulph joined in or not, and began to sing, and truth to say, in a very sweet voice. The words were extremely simple, but the human voice attuned is always affecting; and remembering his sufferings, and all he had lost, Ingulph's eyes moistened with tears.

But the harmony soon summoned a larger audience than

was desired or intended. A crashing noise was heard in the hedge above, and, on a sudden, several troopers appeared, levelling their carbines, and ordering them to stand.

As they had no power to resist, and moreover concluded that the soldiers belonged to Essex's army, Ingulph and his companion obeyed in silence. They were immediately surrounded, and with a chill of heart Ingulph perceived, by their badges and oaths, that they were royalist soldiers. With some vague hope that he might escape recognition, he made no remonstrance, which was besides useless, for they only answered Fox's steady "What harm have we done, friends?" with a shout of laughter.

"Bring the pure ones along by the ears, if they have any left," said one who seemed to be a leader. "'Slife, do they turn the very woods into conventicles?"

The prisoners were dragged, or rather driven, in a most contumelious manner, through the windings of a wood, and the shrill neighing of horses announced their approach to an encampment. But it was not without great surprise that, emerging on the slopes of a wavy succession of hills, Ingulph perceived a numerous body of cavalry occupying them. Below stretched a wide extent of pasture and marsh-land; but although the troops seemed in immediate expectation of an enemy, only a few crows were visible hopping about in the plain.

"Ho, what, rogues of the religion?" exclaimed a cavalier, who seemed to be the commander of this force, in a slightly foreign accent, and dashing back his long black hair from his fiery eyes, he took a survey of the prisoners.

It was not without a throb of the heart that Ingulph recognised the Count Palatine Rupert, whom he had seen several times in the court, but the prince gave no sign of recognition.

"Well, sirrah lamb-face, whence are you, and whither go you?" he said to Fox, after a quick, impatient glance at the prisoners.

"From dust to dust," replied the reformer, with supreme calmness.

"*En route* the gallows," said the prince, with a short fierce laugh. "By the eleven thousand virgins of Cologne, I am in as many minds whether to have thee hanged for that answer or not."

"Even as it pleases the Lord," replied Fox, calmly. "But for the eleven thousand virgins, it is a popish-invented miracle story, utterly false, and ——"

"Impossible, the heretic will say just now," interrupted a

dashing young French noble, whose resplendent armour and trappings were all bedizened with ladies' favours. "Were it but for that pagan disbelief, monseigneur, he deserves to dance the capriole."

"Even as the Lord wills," again said Fox.

"Even as I will, thou canting rascallion, in this camp, at all events," exclaimed the prince.

"No, not so much as one blade of grass shall be trodden under thy horse's feet as thou wilt, foreign man," returned Fox, with the same wonderfully unmoved tone. The prince looked incensed, and would probably have made some outburst, when the French cavalier observed, "Perchance this Monsieur Abbé, as I take him to be from his robes, may give us some information," he said, indicating Ingulph, with a graceful wave of his sword.

"'Tis a scholar of Oxford, and surely one I have seen ere now," said the prince.

"Truly, my lord count; but I have stolen from my books to see the wars," replied Ingulph, very speciously.

"Friend, even in a lawful cause it is not lawful," began Fox, when he was fortunately interrupted by the heady prince.

"This rogue would make Job blaspheme," he exclaimed. "Soh, master student, saw you aught of the rebels' march—heard you aught?"

"Your highness must needs know more than we, having the start of us," said Ingulph.

"Zounds, man, do you come by way of Gloucester, then? Methought you were from Oxford, and should be able to tell us when the king may be expected here," exclaimed the impatient general. "*Parbleu*, speak out, or you shall both of you taste the discipline of the horse-ropes to some purpose."

"Sir, by your leave, the laws of England," began Ingulph, flushed with indignation, when, as if fearful to be cheated out of his martyrdom, Fox plucked him by the sleeve. "Nay, friend," he said, "let us suffer all things, not only with submission, but with satisfaction, to the glory of His name."

"The laws of England! I trust the day is at hand when there shall be none but the king's good pleasure, as verily there shall not be now in this camp, but mine," said Rupert, fiercely. "What, dost thou think that paltry gown shall protect this insolence? What business hast thou with a fanatic preacher if thou art the king's friend? By heaven, I'll see thee whipped ere I dine, with mine own eyes, for a truant school-boy."

“By heaven, you shall not, sir prince, while I have life to resist!” returned Ingulph.

“Are you of gentle blood? for I will not disgrace that,” replied Rupert, smiling grimly. “What is thy name?”

Though certain that the discovery would result in his recapture, Ingulph did not hesitate. “My name is Dethewarre,” he replied.

“What, the insolent rogue that insulted the queen’s majesty! how art thou out of the cage?” said Rupert, puckering his fierce brows. “Why, thou art fitter to hang on the rope’s end, than to feel it. And I scarce think my Lord Montacute would die of grief at the news. ’Tis plain thou art on the way to join the rebels, and if I live to see sunrise, I will see if thou canst not be adjudged as one; and let me tell thee to thy comfort, we have the start of thy friends; for as fast as they travel,—and by my father’s beard, yonder, I think, they are coming.”

He pointed with his staff to a distant part of the plain below, but it was some instants ere Ingulph discerned some faint glimmering of banners and spears, which seemed scarcely above the level of the grass.

“His majesty cannot be far behind, so we must keep them at play till he comes,” said the prince, joyously.

“Were it not fitting to call a council, sir?” inquired an elderly officer.

“Council, what council, when the enemy is before us?” returned the fiery leader. “Sound trumpets, and every man to the saddle!”

“Now will I give two charges; one for the love of the queen of England against her rebels, and another for the honour of nobility on this base and upstart mob,” said the French cavalier, making his horse give a showy curvet.

“Send some to meet the king’s van, and bid them hasten; though it needs not, for Lord De la Pole commands it,” said Rupert. “You, sirs, consider yourselves as prisoners, and if they offer to stir, some of you knock them on the head.”

With this considerate instruction, the prince spurred his mettled charger, and dashed forward, followed by his staff. The trumpets sounded on all sides, and in a few minutes the valleys below were all animate with sparkling rushes of cavalry.

A small body of dragoons remained to guard the heights, who kept an eye on the prisoners, but suffered them to sit together on a culverin, and watch the event.

Ingulph was now aware that although the Londoners, by a

skilful movement, had got the start of their enemies, the latter had regained it by a still more surprising rapidity. It was, therefore, with an anxiety which absorbed his whole being, that he continued the ineffectual spectator of a contest on which was staked—it is not too much to say—the fate of the world.

CHAPTER XIV.

It was drawing towards sunset, and a purple haze thickened over the moors; but the array and march of the parliament army was now distinctly visible, stretching for several miles in long succession of horse, infantry, banners, spears, lumbering artillery, wagons, and all the paraphernalia of a great army.

Ingulph conjectured their number to be about twenty thousand; but of these he knew that the foot was chiefly formed of the London trained bands, men just drawn from their shops, and who had never seen the front of battle. The contempt in which these troops were held in Oxford, the ridicule which the bare mention of them excited, had sunk into his mind; and he hoped scarcely even resistance to the valour of Rupert and his cavaliers. The best chance of salvation for the host, he thought, was that the approach of night might prevent the prince's attack.

But this hope decreased, for the plain gradually presented masses of horsemen, the officers dashing about in every direction to collect and form the troops for an attack. Meanwhile, the moon rose in the still sunny sky, as if to promise a continuance of light to the cavaliers; and as yet it seemed as if the Londoners were not aware of the vicinity of an enemy. Their long line of march now wholly appeared, crawling over the plain like a huge glittering dragon.

Suddenly it seemed as if the Londoners discerned their enemies; the vast mass certainly halted; and doubtless the sight of Rupert's array was as unexpected to them as if the clouds had opened with a phantom host. But again the vast body resumed its progress, at the same slow imperturbable creep.

Whether their rapidity had disordered the cavaliers, or the difficulties of the ground were greater than appeared from an elevation, Ingulph knew not, but it was long before the dropping rattle of musketry announced the nearness of the hostile parties. Smoke and the mists of evening speedily enveloped

the scene of action ; but still the parliament army held on its way, for its shining head gleamed out at more distant points against the dark orange line of sunset.

But though the main body held on, it kept throwing out parties of horse, and scattered combats took place along the whole line ; and the night closed in, as it seemed to Ingulph, suddenly, so absorbed were all his faculties. The blaze of musketry now demonstrated that the army continued its course, for it shone on the verge of the plain. The opinion was confirmed by orders which arrived for the reserve to march with the utmost speed to join the prince at Newbury, into which he had thrown himself, and before which he had compelled Essex to halt to rally his rear, which was much shaken. The main body was compact and unbroken, owing chiefly to the obstinate resolution of the despised London militia.

Ingulph was now separated from his friend, the reformer, fastened by one hand to a dragoon's stirrup, and dragged at a rapid horse-pace down the hill to Auburn Chase. They reached the scene of action, as was evident from the number of scattered dead bodies of horse and man, broken pikes, and one or two plundered wagons. Ingulph's capturer immediately dismounted, and busily sought about for any relics of plunder, searching such carcasses as he imagined were yet unransacked.

From this inattention, the prisoner began to entertain some faint hopes of escape ; and it was for that reason he pointed out to the dragoon a gleam like that of armour in a bed of tall bulrushes in the moor, which might from its situation have escaped plunder. The dragoon instantly hastened to it, but on their arrival, another plunderer appeared to have the start of them. With a thrill of horror Ingulph immediately recognised in the carcass the gay and glittering French marquis, whom a few hours before he had seen in the flush and pride of chivalrous daring. But he had little time to moralize, for the moment the plunderer heard steps, he looked up, and with quick decision drew a pistol, shot the dragoon dead, and almost in the same breath rushed upon Ingulph with a pike.

"I yield—I am already a prisoner!" exclaimed Ingulph, and but just in time to save his life.

"Now may I never bite bread again, if this is not Master Dethewarre!" exclaimed the plunderer.

"Joyce!" returned Ingulph, with great delight ; and it proved indeed to be the stout apprentice. But their greetings

were brief, for Joyce had not apprehended the enemy to be so near, and proposed that his young master should mount the dragoon's horse, and retire to the camp before Newbury. This was readily assented to by Ingulph, who was spent with fatigue; but Joyce took care to finish ransacking the deceased Frenchman before he would depart.

Narrations were soon exchanged, and Ingulph heard Joyce's account of the loss of the precious letter with a feeling of great satisfaction, as it convinced him that Marie had not been the cause of his misfortunes. It appeared that on learning his capture, Joyce had immediately, and very prudently, decamped from Oxford, and luckily fell in with Essex's army on its march. Several of the fugitives who had escaped with Ingulph had already spread his renown in that army. Stonehenge was in London, to stir the parliament in his nephew's behalf: but a citizen who had married a sister of Ingulph's mother, was with the London auxiliars, and would give him a hearty welcome.

Communicating these news, Joyce led the way over moor and marsh, frequently out-walking the horse, until they reached a spot whence a long glare of light showed the position of the camp, or rather bivouac, of Essex's army. Wide gaps in a hedge which they approached revealed the spectacle.

It was a wild and broken heath, having to the left the woods and towers of Donnington Castle, to the right a little river winding through an expanse of dreary black marsh. In front was the town of Newbury, distant about two miles; and all the surrounding country seemed covered with the parliament army, whose position was delineated, as if on a blazing map, by innumerable fires.

The quarters of the city troops were easily ascertained, as well by their neat order, as by the red, blue, and orange banners which marked their divisions. It was chosen with discretion, on a heathy declivity, sheltered by Donnington Wood, but out of range of the red-hot bullets with which the castle endeavoured to disturb their tranquillity, and which shone in the air like a shower of crimson marbles.

Ingulph's uncle, John Bulstocke, was captain of the orange division, a rank to which he had arrived in quiet course of seniority. His *locale* was easily ascertained by the armourers' arms, of which company he was a member, somewhat vain-gloriously displayed on a flag in the midst of his encampment.

Joyce pointed out the civic leader as they approached, who

was sitting among his officers and soldiers, rather *en père de famille*, than with the state and privacy of a commander. In fact, but for the distinctions acquired by seniority, this truly civic force might be considered as all equals, the officers being like the privates, substantial citizens. Some thousand apprentices swelled the ranks, who had volunteered into them with as hearty good will and courage as if it were merely to one of their own riotous games of cricket or foot-ball. Even these youths looked on their officers in the more habitual light of masters; and while the greatest respect was paid to their orders, there was a household familiarity and kindness in their intercourse, far different to that of soldiers and commanders.

The citizens displayed their usual skill in purveyance. Half a tree blazed in one vast fire near old Bulstocke, over which was a cauldron, ingeniously suspended on cross pikes. To judge from the savoury steam, this vast pot contained something better than witches' broth. The chieftain himself was busily engaged in superintending the cookery, with a long iron ladle in his hand. He was a burly man of a low stature, somewhere past fifty, with a goodly paunch, and a jolly, fat, humorous visage, garnished with thick gray hair and beard. He wore a breastplate, but the rest of his person was only defended by stout buff leather, the ties and laces of which were all loose, to give his overflowing plumpness ease.

"Thou wilt find it in my wagon, John," he was saying to one of his satellites. "You may put it all in, for we will fare to-night like brothers; Lord knows it may be our last! And there is a keg of brandy,—knock it in the head, and let us all have a sup of something to keep our hearts out of our boots. What, Joyce, where hast been, lad?" he concluded, as Joyce stepped forward in advance of his companion.

"Lo, I have been on the highways, bidding the stranger in to our feast," said the apprentice. "Look ye, master, did you ever see your nephew before?"

"No, nor behind," replied the citizen, stirring the savoury viands, without much noticing what his attendant said; but Joyce jogged him emphatically, and whispered—"Tis Master Dethewarre, safe and sound—escaped from the enemy."

Bulstocke looked up in amazement, abruptly tightened his belt, wiped his greasy hands on his breastplate, and bade Ingulph welcome with a strange degree of flutter and embarrassment. But the natural kindness and jollity of his disposition soon got the better of what was perhaps a momentary feeling of shame. Observing how pale the traveller looked,

he drew a truss of hay to the fire, seated him, and fell to warming a leaden beaker of excellent canaries.

It may be imagined with what a blessedness of rest Ingulph threw himself on the offered accommodation; and he swallowed the sack with a satisfaction which obviously pleased the citizen.

“Ay, ’tis good warming stuff for the heart; we thought we should want something on the journey; for though I am no feather-bed soldier, yet it’s my first turn in the open fields,” said Bulstocke, with great dignity. “But come, we’ll all drink the young gentleman’s health, though it be in our last keg. Bring it all out, Thomas; mayhap, we may never need it; and ’tis no profit to leave it for the cavaliers; and if we do live to lack it, the devil looks after his own, and why not heaven?”

Flagons of the rich wine, which the wealthy and generous citizen had provided for his own campaigning, were soon in circulation from hand to hand, and the company became rapidly sociable. Bulstocke, indeed, continued to treat his newly-found relative with a somewhat superfluous respect, as if he were of a higher rank than himself. But in listening to the details of his escape, which he was now obliged to give, his exclamations of wonder and delight never ceased. Yet he did not for an instant neglect the important duty he had taken on himself, of superintending the cookery.

“Ay, truly, ’tis a fair tale; but I never thought you would remain long in prison after Master Stonehenge heard of the matter,” said Bulstocke, with mysterious solemnity.

“Why, what could he do in the matter?” returned Ingulph, much surprised.

“Hush! who knows—he may be within hearing,” said Bulstocke, with a glance of great alarm towards the morass on their right, which was now silvered over by a pale moon.

“Do you mean to say he is with the army?” said Ingulph.

“He!—Oh, no, he is in London—I believe,” replied Bulstocke, with marked hesitation. “But sometimes he is for weeks no one knows where; yet truly, that is his business and no other man’s, so we will have done with that; but since you have so but lately escaped from the cavaliers, what do they say now to the London chandlers? Marry, and who but they stood this day’s brunt?”

“Truly, uncle Bulstocke, you fought like men with ropes round your necks,” said Ingulph.

“Nay, for that, I know not,” said the citizen, somewhat aghast at this compliment. “’Tis no treason to obey the law-

ful authority of Parliament, and to deliver his majesty's person from evil councillors and Irish massacring papists."

"The success will determine of that," replied Ingulph, who wished to promote the desperate feeling in his associates.

"But yonder is the royal banner displayed against us."

"Ay, but for that matter, we have the lion and unicorn with us too, though they are but heathen animals," said Bulstocke, cheerily. "Moreover, Parliament can do anything, since it has turned Christmas feast into a fast."

"If we lose the battle, we have lost the law," said Ingulph, with a smile.

"Well, I did ever think that blazing star which appeared at the beginning of this year boded no good to me nor mine," said Bulstocke, dismally. "But when I consulted with Lilly on it, he told me it foreboded only the displacement of kings and folks of high degree, so I thought no more about it,—yet truly I have been lord mayor of London!"

"But we will *not* lose the battle!" returned Ingulph with an energy and fire which so delighted the apprentices that they gave an unanimous cheer.

"By the Lord Harry, and they shall not win it if I can prevent them," said Bulstocke, with answering vehemence. "Why, though I am not so deeply studied in the art military as some, the king shall never have it to say that he saw a white feather in my wing, as I call the lads here. And if it be true what old Skippon authentically reports he heard Walstein himself say, that the art of war is chiefly not to run away—by this hand, the cavaliers shall look for a month ere they see John Bulstocke's back!"

This magnanimous sentiment, naïvely expressed, with an additional syllable which we have not ventured to insert, excited a murmur of applause, for nothing could exceed the wrath of the citizens at the contempt in which they were held by the courtiers, and the age was, truth to say, not only free, but gross of speech.

By this time the cauldron bubbled, and Bulstocke's attentions were now directed to his cookery. "If Betsy were here now, she would put in some little matter of walnut-ketchup, or may be a garnish of broiled mushroom, whereof there are an abundance about, all wasting for want of some one to use them," he murmured regretfully; "but 'tis too late to think of it now; only wait, Master Dethewarre, till we are in London, and she shall make us one of her messes which make one's mouth water to think of it,—though, to be sure, we may be all dead and gone before that comes to pass."

The banquet was now served, and in a short time as much jollity and good-fellowship reigned on the desolate moor as if it had been in some snug citizen's parlour. There was a heartiness and humour in all Bulstocke's doings which sometimes made him laughable, but never contemptible; and Ingulph, who was anxious to win the favour of his company, exerted himself to enhance the general mirth, and indifference to the dangers of the coming day. He succeeded admirably, and the time passed in great joviality until the wine was exhausted, and the whole camp became hushed in slumber.

Ingulph and his uncle, or rather the latter, slept on a pile of hay near the fire. But weary and worn as the student was, some time elapsed ere he could close his eyes. The novelty of his situation, lying beneath the starry heavens, in the midst of a great host of breathing men, who in a few short hours must many of them sleep for ever, had doubtless much to do with this restlessness; but it was chiefly the tumult of those many streams of thought which met and raged distractedly in his mind, and which the circumstances of his past life will abundantly suggest to the reader.

CHAPTER XV.

NEWBURY FIGHT.

THE dawn of the eventful day was unaccompanied by any prodigy; the sun shone out as brightly unconcerned as if it were merely to overlook a sheep-shearing. When Ingulph woke, he found Bulstocke wringing the dew from his hair and beard, while Joyce was tapping a cask of beer; and a great string of black puddings broiled and sputtered on the glowing embers, for breakfast.

"We must make dispatch at our meal," was his first observation to Ingulph; "for we have the lord general's orders to be in battle array within the hour. These are choice puddings, and my wife Betsy made them; poor soul, you should have seen how she blubbered when I told her I might be dead and gone or ever I needed them. But your aunt Grizzle! Lord love us, she was as stout as any Spartan Turk of them all, and as good as told me never to come back again, if I did not come covered with glory, like a Christmas pig with holly! 'Sheart, what should a plain man do with

glory, if he had it? Only I must not complain, for I make all the armour we have on us, back and front, pikes and all."

"Ah, Master Bulstocke, Master Bulstocke! ever at thy feasts and fryings?" said a stout soldierlike man who had come up during the harangue; "were it not fitter to keep this morn in fasting and humiliation?"

"Fast yourself, an' you think it good to fight on an empty stomach, Master Skippon," replied the citizen. "King Arthur and his knights were the best that I have ever heard of, and they did none of their worthy deeds but on full meat."

"A farrago of ungodly lies, jests, adulteries, murders, treasons, and other diabolical deeds, which 'tis a shame to hear a Christian man man quote," replied the officer. "And, moreover, a lie from beginning to end."

"A lie! the history of England a lie?" returned Bulstocke; "we shall next hear the same of Robin Hood and Little John, and the four 'prentices of London, and Master Shakspeare's chronicle stories."

"Give me a quaff of ale, and keep your opinion, master captain," said Skippon, with a smile; and then for the first time noticing Ingulph, he learned who he was, and immediately and warmly pressed him to join his own regiment in the action of the day. But Bulstocke interfered.

"Nay," said he, "let the lad serve his apprenticeship with me; I shall have more leisure to instruct him than you, Master Skippon, and he may be of use to me in the directing and ordering of my fellows, for he hath younger legs, and is taller to be seen."

Ingulph assented to this arrangement, and so, after a pause, did the commander of the city auxiliaries, for such was Skippon's rank at the time. The circumstance gave great satisfaction to the orange brigade, for Ingulph's adventures had procured him that renown which makes men look up to their fellows with confidence, whose courage has been proved.

The whole camp was now in motion. Bulstocke produced from his stores such pieces of armour as Ingulph, unaccustomed to the weight, could be induced to don. The citizen himself, braced up as tightly as his corpulence allowed, with his basket-hilted sword and shield in hand, arrayed his division with as much regularity as if on the Artillery Ground, with the wives and daughters of the citizens looking on to applaud. The most experienced captain could not have shown more coolness, nor the most hardened veterans less apprehension.

Almost as soon as these arrangements were completed,

word was given to advance as soon as the cavalry had cleared the range of woody hills before Newbury, which were occupied by the king's outposts. Meanwhile, Essex himself rode along the lines, exhorting the troops to firmness and resolution.

The earl, the son of Elizabeth's unfortunate favourite, and himself the victim of James the First's tyrannous caprice, was a man of melancholy austere presence, with much of the hauteur of high rank and station in his manner. An air of trouble and indecision was apparent, nevertheless, in his countenance. He wore no armour but a breastplate, the rest of his garb being the ponderous trunk hose, sleeves, and hat plumed all over, of the period.

The troops received him with a general buzz of applause, of which he took no notice; meanwhile the crests of the hills were cleared of the royalists, and the whole army advanced in battalia. When this movement was completed, Ingulph found himself, with the orange brigade, on the brow of one of those elevations. About a mile in front was the town of Newbury, to dispute the passage to which, the royal army was drawn up below.

The parliament's line extended nearly a mile along the valley, and presented a goodly front of horse, foot, and artillery, drawn up with the greatest regularity. The king's array, on the contrary, was chiefly of cavalry, brought into line with the show, glitter, and confusion, of an army of Mamelukes. The innumerable banners displayed waving in every direction, showed like a feudal army in the old time, each noble displaying his standard amidst the troops or tenantry he had levied.

For the first time did Ingulph gaze upon the front of battle, and an indefinable, dreadful, but not altogether unpleasing sensation, stirred his soul. It was not fear, for he would not have resigned his hopes of vengeance for almost any other; but there are few standing in battle for the first time, who have not felt how tremendous is the thought that the destructive energies of the species are let loose upon you to do their worst.

For some time the two armies stood at gaze, both seeming to be aware of the awful importance of the results to be expected from the struggle. Undoubtedly it was the true policy of the royalists not to fight, inasmuch as to attack must expose Essex's heavy army to many disadvantages, and compel them to abandon their excellent position, which the want of provisions would not permit them to keep. But the

fiery courage of the young cavalier officers, anxious to distinguish themselves under their sovereign's eye, in a battle which was likely to be decisive, brought on an action.

The right wing of the parliament horse gradually became engaged, and after a furious conflict were driven off in such a manner as to leave the infantry uncovered. It was then that the steady courage and discipline of the city train-bands appeared in full lustre; for after sustaining many furious charges, they remained unbroken, bristling all over with pikes, like the impenetrable hedgehog against the attack of hounds.

Under this firm unshaken wall of infantry, the horse rallied and renewed the combat in masses, while to the left the opposite cavalries contended almost man to man, the ground being broken and hedged; but on the whole, to the visible disadvantage of the parliament.

Ingulph's courage and exhortations contributed to sustain the resolution of the orangemen; and to do Bulstocke but bare justice, no tried soldier could have stood with greater equanimity. He kept a sort of obituary as men fell around him, but never stirred his own burly figure from the position he had taken at the beginning of the battle.

"Ay, there goes poor Dame Marigold's husband!—by St. George, young Stephen is down!" he exclaimed at intervals, "Lookye, they are taking off Giles Mompas with a bloody cockscorb. Stand to it, lads! I warrant we live to tell our wives and lasses all this. Steady!—for the king and the good city, and all our rights and liberties."

The fury of the attack subsided in the direction of the orange brigade, and seemed to concentrate towards the elevation occupied by Essex in person. But although the horse was routed and broken in some parts, the line of battle was still maintained; and as the artillery was ordered to advance, the decision of the battle seemed to approach. Ingulph, therefore, watched with anxiety the slow and cumbrous movement of the ordnance across the plain in their rear. Suddenly he observed a strong body of royalists, horse and foot, fetching a compass in the distance, in the hope of falling unawares on the flank of the artillery. By this manœuvre they would also be enabled to attack the army in the rear.

With a promptitude and decision worthy of an older captain, Ingulph pointed out the movement to his uncle; and scarcely asking his consent, marched the whole brigade with infinite rapidity so as to intercept the advance of the enemy. The cavaliers rushed upon them, the savage Rupert himself, with

nis black hair waving almost as long as his horse-tail plume, leading the attack.

Ingulph's reputation for valour stood him now in good stead. The militia men obeyed as if he had been some supernatural leader, and continued pouring their musketry like a destructive hailstorm on the cavaliers. By this time, Essex had despatched a body of horse to their relief, and the artillery coming into play, the discomfited cavaliers retired.

Skippon, who commanded the relief, assured Ingulph that the earl commended his movement as the most soldierly action yet performed in the battle. But the royalists, imagining that they had discovered the key of Essex's position, renewed their attacks so continually, that at length, by the necessity of strengthening it repeatedly, it in reality became the central point of the conflict.

Hour after hour wore on, but no man took heed of time, and the hot sun glowed unnoticed through the sky. But evening came at last, welcome to both parties, with no decisive advantage to either, though certainly with some to the royalists, since they compelled their opponents to spend another night on the open field, without provisions, while they had an abundance of every necessary. The battle gradually died away along the whole line, although it continued in scattered skirmishes till nearly ten at night, having been fought with obstinate courage on both sides since six in the morning.

Without food, and with little accommodation of any sort, the army bivouacked on the field which they had kept with such difficulty.

A bivouac on a field of battle thickly strewed with the slain, is indeed but a dismal spectacle ; and when the flush of enthusiasm vanished, Ingulph gazed with intense sadness on the heaps of carcasses which strewed the ground, like the withered leaves in autumn. Meanwhile, Bulstocke occupied himself with indefatigable industry in collecting any scanty materials for creature-comfort which remained. But these were soon found to be quite inadequate, and Joyce was dispatched with a woful message to head-quarters ; but he returned at last with only a single barrel of red-herrings, and another of hard biscuits.

"Am I expected to work a miracle? why, there is not a bite a-piece!" said Bulstocke, staring aghast at the provisions. "And what is there to drink? for, by my troth, I have been squeezing the barrel this hour, and might as well have squeezed at a stone."

“There’s the river,” [replied Joyce, laughing, “and my lord general himself is fain to make it his cellar for the nonce, too.”

The soldiers were too much exhausted to think of burying their dead, but some few assisted Ingulph in a humane search which he made to rescue such as were too severely wounded to make an attempt to save themselves. Among the slaughtered heaps which had fallen in the great attack on the artillery, Ingulph perceived with sorrow the body of the good and accomplished Falkland. He had fallen in the front rank, and lay among a heap of the undistinguished slain, as if his rash courage or indifference to life had led him far beyond even his gallant compeers. Ingulph removed the body to a hedgeside, where it could not be trampled, but the time allowed no other mark of respect. Gradually, all gathered around the watchfires, and the general results of the day began to be known and canvassed.

Ingulph heard with great concern, that it was rumoured the earl intended to order a retreat on Gloucester. Slight as was his military experience, he had not the least doubt that such a measure would cause the utter ruin of the army. At the same time, destitute of provisions as they were, it was impossible to keep their position. Motives of prudence seemed then to counsel what the burning emulation and resentment in his heart prompted; besides, from the great number of leaders of quality and reputation among the royalists who had fallen, he had little doubt that the enemy were as much discouraged at their success as his own party at the want of it.

He therefore applied himself with infinite zeal to heighten the feelings which he knew were predominant among the citizens—their longing for home, hatred of the courtiers, fear of the starvation which they must suffer in returning through a devastated country, shame, and hopes of acquiring renown to themselves and their beloved city. By dint of these arguments, he prevailed on the brigades of the city to dispatch him to the earl to learn his pleasure, and to offer their humble service in forcing a passage through the enemy rather than retreat on Gloucester.

The earl of Essex’s quarters were in a mill, around which the cavalry bivouacked. On approaching, Ingulph heard a chaunt of many voices joining in some slow and melancholy psalm-tune. Separately, perhaps, the voices had been harsh and unmusical, but thus united, and under the circumstances,

there was something inexpressibly affecting in its measured wave-like swell and fall.

A council of the officers was held in the mill, and it was they who joined in this solemn devotional exercise, prior to deciding on the military operations of the coming day. Inquiring for major-general Skippon, the guard suffered Ingulph to enter the mill, where that commander immediately recognized him, though with some surprise at his presence, and introduced him to the earl as the godly young gentleman who had escaped from Oxon castle, and rendered such important services during the battle as a volunteer.

“ You have approved yourself a good soldier, and a worthy relative of that excellent patriot, Master Stonehenge,” said the earl, with marked though stately kindness. “ I shall see you have your recompense, if the parliament are pleased to reward a deserver for my sake ; but what your immediate purpose is with us, we will hear as soon as we have sought the will of the Lord in this great pressure and emergency in which we stand.”

The earl knelt, and with him all his officers, and prayed aloud, for nearly ten minutes, for enlightenment in the difficulty in which he found himself, to which the officers responded at intervals with fervent amens. He then arose, and looked inquiringly at Ingulph.

“ Mayhap my message is an answer to this prayer, my lord,” replied Ingulph, with singular happiness ; and he then delivered it, interspersed with the best arguments which his own ingenuity could add. He saw that he was listened to with the greatest attention, and that his superstitious appeal in the first instance had produced a great effect.

“ If this be an answer, I know not ; I had it in my heart to propose a peace to his majesty,—his gracious person being in the field, and no great advantage won by either,” said Essex, in an irresolute and troubled tone.

“ To ask peace, now, my lord, were even all one as to acknowledge ourselves at mercy ; and every moment our hunger diminishes our strength, which the king well knows, and he will but tickle us with words till he has us completely at mercy,” said Ingulph, warmly.

“ The king is called his majesty, when you speak of him in the third, Master Dethewarre, said the earl, austere. “ We are here to do his majesty’s gracious commands, as signified by the two houses of parliament, but not in any way, as God forbid, to diminish his majesty’s lawful titles, dignities, prero-

gatives, immunities, and powers, as enjoyed by his majesty's ancestors of glorious memory."

"But, my lord, what will become of your own, and of the gallant men who stand by you in weal and woe, if the sword be laid down ere the pen has signed?" said Ingulph, warmly.

"I know not why those men only give counsel, who understand not war—for I hear none of you give a word of advice," said Essex, looking discontentedly round. "I would his majesty could see more clearly into the times. There is a sort of men arising, I wot not what they mean, but they rave distractedly, both in church and state. Understand me fairly, sirs; I would have a peace, but such as should abundantly provide for the security of our laws, religion, liberties, and bring delinquents to justice, with satisfaction for tender consciences, and all men and all things in their places again. All honest men wish for peace, and ye all know that if we lose this army, there is nothing to prevent his majesty from going direct to London, and you know what panic is there already."

There was so general a silence of disapprobation, that Ingulph ventured to renew his argument, by expatiating on the starved condition of the troops, and he even insinuated the probability of a mutiny if they were kept long in such a state of suffering. The majority of the officers joined zealously in these representations, as neutral ground, on which they did not clash against the earl's declared opinion.

"Fight the fight, then, if it must be; but God knows what may come of it," said Essex, passionately. "And since your citizens are so hungry and so eager, Master Skippon, let them even lead the van of the attack at sunrise."

Skippon readily accepted this honour for his division, and Ingulph then respectfully withdrew, to leave the officers to their deliberations on the necessary preparations.

Bulstocke was somewhat puzzled when he heard of the distinction conferred on the city brigades. "For our good services to-day, we are to have the first brush with the cavaliers," he said, with an astonished look. "That is not the way we do in the city, when a man works well, to give him his yoke-fellow's task as a reward. Marry, to see how folks are always ready to drive a willing horse to death."

"Marry, is a popish oath, and an abomination in a Christian's mouth, Master Bulstocke," said a severe and gloomy-visaged pikeman.

"Why, so is mince pie, Thomas Pride, or a Michaelmas goose; but if that's damnation, I never saw it written up in

the commandments, many times as I have read them in Paul's aisle, waiting for a customer, or such like," replied Bulstocke.

"Truly, thieves and money-changers have defiled the temple," replied the puritan. "Not that Paul's is a temple to the Lord, seeing that the mass-book of the Common Prayer is still muttered in it. But truly there is a first commandment, as well as a second and a third; and what are mince pies and Michaelmas geese, but graven images, as it were, or symbols of popish idolatries and heathen festivals to their pantheistic saints?"

"I know no Greek, Thomas, but this I know full well," replied Bulstocke. "My father ate them before me, and my father's father; and, please God, I will do the same, as long as suet and plumbs, and apples and cinnamon, and fat geese, are to be had for love or money."

Fatigue overcame all other corporeal miseries, and in a short time the whole camp was hushed, and the dead scarcely slept sounder than their survivors. But Ingulph awoke with the first beam of light, and aware that he had in some measure undertaken the responsibility of the great attempt about to be made, immediately began his preparations. In a short time the whole army was in array, and while it was yet gray dawn, Skippon arrived with orders for the city brigades to advance.

Advance accordingly they did, in massive and determined array; but as it was now light in the plain below, great was the astonishment to perceive not the least sign of an enemy! Scouts were sent out and returned with intelligence that the royalists had vanished as if the earth had swallowed them.

Ingulph, who was with the orange brigade in the advance, concluded instantly that the enemy, having experienced the strength of their position, had abandoned their own ground to lure them from it. But it struck him that it was a great error to relinquish their strong position in Newbury with such an expectation, because it could not be difficult to fall back on the heights; and he eagerly persuaded his comrades to push forward and occupy the town without waiting for orders.

They found Newbury as silent as a magic city of eastern romance turned into stone for not reading the Koran; or as if the plague had swept off all the inhabitants. Doors and windows closed and barred—the very market-place a desert. Perhaps the king had expected that the wearied army would have halted in the city to refresh itself, and thus allow him time to take a more advantageous position in advance. But Essex, learning

what had happened, gave orders for the army to pass through without a moment's pause ; and in high approval of the conduct of the orange brigade, gave it the glory of holding the town until the army had marched out of it.

This honoured brigade was thus again brought by its valour into the post of danger, to Bulstocke's continued wonder. And dangerous it seemed, in truth ; for when the brigade at length took up its glorious position in the rear, Rupert and his flying cavalry appeared along the line of march as it traversed the deep and involved country towards Reading. The orange brigade, however, got clear of the town, and were steadily wending their way to rejoin the main body, when Ingulph discerned a party of cavalry galloping towards them, as if to intercept this junction. So rapidly had the army advanced, that they were too distant to hope to reach it without sustaining a charge. But as the glittering squadrons approached, Ingulph's feelings became strangely intense and mixed, when he recognised in their commander Lord De la Pole—his brother, despite of all his wrongs.

The young cavalier came foremost, waving his sword, laughing and exulting as if at some drunken revel, and his troops dashed after him with headlong rapidity. So furious was the charge, and hasty the preparations for it, that for the first time the square of spears was broken, and a desperate pell-mell combat took place, the cavaliers hacking, hewing, and trampling without mercy. But by this time Essex had sent a party of cavalry to their relief, and De la Pole's men, attacked by superior numbers, and in confusion after their charge, were driven off with slaughter.

The orange brigade again formed, Ingulph collecting the wounded, whom he was determined, whatever happened, not to desert. Engaged in this research, he suddenly came upon a cavalier who lay insensible and crushed beneath the weight of his own dead horse, and so covered with blood and dust that, but for the armour, Ingulph could not have recognised in him the Lord De la Pole. Yet he it was ; and after a moment's inward struggle, Ingulph raised him, bound a wound in the breast which seemed to be the chief one he had received, and placed him carefully and even tenderly on one of the tumbrils of hay on which the wounded were carried.

CHAPTER XVI.

LONDON IN 1643.

CONTINUALLY harassed by Rupert's cavaliers, but without any other serious damage, the army at length reached Reading; after which, their march to London was no longer infested by the enemy.

De la Pole's wounds were found to be dangerous only from the effusion of blood, and therefore the preservation of his life was undoubtedly due to Ingulph's timely aid. The cavalier himself warmly admitted it, and in spite of Ingulph's desire to the contrary, obtained of Essex that he should be considered his brother's prisoner, as he now ostentatiously called him, and remain under his charge. The custom of warfare at that time made every prisoner a kind of property to his capturer, who was at liberty to ransom him for his own benefit. Though partially abolished by the parliament, this practice was considered still to hold good when the general pleased to authorize it.

The army continued its advance to London, where preparations on a grand scale were making for its reception. In proportion to the panic into which the king's successes had thrown them, was now the rebound of the parliament's hopes; for although the battle was apparently a drawn one, all the advantages of victory were gained by them.

In the first terrors of the king's successes, the parliament, in addition to the old walls of the city, had run a line of fortifications, which took in Westminster and the more important suburbs. The fields about Charing Cross were entrenched and mounted with cannon; but, on the approach of the army, were covered with the populace, rushing out to meet their deliverers.

The members of parliament and dignitaries of the city, in state costumes, rode out to meet their faithful army, an honour which kings have seldom obtained, and for the first time Ingulph beheld that great assembly whose progress was watched by all Europe with mingled amazement and fear.

Lenthal, the speaker, was easily distinguished by his robes, long, handsome, dismal visage, and a pomp of manner not unbecoming his high station. There, too, came the fanatic but noble Vane, the gloomy and sagacious St. John; Hollis, and Nathaniel Fiennes; the witty republican, Marten; and now

Hampden was gone—the darling of the people, and chief leader of the parliament,—he whom the cavaliers in derision styled King Pym. Though a man of short stature, worn and haggard with the immense cares which success had brought upon him, his ready smiles, volubility of language and ideas, rapid movements, and never-flagging courtesy, marked a man formed to win the popular love. There was but a poor show of peers in the procession; by far the majority were with the king, and those who remained were so merely the echoes of the commons that they were almost slipped out of men's notice. But there was the lord mayor, and other civic dignitaries, blazing in scarlet and gold, and the Scottish commissioners in their robes of estate.

After an harangue from Lenthal, in the highest style of scriptural eulogy, and a modest reply from Essex, the procession moved forward, amidst thundering acclamations of the masses. The earl rode uncovered, bowing with stately courtesy at long intervals.

Banners and tapestry waved from every window; triumphal arches crossed every street; cannon roared; military music resounded in every direction; and the popular effervescence vanquished even the gloom and contempt for mundane feelings affected by the more rigid sectaries. De la Pole watched the whole proceeding with a laughing eye, and abounded in jests and sarcasms, which, in spite of himself, amused his capturer, beside whom he rode. Ingulph himself was an object of general attention, for his renown had preceded him; and the gallant bearing and paleness of his companion won at least an equal share of notice from the women.

“Good luck! how things have changed,” Bulstocke kept saying. “Why we did no more than put on our chains and mantles the day the king came from Scotland and dined with us in the city; and I sat but three below the salt. Good luck! how the world changes!”

“I remember the feast well, forasmuch as the queen and her ladies did nigh kill themselves with laughing, on their return,” said De la Pole.

“Ay, but who laughs now?” replied Bulstocke, into whose good graces De la Pole, despite of the coldness with which his advances had been at first received, had contrived by his wit and jollity to insinuate himself.

“Why, the court laughs, and must, as long as there are citizens,” said De la Pole, smiling and kissing his hand at some girls who were gazing at him from a window; and who vanished as instantly as if he had darted a spear at them.

Ingulph had been for some time musing what to do with his prisoner, for whose detention he was responsible. He thought it likely that his uncle, Stonehenge, would dislike the presence of the son of a man who had so injured him. Bulstocke would gladly have received them both in his own house, but he had so profound a notion of the deference due to Stonehenge, that he declared he must first consult him on the matter. It was agreed that the brothers should await an answer at a small inn in the Strand, which De la Pole selected from the singularity of the sign. It was the portrait of a jolly, knavish-looking fellow, with this couplet below :—

“ There’s many a head stands for a sign,
Then, gentle reader, why not mine ?”

“ I like the humour of it,” said the cavalier ; “ I’ll warrant mine host is a quaint, original fellow ; and I do need the sight of a laughing visage after all these long-drawn cast-iron masks.”

They quitted the procession which was escorting the earl to his mansion, and no sooner halted at the door, than mine host made his appearance with a figure which by no means belied his natural characteristics.

“ Welcome, cavaliers, for I see by the cut of your gibbs ye are honest gentlemen,” said mine host, with a stress upon the word, which meant much to the initiated.

“ For to tell a friend from a red herring
Needs nothing but wit and a nail’s paring.”

“ ’Tis Taylor, the water-poet,” said De la Pole, smiling. “ What, old crony, hast forgotten me ?”

“ My honourable lord !—’tis the first time that ever I was sorry to see you,” said Taylor, bowing profoundly. “ Will it please you to alight and take a smack of the old bin you may remember ; for in sooth this is weary work for the eyes, to see folks ride on horseback that should do it in a cart.”

“ Have a care ! Master Pym has long ears,” said the cavalier. “ And by-the-bye, hast thou thine own still, for I thought long ere now to learn thou hadst played martyr to rotten eggs and cabbages.”

“ In truth, my songs are written in the king’s fear and defiance of the pillory,” returned Taylor ; “ and I do pray you, my lord, how *is* his majesty ? Say, ere we enter, for this day stirs the mud, and my house is full of slit noses and rebels of all sorts and shades.”

“ His majesty is—the better for thy asking,” said De la Pole, laughing. “ But lead in—we are spent.”

As if he had received the most satisfactory information, mine host rubbed his hands, blessed the king, and threw open a door which admitted to the only room in the house destined for company. There was a good fire in the chimney, doubtless to cook by, for it was a very hot day; but the company was not so numerous as Taylor had boasted. There were only three persons, but all of them, in their way, remarkable.

One sat close to the fire, as if it were December, demurely engaged in what was then called "taking" tobacco. A little earthen censer, filled with the odoriferous weed, stood on the hearth, which he inhaled from a long tube of coloured clay. His countenance had a singularly keen, ferret expression, and there was something peculiar in his garb. He wore a leathern apron with a pouch from whence stuck out the haft of a knife, some ends of cord, and a variety of long thin steel instruments like those in a surgeon's case. Another fellow sat opposite, in the meanest garb of poverty, and with a visage projecting, bristly, and brutal as that of a wild hog.

At the opposite side of the room, either to avoid society or for the sake of the light, for he was pencilling in a thick ledger-like volume, was the third guest. He was dressed in the costume of a lawyer—which at that period was worn in public as well as in the courts—with an inkhorn at his girdle. His hair was cut close round his pale saturnine visage, and showed the frightful mutilation he had sustained, for his ears were gone, and apparently with them a slice of one of his cheeks. Turning to see who entered, he revealed an additional stigma, for his cheek was branded, in large black capitals, with the letters "S.L.," the abbreviation of the words "seditious libeller."

"Why, Master Prynne, at your penmanship ever? you will leave no foolscap for me," said Taylor.

"Thy lampoons and pasquils are in the heads of fools already; why trouble about their caps, John?" returned the lawyer, gravely.

"You have me on the hip there; I will owe you the turn awhile," replied Taylor, very good-humouredly. "But if you be writing of verse, (for there was never a lawyer could write poetry,) you should drink some liquor more fantastical than ale, though mine be as stout as any between London and Gloucester, and sticks on the lips like honey."

"'Tis an ill bird fouls his own nest; and being of Gloucester, I marvel thou praisest it for these vanities," said Prynne.

"I would that were the worst to be said of it," replied the

water-poet. "But since they have turned reformation rogues, I pray heaven they may lose the craft of making cheeses, too, for a judgment."

"Thou art profane, John, thou art profane, and will never rest until thou hast run thy neck into a wooden collar," said the lawyer.

"Then if thou lose thine ears, I counsel thee to wear thy hair long," said De la Pole, with a satirical smile.

"You speak as one of the ignorant, sir, by your leave," said Prynne, smoothing his close crop away from his maimed ears. "Could these severed, amputated, and dismembered auricular gristles be restored to me again by magic or heavenly art, I would refuse and utterly decline the offer; for thus am I a perpetual protest against the antichristian, inquisitorial, merciless tyranny of the bishops, and the hellish tyrant, pope Laud, their ringleader; a monument of the unexampled, insolent tyranny of Charles Stuart; and a living daily memento to all men who yet hope for peace and liberty under his merciless Turkish sway, and that of his idolatrous woman, the apostate Frenchman's daughter."

"I pray you remember, then, that merely to be a woman, entitles the queen to some respect," said De la Pole; "in my presence at least, for you see I wear love-locks."

"For the devil to clutch thee by," returned Prynne.

"But is it true that you are a convert to the heresies of this new quacking sect they speak of?" said the cavalier, with provoking simplicity.

"I support, perpend, or any wise abet that young man's 'pravities? Stranger, have you read my Quaker Quaking, or a firebrand for the tail of a fox?" exclaimed Prynne, vehemently.

"By the Lord, have you yourself; for all you wrote it?" said the cavalier, laughing outright. "Why, man, the judges who condemned your histriomastix, did it only on a six months' perusal; but a cup of sea-water is as bitter as the ocean."

"And so I trust they found it, and of a flavour not to be swallowed down with wine and strong drinks," said Prynne, triumphantly. "Yet, notwithstanding the visible judgment on them, the Frenchwoman, as we hear, with her unclean court, still holds her orgies, witch-sabbaths, and devilries, under the guise of stage-plays or masks."

"And here is the devil incarnate who composed the last," said De la Pole, tapping Ingulph on the shoulder, who had been gazing rather than listening, so painfully did the visible

impress of tyranny affect him in the person of the maimed enthusiast.

"It grieves me to hear it, for the young man hath an ingenuous countenance," said Prynne. "None but the fiend is a gainer by stage-plays, wassails, ales, churchings, hawkings, maypoles, christmasses, minstrelsies, bear-baiting, and all manner of flesh-delights. The writers, projecters, beholders, dancers, singers, baiters, revellers, and fiddlers, are all damned."

"An you were judge, I doubt not," said De la Pole, laughing. "And I must freely tell you I would rather be so, than go to such a heaven as you would allow."

Taylor entered at this moment, with a tankard of burnt wine, foaming over, and fragrant with spice.

"Fill all men's goblets, and let us be companionable, mine host," said the cavalier.

"No friend, no; another measure of thy brown Burton, an thou wilt," said Prynne, withdrawing his cup as Taylor offered to fill it.

"As thou wilt, master, for indeed the ale is very good and eloggy, though self-praise is no recommendation," replied Taylor; "there's the more for them that will; nay, sirrah, were it the gallows, master before man," he continued, as the man with the bristly face extended his mug, and passing it to fill the smoker's, neither of whom had hitherto spoken a word.

"Thank'ee, good man," said the smoker, in a gruff tone. "But I am musing why you keep your cracked tobacco-box on the hob; 'tis good harbourage for some sort of imps, and truly I have seen a scarlet toad leap out of a less suspicious matter."

"Ay, but you have such a gift at seeing, Master Hopkins," replied Taylor, with a cock of his humorous eye.

"In the matter of witchcraft and wizardcraft, and such like, I thank my God, I know myself as well as any man that hath been since Christendom," replied the party addressed. "And for that reason it hath pleased some good men (ay, and with warrantry, considering how many I have rooted out in my time,) to call and christen me by the title and namesake of Witch-finder General."

"Your war is waged with old women, so 'tis no concern of mine if you do root them out," said De la Pole.

"'Tis a lying error to believe so!" said the witch-finder, with vehemence. "The devil is no such fool!—why, there is one in this very town," whom I have my eye on, is a marvel of beauty and youth."

“Where is she to be seen?—For I will have my fortune told this very night,” said the gay cavalier.

“Speak low, speak low, lest some hear that should not!” said Taylor, looking round with a strange expression of alarm on his jolly features.

“Aroint thee, Satan! I fear thee not,” said Hopkins, visibly startled; adding, in a lower tone, “there are few suspect it, and ’tis by mere chance I had any inklings of it myself. A certain great lord in Oxford set me on making inquiries concerning a London merchant, whom he did suspect came by the money he lends parliament in bushels, by magic, which would be a fine exposure. But from what I hear, I should say he hath a witch or fairy to wife.”

“Of whom speak you?” said Ingulph, somewhat interested.

“I am acquainted with an excellent worthy woman, a laundress, who declares that she hath rats for her feet, for she hath seen them peep out of her golden garments,” continued Hopkins, without noticing the question.

“Do they keep cats in this marvellous witch’s neighbourhood?” said De la Pole, laughing heartily.

“And the same worthy matron credibly declares she has seen her play with a huge green snake, that shines like mother-of-pearl,” said Hopkins, quite unmoved.

“What manner of liquor does the good woman drink?” returned De la Pole.

“I see thou mockest, young man, and of a truth, scoffing shall abound in the latter days,” said Prynne, with a groan which seemed to come from the depths of his heart.

“Ay, ay, Hopkins, you would fain have a bob at Stonehenge’s Spanish dollars,” said the water-poet, with a knowing wink.

“Stonehenge!” repeated the cavalier, with a start. “Is not that our beloved uncle’s name, Dethewarre?”

“I mean him not; he is a worthy Christian gentleman, who has served the parliament with tooth and nail!” said Hopkins, much perturbed.

“If she be so fair a witch—alas! she may transform him into a horned beast,” said De la Pole, with a slight sneer.

“Nay, the beast is baffled, and principally by my means,” said Prynne, associating his usual ideas with the word, “for I trust we shall not again have Canterbury among us to serve him.”

“Would you spill the old man’s blood on the edge of the grave?” said Ingulph.

“He did not spare mine on the scaffold!” returned Prynne, showing his ghastly scars, “look where a portion of my cheek was cut, even till the artery flowed, and but for the compassion of a hangman’s ’prentice, I had bled to death.”

“And you were mercifully dealt with,” returned the cavalier. “Was not Peacham condemned to die for only writing a sermon which he never preached?”

“Then, all honour to you, noble English hearts, that will never more suffer this infernal tyranny in England!” said Ingulph, passionately.

“But, Master Prynne,” said De la Pole, imitating the ponderous style of his antagonist, “I have, as it were, been revolving, considering, pondering, deliberating, and bewildering, whether it is not pure carnal-mindedness and vain-glory in you to keep these crop-ears so visible, being ensigns, ornaments, insignia, and garniture, of martyrdom?”

“Come, sirs, shame not my house, for ’tis not in good liquor to be brawlsome,” said Taylor, frothing the mugs up with the skill of an accomplished tapster; “Here’s a stave of my own composing, to the increase of good fellowship:—

‘Some are for parliament, some for crown,
Some are for presbyter, some for gown;
Some swear ’tis right, some swear ’tis wrong,
And some like a sermon, and some like a song.
But all faiths and parties may surely agree
To fathom their bowls in harmony,
In harmony!
That’s all we need know for a certainty,
A certainty!’ ”

“Yet I do persist,” continued the cavalier, in his mocking tone, “that ’tis a great question, yet unsettled in theology, whether the apple that Eve ate was a Kentish or a Kirton pippin.”

A concussion seemed now inevitable, but luckily Bulstocke entered at the moment. There was a singular degree of embarrassment in his manner, as he informed Ingulph that his uncle desired both himself and his prisoner to lodge in Whitehall, and to see them directly.

“Then, by ’r lady, Master Hopkins, I will see what sort of shoes Mistress Stonehenge puts on her rats,” said the cavalier, eagerly rising.

Bulstocke stared amazedly, and then called for a stoup of wine, which he swallowed hastily; and scarcely returning the greetings of the poetical host, who was yet an old crony of his, the three departed. De la Pole had just reached the door, when Hopkins caught him by the cloak, and drawing

out of his instruments, a long keenly-pointed needle, muttered, "If you could only prick her with this, and mark carefully whether she bleeds, and if so, how many drops—I will soon tell you who's witch and who's not."

"I have an infallible criterion of my own," replied the cavalier, snatching away his cloak. "But I fear you are a conjurer yourself, and will try." And dexterously seizing the needle, he stuck it with such good will into the witchfinder's hand, that he left him howling with pain.

CHAPTER XVII.

WHITEHALL.

A SHORT walk from the Strand brought Ingulph and his companions to Whitehall, in part of which ancient palace Stonehenge had been allowed to take up his residence. Nor was that circumstance one of the least significant signs of the times. For a long time after the king's departure, the palace remained as he had left it, the chief suites locked up, and in the care of some few inferior officers of his household. But encroachments were now commenced in the majestic solitude, which threatened to extend from some minor invasions of distant suites over the whole pile, according as the necessities and courage of the parliament increased.

The vast extent of the palace seemed indeed to make this consummation remote. During the four hundred years which had elapsed since its foundation in 1243, Whitehall gradually increased in bulk, until it occupied an almost incredible space, extending along the banks of the river, and inland over all that district now occupied by numerous mansions and the stately street which continues to bear the name, even to St. James's. Its architecture exhibited traces of almost every style which had prevailed during the ages which had elapsed since its foundation by the great baron who had built it as a place of strength, and of which structure a battlemented keep and some lofty towers still remained; who bequeathing it to a monastery of Black Friars, they had added some buildings of an ecclesiastical character. The friars disposed of it to the see of York, in whose possession it remained for ages, and a considerable part of the pile still bore the impress of the sober magnificence proper to that great prelacy. The vast additions made by Wolsey displayed rather the grandeur of the prince

than of the churchman ; and Henry the Eighth also left traces of his character in the tilting-yards, cock-pits, and military architecture which he added to the fabric ; while James the First marked the commencement of a new era, and his own tastes, by erecting the noble banqueting-house, which of all that immense edifice alone survives the fire of 1697.

Entering the palace by a superb building, commonly called Holbein's Gate, they crossed the tilt-yard, surrounded by its beautifully-wrought galleries, from which the beauties of the bluff monarch's court looked down and surveyed his exploits and those of his chivalry in the gallant tourney. Thence they reached a hall which had once been the guard-chamber of the palace, but was now desolate, or only tenanted by the dusty suits of armour and useless weapons of ancient chivalric pastimes which hung around the walls. The beautifully-stained Gothic windows were much shattered, and other marks of wilful dilapidation appeared, for the rage of fanaticism regarded all the remains of the ancient religion with abhorrence, and in a palace occupied by Catholic prelates for so many ages, these could not but be numerous.

Passing thence through divers long corridors, they emerged by a postern into a garden of great extent and beauty, though much neglected, which descended in terraces to the edge of the broad and tranquil Thames. Rejoicing calmly in its strength, lay the noble river, burnished all over with gold in the setting sun. Bulstocke guided through the labyrinths of the ancient gardens, in which four centuries of mankind had left traces of peculiar tastes in that art in which the first of men was a proficient. But the solemn monastic yew, anciently cut into strange forms of beasts and birds, were now neglected into wilder phantasies than ever gardeners' "fine frenzy" dreamed ; the stately palm, brought from Calvary itself, was scathed with barbarous wounds ; the fountains were choked with weeds and grass ; the beauteous statues of ancient deities and solemn urns were green with moss ; the fig-trees and peaches planted by Wolsey were torn from the walls, and lay blossoming on the ground.

The general air of the gardens might be said to retain something of the ecclesiastical tastes of its former possessors and planters. The flowers were chiefly those whose rich scents or religious gravity of beauty have rendered them favourites with the Catholic clergy, or useful in their sacrificial pomps :—the perfumed purple lavender, the virgin-dedicated lily, holy rosemary, sanative balsam, tranquil violets, golden asphodel, martyr-wreathing amaranth, and

numerous medicinal herbs, cherished by a church which was once almost equally the physician of body and soul.

After wandering for some time through this sylvania, they came to a winding path which conducted into what was once the orchard and private garden of the palace. It was enclosed by a hedge formed of matted briars, vines, hops, and honeysuckles, twisted with extraordinary skill into a dense and almost impenetrable wall, over which waved the luxuriant verdure and odorous blossoms of unnumbered fruit-trees.

"Surely we are in the Hesperides,—and hark! one of the charmed nymphs is singing under the mystic tree," said De la Pole, pausing.

"Pho!—there's no such thing—there's nobody singing,—I do marvel to hear that you believe in witches," said Bulstocke, with an appearance of alarm.

"Is it a fairy singing?—it must needs be Shakspeare's Ariel, or some more delicate sprite," said the cavalier. "I pray ye, listen."

They listened. It was a warm glowing sunset, almost southern in its hushed effulgence. A female voice, incomparably sweet, was heard singing with the profusion and liquid sweetness of an Italian nightingale pouring its amorous fancies in fitful gushes of rapture and plaintiveness. The words were foreign, but the playful tenderness of the air seemed to speak some intelligible language which the soul understood without corporeal aid.

The song ceased, but the voice was still audible, prattling and chattering as if with some bird or other pet, and anon breaking off to indulge in a little flourish of melody.

"She is not far off—let us see what manner of bird hath so sweet a note," said De la Pole, pushing into a thick maze of wood, which seemed to intervene between them and the songstress.

"My lord, remember! this is Stonehenge's private garden!" said Bulstocke, with great horror; but the cavalier pushed resolutely on, and his companion had nothing for it but to follow him.

As we have said, the enclosure was partly garden and partly orchard, combining the beauties of both, in the number, variety, and stateliness of the fruit-trees which shaded it, and in the parterres of flowers which bloomed wherever the sun poured fissures of light through the leafy vault. The emerald green of the grass, besprent with daisies and brilliant poppies, the murmur of the trees laden with blossoms, the melody of unnumbered birds, which found shelter and safety

in the surrounding thickets, combined the choicest pleasures of sight and sound.

At some distance, in a full ray of sunshine streaming through the flowery branches of a vast apple-tree, as if basking in its radiance, lolling on the grass and caressing a richly-plumaged bird, of a species but little known in England, the vague instincts of a passionate organization appearing in the tenderness with which she suffered it to nibble at her sweet mouth, or pressed it lovingly to her bosom, with wooing words and endearments, was a young girl. Her figure was hardly yet rounded to its full loveliness, but it was advantageously displayed by the rich foreign custom which she wore; a short petticoat of spangled lace over another of shimmering tissue, a boddice of scarlet velvet wrought with silver vine-leaves, her profuse, glossy, and raven black hair being partially confined in a silver net sparkling all over with diamonds. Silver filagree work, tassels, crosses, and innumerable gauds of colours and jewels, which delight the natives of hot climates, finished her toilet.

This pretty figure was well contrasted by another, at whose feet she sat, a tall elderly woman in a formal and sad-coloured costume, who was knitting; while a snowy kitten amused itself with ravelling her ball of worsted, to the silent delight of the young girl. The older female's form, though somewhat too large to be elegant, had once been fine; and her countenance was still handsome, though crimped up with a harsh puritanical crossness, and knitted with a perpetual frown, under which flashed a pair of grey vindictive eyes.

The cavalier pushed boldly on, and the crackling of the branches caused both the females to look up; the matron uttered a kind of stifled exclamation, while the young girl looked up with all the shy beauty of a startled antelope.

De la Pole advanced, removing his plumed hat, and fixing his eyes, which sparkled with something more than curiosity, on the younger lady, who gazed at him in mute alarm.

It was apparent that she was the syren whose voice had guided him, for a guitar hung by a scarlet ribbon to her neck; and her beauty fixed the bold gaze of the cavalier in undissembled admiration. It was evidently of a southern character; the rosy brownness of complexion kissed by the sun into a ripe glow on the cheeks, like the purple tints of the grape, in depth and downiness; the expression of mingled softness and vivacity, which in the southern women so easily kindles to flame or melts to the most voluptuous tenderness; the full bust, the lively gesture, the depth and yet playfulness of the

smile, habitual to the small, ruddy, velvety mouth, the eyes volcanic with passion, marked a daughter of the sun. But the air of purity and innocence, which surrounded her like the snowy atmosphere of an angel, was almost childishly lovely and confiding.

"Do you come upon us as a thief in the night, or as a strong man to slay?" exclaimed the matron, starting up, and gazing with a fierce and singular intensity at the young cavalier.

"Nay, madam, but methought I heard an angel singing, and I was not mistaken," said De la Pole, in a tone of the profoundest respect. "'Tis by the merest accident, and I crave your pardon very humbly."

"Nay, Grizzle, 'tis the Lord De la Pole,—the prisoner; we are going to Master Stonehenge," said Bulstocke, who, with Ingulph, had now arrived.

"Then, o' God's name, go on your way; what do you here, brother?" replied the matron, her pinched visage turning very pale, while a brilliant flush covered that of the young girl, beneath the cavalier's gaze, which heightened her beauty like a rose's beneath a sudden beam of sunshine.

"Body o' me, I thought you would like to see your nephew, for the first time, sister," said Bulstocke, putting a good face on the matter. "But an' you do not, say so at once, and we will not trouble you with our company."

An expression approaching to a spasm crossed the matron's features, as she turned at this introduction to Ingulph, and welcomed him with an agitation which her natural strength of nerve immediately overcame. "But," she added, after the usual formal greetings of the time, "thou knowest, brother, Master Stonehenge must not be kept waiting; we may see one another anon."

Bulstocke seemed cordially to agree, but at the moment the cavalier exclaimed, "Nay, gentlewoman, give an instant's rest to the sole of my feet; I am spent with my wound," and staggering a few steps, he sunk, and either feigned, with more than woman's skill, or actually swooned.

Bulstocke and Mistress Grizzle stared at one another in silent dismay, and Ingulph himself stood amazed. But in that instant of time, the younger woman was kneeling beside De la Pole, applying a nosegay, which she snatched from her bosom, to his nostrils, rubbing his temples, brushing back his thick curls, and uttering a thousand childish exclamations of pity and terror. Still he stirred not, and in her dismay and ignorance, the poor girl called out that he was dead, and a

sparkling shower of tears from her eyes bedewed his pale cheeks.

By this time, Grizzle and the other two present, recovered from their surprise, and came to the rescue. Bulstocke tore open the young man's vest, Grizzle produced a smelling-bottle, Ingulph fanned the air, and all the time the young girl chafed the cavalier's hand in both hers; and his first symptom of returning life, was to press her hand as it were convulsively to his breast.

"Oh, he is dying; the *povrito* is dying!" she said, with passionate grief. "*Ama mia!* feel, his face is as cold as marble." And she put her lips to his white cheek, starting timorously at the warm rush of blood which instantly met the pressure.

"Ramona, retire; what will your husband say?" said Grizzle, somewhat roughly removing the young girl, and taking her place.

"Nay, *ama*, he has always bidden me to be kind and gentle to those who needed help," replied Ramona, beseechingly. "*Dios!* do not let him die."

"Nay, lady, he hopes to live to thank this generous compassion," said De la Pole, opening his eyes and fixing them languidly on the lady, but with an expression which deepened the warm tints of her complexion; and she cast her eyes down with a renewed gush of tears. "By what name, sweet lady, may I remember you for ever?"

"Nay, my lord, throw not away your court compliments on this young girl," said Grizzle, sternly. "'Tis Mistress Stonehenge, and she has been too carefully instructed in Christian sobriety to relish these gaudy phrases."

The cavalier seemed struck with this announcement, for he rose instantly, without much apparent difficulty, and without Bulstocke's volunteered assistance.

There was no longer any pretence to remain, and after the exchange of the usual civilities, the cavalier and his companions proceeded on their way, but not until De la Pole had snatched up the nosegay, and retired, pressing it to his heart with a mute but emphatic glance. Ramona seemed to watch his movements with curiosity and interest; and when he was fairly out of sight, she resumed her seat on the grass, touched her guitar with a few wild jangling notes, stirred her milk-white kitten with her little foot (not rat, Hopkins), and fairly melted into tears.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE ASTROLOGERS.

FOLLOWING the windings of the orchard, Bulstocke led to a wicket, which admitted into a courtyard, surrounded on one side by the river, and on all others by a pile of buildings, evidently the most ancient of the palace. A quiet gloom reigned in the shadows of the huge and strangely diversified architecture, which looked indeed partially ruinous, and was nearly overgrown with ivy; over all arose a round tower, very lofty, and apparently tenanted only by a rookery of crows, which kept wheeling in airy squadrons, with loud cries, over head.

“Master Stonehenge is a great student of astrology, and he stays principally up thither,” said Bulstocke, pointing to the tower. “But I pray you, my lord, do not mention what you have seen, for he might take it ill of me to have brought you through the private walks.”

“Fear not,” replied the cavalier, musingly. “Surely, Ingulph, this uncle of yours is a philosopher of that Hermeppic school, which places its *elixir vitæ* in the sweet reviving breath of youth, else what wants he with so blooming and mere a girl for a bride?”

“Nay, you had better ask him,” replied Ingulph, sharply; and no more was said for some time. They entered the building by an ancient gate, passed through several corridors, and ascended so many flights of steps, that De la Pole inquired, with impatience, if they were going to a crow’s nest. But at length they reached a narrow winding staircase, which conducted to a still narrower doorway, closed by a strong oak door, cramped with iron. Bulstocke, opening this, showed another of exactly similar make, at which he tapped.

Some moments elapsed before any notice was taken; a strong, deep, and somewhat agitated voice then commanded them to enter, and filing in, for two could not have gone abreast, a dark chamber, of considerable extent, but lighted only by two deep recesses in the walls, appeared. It was wainscoted with black oak, riveted on with large nails, driven in symmetrical figures. The ceiling and floor were of the same, and at intervals, all round the walls, hung massive rings. In a deep chimney on one side of this lofty dungeon

burned a low fire of embers, which from time to time threw out strangely-coloured gleams, as if it, too, had something of a supernatural quality. These irradiations lit up some curious cabalistical characters and figures carved in the stone-work round the chimney-piece.

The furniture was of a singular kind, consisting of some massive wooden stools, a table covered with books open at various hieroglyphical pictures, and extraordinary illuminations of the stars and celestial bodies flaming in the fantastic configurations of the ancient astronomers. Globes, astrolabes, telescopes, zodiacs, and many unknown instruments of judicial astrology, strewed the chamber.

Of this scientific apartment there were two occupants. One was Master Stonehenge, the other was a well-featured man, and yet with a somewhat vulgar physiognomical character, with keen cunning eyes, and attired in a loose gown of black serge.

Stonehenge welcomed his nephew with marked affection, and after slightly returning the cavalier's bow, looked at him for some moments with so much and intense earnestness, that it staggered even his audacity.

"Marry, sir, are you stamping my portrait in your eyes, that you may know me again in a fog?" said the cavalier, in a vexed and troubled tone.

"Nay, I do perfectly know your features; you are like your father, sir; a rare compliment, considering in what time he chiefly flourished," said Stonehenge, with sardonic playfulness. "But I am bound to take note of you, being a prisoner of the parliament, and in some measure under my charge."

"You are acquainted with my father, then?" said De la Pole, gazing earnestly at his host.

"I have seen him," replied the latter evasively, and he walked away a few steps; then turned and made an impatient gesture to his attendant, which the latter seemed to understand, for he unrolled a curiously-painted parchment, and handed it to Stonehenge. In the centre there was a figure with a crown on its head, with several figures standing around it, at right angles, all in robes of state, surmounted by numerous stars and mystic letters. Two of the figures were distinguished, one by having an axe and the other a dagger struck into them, as it seemed, by the violence of certain lines drawn from the surmounting stars.

Stonehenge glanced carefully over this, while the young men looked at him in some surprise.

“Note my lord’s answers, Lilly,” said the merchant, with a strangely bitter emphasis on the title.

“I would be glad to know, if this gentleman be the famous conjurer, whether the parliament requires its prisoner’s fortunes to be told,” said De la Pole.

“Forasmuch as men’s deaths depend so much on their nativities, even that were no profitless guess,” replied the astrologer, with a cunning smile. “But ’tis not so; I am but to note down such particulars as are usually required from prisoners of state.”

Carefully shading what he wrote, that it might not be overlooked, Lilly continued writing the prisoner’s replies to the queries which Stonehenge addressed to him in a somewhat despotic tone. Numerous as these were, few seemed to have much significance. His age was inquired; his exact name; the place of his birth, and even the hour and minute; to all which De la Pole answered with real or affected carelessness; and when the questions seemed exhausted, he inquired of Lilly, with apparent simplicity, whether he needed any other information to cast his horoscope. “For I would fain know,” he said, “whether the lady to whom I am betrothed, and whom I love so much, that the sight of any other woman, however fair, vexes me, shall assuredly be mine, and when.”

“You were born under the lush-lighted planet Venus, in the ascendancy of Mars,—stars unfavourable to matrimony, and the latter to life,” replied Lilly. “Moreover, an evil beam has shot into your house, by passing Saturn, the melancholy and malign old man delighting in darkness and sorrow.”

“Yet if Venus stand my friend, let Saturn do his worst,” returned De la Pole, laughing. “Yea, even Saturn in Scorpio.”

“Nay, that planet was in apogee when your father wedded,” said Lilly, quite seriously.

“Have you then questioned the marquis of Montacute’s horoscope?” said De la Pole, with earnestness.

“Among many others, which I am casting for next year’s almanack,” replied the astrologer. “When you know the general’s fate, you know the fate of his troops.”

“I trust that you will not put it then among the raw-heads, coffins, and flames, at the beginning, Master Merlin,” returned De la Pole.

“All things must be where fate will have them,” said Stonehenge, musingly. “I have seen Master Lilly’s erection of your noble father’s scheme, and there is a red stream of gore

flowing through his house ; but whether but to cleanse it, or as a sign of dark deeds done in it, science it seems can scarcely declare."

"I do hope that I am not given into custody to madmen," said the cavalier fiercely. "If you are, as you give yourself out to be, Dethewarre's uncle, my kindred to him is perchance but small claim on your hospitality, but it should protect me from insult, being in your powers."

"'Tis very true ; I admit the claim," said Stonehenge, with a bitter smile. "Lilly, as Master Bulstocke perchance knows not the way to the tower where my nephew and his prisoners are to lodge, you will guide them thither."

Lilly sprang up with alacrity, as if he were glad to get away ; and De la Pole stalked sulkily off between him and Bulstocke, who had not uttered a single word during the interview.

Ingulph was prepared, though with some hesitation, to follow, when Stonehenge made him a sign to remain.

"I will but detain you for an instant, my gallant boy ! my son !" he said, affectionately embracing him. "The times are ripening fast, and in you I behold the destined fulfiller of the glorious dream which humanity shall waken to fulfil. The hand of fate is visible in all the workings of your fortunes—for what was Walstein's fall, unhurt, from a lofty window, compared with thy escape ? And thus do all men already note in thee an extraordinary lot, and look for something more marvellous to follow. Thou hast beauty, youth, intellect, eloquence, and wrongs, and either thou art the destined sower which the times demand, or this ploughshare of God has torn up the earth in vain."

"What share it shall please heaven to give me in the great work, I am ready to execute, to the last drainings of a heart which has scarcely ever beaten without anguish," said Ingulph, with mingled enthusiasm and melancholy.

"All shall be well yet. Lilly and I have been casting your horoscope," said Stonehenge, with a smile, which seemed half in ridicule of his own credulity ; "and we find that on your birth appeared those famous three suns which have so long perplexed Europe ; the middle one encircled by a rainbow, which is heaven's sure sign to the nations that a deliverer is born ; and but that you understand not the mystic symbols—look at this oracle."

As he spoke, Stonehenge displayed the cabalistical picture we have described, at which he looked with great satisfaction. "The luminaries are in violent signs, not beholding each

other," he said, half aloud. "Your planet is in the house of ascendancy, and every success is promised; ruin and destruction to all that pass at angles of opposition; the certain dis-crowning, if not the utter ruin, of the tyrant; even his life shall at one time be in your power."

Ingulph also smiled at the wild absurdity of this prophecy or prediction, while Stonehenge continued in a rapt manner,—"But 'tis just that he who darts a poisoned spear should have it returned into his bosom. You disbelieve in this science, Ingulph, because you have not, like me, experienced its truth; yet even in the depths of the forests of Mexico, wandering among savage hordes, I saw written in the glorious starry book which unfolds its leaves in those resplendent skies, prophecies which have led me over the ocean to my long-abandoned native land to fulfil what they decree. But let us see what discoveries Lilly has made concerning this tinselled young man, the gaudy son of Montacute?"

He then examined with great attention the paper which Lilly had been drawing, apparently with cabalistical figures.

"I do read it, but with difficulty," he said at last, after some study. "This malignant conjunction of the native's star with Mercury, betokens danger to those who regard it in Saturn, as mine does; but other testimonies fall in to mitigate the influence; yet have a care of him, Ingulph, for he is dangerous to both of us."

At this point in the confabulation, Bulstocke's voice was heard at the foot of the staircase, calling Master Dethewarre, in a timid and doubtful tone, as if he feared to interrupt, and was yet compelled.

"Go to them, they wait for you; we will meet again shortly," said Stonehenge, placidly; and exchanging farewells, Ingulph hastened to join his friends.

"Lord help us, but I was afraid for you," said Bulstocke, looking at Ingulph as if he had escaped from a lion's den; but resuming his usual cheerfulness on observing Ingulph's, he added, "For certes there are such strange stories abroad, that although I may truly say that in former times Master Stonehenge was the making of me, I can scarcely get over a sort of shuddering when I see him."

The cavalier and Lilly were waiting at the foot of the staircase, much marvelling at the delay; but hearing their footsteps, resumed progress. They were chatting very sociably, for it was difficult for any one, however reserved, to resist the animation of De la Pole's manners; and Lilly had little of the dignity and gloom of his mystic calling; to the contrary, he

was a man of profuse speech and somewhat vulgar freedom of manners. The familiarity of the young noble was very gratifying to a plebeian who had risen by no very creditable means from a low class of society.

Ingulph and his prisoner were to be lodged in Holbein's Gate; and, after crossing the gardens, Lilly led them thither by a different route than they came, through the chapel of the palace. This lay in what might almost be called ruins, the stained windows being much shattered, the altar removed, the escutcheons, and the wrought pews they surmounted, appropriated to the knights of the garter, the sovereign's being in the centre, were much defaced, the elaborately-carved and massive pulpit of black oak, richly gilded, thrown on the tessellated pavement. Thence Lilly conducted them, by several suites of chambers, up a winding staircase, into the tower over the gateway. They arrived in a large dungeon-like apartment immediately over the gate.

An old mulatto seemed to be waiting for them, very decently clad, but in a foreign garb, with that smooth, sinister, bending aspect only to be acquired in slavery. He spoke in broken English, but sufficiently well to announce that he was appointed to attend on the new visitors. He then led the way to a suite of chambers in the west tower, informing Ingulph that he was to occupy those in the east, and that the gateway below was locked every night, and placed under guard, after which no one without the watchword could leave it.

De la Pole's apartments were furnished in an antique style, and were somewhat gloomy; but preparations had evidently been made for his reception, and things were arranged with a cleanliness and order which marked some female superintendence. In truth, Grizzle, although she had no reason to be very solicitous for the accommodation of the prisoner, had found it impossible to resist her housekeeping instincts, and to her the preparations were due.

"You will be better lodged here than I was in Oxford," said Ingulph, remarking the discontented manner in which the cavalier went from window to window, ascertaining that all looked either into the street or tilt-yard.

"But I shall not escape so easily; 'tis true I have not a relative who is a wizard," said De la Pole peevishly. "But I should not have grieved so much over my fate, if any of these windows had overlooked the gardens, or the river, or anything worth seeing."

Bulstocke, imagining that the prisoner was now satisfac-

torily lodged, invited Ingulph to come home with him, to partake of a little jollity which his wife and some of his city friends were preparing for his reception.

“They think so much of the arm of flesh, as if the victory were any but the Lord’s,” said the valiant alderman, with so much modesty that Ingulph could hardly keep his countenance.

“Oh, consent, consent, my dear lad, and take me with you, for I shall die of weariness, if I am left here alone,” said De la Pole, eagerly. “I give you my word of honour I do not dream of an escape, and will consider myself on parole until you release me.”

“Truly, his lordship shall be welcome too; I warrant we find plenty for us all, and a dozen into the bargain,” said the hospitable Bulstocke; and rather touched with the anxiety and soliciting expression of De la Pole’s usually haughty visage, Ingulph consented.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CITIZENS.

BULSTOCKE lived in Ludgate; and to reach his abode more easily, they took a boat at the palace stairs. From the river, the vastness of Whitehall was more apparent than on the land, and the bright beauty of the evening displayed it to advantage. Tower after tower, terrace after terrace, pile after pile, floated past on the dancing waves, and the cavalier watched eagerly as they went scudding by the ancient mass in which Stonehenge resided. Ingulph, too, noticed it, but his attention was chiefly attracted by the circumstance, that on the summit shone an extraordinary light, resembling a clear, green, stationary star; but it vanished so suddenly after he had observed it, that he had no time to point it out to his companions, even if he had been so inclined.

In the warmth of his heart Bulstocke had invited Lilly to share his “home-again feast,” as he called it, an invitation eagerly accepted; so that when he landed at Blackfriars he had a considerable suite.

The moon shone brightly on the uneven shingles with which the streets were paved, and touched the strange, carved, picturesque houses and jutting balconies with fanciful lights which a painter would have frequently paused to note. The streets were filled with the population returning home from

the sight-seeing of the day, mostly wearied and silent; and Ingulph could not avoid contrasting the royalist population of Oxford with the sobriety of demeanour and garb which characterized puritan London.

They reached Bulstocke's house, a large rambling edifice, built in a chaotic confusion of galleries, pent-houses, and flights of massive stairs, with innumerable lattices, not built in the fear of the window-tax. Entering a wide yard surrounded by the smithies used by Bulstocke in his Vulcanic art, their arrival was announced by the growling of a huge bull-dog, chained to an anvil in the gateway. Bulstocke's voice instantly changed the tune to a joyful whine of recognition; but the signal seemed to be heard within, for a door flew open, and a voice exclaiming, "Why, John, John, lad, is it thou?" was heard, and Bulstocke was caught in the arms of his spouse, and surrounded by a whirlpool of friends, apprentices, domestics, and armourers, who came rushing out to welcome their warlike master home.

"Why, woman, thou wilt fairly shame me to tussle me thus before folks," said Bulstocke, nevertheless kissing his short, plump, buxom little wife again and again. "And how are ye all, neighbours?—tut, 'tis not so much to be in a battle after all;—you have let the lads have holiday, wife, I suppose, since all the fires are out?"

"Tut, man, never think of that now, when we have thee home again, and ne'er a bullet in thee; but oh, it was venture-some of thee to go!" said Mistress Bulstocke, in a flood of joy and admiration.

"Why, what could my pikes have done without me, that have had the word of command from me these score years?" said the worthy citizen. "But to thy comfort, lass, thou hast me here as sound as a trout, and as hearty as a buck; but lead in, lead in, I have honourable guests to show you."

The whole company trooped back to the spacious parlour in which they had been assembled, and as they were obliged to pass through the kitchen to it, preparations on a grand scale for the feast were visible.

The floor, and nearly all the furniture, was of massive oak, rudely carved, the fireplace occupying nearly one end of the room, so vast it was. As this was an occasion of great pomp, the floor was strewed with rushes, which diffused a not unpleasant odour in the room. But the cavalier's attention was chiefly directed to the company, and he quietly formed his observations on them as he went.

In the liberality of her joy, Mistress Bulstocke had invited

nearly a score of her own and her husband's special friends, all substantial citizens, in which order the worthy alderman stood among the foremost. One or two were exceptions to this class, such as the famous theologian, Master Milton, who also kept a school in Aldersgate, and was considered a very respectable man. But at present he was in a somewhat gloomy disposition of mind, for it was not long after his wife had run away from him, disgusted with the evangelic severity of his manners. There was also Master Tomkins, a personage of greater consideration, having been clerk of the household to the queen, when she had one to keep, and who was suspected to be looking forward with anxiety for her majesty's return. He was an austere and magisterial man, dressed in the gloomiest and richest materials which could be procured for money, and with rosettes of a truly enormous size in his shoes, that being the reigning court mode, and the only sign he dared openly give of loyalty. Tomkins was connected by marriage with the Presbyterian faction, having for wife a sister of Waller, the poet, who had taken a considerable part against the king in parliament; but both the latter were suspected of secret conversion to the royalist interest.

Among the citizens was one whom subsequent circumstances require us to mention specially. He was a rich goldsmith, called Chaloner, a large, portly man, with a long beard, and an air of profound gravity, but who was thought to be something too much under the dominion of his wife, a lively, handsome, and rather shrewish dame, who well knew how to use her good looks and sharp tongue in attaining and preserving her sway.

Between Tomkins's wife and Chaloner's, although particular friends, there waged a kind of civil war, for Tomkins's wife, on the score of her gentle blood, and her husband's former court station, considered herself as infinitely elevated above the rank of any mere citizen. She took all opportunities of expressing a sense of this superiority, insomuch that Mistress Chaloner had despitefully given her the name of the gentlewoman, by which she was generally designated. The war, though never openly declared, raged on tacitly, in dress, in jewels, ribands, pride, husbands, and in fact, all things, even in wit, but there Mistress Chaloner's edged tongue gave her too decided an advantage.

On the other hand, Madam Tomkins's not-to-be-doubted-aristocratical distinctions gave her the ascendancy, as was proved by the essential difference of her title—Madam being only applied to women of rank. Mistress Chaloner's path,

by the necessity of being contrary to her rival, seemed unavoidably chalked out to her in democratical extremes. But, strange to say, in politics only they agreed in a disagreeing manner; for while Mistress Chaloner continually and on all occasions and on none railed at the pride, insolence, tyranny, and popish tendencies of the court, sneered at the pretences of folks who would be thought to belong to it, and exalted the virtues, riches, and other good qualities of the citizens—she secretly, in her woman's heart, envied the distinction of being connected in any way with that mass of scarlet and golden glories which her imagination figured in a royal court.

Both ladies were garbed in their Genoa velvets, rich with brocade and jewels; but, alas, Madam Tomkins had on the true genuine court-tire, such as was worn at her majesty's last presence at Whitehall. Mistress Chaloner took little pleasure in the indisputable superiority of her personal charms, under this dispensation. But, albeit, feeling to her heart's core the inferiority of her blue velvet cap, thick sown with pearls though it was, she was too good a general to show any signs of discomfiture in the presence of the enemy. On the contrary, about the time the guests arrived, she was in vehement disputation with Madam Tomkins, on the covenant, and alleging that for her part she saw no reason to insert those loving protestations as to the inviolability of the king's person, when all the world knew that a cannon-ball would as soon hit a prince as a 'prentice.

"You know more of 'prentices than I can pretend to, Mistress Chaloner," replied Madam Tomkins; "but methinks even cannon and ball have more respect for the Lord's anointed than the clamorous disloyal tongues of which there are so many in this city."

"'Tis an observation for your chawing, Master Henderson," said Mistress Chaloner, turning to the Scotch divine, who was then at the height of his popularity in London.

"Truly, fair Mistress Chaloner, I know not that I am accountable for any of my doings in this city, which may verily be called the stronghold of David, save to the Lord, and the committee of the estates of these two covenanted kingdoms," replied the presbyter, in a strong Scotch accent, which, in the enthusiasm of their new alliance, had ceased to be disagreeable to the southern ear, or at least so ridiculous as it had once been considered.

"And your wife, and your wife, Master Henderson," said Mistress Chaloner, with equal gravity.

This dialogue took place some time before Bulstocke and

his guests arrived, who were now ushered with great ceremony into the parlour or dining-hall of his spacious abode.

"Now, by all we must not swear by, I am as glad to see you home again as ever I was to see my wedding kirtle," said Mistress Chaloner, in her cheery way. "Look you, I have been merry this hour, against wind and tide, and 'tis as ill laughing alone, as dancing alone, or sleeping alone; heaven keep us against ghosts these war-times."

"Were I a ghost, you would have reason to say so, fair mistress," said De la Pôle, with his usual gallantry. Mistress Chaloner looked at him with a quick, merry glance, and then at Bulstocke, to ascertain who this lively resposner was. But the alderman seemed to have some hesitation, and two or three times gulped down the words with which he commenced an introduction, staring at his wife with a face full of infinite meanings; and no marvel, considering the relationship which one of the new guests held to her.

"Why, in good troth, you look as lackadaisical and full of nothingness as poor Chaloner, when he was courting me, knowing himself the worst of a score," said Mistress Chaloner. "Heaven grant you are not eye-blasted, for they say there is a witch lives in some quarter of Whitehall, whence they say you are come."

"Nay, we run more risk of being bewitched where we are," said the cavalier, with a glance, which set Mistress Chaloner fluttering her fan.

"Sir," said Henderson, austerely, "I am grieved to see you have so muckle of the ill practices of the court, in this be-honeying and larding of women with high-seasoned compliments, so that they have no relish left them for the plain phraseology in which honest men bid them do their duty."

"Nay, Master Henderson, truly you wrong the court," said Madame Tomkins, but without stating why, depending with reason on the majesty of an *ipse dixit*.

"And more yourself, for the sweetest word that ever I heard from courtier never made me forget the sourest word from priest," said Mistress Chaloner, with a smile of mingled coquetry and sarcasm.

By this time Bulstocke felt the necessity of speaking, and had screwed his courage to the point.

"Why, you see, wife," he said, "the young man himself cannot be to blame in the matter, and thy sister herself owes *him* no grudge; but, truly," he added, checking his speech, and turning to the company, "'tis an ill life to live in hatred; and although my lord's father was pleased to do his best to

ruin me in the Star-Chamber times, yet, wife, I hope you will make him welcome for his brother's sake, Master Dethewarre here."

"My lord! what lord?" said Madam Tomkins, hurriedly.

"Pardon my intrusion, worthy lady," said the cavalier, with winning cordiality, and taking Mistress Bulstocke's hand. "But, indeed, your husband's kindness makes me most anxious to right the injustice my father may perchance unwittingly have done, which I engage myself to do, as soon as there is a good peace with his majesty concluded, which all honest folk do pray for night and day."

"Nay, indeed, Mistress Bulstocke, ye canna well say your prayers the night with the breath that could keep the coals of this feud alive, after so honourable a saying and acknowledgment," observed Henderson.

"There's more in't, there's more in't," said Mistress Bulstocke, with evident confusion.

"Why, truly, it is not a blood-feud—blood hath not been spilt in the matter?" said Henderson, inquiringly. "If not, there is naething sae sweet and comely in a Christian as the forgiveness of ane anither's transgressions."

"Well, John Bulstocke, ye are the best judge; and whom you invite I will make welcome," said Mrs. Bulstocke, but still with some reluctance.

"Then here's the end of a fray, and the beginning of a feast," said Mistress Chaloner, with characteristic gaiety; and De la Pole, whose high rank cast Dethewarre into shadow with the majority of the guests, was formally presented to each and all.

Madam Tomkins extended her hand, in the stately court fashion, for the cavalier to kiss; which he did with all solemnity, emphatically marking his knowledge of the distinctions of rank by making his lips acquainted with Mistress Chaloner's pleasant cheek, in the heartiest city style.

"By yea and nay, Chaloner, though I say it to thy face, 'tis the heartiest buss I have had this many a day," said Mistress Chaloner, smiling and ruddying all over. "But all the world knows my lord is his majesty's prime soldier; and on my troth I do love a soldier, and would thou hadst been out with the train-bands on this Gloucester business, Chaloner!—for they are like to be all in all these times."

But Milton, whose great theological abilities always attracted attention to what he said, now interposed to draw Ingulph from the shade.

"Master Dethewarre, I rejoice to see you," he said, in his

calm, musical accents, while Ingulph perused the countenance of the famous polemic, which might almost have been judged too femininely beautiful but for the severity and intellectual loftiness of its expression; "I rejoice to see one who is so likely to prove a pillar in that gorgeous temple we are building to Jehovah, so far exceeding Solomon's, that its roof shall be the unbounded heavens, and all the nations of the earth may meet in it."

"I have a heart and a hand ready in a good cause, and that is all," said Ingulph, very modestly.

"Nay, for we have heard that the Muses have touched your lips with the hallowed fire," said Milton. "And such a voice, backed by such deeds, may well be a trumpet-blast to waken the earth from its lethargy of a thousand years."

"There needs not that in a land where you have spoken, Master Milton," replied Ingulph. "The sword has been thrust into my hand, and it will become too hard and callous to attune the warbling wires."

"Let us all, at all events, do our duty," said Milton. "But a breath of fire is now breathed into the nostrils of this nation, which fast grows instinct with the life of liberty. Awhile ago, and all seemed night; black, Cimmerian night; the dark that was ere light arose on chaos; when of a sudden the stars appear, and our whole sky is fretted with constellations of glories strewn as prodigally as the gold-dust on some Indian emperor's triumphal way. O God! what shall we live to see if this great wave of human progress be not broken until it roll into an universal ocean!"

"But, truly, is this Master Dethewarre that escaped from Oxon Castle, by flying without wings?" interrupted Mistress Chaloner, in great fear of a sermon. "I pray you sir, tell us truly the story, whereof we have so many variations, for we shall have supper anon, and I would get my gaping over."

As this seemed to be a topic of general interest, and all joined unanimously in requesting him to relate the adventure, and even De la Pole, with an ironical smile, Ingulph had now to tell the tale of his escape, and with all the particularity which women's minute imaginativeness, by men styled pettiness of thought, requires. He soon grew into favour with the two rival ladies, and from different causes; with one for having served the court in its pleasures, with the other for having fought against it in its battles.

But Mistress Chaloner was by so much the handsomer woman, and had such good-humoured and roguish smiles, and

such a bewitching way (according to the jolly city manners of that day) of *pinching on the sly, yes, verily, of hugging and clutching*, as if yielding to the emotions inspired by the recital, that Ingulph involuntarily heightened all his doings against the court to please her.

Whether De la Pole was vexed with this momentary eclipse, or whether, with his usual subtlety, he fathomed the secret of the rivalry between the two ladies, he played them off admirably one against another. He now feigned to devote himself to Madam Tomkins, even while his ear was attent on the merriment of Mistress Chaloner, who, enraged at being neglected, determined to show that she cared for ne'er a lord in the land, and so devoted herself to Ingulph.

The conversation grew more general, naturally drifting into politics, in which Madame Tomkins always pretended to be too mysteriously well informed ever to open her lips, lest she should inadvertently betray some great secret of state. Mistress Chaloner, on the contrary, gave her opinion on every topic that was started; and although her views on state affairs were not at all inspired by Machiavellian sagacity, her rattling gaiety and handsome looks always secured attention even from the grave and really politic presbyter, Henderson.

De la Pole adapted himself with more than Protean versatility to the most opposite views and characters in the company.

"Certes," said he to Milton, in reply to some observation, "there is something mountainous and vasty but chaotic looming through the mists in your London brains; but 'tis but a huge phantasm, not an abiding reality."

"You say so, for you know not its name, my lord," said Milton, kindling to enthusiasm. "It is liberty—vast, limitless liberty! The human mind ariseth like a giant refreshed with wine; and all the petty chains which kings and priests—ay, and presbyters—have forged for it, shall burst with but the stretching of the limbs. Look again, I tell you, at this London, once sodden and silent as a corpse in the sepulchre; now what a mighty forge of thought is it become, wherein the hammers of a thousand smiths are continually at work! And though some send forth rude unfashioned weapons, or unwieldy armours that crush the bearer, still 'tis all wrought in a metal which, when the destined artificer comes, shall be wrought into one great and irresistible whole; though what that whole shall be, lives only in the thought of the Eternal. Listen, and ye shall hear mechanics and dysters plan commonwealths as seriously as Plato, ay, and perchance more wisely;

women and babes whose lips still flow with mother-milk, make simple the hard, and confound the wise with foolishness. Here one sits trimming his lamp by night, lest the kingdom of Christ should come and find him asleep; another muses whether to his hand, or to Peterkins, his neighbour, shall the sceptre of a thousand years be confided; anon, one discusses in his garret what terms of peace the nation shall offer to the king; his neighbour, the scholar, denieth any, and dreameth nightly of antique Greece and Rome, abhorring kings; yea, indeed, these are great times, if the end belie not the beginning!"

"The shepherd distrusts a bright dawn," said Ingulph, with a sigh.

"But being a poet, Master Milton, and my Lord Berkeley says, one of an excellent device, I marvel you side with a cause which utterly dislikes and contemns such frivolous matters," said the cavalier.

"The beauties, glories, and grandeur which accompany royalty and prelacy, are even as the purple and golden clouds that glorify yet darken the pure sunlight!" replied the poet. "But I too have known the spells these exercise; yea, when in Rome, with much ado did I keep my knees stubborn, when a hundred thousand men knelt in the dust to receive the benediction of a tottering old dotard in cloth of gold. I have stood in St. Peter's when the fervent noonday of Italy poured an ocean of emblazoned light through its vast temples, flooding in glory all those miracles of art which boundless genius and wealth have collected in them; but as I gazed through that wilderness of gilded marble, crowded with kneeling devotees, glistening with banners, altars that flamed with gold and precious-stones, sumptuous priests wafting the golden censers to those glorious vaults with perfumed smoke of ambergris and Egyptian nard,—I remembered that the universe is the temple of God, and felt cabined and imprisoned in all that simulate magnificence! And for the same reason, the glitter and pomp of courts did ever move me but to pity that men should consent to be courtiers that might be freemen!"

"Methinks Master Pym and his coadjutors themselves would stare to hear you talk," said De la Pole, much surprised.

"Let them do their appointed task; other hands will snatch the torch when they relinquish it," replied Milton. "They are but pioneers; when the skirmishers retire, the trampling masses of the battle advance."

"Nay, then I will set those on you that can manage you

better," said De la Pole laughing. "Is it true that there is a certain book lately appeared with Master Milton's name to it, ladies, pleading both the lawfulness and necessity of a Christian freedom in the matter of divorce, if a man, on a careful trial,—let us say, of some three months or so,—find his wife disagreeable to him either in person or mind?"

"Chaloner, wouldst thou have given me so long a turn?—I know some husbands that would not," said Mistress Chaloner, laughing outright.

"It is a monstrous and a damnable heresy, being in essence the abominable antinomian doctrine of the dissolution of all moral ties and obligations!" exclaimed Henderson.

"Methinks it is a popish fashion, then, to lay down the law thus absolutely," said Milton, with warmth. "But of a truth we are like to find our presbyters as insolent and conscience-binding as ever the prelatical church with monkish Canterbury at its head; for they do rage as intolerantly against all dissent and difference from their modern inventions, as ever the others from ancient ones."

This was almost for the first time that Ingulph clearly understood or believed an assertion which was frequently made in Oxford, that the parliamentarians included two religious factions which were likely to split from one another, and thus to divide their strength. He concluded that Milton was one of the new sect called independents, and he turned with some interest to watch the theological concussion which seemed now inevitable. Henderson was evidently collecting himself for an onset, when Mistress Chaloner most fortunately broke in.

"Prythee, Master Milton," she said, pouting her pretty lips, "is a woman but a mere chattel, like a man's ox, or his ass?"

"If woman be not created for submission," returned the poet, "why then is her flesh so tender, her bones so weak, her muscles so flexible, her nature fearful and abject?"

"If you ask me, Master Milton, I could answer you!" said De la Pole, with his licentious smile.

"Surely not that man might tyrannize over her by his brute force!" said Ingulph, warmly. "But that he might win her love by the noblest of all claims, gratitude, by protecting her weakness with his strength."

"Woman is made for man, for his enjoyment and service merely," said Milton, with increasing vehemence. "Man hath a noble destiny in the creation; 'tis honour enough for woman that she is created to obey him voluntarily."

“Hear you that!” exclaimed Mistress Chaloner. “I’ll warrant, Master Milton, there are some men would fain believe you.”

“Woman is the glory, the beauty, the effulgence, the colouring, the completion of nature!” said Ingulph, passionately. “Without her, our moral world were as desolate, and hopeless, and dark as the physical one without a sun.”

“Hear you that!” again exclaimed Mistress Chaloner, triumphantly.

“You are in love, Master Dethewarre, and I grieve to think it, coming from what quarter of the compass you do,” said Milton, in a tone of grave and stern rebuke; and the young man involuntarily coloured.

“Why, Master Milton, they do tell us your own wife hath returned to Oxford, from all the enjoyment of your superiority,” said De la Pole, with a slight laugh.

“Truly, my home and hearth are desolate,” said Milton, in a tone of deep bitterness. “It is thus that evil itself works blindly to good; and that blow which at first dazzled and stunned my sight has removed the scales of prejudice; so that I now see that beside those rare crimes which the prelatical courts admit to the heavenly privilege of divorce, there are a myriad reasons which may justly free a man from that loathsome Mezentian thralldom, that chaining of a living body to a cold, putrefying corpse.”

“This is indeed a whirling world, when the pillars of such a mind are bending!” said Ingulph, pausing in astonishment at these sentiments from the mouth of the religious Milton.

“Yea, for the old structure of the world must be dashed to pieces ere we can rebuild it on sure foundations,” replied Milton, enthusiastically. “Yea, from the dark bosom of desolation our structure shall arise, like the enchanted palace of the Lady of the Lake from its black waters, the glorious architecture piled to the skies, and yet hewn out of one solid diamond!”

“Tut, gentlemen! but we may be all of a mind at least on the king’s pork; and here comes a wild boar from his forest of Needwood,” said Bulstocke, rubbing his hands and springing up, for now appeared his spouse, after many disappearances from among her guests in housewifely anxiety, heading with modest triumph the march of the supper. Surrounded by numerous dishes whose very receipts are forgotten in these degenerate times, carried in triumph on a verdant hurdle of oak, came a wild boar, roasted whole, with the tusks carefully blanched, and gaping wide with large lemons in its jaws.

At this sight, party animosities faded away, for among the luxuries of our ancestors the flesh of the wild boar was considered meat for kings, and was indeed but seldom served but at the tables of persons of rank.

"Come, Master Dethewarre, thou and I will be yoke-fellows for the evening," said Mistress Chaloner, pettishly glancing at De la Pole, who was offering his arm to Madam Tomkins. "Never frown, Chaloner, if I make the young gentleman my playmate before you, for 'tis better so than another way; so let's be cheek by jowl, and chatter as fast as fishwives."

"*Tête-à-tête*, methinks, were a courtlier phrase," said Madam Tomkins, with a smile of pity at the young cavalier.

"Nay, for your French is not an honest language; it can do wrong with so fair a visage," replied Mistress Chaloner. "Look to your head, bedfellow, that day I begin to translate my city doings into court language; and so good keep us all, and let us to supper."

"Would you would employ me as your tutor in the task, fair Mistress Chaloner!" said De la Pole with a sigh, which meant far more than his offered arm to Madam Tomkins.

"Hear you that, sleepy Chaloner!" said the gay citizeness, clapping her husband on the shoulder, who had sunk into a reverie. "Now, by'r lady, I wish you would not throw temptations in one's way, for a body cannot always know to a certainty when you are asleep or awake."

"Now, Master Henderson, give us a short grace, for there is nothing worse than cold boar fat," said Bulstocke, seizing the vast carving-knife which he was to handle; and there was a reverent silence.

Henderson complied, though as usual at a great length, insomuch that Bulstocke showed visible signs of impatience, and sliced little bits off the boar; and the very moment the amen was pronounced, his knife and fork were buried in it. Ingulph could scarce forbear laughing at the hypocritical reverence with which De la Pole listened to the grace, without any sign of weariness. All then seated themselves, and whether by accident or design, the cavalier took his place between Mistress Chaloner and Madam Tomkins.

Ingulph made room for the presbyter between himself and Milton.

"Truly!" said Henderson, in an exulting whisper to Ingulph. "Truly, it were of an unspeakable advantage to the gude cause to win over so noble and powerful a gentle-

man, with such excellent shining ability to advance any, good or bad."

Ingulph smiled, and watched with amusement the operations of his versatile rival.

For some time he directed his conversation almost exclusively to Madam Tomkins, to the indescribable delight of the stately dame, who relaxed from her lofty silence when she found herself in contact with a courtier of such high rank. Her satisfaction was heightened by the low and confidential tone which De la Pole adopted towards her, and by the visible pouting and vexation of Mistress Chaloner. But very often De la Pole's eye wandered over the plump handsome form of the rival citizeness; and often when he seemed all attention to Madam Tomkins's whispered politics, he was listening to Mistress Chaloner's heedless observations on all things.

Nor was the cavalier's silent homage lost on Mistress Chaloner, who, with a woman's quickness, felt rather than perceived that his eyes were turned towards her. Without once returning this gaze even with a glance, the colour frequently mounted in her complexion, her eyes sparkled still more brightly, and her natural vivacity hurried her sometimes into wit, and sometimes into folly, which only her handsome face and exhilarating laugh could have made, not only tolerable, but even delightful.

Manœuvring thus, Madam Tomkins was raised to the ninth heaven by the distinction and deference she received, while Mistress Chaloner was convinced that at least the young lord comprehended she was the handsomest woman in the room. And not only did he thus incompatibly succeed, but by adopting various forms he won the favour of all the company. He managed to be at once gay and hearty with Bulstocke, demure and sober with the severer portion of the company, without offending or surprising either. He drank healths with Bulstocke, discussed morality with Milton, points of controversy with Henderson, praised Mistress Bulstocke's cookery and spiced wines, for he had found her weak point too, until the good old woman forgot all family feuds, and regarded him as kindly as if he had been some dear old friend; assured Tomkins that the queen frequently regretted his absence from the intendance of her affairs, and in the same breath inquired of Chaloner whether he had ever presented his wife at court, as her majesty was known to prefer women of fair presence for her own personal service. He sighed for peace

so patriotically, and insinuated at the same time so slyly the rapid progress of the royal arms, that he excited a vague feeling of alarm, even in those who had just returned from a triumph over them.

De la Pole's wit, usually so licentious, had a truly cameleon power of shifting colour, and he contrived, while seeming to reflect the predominant tone of the company, to show out glimpses of his real opinions which produced effects only where intended. The freemasonry of mind is as subtle in communication as air; and Bulstocke's frequent chuckles, and the laughing glances of Mistress Chaloner, showed how well they understood him. Something of the magic influence which the cavalier obtained was of course to be imputed to the lustre of his high rank, which in that age still blazed in the popular eye with the glories of the set sun of chivalry.

Only the subtlest talent could have infused the notions which he managed to instil around him so invisibly; and yet, when he arose to depart, the majority of the company were sadly musing on the prosperous condition of the king's affairs; and dim anticipations of some vast agency at work which must restore the old order of things swayed the minds of those who less feared such a change, or perhaps desired it.

Meantime, under Bulstocke's auspices, the most jovial conviviality reigned; but as we have in our time received some special hints as to the impropriety of that antique freedom, we reluctantly abstain from giving the authentic details of the conversation which are now lying before us. It was day-break ere the party broke up, and the brothers, if we may call them so, returned to Whitehall.

De la Pole's success was apparent at his departure. Madam Tomkins, whose court rank gave her the privilege, earnestly invited him to honour her roof with his presence whenever he deigned; and, having discovered that Chaloner was a jeweller, he invited himself to visit him under pretext of asking his advice as to the setting of some diamonds which he intended for presents, when the parliament should be pleased to set him at liberty. He assured Bulstocke that, after tasting the quality of his wit and wine, he need not marvel if he found him a frequent visitor; and retired, carrying with him golden opinions from all.

Ingulph was not altogether displeased to notice the flutter of smiles and blushes with which Mistress Chaloner received the adieux of the young cavalier, which he spoke in a low tone. Albeit sufficiently free of speech and manners, Chaloner's wife appeared to him a woman of an excellent heart, and

attached to her husband. There was not much to be feared, therefore, in the effect of De la Pole's gallantries in that quarter; and Ingulph was perhaps unconsciously influenced by a feeling similar to that of the humane gardener, who, unwilling to crush a slug which he found on his own cabbages, threw it over the hedge upon his neighbour's.

Chaloner, however, seemed not altogether to relish the affair, and he spoke somewhat tartly to his wife on a subject somewhat remote from it, rating her for not taking the hints which he declared he had frequently given her that he was nearly dead for want of sleep. To which the coquettish citizeness replied only with a laugh, and by leading off her lord and master by his long brown beard.

CHAPTER XX.

THE period which immediately followed Ingulph's arrival in London was full of circumstances which influenced all his future destiny and opinions. It was impossible to breathe an atmosphere so fraught with fire without catching flame; and the dominant passions of Ingulph's nature found but too many whirlwinds running their way not to join in the rush.

The contempt of authority, the fury against oppression, the levelling doctrines which began to be prevalent, flattered the wounds in that proud heart, stung over with wrongs. The visions of universal equality and freedom which haunted men's hearts, became radiant realities in the rich imagination of the young poet. The desolation of that dreariest of all human sentiments—hopeless love—the glassy but impassable nature of the prejudices which made it so—maddened him with the despair of a bird confined in a crystal cage. To bring down the order of things which had crushed him, whose malignant leer had welcomed even his first glimpse of the sun; to dash to pieces those fragile distinctions which yet separated him for ever from the woman he adored; these were lava thoughts, which needed but fashioning to become thunderbolts.

And hopeless most apparently this passion was, even to the visionary foresight of youth. His flight from Oxford, the reasons alleged, his subsequent achievements, were recorded in the royalist journal, the *Mercurius Aulicus*, published under the court's own direction, with all possible circumstances of ridicule, insult, and execration which his supposed presumption, and subsequent treasons, merited from a court

scribe. Nearly at the same time he was introduced to Pym, the destroyer of Strafford, by Stonehenge, and accepted from him a commission to raise troops in the parliament's service. Proceedings were to be commenced before the parliament on the circumstances of his birth; but such was the influence exercised by the visions of judiciary astrology over the strong intellect of Stonehenge, that he declared it was necessary to wait for a fortunate conjunction of the stars ere he could take the preliminary step of consulting with his lawyers.

These vague expectations, and the thought that glory, even acquired against the cause of Marie, elevated him nearer to her, heightened his military zeal. Joyce, whom he had appointed one of his officers, ably assisted him in levying his recruits, which he raised principally among the young apprentices, who had seen and admired his valour, and were full of enthusiasm in their young leader. The gold of Stonehenge did all the rest.

Meanwhile, so long as De la Pole remained a prisoner in London, the dread of losing Marie utterly seemed adjourned. And the young cavalier himself was apparently content to remain; he had received his father's command to offer a large ransom to the parliament for his liberty; but he generously declared that he was his brother's prisoner, and would look to none but him for his redemption. On the contrary, Ingulph obstinately refused to meddle in the matter, and referred him continually to the parliament; perhaps because he knew that their great dislike of Montacute rendered their consent to his son's enlargement unlikely. Ingulph made this dispute the pretext for avoiding as much as possible his brother's society, which, with the secret intentions existing against him in his heart, was in a high degree painful to him, affecting his fine nature with a species of remorse.

De la Pole seemed not to be much troubled by that circumstance, nor indeed by any other. He had merely given his parole not to attempt an escape, which indeed would have been very difficult; and was allowed the free range of the city; and he used his tower of the Gate House rather as his palace than his prison. He had a retinue of his own servants about him, received what visitors he chose, and lived as freely and magnificently as if in one of his father's castles. He visited frequently in the city, where his wit and rank made him universally sought, and among the nobility who adhered to the parliament, and remained in London, many of whom were his near relations.

Some of the most remarkable of these personages composed

what was then commonly styled the Party Volant, from the fluctuating nature of their principles, or rather actions. The majority had joined the parliament from motives of private pique or caprice, but some dim shadow of coming events began to work wonders in converting these courtly democrats. The joke was getting too serious; that phantom of popular power which they thought to fashion out of smoke, and dissipate with a breath, began to take a solid and gigantic form, and to affect with vague terror those who had raised it as they imagined to do their bidding.

The earl of Northumberland was of these, a nobleman whose greatness in the common eye was little less than kingly; and the part which he had taken with the parliament, languid and distrustful as it was, made him very popular. The grandeur of his ancestry, his vast possessions, the stateliness of his manners, combined to increase this veneration; but his excessive pride and instability of purpose made him an object of dislike and suspicion to the parliamentary leaders, though from necessity they affected profound deference and trust both in his wisdom and fidelity.

But it was the great earl's daughter, the widowed countess of Carlisle, who swayed him in almost all the counsels he embraced, and those of the considerable party whose uncertain and wavering policy had gained them the appropriate nickname of Volant. The earls of Holland, Clare, Portland, and in fact nearly all the few peers remaining with the parliament; Waller, the poet, and many other members of the commons; a considerable mass of the citizens, wearied of the extreme rigour of the presbyterian discipline, and of the expense of the war—might be included in the list. The countess, whose beauty, wit, and fascination of manner gave her the greatest influence over those frivolous and insincere politicians, was not supposed to be animated by any love of abstract principles in her opposition to the court, but by revenge for the king's consent to the execution of Strafford, to whom she was said to have been strongly attached. If so, the logic was very womanly which induced her to abet the triumph of those men who had brought Strafford to the block, against the king who would have saved him—but who, it is true, did not.

Ingulph was meanwhile actively engaged in his military preparations, and his leisure was abundantly occupied in studying the singular characters of his new relatives, which indeed embodied some of the main characteristics of the age.

Bulstocke might fairly be taken as a representative of the

citizen class, under the influence of a peculiar phase in politics. He was a jolly, good-hearted man, who, in the main, wished well alike to king and country, and did not separate the ideas even in fighting against the royal banner. It was against the tyranny exercised under his authority, some rude blows from which he had himself received, that he always imagined himself to be contending. But a religion which banished all feasts out of the calendar suited not his love of good cheer, and still less its numerous fasts his very excellent appetite; so that Bulstocke was full as often acting against his own secret wishes as for them when zealously engaged in establishing the presbyterian sway.

But, like all true Englishmen, Bulstocke was considerably under petticoat influence, and that, in his family, ran all in one way. Not that his wife was much of a politician, for she was one of the good old times, who, provided that her pickles ripened well, and her currant wines proved sweet and bright, heeded the revolutions of state no more than those of the heavenly bodies. But her sister, Grizzle, who had preserved herself in a state of single blessedness to a pretty ripe age, was a woman whose fanatic enthusiasm was remarkable even in that age of religious furor.

Grizzle's intellect was naturally strong rather than good, and some early disappointments added sourness and irritability to her ascetic gloom. In her own sect she was accordingly, but without the least intended irony, known by the spiritual cognomen of Tribulation Dethewarre. But saint as she now was, report assigned to her youth a very different complexion. This circumstance, coupled with the dislike which she entertained for De la Pole, before he could have given her any occasion, put it into Ingulph's mind that she was the personage who had occasioned the breach between his father and the knight of De la Pole. Once or twice he even suspected that she might be his own mother; but her little kindness to him, and Stonehenge's positive assertion that his mother was dead—dead of a broken heart—removed this apprehension.

But it was Stonehenge himself who chiefly fixed his observation, as well from the eccentricity and mystery of his character, as from its singular contradictions. In politics he was at once royalist and revolutionist, so mixed in his notions that sometimes Ingulph thought he was an enthusiast of the fifth-monarchy scheme. One thing was certain, that he desired to dethrone the reigning family, but not to destroy the throne. For whom then was it to be preserved? The fanatic expectation of the second advent seemed, however, unlikely

to be Stonehenge's, for he had a strange theory of religion of his own with which it was irreconcilable. Whether the unmerited misfortunes which, according to him, he had suffered during his life, had troubled his otherwise clear intellect, and his large acquaintance with human misery urged him on such a solution of the enigma of man's moral constitution, can scarcely be asserted; but he had imbibed the Manichean doctrine of the two contending powers of good and evil. Luckily he now considered that the good principle had attained the mastery, and that all things were tending towards happiness and virtue.

Still his ideas were essentially the reverse of democratic; and sometimes Ingulph imagined that, deceived either by his affection for him, or by some starry fancy, he regarded him as one destined to overthrow and then to clutch up the crown! He seemed to look forward to some epoch in which he should appear in a far different rank from that which he now enjoyed; and disliked that his wife should mingle in the society of those who seemed to be her equals. The seclusion in which she lived, and perhaps some encouragement of his own to baffle curiosity, had probably given rise to the absurd rumour of her witchcraft.

Perhaps there might be another reason which Stonehenge scarcely avowed to himself. His young wife, of whom he was passionately fond, was extremely beautiful, innocent almost to folly, and but little acquainted with the manners of the distant and colder regions to which she had been transplanted from her native Mexico. She was just at the period when the passions begin to deepen in colour, after the first faint blushes which they spread over the whiteness of the soul, like dawn on the pale skies. Not that Stonehenge in the least misdoubted the love or fidelity of his fair wife; on the contrary, in the certainty of both he seemed to place an unbounded trust, and therein to find a paradise of tranquil, pure, and so to speak, sublimed delight, for there was little of sensual mingled in the love of Stonehenge. There was even something paternal and filial in their relation; supreme and spiritual tenderness on one side, on the other unbounded affection, confidence, and veneration.

Much of this might be accounted for by the peculiar circumstances under which Stonehenge won his youthful bride, and which Ingulph learned from the innocent young thing herself in the course of the many conversations they had together; for Stonehenge seemed not to apprehend the least danger from their unreserved intercourse, interpreting by his own the noble

and virtuous nature of Ingulph. Between the two he seemed to share the large affections of his heart with all the more liberality, that, like sweet streams bursting from a rock into light, they had been long suppressed.

It appeared that Ramona was the daughter of a Mexican noble of the highest class, and of a savage woman of the tribes bordering on the Spanish dominion, who had found the restraints of civilized life, even though embellished by the artifices of love and wealth, insupportable. She had fled from her Spanish lover, and rejoined her tribe, bearing with her the sole pledge of her past love in the infant Ramona. Wandering among these savage tribes on some of his visionary speculations, Stonehenge found that this woman had become the squaw of the chief of her tribe; and among the brood of red little savages which now called her mother, the European blood of Ramona was apparent.

The first love of woman is the key of the whole melody, whatever changes or discords may jar the ear. Ramona's mother sickened of some fatal disease, and dying, reverted with tenderness to the memory of the lover she had deserted. She wrung from the European a promise to convey the child back to its parent, and furnished him with indubitable tokens by which the Spanish noble would recognise it as his own. But Ramona shall tell the rest of the story herself in her own simple language.

"Because I was not dusky-red as they were, they intended to sacrifice me to the Great River," she said. "But he took me away by night, and we travelled many moons towards the rising sun. And then he was so wise, that when we left the Indians, he found out our way by the light of a star! He killed birds for me to eat, and found me wild maize; and when I was weary, he carried me in his arms; and by night I slept in his bosom, and was not afraid, although I heard the panthers and bears howling about our fire. He brought me to my father's home again; and for years after, my father and he would often sit and talk together about the stars and the God of the English; and he taught me your language. At last they told me I was to marry him, lest he should leave us; and my father bade me, and I loved him as well as my father, so I did what they bade me; but your country is not warm enough for me, and your sun is like our moon, and your skies are so blue!"

This tale, childish as it was, was not uttered without an occasional wandering flush and a degree of hesitation, which marked the union of riper and more womanly thoughts with

all that simplicity and innocence. There remained something of the forest wildness in Ramona, the untamed spirit and fiery playfulness of her savage mother mingled with the pride and warmth of her Spanish blood. Her beautiful eyes seemed to have caught something of the endless variety of sun and shade which chequer the foliage of those immense forests of South America in which her childhood was spent. Withal there was a rapt and passionate seriousness at times in her manners which denoted great depth of feeling.

She was indeed the light and beauty of that else dreary household, and Ingulph's affectionate nature, melted by his own misfortunes, flowed towards her with a feeling of tenderness, the sweetest and purest that he had ever felt. The senses had no part in this exquisite emotion; Ingulph had but too well experienced passion to doubt the nature of his feeling; but the age, sex, and confiding innocence of the young girl affected him with an emotion warmer and yet as holy as fraternal love. It was to passion what a serene and brooding midsummer twilight is to the noonday blaze.

Ramona on her part took to her new companion with all the lovingness and simplicity of her nature, and Ingulph himself was frequently embarrassed with the caresses and tenderness she heaped upon him, in her desire to show how much she delighted in his company, which, in truth, was a pleasant change from her usual solitude and silence, or the persecuting fanaticism of Tribulation. The old lady had taken it into her head that she had had a special mission to convert Ramona from the Romish errors in which she had been brought up; and as she had not a word to say for the faith that was in her, except that her father had taught her so and so, or her old nurse always told her to count her beads at such an hour, Tribulation had an easy theological victory. But her impressions were made as if on water; Ramona's errors, or rather habits, ever returned when the pressure of the instant was gone.

Moreover, the process of conversion necessarily included a degree of enlightenment in sin, which it seemed almost desecration to pour into that pure and serenely innocent mind. To Ramona all things were what they seemed; she took humanity on trust as she did the flowers and the light. But not Juvenal himself took a more comprehensive view of the vices of his age than Tribulation of those of her own; and Ingulph often remonstrated with her on the subject of the revelations which she made to Ramona in the way of warning. This produced some little bickerings between the

aunt and nephew, for of all things in the world Tribulation valued her religious knowledge at the highest. In revenge she sometimes threw out intimations that the close companionship between two young persons of different sexes could not be proper; and blamed Master Stonehenge for folly in permitting it. Ingulph was conscious of some degree of reason in this flier, for, without having the slightest tinge of the coxcomb about him, it was evident, even from the very artlessness of Ramona's nature, of what inflammable materials it was composed.

Still, the delight of her beauty and playful tenderness, the *abandon* of her innocence and alluring gaiety, continually attracted him to her society. He abstained, indeed, whenever he could summon resolution to forego the only pleasure which remained to him; and then Ramona, fearful that he was going to desert her altogether, redoubled her fascinations and simple cajoleries. Tribulation's mislikings day by day increased, and she perhaps hinted something of them to Stonehenge, for there was a slight change visible in his manner. To avoid seeming conscious of any dereliction in his own heart, Ingulph could not pretend to notice this alteration all at once: but he infused a degree of coldness and reserve into his manner, which poor Ramona seemed to feel acutely. She became melancholy, shy, and fretful, and Ingulph sometimes surprised her in tears; but when he questioned her as to what ailed her, she only replied pettishly, and with little brilliant coruscations of temper, which almost amused him from their childish impatience and vivacity.

CHAPTER XXI.

It cannot be denied that Ingulph himself, little subject to vanity as he was, began to fear that he had found too much favour in the sight of the beautiful young Mexican. Without acknowledging this suspicion, even to himself, he gradually diminished the length of his visits, and, under pretence of his military avocations, made them few in number.

It happened on one occasion that he had been absent two or three days; and arriving at the old palace, as it was called, towards evening, he found Ramona as usual in a gloomy Gothic chamber overlooking the garden. Tribulation was there, but fast asleep, or at all events dozing and nodding in her chair.

Ramona was seated at the open window, leaning her head on one arm on the sill, and listening, as it seemed, in a languid reverie, to the music of the birds in the garden. So deep was this musing, that Ingulph's approach did not disturb it, and he saw that tears were gushing from her closed eyelashes. Ingulph gently kissed the hand which lay carelessly beside her, and starting up, the golden hue of her eyes, as they shone up with pleasure, struck him.

"Oh, is it you, is it you? *hermano mio!*" she exclaimed, for that was the title she usually gave him, clasping both his hands delightedly in hers, and with such an expression of innocent joy, that Ingulph was involuntarily moved.

"But wherefore do you weep, Ramona?—being so good, you should be happy," said Ingulph, striving to assume an air of gaiety.

"Stay with me then always, and I will be always happy," said Ramona, laughing her tears away in a sunny shower. "The air is so cold in this land, and people never smile, and I hear no music but what these dull gray birds make; and your heavens are so harsh and cruel, that unless I see you sometimes, I seem to be left alone in all the world!"

"Nay, Ramona, for you have your kind, loving, and noble husband," replied Ingulph, hastily.

"Ay,—but he frightens me now," said Ramona, with some hesitation. "He tells me stories that freeze me,—how wicked women are punished; and that if I wrong him, he will treat me worse than all. But I am not wicked; why should he frighten me?"

"Why, indeed!" thought Ingulph, but he said aloud, "Come, and I will tell you; 'tis because he loves you, Ramona!—Alas, you do not know what would happen to you if you were wicked in this country—where all are so good," he added, with a twinge of conscience.

"Why, what would happen to me?" she said, drawing up to him in the fearful attitude of a child about to listen to some grandmother's ghost-tale. Ingulph, though with some remorse, thought it not an ill opportunity to give her a clear notion of the condition of women in the country which she had adopted, and of the ruin and degradation to which an error in conduct might subject her. Faintly and guardedly as he sketched the picture, it overwhelmed poor Ramona with terror.

"Oh, now you are a cruel brother, and are frightening me with a wicked dream!" she said, passionately. "And I could frighten you too with one that I had last night; and I will,

too, if you do not own you have invented all this to frighten me."

"'Tis but too true, Ramona; but tell me your dream; I am not so easily scared," replied Ingulph, smiling, but mournfully.

"I thought I was in my own land again," she said; "and the sky was burned with brightness as I remember it, and I was sitting near the torrent behind my father's palace, and I was singing and binding my hair with flowers, and so happy that I was happy up to the very sunshine in heaven. Then I thought you came to me with some fresher flowers, and we were twining them into wreaths for my hair, when on a sudden Stonehenge came rushing down the ravine on a whirlwind, and seized us both by the hair, and dashed us down the torrent; and I awoke shrieking amidst the roar of the waves."

"'Tis but a foolish dream, Mona, yet I would have you—it should teach you to beware of offending your husband in the least particular," said Ingulph, with an emotion which he could not altogether conceal.

"It frightens you too; and you are a strong man," she said, with increased alarm. "What shall I do? for I have even offended our blessed Lady, for they will not let me pray to her, and my father told me she would forget me if I forgot her."

"No, no, dear child, you are not so desolate," said Ingulph, touched with the pathetic tone of this appeal. "You are, and you shall be ever, my sweetest and dearest sister; and I will die a thousand deaths ere any shall wrong you!"

"Then, oh, how I will love you, how I do love you!" said Ramona, breaking into smiles; and throwing her arms with childish delight round Ingulph's neck, she kissed him with southern vivacity. At that moment Tribulation muttered in her sleep, and Ingulph disengaged himself with some degree of violence.

"No, Ramona, no!" he said angrily, in his vexation. "You must not love me—I mean you must only like me as a friend; but you must not—we must not kiss one another, you know. They take notice of these trifles in England."

Ramona looked at him with surprise, and then a faint blush rapidly deepened all over her face and neck, and covering her face with her hands, tears gushed through them in a torrent. But recovering her composure as suddenly, she dried her tears; and with an expression of passionate indig-

nation, she exclaimed that she knew one who would not be angry if she loved him, she was sure.

This announcement somewhat puzzled Ingulph, but he felt that it would be desirable to ascertain the meaning. While he was questioning Ramona, and she was half-playfully and half-pettishly refusing to tell her meaning, he heard a voice singing some courtly melody in the gardens below, apparently while the singer walked.

“Ay, there he is!” said Ramona, with an arch smile. “He shall be my brother now, since you are so cruel.”

Ingulph looked out, and soon discerned the figure of De la Pole, strolling carelessly along. He was garbed with his usual florid elegance, in light green satin, trimmed with rose-coloured ribands, and with a cap and gallant plume of white feathers springing from a diamond aigrette. The bloom had now returned to his complexion, and coupled with the vivacity of his colours and his handsome figure, gave him a very gallant appearance.

Ingulph watched his proceedings with some interest, and saw that he glanced continually up at the window while affecting to walk carelessly up and down. As if to increase Ingulph's vexation and surprise, Ramona stole up behind him, plucked a handful of honeysuckles which clustered round the window, and threw it laughingly to the cavalier. He dropped on one knee instantly, at the same time glancing up, when his eye encountered that of Ingulph, who could not forbear laughing at the ridiculous figure he cut. The cavalier, after an instant's thought, affected not to recognise him, and called out in a mock plaintive tone to know who had thrown the flowers at him. No answer was returned, and he walked away whistling.

Ingulph was, however, more alarmed than he pretended to be; and he made inquiries of Ramona, while she teased him by playfully avoiding a reply. At last he became seriously vexed and silent, and Ramona was putting back his dark hair, as she said, to see what he was thinking, when the door suddenly opened, and Stonehenge entered with the astrologer Lilly.

Tribulation started up, but it was evident she had been asleep; and the consciousness of the suspicious appearance of things gave an air of confusion to Ingulph's whole manner. Stonehenge's brow darkened, and Lilly gave an inquisitive prying stare.

Stonehenge, however, made no observation; but after a

short interval informed Ingulph that on the following day he was to accompany him to a consultation with Selden and other eminent juriconsults. Ingulph quietly assented, and shortly afterwards retired, full of vexation, and inwardly resolving by absence to remove any doubt which might have crossed the mind of his noble and generous relative.

Retiring moodily to his apartment, Ingulph had scarcely seated himself, when the door flew open, and De la Pole entered, accompanied by a cavalier dressed in all the fripperies of the French mode, with a very handsome, intelligent, and sprightly expression of countenance.

De la Pole, without taking the least notice of what had recently happened, introduced this cavalier as Master Waller, the famous poet; and the latter, after a prettily-turned compliment to Ingulph's achievements in Parnassus, apologized for his intrusion, by professing that he did it at the command of a noble lady. "I have it in earnest commission to bring you to Northumberland House, where the divine Carlisle longs to see you grace her festival to night, for she has heard of your poetry, and admires you infinitely on report."

Ingulph was much surprised, and truth to say, but little flattered with this invitation, which Waller evidently expected would overwhelm him with satisfaction. But he thought that he might be enabled to speak to De la Pole on the subject of his gallantries to Ramona, without exposing himself to the danger of a *tête-à-tête*, in which his indignation might provoke him to some excess. He therefore quietly, but without any enthusiasm, consented.

The cavaliers eyed one another not without some disappointment; but De la Pole made an understanding wink to Waller, and they left the Gate-House to enter the poet's *caroche*, which was waiting in the courtyard.

Crossing the tilt-yard, they accidentally met Lilly, who was coming along with a face full of solemn meditation. But as the shrewd astrologer never neglected any mundane enlightenment in expounding the dark oracles of his planets, he looked with much curiosity at the unusual conjunction before him.

"Ah, Master Lilly, have you erected my figure as I prayed you?" said De la Pole, who, on his part, never neglected any means of acquiring information, but had perhaps more belief in the astrologer's prying habits on the earth than in the heavens.

"My lord, your scheme has hitherto baffled all the resources of my art, though I have tried by the noblest methods of

Ptolemy, and the never-to-be-sufficiently-lauded Magus Zoroaster," replied the sage, with great solemnity. "This much, however, I can at present assure your lordship, that it behoves you to be careful what enterprises you form, for there is an evil planetary hour in your life, which seems not very far from striking."

"Say you so?" replied the cavalier, in a somewhat less confident tone than his wont. "I pray you try your conjurations once again, and predict it to me more exactly; and meanwhile here is ink-money."

Lilly took the largess without deigning to count it, but obviously not displeased with the present.

"I too, Master Lilly, am about to embark in an enterprise, and am curious to know if it will be fortunate or not," said Waller, with earnestness.

"Is it a journey, or some domestic business?" replied the astrologer, fixing his keen, cunning eyes on the querent.

"Nay, the question is general, and you need but resolve it generally," returned Waller.

"Were it my honourable lord here that questioned, I would have him remember of the three mock suns which appeared on his majesty's birthday," said Lilly. "Whatever lying George Wharton of Oxford may say of it to dishearten the godly, I would have all cavaliers and men of high degree look on what leg they stand; and not think all's gold that glitters; for a many will put a rope round their necks in the dark this quarter, mistaking it for Garter Blue."

"Master Lilly, methinks 'tis little for the honour of your art, and less for the profit, to vent your mysteries with so little solemnity!" said De la Pole, for Waller looked as disconcerted as if he had really heard some oracular voice denouncing him.

"I was but queried generally, and as such have I responded," said Lilly; and glancing at Ingulph, he added, "but above all, I warn all men for this year at least to beware of women; for though Venus be in ascendant in other houses, she is not so in her own; moreover, Taurus this year is much given to butting, and therefore—they who sup with the devil should have a long spoon."

"Do you allude to our trusty and well-beloved brother here?" said De la Pole, laughingly, but with visible tartness.

"A word to the wise, my lord; you shall oft find a toad asquat under strawberries," replied the oracle. "If I have taken the wrong sow by the ear, it need not squeak; but as I

said before, if a man be not bent on self-destruction, 'twere as good he kept out of an exploding mine."

"Master Lilly, I would see you again, and as soon as possible after my return; methinks I discern at least the sphinx's claws in you?" said De la Pole.

"I shall be proud to wait on your honourable lordship," said Lilly, evidently gratified. "But meanwhile, may I pray to know if you are going anywhere by water?"

"Can you not obtain more certain intelligence from your stars?" said Ingulph, vexed with the general drift of the astrologer's observations.

"They love not to be vexed with trifling queries," said Lilly, loftily. "All I meant to say was, that to-day is an ill one for water-journeys, the moon being in Aquarius; but let all men take their own wisdom, and see whither it will lead them."

De la Pole laughed, and nodding intelligently to the astrologer, moved on with his companions.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE PARTY VOLANT.

It was apparently an object of some interest with Waller to conciliate the friendship of his fellow-poet, and his lively conversation and dexterous compliments were well adapted to the purpose. But he had produced a different effect than he imagined, when they reached their place of destination; for a vague feeling of suspicion was excited in Ingulph's mind.

The earl of Northumberland usually supped at dusk, after which hour his vast mansion was thrown open, and he and his daughter held what might be called their court. The wits, the scholars, and distinguished politicians opposed to the king, assembled here; that being the sole point in which any number agreed, except in the universal homage and adulation of the superb widow.

Northumberland kept house in all the pomp of feudality, his officers and attendants composing a little host in themselves. He was seated in the great hall of his mansion, upon an elevated dais, under a canopy,—a man of stately person, garbed in an ancient but magnificent costume, which he prided himself on preserving, with a long beard, a formal and

lofty regard, a solemn dignity and reserve of manner which seemed well imitated by his dependents, for not a whisper was heard among them,—the earl eating of the good things served to him with as much gravity and state as if he were engaged in the most important business.

The countess it seemed did not partake of this extensive repast. Rumour asserted, but to the incredulity of all the good housewives of London, that the lady frequently supped as late as even ten at night, in select symposia of her own choosing.

The party advanced towards this potentate, De la Pole assuming a gravity and stateliness very unusual to him, and presented Ingulph briefly as Master Dethewarre. To this Waller added a commendatory flourish on his poetical abilities. The earl listened with grave austerity.

“We have but too many of these silken caterpillars of the state already, Master Waller,” he said. “I would have every man follow an honest occupation, or that to which he was born; for the pen to be in all men’s hands, it now grows as contentious and dangerous as for all men to wear swords; but, sir, you are very welcome for my Lord De la Pole’s sake.”

Ingulph bowed with a stiff-necked reluctance, which seemed to attract the earl’s notice more than any other circumstance as yet predicated concerning him. He suspended his operation of eating, and took a cold and deliberate stare at the offender; who returned it with a haughtiness which increased the feudal noble’s surprise.

De la Pole hastened to the rescue. “Truly, my lord,” he said, “although in the main your lordship’s opinions wisdom herself cannot mend, yet we have perchance fallen on times when the pen may be as serviceable in a good cause as the sword; at least, so judges my lady, your daughter, since she deigns to desire his visitation.”

The earl bowed as if he now comprehended the matter more clearly, though for what reason was not very apparent; and despite the impatience of Ingulph, the cavalier remained for some time in conversation with the earl, sometimes extorting an unwilling smile from him who thought it was a lessening of his dignity even to seem amused.

At last De la Pole took the opportunity of some new arrival to glide off with his companions. Ingulph took no pains to conceal his disgust, and he followed the light trip of the cavalier so slowly that he and Waller were obliged to wait for him on the summit of the staircase.

“Slife, Ingulph, you are well enough received for anything under the degree of viscount,” said De la Pole, laughing at the cloud on his brow. “We must take men by that side of the nose they offer us; and yon piece of state-buckram by his blue garter.”

“Hush, for here we are in the temple of the tenth Muse, and the fourth Grace,” interrupted Waller, as two showy pages emulously hastened to throw open an apartment which would now be called my lady’s boudoir, but was then styled my lady’s privacy.

It was a large and nobly-proportioned apartment, furnished in the Italian style, with vast mirrors, set in masses of gilt framework, and with paintings of a school in which beauty and effect had taken no counsel with prudery and scarcely with decency in their arrangements. The subjects were from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, a work which had been solemnly condemned by the parliament. Sweet perfumes filled the chamber from the ambergris lamps which burned around, the chief one being an exquisite bronze of Pysche discovering Cupid. Near this, playing at chess with a stately old cavalier, was the countess of Carlisle.

She was a superb though somewhat full-blown beauty, garbed very gorgeously, and somewhat superfluously bare on the bosom, however voluptuously fair and shapely it might be.

The earl of Holland and several other gentlemen stood around her chair, apparently watching the game with interest. This volatile nobleman, equally famous as a courtier, a liberal, a wit, and a man of pleasure, by his many tergiversations would have made himself the contempt of every party, if his great abilities had not made him valuable to any. From a devoted courtier he had become a fierce partizan of the parliament, and was now supposed to be wavering back to his old opinions. He was a courtly, handsome-looking man, somewhat post-meridian, in truth, and attired in a garb much too youthful for his apparent age, but which might be excused in a statesman who owed his first advancement to his personal beauty.

The countess glanced round as her new guests entered, and a ray of pleasure lighted up the haughty expression of her beauty when she observed who they were. “Good faith, my lord, and you Master Waller, you are twice welcome,” she said; “for I dreaded nothing less than to see Pym with his perpetual smile, that will surely wear out his lips at last, or St. John’s gloomy visage, whereon one never shone. But

what new face is this, that hath so legible a recommendation written on it?"

Waller stooped lowly to kiss the fair widow's hand, and murmured in a soft tone—"Another nightingale for your ladyship's cage of beauty, whose captivity is so much pleasanter than liberty, that the open door tempts none to roam."

"My brother Dethewarre," said De la Pole.

"Oh! then this priest is vowed to another shrine," replied the countess, turning the full battery of her splendid eyes on Ingulph. "We may not dare to compete with the queen in beauty, which were as high treason in any woman as the chief part of your doings, my lords, are in men."

"The queen of heaven herself won not the apple from the queen of beauty," said Ingulph, with a florid compliment which he thought would suit the meridian.

"Why there, surely, spoke Waller himself," said the countess, with a still more overpowering glance and smile. "Cherbury, I will have no more of your compliments to-night; they are too stiff with Spanish brocade after this."

"To compliment my Lady Carlisle were even as hopeless a hope as to glorify the brightness of the sun," said Cherbury, the cavalier who was playing with the countess at chess. "For compliment is ever what politeness adds to truth; and in this case even to reach the truth is a despair."

"Nay, sir, since you are a peer of the realm of poesy, wherein they call me sovereign, you have the right to salute my cheek," said the gracious beauty, as Ingulph bent to kiss her hand. "Fear not, the colours are laid on by nature, and not by a French handmaid."

"Was ever man offered Paradise before, and feared to take it?" said Lord Holland, laughing at the hesitation visible in Ingulph's countenance. "Or is he fearful that the brightness burns; as in truth, and alas!—it does."

"Speak you from experience, my lord?" said De la Pole, in a whisper; to which the older rake replied with a licentious wink and nod.

"To taste, madam, were but to heighten thirst; and nectar is too intoxicating a drink for any but the gods," said Ingulph, modestly, executing his original intention.

"One sees well you are but lately from that incensed atmosphere of the court; *incensed* in two takings, alas!" said the countess, half displeased with a respect carried so far as to be equivocal.

"I cannot but rejoice to see that the parliament has won such a champion from the court," said Holland; "and yet

one who, having tasted of its delights and splendours, cannot but be willing to promote a happy peace and accommodation."

"Ay, the court, the court!" exclaimed Waller, in a sort of rapture. "That is the poet's true atmosphere; the perfumed presence of high-born beauty, the glitter and sparkle of feasts, to him are as naturally alluring as beds of flowers to the volage butterfly."

"You speak of one order of poets, Master Waller," said Cherbury. "But there is another, which, eagle-like, demands the broad range of the sun to spread its wings at ease."

"Such wings would darken the earth, my lord; which methinks is not the poet's trade," said De la Pole.

"The poet is no longer a troubadour, my lord," said Ingulph, coldly. "But your ladyship is aware that the court has taught me my distance—which I shall henceforth keep."

"We have all been misled; but none of us that are here, I hope, are desperate," said the countess, hastily glancing round the party volant.

"Excepting me, divinest Amoret," said Waller, with a poetical sigh.

"You!—that have exhausted all the arrows of Apollo on my Lady Sunderland!" said the countess, smiling.

"And without bringing her down," said De la Pole, laughingly repeating the well-known verses:—

"Thyrsis, a youth of the inspired train,
Fair Saccharissa loved, but loved in vain:
All but the nymph that should redress his wrong
Attend his passion and approve his song.
Like Phœbus thus, acquiring unsought praise,
He caught at love, and filled his arms with bays."

"But what are the news in the city, Master Waller?" said Lord Holland, who seemed not to be in the humour for poetry.

"I will tell you anon, my lord," said Waller, with some peevishness. "But truly, methinks, since the court went, there has been little worth the hearing, for their discourse was chiefly the scandal of it."

"Indeed the courtiers were great news-makers among the city goodwives once," said the earl. "I warrant they wish it back again; but whether the day will ever come, I know not—perhaps never for me."

"It was your own will to leave what used to be your earthly Eden, the court, my lord," said De la Pole. "But there is no fiery sword waving to prohibit your return."

“But there is a woman’s anger, much more relentless,” said the earl, thoughtfully. “Had I betrayed aught but the queen’s penetration!—and yet, were it fairly examined, it would be found that I was in a manner compelled to side as I did, at a time when parliament was bringing all men to book, and the king was in no way able to protect those who had served him faithfully—as I had done.”

“’Tis in that light, and even still more *couleur de rose*, that her majesty regards your conduct,” said De la Pole. “My Lady Carlisle will witness how easily more important matters are overlooked.”

“I am content to go—wherever my Lady Carlisle will lead me—though it be to Oxford,” said Holland, eagerly.

“Nay, my lord, ’tis scandal enough to be seen in your company in my own house,” replied the lady, with a smile full of meaning, and moving one of her chessmen as if her thoughts had been all along intent on the game. “Now, Cherbury, I have you at a vantage, to give in while honourably you may; for I will play with you no more to-night.”

“Would it were near morning when you said so, lady!” replied the gallant old lord, with an amorous sigh.

“Fie, fie, you will make me betray my rouge, if I wear any, with the colour of my blood,” replied the countess, colouring beautifully. “Henceforth I will choose my gamesters among those whose imaginations are too fresh to spite me with these faded gallantries. They say you are a good soldier, Master Dethewarre; dare you battle with me?”

“Ingulph has played the soldier, madam, but he is not Mars,” said De la Pole.

“Let him be Endymion then, and I will be the cold bright moon,” said the countess, with a luxuriant smile, which somewhat jarred with the vision of the snowy goddess and her shepherd love.

“Thrice fortunate shepherd!” sighed Holland, with affected melancholy. “I would give all my fleecy care, my ivy-crowned bowls, the crook which Pan himself bestowed on me for—for—but to my sorrow every one knows I am a married Corydon.”

“Your wife must nigh have forgotten it my lord,” said De la Pole; and the countess turned her fine neck haughtily away, and yet skilfully, so as to display its admirable beauty.

“But, Waller, you do not tell us what fell in the house this morning,” said Lady Carlisle, after a pause. “Have the Lord Angelos there hanged any bumpkin or milkmaid for a

breach of this last ordinance of theirs, which truly they may fitlier call a self-denying one than that which the independents are mooting."

"Not that I have heard, madam; 'tis but contrived to secure the discretion of those who can never drink but they must sully the pool," said Waller, with a glance at Lord Holland. "The saints would be above the fear of scandal; but we consented, in spite of our teeth, to an order for the archbishop's impeachment; and to another which nearly affects your ladyship."

"Affects me, Waller?—pray you, do not startle me without a cause!" said the countess, with considerable alarm.

"'Tis an ordinance for the destruction of all idols and objects of adoration in the kingdom, which will surely bring you down," replied the tormenting *ingenioso*.

"Let them level the temple too, then!" said Holland, pressing his hand upon his heart.

"It will fall of itself of mere hollowness, my lord," said Cherbury, with a jealous pettishness which only produced a sardonic smile from Lord Holland.

"Not by your means, great destroyer of temples though you be," said the latter nobleman, alluding to his opponent's deistical principles.

"For what I have done, my lord, with regard to my book *De Veritate*, I had divine warranty, which I trow me, Lord Holland, you can boast for few of your doings," said Herbert of Cherbury, testily.

"And from your example, my lord, I shall shun to ask it, lest the devil be permitted to give me a sign," returned Holland, tartly. "I would you could hear what reverend men say of your marvellous vision of the lambent flame."

"And I would you could hear what honest men gloss on your own realities, my lord!" replied Cherbury, in a choleric tone.

"Come, my lords, shall my women bring you needles to duel this matter out?" said Lady Carlisle. "Of a truth, for the sublime reason of which you men boast yourselves, ye are the veriest fools in nature! Were I a believer in the powder of sympathy I would have my father's fool cudgelled to bring ye back to your senses!"

"I have heard Sir Kenelm say, that had he been on the scaffold when Strafford's head rolled—" began De la Pole; but he broke off suddenly, exclaiming, "But here comes his murtherer."

At this moment the door opened, and Pym appeared,

escorted by the earl himself, who, with all his pomp of power, was secretly conscious that it was more showy than real compared with that of the great demagogue.

Lady Carlisle made a movement as if to welcome the visitor, but overcome by the dismal recollections so suddenly forced upon her, her voice faltered, and she burst into tears.

"What ails thee, daughter Lucy?—fie, gentlemen, what is this?" said the earl, in a tone of great surprise.

"Surely, though we have heard of the passionateness of some in the game, these tears are not merely for suffering checkmate?" said Pym, with a slight degree of irony in his tone.

"Ah, Master Pym, if it seem such a bagatelle to you, look that you do not suffer it in your own great game of politics!" replied the countess, raising her eyes still flashing with tears.

"Indeed, bright lady, they shall come on very soft shoes that find me sleeping over my game," said Pym, with a smile so full of trouble and fatigue that it seemed rather a spasm. "But indeed I have neither pause nor rest from the dark designs of the malignants; so that things have reached a pass, beyond which, if they drive me, God knows what may follow! Neither age, nor sex, nor rank, can we look to that have to preserve a nation from destruction! I do fear we shall be compelled to make some terrible examples."

Whether there was something in this speech which fell in with any particular fears in the company, or for some other reason, there was a remarkable silence after it.

"Yes, yes, Master Pym, we have undertaken to feed the horseleach's daughter, whose cry is still 'More, more!'" said the countess, hurriedly. "But for traitors and malignants, they call *us* so at Oxford, and you know what you yourself said—no, it was St. John—cry you mercy, master solicitor, I did not at first note you there.—We give law to hares and deer, because they are beasts of the chase; but when was it accounted foul play, or cruelty, to knock foxes and wolves in the head, find them where we will, for they are beasts of prey?"

"It was at Strafford's trial that I made that poor simile," replied St. John, with his dark and penetrating look coursing with seeming politeness and real contempt from one to another of the company as he saluted them. "And I am grateful that it should be stored in your ladyship's memory, among the brilliant and costly fancies of bards and sages such as Master Waller and my lords here."

“Oh, I do assure you, as I live, I have not forgotten a word that passed at that time, good or bad,” replied the haughty beauty, drying her tears, as if in scorn of her own weakness. “When will any of us—when will England—when will yourself, Master Pym, forget by what means the blood of that minister was poured—who was the friend, the companion, the brother of your youth?”

“An impromptu, an impromptu, on your weeping, celestial countess!” interposed Waller, for he remarked with alarm the passion which quivered for a moment over the usually placid features of Pym.

“Good faith, yes, let us hear it,” said the countess, turning with a bright expression of triumph and hatred from Pym. “But here comes my Lord of Rothes; and perchance poetry is prohibited by the covenant, for we all see it is rigorously excluded from their psalmody.”

The Scottish commissioner entered as she spoke, with several other gentlemen, members of the two houses.

“My Lord of Rothes has a court as well as a covenant suit of opinions,” said Lord Herbert. “Like Alcibiades, he can drink wine with the Persian, and water with the Spartan; cant with his masters, and coo with his mistress.”

“Master Dethewarre being a poet, verses must be as little to your use as medicals to a quack,” said Pym, gently drawing Ingulph from the group which now gathered round the beauty and her poet.

Under pretext of examining some of the paintings, Pym drew him down the apartment to a distance from the centre of attention. Uneasy glances indeed followed them for some moments, but the circle seemed soon to close again in conversation.

“Ay, Leda and the swans!” said Pym, pausing before one of the groups. “Are these sights for Christian men, but least of all for Christian women, to gaze at? Frivolous and yet dangerous race! do ye hope to stop the Ganges with a straw?”

This last observation seemed to have no connection with the former; the speaker’s eye was fixed with a mixture of wrath and sorrow on the prattling, glittering group they had left.

“What mean you, sir?” said Ingulph, with unaffected earnestness.

“I pray you, listen not to the voice of the syren, or you are lost!—what do you here?” said Pym, austerely. “You are of the stuff of which they build empires; be not lured into sharing the fall of the rubbish of one.”

“Master Pym, I do not understand you,” said Ingulph, much surprised.

“Truly, then, I am glad of it,” returned Pym, after a pause. “But you are in the cave of the sorceress,—beware!”

As he spoke, a man in a very dark garb, with an acute, metaphysical, and somewhat pale countenance, came up and joined them.

“Truly the path of destruction is smooth,” he said, with a peculiar smile to Pym. “Hear you?—There’s more mirth with them than at a bridal; but the Lord knows if they have any reason to be so merry.”

“Yea, yea, the fox is trapped, and a pitfall is set for the wolf,” replied Pym bitterly. “Troth, Vane, I doubt not our heads will look grim enough on Westminster gates, to frighten all men from looking towards a parliament again.”

“St. John hopes they will set his head on London Bridge, for he loves the air of the river,” replied Vane, in a low sarcastic tone. “And as for Selden, doubtless his learned skull will show well at the Bar of his beloved Temple.”

“Will you pay your homage to my lord and lady, and eat your bread and onions with me to-night?” said Pym, with a smile.

Vane assented, and glided away towards the group surrounding the earl and his daughter.

At this pause, Ingulph heard Waller reciting some verses, “On a Lady singing in a Garden,” which for a moment attracted his attention, for he thought it related in some manner to Ramona.

“Thus, fair incognita, thy song
Lured young Love, listening, to be blest,
As nightingales the fowlers guide
With their own warble to the nest.”

“’Tis on a lady married to an ancient gentleman,” he concluded with a smile, amidst the general approbation. “And not a word of Venus nor Vulcan in it.”

“What a rare visage Vane hath; mine is too open, St. John’s too close, ever to deceive!” said Pym, watching his famous coadjutor as he mingled in the circle. “Nay, my lady, you have your watch there!—Who would think that while that sweet smile lights the crimson of her lips, the brain within rankles with serpents to remember that Vane’s artifice it was that chiefly brought him to the block?—Oh! marvellous!—when will truth return among men?”

Sir Harry Vane now rejoined them, bringing St. John with him.

“They would have me stay to my lady’s little supper; they cannot live without me; what will they do when they have lost me?” he said, in a tone of laughing contempt. “But I marvel who seasons the meats, for indeed I love not popish cooks.”

Pym then made some indifferent inquiries of Ingulph as to how he got on with his levy, and apparently satisfied with his replies, bade him farewell, and retired from what seemed to be the performance of a painful duty.

The visitors began gradually to thin, and when the earl went to bed, which he did precisely as the clock struck nine, all the uninvited guests followed his example. In a short time there remained only about a dozen to supper,—all distinguished members of the Party Volant.

CHAPTER XXIII.

WALLER’S PLOT.

THE supper was served, and with a splendid elegance of which Ingulph had seen few examples, even in the court. It was an Italian fashion, which had as yet made few converts among the northern nations, that of nocturnal repast; but which afterwards reached its height of glory under Louis Quatorze.

The conversation was animated, though partaking somewhat too deeply of the license of the times; and Ingulph, kindled by the smiles of a beautiful woman, and the wit of the choice spirits about him, blazed up with a splendour of imagination which surprised and delighted even them. He was treated with the most marked attention; but it was not until the cloth was removed, and the lackeys gone, that he began to perceive a drift in this distinction.

The conversation, which had at first been remarkably guarded on political subjects, began to take another turn, guided, indeed, by De la Pole, whose royalism excused the rashness of his observations. But the general tone adopted by the company seemed to chime in with singular harmony, considering that they were all supposed to be partizans of the parliament.

“Why, there are not two of ye that I can find of the same mind,” said De la Pole; “and for more moderate men, my

Lord Northumberland is aweary to be ruled by fellows whose names are as new as their pretensions ; and Master Waller here will certify how ill the citizens like these constant drainings of their once fat purses."

"I have some little familiarity with the city, through my brother Tomkins, my lord," said Waller, timidly. "But to speak so wide a word as that, you shall pardon me ; only it is certain, the city cannot but grieve to lose its chief customers for taffetas, silks, and gewgaws ; for, Heaven knows, men go about as if it were plague-time, and every second man on his way to a funeral. As far as a petition or humble remonstrance might go, I think the city may be depended upon, especially if Essex could be brought to sanction it."

"For my Lord Essex, I can witness how ill he takes the slights and indignities he hath of late suffered from his masters," said Holland, eagerly ; "but he is of cast iron where he deems his honour concerned ; Bedford has resigned their horse in disgust ; Clare loves the king next to his own estates, *longo intervallo*, true ; but Portland, Lovelace, and Conway, are of unbounded devotion to their majesties."

"And yourself, my lord," said De la Pole with a smile. "As indeed which of the peers is resolved on treason but Manchester, crafty old Saye, and mayhap Fairfax ? Of the commons, who but sixty or seventy, whose insolence has made them desperate ? Of the city, who but the rabble and the fanatics ? Why, were we prisoners but loose, that are cribbed in the Tower, Ely House, Whitehall, the ships in the river, and other confinements, there were a stout army of cavaliers ready to hand."

"I beseech you, my lord, do not talk thus, though it be but in jest, and over our wine," said Waller, glancing at Ingulph with anxiety.

"Tut, it is no treason ; we can do it all in their own words," replied De la Pole impatiently. "St. John cannot conjure treason out of this list, for example, which I have made of the citizens, under the heads of right men, averse men, and moderate men. Master Tomkins and Chaloner assisted me, who are surely familiar with the muster-rolls ; and I am assured of at least three-fourths of the citizens remaining neutral in case a peace were proposed."

"My lord, I would exhort you to respect names," said Waller, very warmly.

"Wherefore ? I plot no treason, again I tell you," said De la Pole. "And if I did, for opposition, I know not where to look for it. Their armies are at a distance, and watched by

the king's, who could be at London walls as soon as any that could come against us."

"Truly, my lord, you speak as if you had this city in your grasp," said Waller.

"If those who wish well to the king had only some shelter under which they might declare themselves, it would soon be seen in whose hands it would be," said De la Pole, glancing at Ingulph.

"For myself, I must needs confess I owe the king much through my gracious mistress, the queen, whose favours I always thankfully acknowledge," said Holland, dubiously, as if groping his way in the dark. "But I love my country. In short, if men were well assured of one another, I see not why—at least the insolency of the tumults might be suppressed, and his majesty might return in safety to a personal treaty with his parliament."

"It is all any man shall pretend to that joins with me," said the wily young politician; "I have a marquisate to lose, and a head which I cannot do without."

"And I have ten thousand a year, and my Lady Carlisle's smiles," said Waller, dismally.

"Nay, for we are all embarked in the same boat," said Lady Carlisle. "Moreover, the lightnings themselves spare the laurel."

"The lightnings might, but not the sectaries," said Holland. "They are more likely to send the Muses to Bridewell for disorderly wenches than to honour their train-bearers. But let us know your project distinctly, Lord De la Pole, since such I take to be the purpose of our meeting."

"Remembering always that you speak in the presence of a sworn soldier of the parliament," said Ingulph, who had been listening for some time with uneasiness.

"And for that very reason the destined restorer of the monarchy!" said De la Pole eagerly. "I have brought you here, brother, that both sides may know what they have to depend upon, and that you may see that I do not jest when I tell you that, if you will lend the support of your soldiery to a humble petition for peace which we mean to present to the parliament, you will be nobly backed, and win for yourself not only the king's pardon for all past offence, but whatever else your own ambition can assign as your reward."

"Are you assured of that my lord?" returned Ingulph, after the pause of astonishment with which he listened to this communication, to which all present assented by their looks. "The king's pardon! Let him keep it for his criminals;

he has enow of them. And were I inclined to play the traitor, are you assured, my Lord De la Pole, that my conditions would not be irksome to yourself?"

"Can there be treason *for* the king?" exclaimed Lady Carlisle. "I do beseech you, sir, throw not away the noblest prize that ever fortune offered in her lottery; for were your noble talents as worthily set, to what distinctions might you not aspire?"

"You shall learn what my conditions are, then, to-morrow," said Ingulph, rising suddenly; and the whole company followed his example in consternation.

"You shall have a blank signed by the king!—Can you ask more?" said De la Pole, darkening in every feature with disappointment. "The king will deny you nothing which it is possible to grant for such a service."

"Can the king restore me to my right of blood, and my mother's memory to honour?" said Ingulph, with sudden fierceness.

"Certes, that were impossible!" said De la Pole, staring with much amazement from Ingulph to the countess.

"Will he?" exclaimed Ingulph, with increased vehemence.

"You rave, Dethewarre," returned the young noble, drawing himself up in a scornful attitude of defiance.

"The parliament can—the parliament will!" said Ingulph, checking his passion with difficulty. "But enough of these matters, which are not for private discussion."

"You have only then to betray me, for the project is mine only, and you will have one obstacle out of the way," said De la Pole.

"If I had desired your blood," began Ingulph, but he interrupted himself, and turning to the countess, said, "lady, rest assured that whatever I have heard under this roof is for ever a secret in my heart;" and bending deeply to her, and more slightly to the rest of the company, he left them in a state of indescribable bewilderment. He had, however, scarcely reached the gates when he was overtaken by Lord De la Pole.

"We are brothers, let us not part foes," he exclaimed as he came up with him. "Dethewarre, you saved my life, and if my gratitude has driven me on too fast and far in measures to restore you to the king's favour, methinks it merited not this severe rebuff."

Ingulph paused, for the appeal was subtly adapted to touch the fine chords of his generous nature.

"Your father never deigned to call me his son; I know

not why you should call me brother," he replied. "But I need no gratitude, or, if any, it shall be amply satisfied if in future you confine your rambles in Whitehall Gardens to parts at a distance from the old palace."

"What! are you jealous of me?" said De la Pole, resuming his usual sarcastic levity.

"Yes, I am jealous of you; and by this light of heaven, if you dare to breathe an unhallowed thought on aught that I love, Lord De la Pole, you shall learn so," replied Ingulph.

"My good lad, you are far more likely to put such folly into my head than to put it out," said the cavalier, disdainfully. "But you have your security in your own hands. Give me my liberty, and I will return to Oxford, marry, and settle down into those calm domestic habits, for which I am naturally so well fitted."

"The parliament is your keeper, not I; win their manumission, and you have mine," said Ingulph, with a keen pang. "And so good night, my lord; let us part, while we can, in peace."

CHAPTER XXIV.

IF Stonehenge had in reality imbibed any suspicion of his nephew, it did not appear in his manner on the following day, when they went together to the consultation of lawyers at Selden's chambers in the Temple.

They found the great juriconsult in a chamber overlooking the gardens of the Temple, a fountain playing beneath the window amidst a profusion of foliage, which its showering waters kept perpetually green and fresh. He fixed his deep-sunk but bright and good-humoured eyes on Ingulph, shading his gray hair back from his temples so as to reveal his long, thin, and acutely intellectual countenance, instinct all over with expression.

St. John was there, and two other lawyers, principally known in the courts as advocates of the extremest measures of the parliament, whenever they needed a legal gloss. The first of these Selden introduced as Master Bradshaw, a commissioner of the parliament's great seal, a man of a remarkably mild and pleasing countenance, with a smiling expression diffused over his handsome and well-cut features, and with a somewhat amorous moisture of eye and lip. The other was Aske.

"I expect Dorislaus every instant," said Selden, glancing up

at a huge dial. "He is likely to please you better with his answer, Master Stonehenge, than I can, for he refers his judgments to universals, whereas I am ever dabbling in particulars. Now the law of England demands that, to make a marriage, a man and a woman must be linked together by a certain formula of words, pronounced by a priest; consequently the lady of your story, marrying another under the notion that she was marrying Lord Montacute, did nevertheless not marry him. But Dorislaus will tell you a great deal about the essential nature of contracts in general, and demonstrate that justice is the supreme spring and intent of all law; and so he will bring us to the point which I have all along affirmed, that the law of England has no remedy for your wrong, and that consequently you must appeal to its justice; *i. e.* you must present your grievance to the notice of parliament, which is very well inclined to notice everything of the sort."

"It is not that we hope for redress from written law, Master Selden," replied Stonehenge. "But we would have the declared opinion of its oracle, first, that we have a wrong, and next that the law has provided no remedy for it; on this basis we will proceed."

A tap was now heard at the door; it opened, and admitted a fat-faced, pale, and studious-looking man, in the costume of a jurisconsult, and with something of a foreign aspect. This was Dr. Dorislaus. He bowed with profound gravity to the assemblage, seated himself, and without any further delay pulled out a thickly-written bundle of papers, and began to read.

It was a long recapitulation of the facts of the case, with which the reader is already acquainted, the names of all the parties in it being carefully withheld; but, as Selden had anticipated, the doctor took little notice of them, but began immediately to discuss the abstract principles. Upon these he brought to bear so vast a mass of learning that, in a short time, profoundly interested as Ingulph was in the question, he lost any connection which might exist between the subject and the commentary. But the clear and practical intellect of Selden speedily deduced light from the chaos.

"You mean then to say, as I do, brother Dorislaus, that in law these parties were not married, and in equity they were," said he, with a smile. "The bad faith of one of the contracting parties does not annul the agreement. If I buy a pottle of strawberries (as I did yesterday of a black-eyed huckstress, shame to her) on the credit of some half-dozen fresh ones on the top, and find them all mouldy and crushed below, 'tis true-

my dessert is spoiled, but no man can doubt I am the wronged party."

Bradshaw delivered his opinion verbally, and it was very different from that of the profound Dorislaus; for he clung to the facts with pertinacity, and vehemently inveighed against the oppression and cruelty of the perpetrators.

"Declamation is not argument, but every stick helps to make the bundle," said Selden. "But, master solicitor, you do not speak; we are waiting for an oracle."

St. John had been silent for some time, and his usually saturnine visage was shadowed still more darkly than its wont, perhaps because the discussion reminded him of his own illegitimate descent from the noble family whose name he bore.

"I would take up quite another ground," he said hastily, "Set aside all consideration of the marriage; let the plaintiff simply prove that there was an agreement between the parties to accept one another as man and wife, and it was a valid marriage, since only the decrees of the Council of Trent rendered the intervention of a priest obligatory; and no Protestant will pretend that those decrees are binding in this realm."

"But there is the common and customary law which you overlook, brother," said Selden. "You cannot name a time in England in which the aid of a priest has not been considered essential to the fastening of the conjugal fetter."

"But, thank God, we are out of those popish trammels of ancient superstition now," said Bradshaw, vehemently.

"But do you deny that marriage by a priest is legal?" returned Selden.

"Certes, no," replied Bradshaw.

"And this unhappy lady was married, by a priest, to the menial of the man whom she supposed she was marrying?" said Selden, turning to Stonehenge, who became ashy pale, but nodded assent.

"Then your argument would make her to be married to two husbands at once, which is bigamy," said Selden.

Bradshaw replied with great warmth, and the discussion became animated with some degree of personal feeling, for this singular case was of a kind well calculated to bring into concussion the elements of two opposing orders of ideas. But the question was finally determined by Stonehenge declaring that his nephew should acknowledge that law and equity were in his case opposed, as the basis of his demand for the interference of the supreme law of justice which the parliament had it in its power to interpose.

The meeting separated after Selden had delivered his written opinion; but in the concoction of the petition, Stonehenge used the services of a lawyer whom Ingulph had afterwards occasion to remember. He was in very little practice, but keen-witted, eloquent on occasion, bold, unscrupulous, and a vehement fanatic, and his name was Cook.

The petition itself was a somewhat singular document; for again the names of all the parties concerned, excepting that of Ingulph and the marquis of Montacute, were omitted. It was presented, received with favour, and an order was made for the marquis to appear and answer the charge. No one of course expected that the marquis would obey, and it was probably considered as a good means of getting rid of a troublesome subject. Stonehenge himself seemed to rest contentedly on his oars, for although he had much influence with the parliamentary chiefs, he seemed satisfied with the general curiosity and inquiry directed to the subject, as if to excite such had been his main view.

Ingulph's estrangement from De la Pole was of course now complete; they very rarely met, and when they did by accident encounter, passed one another in silence.

After this seemingly abortive effort, Ingulph's thoughts reverted with the more force to his own ideas of the means of obtaining redress, and his republican visions took entire possession of his mind. The solitude in which he spent his time, when not engaged in disciplining his raw levy, fed his phantasies; for after the scene with Ramona, and the evident suspicions excited in Stonehenge, prudence counselled him not to seek her society.

It was not that Ingulph imagined that Ramona had in reality imbibed an affection for him too warm for the relationship in which they must stand towards each other. The very exuberance with which she owned her delight in his presence, and the unrestrained manner in which she expressed it, convinced him to the contrary; for passion makes its votaries, and especially women, regard its object with a species of fear. But, with his poetical intuition of feeling, he comprehended that Ramona, with all her reverence and affection for Stonehenge, and unconsciously to herself, felt vaguely the cravings of more powerful sympathies, which needed, perhaps, but an object to warm and concentrate into passion.

It was, therefore, wisely and virtuously done to deprive himself even of the pure pleasure which he had derived from contemplating so much beauty and innocence; and had not a

perturbing influence occurred, the result might have answered his expectation.

CHAPTER XXV.

It would, perhaps, have been better if Ingulph had discontinued his visits more gradually; Stonehenge frequently expressed surprise and dissatisfaction at the neglect, and listened with a species of incredulity to his apologies, and in a manner in which Ingulph felt there was an increasing fusion of suspicion. To obviate this inconvenience, he went into the contrary extreme, and returned to his habit of visiting at the old palace almost every evening. But a change had now come over Ramona. She was as reserved and uncommunicative as ever she had been the contrary; and he observed with pain, that a deep shadow of melancholy had fallen on her sunny nature, like the gloom of a storm over an Italian vintage.

But there was another change which puzzled the young observer much more; Ramona seemed suddenly to have awakened to the power which her beauty and youth gave her over her husband, and displayed it in a thousand caprices. She began to complain of the seclusion in which she lived, as if she had but just discovered it; and Stonehenge, whose heart was naturally tender and confiding, suffered her to assume a liberty which, considering her foreign education and ignorance of the world, was not very advisable.

Time passed in these fluctuations, and meanwhile Ingulph's attention, after the experience he had acquired of the party volant, was frequently directed to the singular proceedings of De la Pole. Whether sincerely, or to serve his political purposes, the cavalier had assumed a great strictness of life, frequented the conventicles, and spent many hours daily in conversation with the chief religious leaders. Blinded by the hope of so great a convert, fanatic and presbyter alike received him with open arms. But Ingulph suspected some hidden aim under this fair show.

It happened one day that, hearing there was to be a meeting of the godly in the chapel of Whitehall, which had been laboriously despoiled of its splendours to render it sufficiently holy for the purpose, Ingulph had the curiosity to attend. He found the chapel crowded with devotees of both sexes, huddled together, and discoursing in low mysterious

tones, while from time to time deep sighs were audible, which wanted little to merit the appellation of groans.

Considerably to his amusement, he discerned De la Pole leaning against the carved work of the royal pew, almost the only one which had not been more or less defaced, and listening with an air of profound respect to a tall, raw-boned, wild-eyed fanatic, in a leather-seller's garb, who seemed to be expounding the law to him. But Ingulph's feeling altered when he saw Tribulation enter with her young charge, and De la Pole advance, and, as if it were one of the most usual things possible, hand them into the pew, and take his place next to Ramona. He then noticed that the cavalier wore a plain black garb, and a high conical hat with a plain band, according to the puritan fashion.

Ingulph remarked with little satisfaction the attention which the cavalier continued to pay Ramona during the proceedings, and was struck with her pale and timid look, so unlike her usual joyous expression. It is true that De la Pole seemed to pay as much or even more deference to Tribulation; but Ingulph, himself unseen, watched divers little bits of by-play which escaped the zealous matron's observation.

For some time no preparation was made for any kind of worship; the buzzing, sighing, and groaning continued, but nothing was heard distinctly. At last Tribulation, who was famous for her gifts, raised her voice in a shrill tone approaching to a scream, and proposed that all present should join brother Praise-God Barebone in thanksgiving for the subject of their meeting. The brother rejoicing in this melodious name, and who was the man in the leather apron, began by making great professions of unworthiness, but universal murmurs of assent drowned the effusion of modesty.

Barebone then began a prayer, or rather rhapsody, aloud, which his auditors followed in a Babel of sounds, which, however, were only innumerable echoes to his discourse. Taking occasion from the ruins of the ancient superstition visible around, Barebone announced in prophetic furor the approaching downfall of Antichrist throughout the world. But his discourse, however profitable to the initiated, seemed to Ingulph of intolerable length and tediousness. It concluded, however, at last with a prayer, or rather imprecation, for the conversion of all papists, prelatists, and malignants, haters and worriers of the truth, and a denunciation of all the woes which the most hideous dreams of madness ever shaped, if they declined the offer.

On the conclusion of this prayer, De la Pole arose, and in a sanctimonious tone, which, at least in Ingulph's ear, scarcely concealed the contemptuous ridicule of what it affected, he besought the prayers of the godly to bless the labours of that virtuous and zealous gentlewoman, Tribulation Grizzle, in the kindling of his lantern, if he had wandered, as he began to fear he had, in serving the king and prelates, without due consideration of the merits of the cause.

A general hum of satisfaction arose; some sobbed aloud, especially Tribulation's maid-servant, when the zealous matron herself returned thanks for this experience of grace. Modestly did she disavow her share in the work, imputing it all to a direct providence; but her exultation and triumph shone but the more apparently for the spiritual humility of her phrase. The more zealous enthusiasts gathered around the convertite, and all eagerly proffered him their experiences, their advice, their various and often contradictory reasons for the faith which was in them.

The young cavalier thankfully declined having the flood-gates opened upon him, by declaring that as yet he had met with no difficulty which Mistress Grizzle's gifts had not resolved. The triumph of the latter was now complete, and she burst into an hysteric paroxysm of tears, laughter, prayers, thanksgivings, and ejaculations which speedily became general. Groans and fervent outpourings resounded on all sides, and people wrung hands, wept, and congratulated each other as if on some public rejoicing. The convert himself, overcome by emotion, clasped his next neighbour to his bosom, which happened to be Ramona, and kissed her in such a transport of enthusiasm that he seemed to forget it was in a public presence. Ingulph darted forward, but at the same moment Ramona fainted.

Make what haste he could to the spot, recklessly elbowing his way, De la Pole had the start of him, lifted her from the shrieking women, and bore her to the chapel door. Ten smelling-bottles instantly rushed to the rescue, twice as many remedies were propounded, applied, denounced, before Ingulph arrived. But the cold air did better than them all, and Ramona revived in the arms of the young nobleman.

The cavalier resigned all care of her to the women the moment he discerned Ingulph, and Ramona herself seemed confused and unresisting as a lamb stunned at the sacrifice.

"She reviveth, Mistress Tribulation, even as the lily after a shower; but oh! this is a gracious day for me," said De la

Pole, with unshaken coolness. "This is the first time I have taken any real and living interest in my soul's weal, limiting my desires and necessities altogether to carnal things; yet I know not clearly whether it be the weakness of my flesh, or the strength of your spirit that wrestles thus within me."

"Verily this is indeed manna in the wilderness," exclaimed Tribulation, in an ecstasy. "Oh! if I could but rescue a sheep from the Romish wolf, as I have the lamb before us."

"But there are doubts within me which methinks your reason only dispels, as the sun dries up the gossamers on the grass," said De la Pole, with such an inveterate seriousness that even Ingulph was puzzled.

"Nay, but I fear you have not patience for so long a work, young lord," said Tribulation, with some degree of doubt.

"What is time to eternity?" returned De la Pole; and glancing at Ramona to point the meaning of his words, he continued, "and, on my life, never until now did I feel a passion like this, which fills my whole soul with a divine and holy fire."

"There have been sudden calls, but yours, my lord, is most remarkably so," said Ingulph, with inexpressible bitterness.

"And will you, a worm of the earth, presume to dictate the how, the when, and the where?" said Tribulation, vehemently.

"Would all could shake off the old man as I have done," continued the invincible De la Pole. "Ah, Mistress Grizzle, you will hear many a sad tale about me, if you listen to them; yet how was I to obtain any knowledge of the truth, listening to dumb dogs, or at best to court-chaplains? But my enemies do infinitely exaggerate me."

"Disburthen your soul of the weight of its iniquity, even by a full confession before the people," said Mistress Tribulation.

"Alas! my sins are mostly of a sort which I would not have known to that pure loveliness which has reclaimed me from all," replied the cavalier, with a deep sigh.

"Let the vain woman, Strafford's daughter, be humbled then in your humbling," returned Tribulation.

"Alas! I do rather worship than love!" said De la Pole, gazing at Ramona, who coloured deeply, and shrunk back from the tremulous attitude in which she was listening to the conversation.

"Come, Mistress Stonehenge, I will see you into the

palace; my uncle will marvel at your absence," said Ingulph, clutching her hand with some rudeness, and drawing her away without allowing her time even to return the cavalier's courtly bend.

Ingulph drew her rapidly along, and she seemed to obey with implicitness, as if aware of something wrong in her late conduct. He felt the necessity of opening her eyes to the real character of the cavalier and his purposes, and yet it seemed like desecration to put such ideas into her mind.

Ramona lacked almost all the data in possession of which the civilized mind needs but a few words to understand any new form of turpitude. To explain the motives of such a man as De la Pole, that mass of corrupt opinion from which the false glories of gallantry have risen like phosphor from a marsh, made Ingulph feel as if he were playing the serpent's part in Eden, and bestowing death in the guise of knowledge.

He was therefore silent for some minutes, and he was inwardly touched with the childish awe and submission in which Ramona seemed to await his reproofs. But she too had something of a woman's tact, and at last broke the silence by admiring an orange scarf which Ingulph wore as an officer of the parliament.

"But you will go to battle in it!" she exclaimed tenderly, "and you may be killed."

"War cannot choose its victims, Ramona," replied Ingulph, with a severity which restored the marble hue to her complexion; "but women need not pray that the lot should fall on me, as ye all might on yonder cavalier, who is of those who glory in betraying them to guilt, and then abandoning them to sorrow."

"Can devils look like angels then?" said Ramona, with a sudden passion which took Ingulph by surprise. "And can anything love another and yet harm it? Do I not love my bird, and would I give it to my dueña's lean black cat to tear?"

Ingulph felt it impossible to explain the difference between the power of love, as she understood it, and as it was understood by the profligate noble. His reply was therefore so confused, that even Ramona, to whom the bitter smile of ridicule was unknown, laughed merrily, as if she had confuted all those gloomy fancies. She began playfully gambolling among the trees in the moonlight, and sometimes hid herself among them, while Ingulph pretended to be alarmed, and looked about for her until she came laughing out of her concealment.

Wrapped as he was in thought and sadness, Ingulph in-

dulged her sportive gaiety ; and on one occasion, when she bounded out like a young fawn, he affected to pursue her. As she ran nimbly before him, both of them suddenly perceived Stonehenge and Master Lilly advancing towards them, and both stopped short with a consciousness of impropriety in their play, which until then neither had felt.

Ramona stood fixed, and with an expression of great timidity, before her lord ; while Ingulph thought it necessary to advance boldly. He was somewhat startled with the stern look with which Stonehenge returned his greeting, and Lilly had the satisfaction of increasing his emotion, by the pathetic and compassionate glance he bestowed upon him.

“ You are in the gardens late to-night, Ramona,” said Stonehenge, fixing his eye upon her with profound and gloomy consideration, while Ramona, instinctively, as the flower folds herself up against a storm, crept back to Ingulph’s side.

“ Mistress Stonehenge has been attending a meeting of the elect in the chapel,” he said, with forced composure. “ But I grieve to observe that wolves are allowed to graze with the sheep, for my Lord De la Pole was there, and in Mistress Dethewarre’s pew.”

“ Ay, indeed,” said Stonehenge, glancing at his wife, who made no reply, unless the look of terror which she cast at Ingulph was one.

“ Are you turned king’s evidence, Master Dethewarre ? ” said the astrologer, with a humorous look of intelligence. “ But we who read the stars are seldom so much in the dark as folks suppose ; Mercury winked at me the other night.”

“ What mean you, Master Lilly ? ” said Ingulph, turning very sharply.

“ Nay, nay, he doth but jest ; my Ramona loves me too well that I should fear any of these court butterflies,” said Stonehenge, and his countenance lighted up with a beam of tenderness which seemed to irradiate its expression. Ramona instantly ran smiling to him with all the trustfulness and vivacity of her nature ; and at the same time Tribulation appeared in the distance.

This apparition appeared to satisfy Stonehenge, for after glancing at the clear twilight sky, he murmured to Lilly, that the night was very favourable to observations ; and with a look of confidence, desired Ingulph to proceed on his way with Ramona. The astrologer and his patron then dived into a woody path which led to the river.

Ramona seemed now quite happy, and she gave vent to her satisfaction in a rapturous melody, full to overflowing of the

vague gaiety and pleasureableness of youth, which formed a singular contrast to her late dejection.

But Grizzle's look and manner, on her approach, were so frosty and severe, that Ingulph readily perceived she had been listening to some unfavourable statements about himself.

Ingulph's first observation on her joining them was not likely to remove this impression. "What is this folly of conversion you have taken into your head, aunt?" he said. "You are but deceived; this cavalier makes a jest of you."

"A jest of me, forsooth!—folly of conversion!—what word is that for a Christian mouth?" exclaimed Tribulation. "Deceive me! marry, I should like to see the woman's son can do it! But you have a spite against this poor young gentleman, your brother, which extends even to his soul!"

"And doth he frequent your society, and that of Mistress Stonehenge, on this great business of conversion?" said Ingulph, tartly.

"Nephew, nephew, the sour leaven of hypocrisy ferments in your bread," replied Tribulation, ominously shaking her head. "What, if he gladly and pleasedly attends to my exhortations, do I therefore take unto myself any vain-glory? I pretend not to mere man learning and traditions, and musty councils and fathers, wherein the blind lead the blind; but as far as a poor bat flitting in the shadow of death can discern the light of Scripture, according to the faithful presbyterian witnessing, I may truly say I have not buried my talent in the earth, as Mistress Stonehenge can witness, whom I have turned from her idolatries."

"Yes, you have taken away everything my father gave me," said poor Ramona, very innocently.

"Her beads and crosses and relics and gilded trumperies," said Tribulation; "though she whined for them as a weaned babe for the breast."

"But we do not give weaned babes sour green grapes to suck instead," said Ingulph, warmly. "Temper the wind to the shorn lamb, you know, aunt; but for this cavalier, he is a very wolf in the fold."

"You have your own reasons, doubtless, to turn our hearts against him!" said Tribulation, bitterly.

"You deal too much of late in these mystic scoffs," said Ingulph, impatiently. "But if you cannot understand the danger to which you are exposing your innocent charge, I must perforce put Master Stonehenge on his guard."

"I have not accused you, and I know not why your conscience suggests to you a defence," said Tribulation, calmly.

“But Master Stonehenge will attend little to your accusations of one whose body, he knows, is condemned, and whose soul I would save.”

The sudden and vivid interest which this announcement, enigmatical as it was, excited in Ramona, evidently troubled Mistress Grizzle.

“Ay, whether he puts forth fruit or not, he is a fig-tree destined to be cut down,” she said with solemnity. “A doom hangs over him, which no human effort can baffle!”

“In heaven’s name, what do you mean?” said Ingulph, vehemently, remarking the ghastly look of Ramona.

“Let it be a word not spoken,” said the old lady, with oracular gloom. “Mistress Stonehenge knows that her husband is a man whose determinations are law, and yet I say not that he shall move a finger in this youth’s destruction; and yet in a short time he shall fill a deserved and bloody grave. I have no cause to love him nor his race, and yet in Christian charity I would not have his soul perish with the tabernacle of clay.”

Ingulph saw at a glance the fatal mischief which this announcement was likely to create, unfounded too as he supposed it to be, by adding the strong interest of terror to the image of the handsome young cavalier.

“You speak in parables, which may be wise to the wise, but to me are folly,” he said, passionately. “And do you think it wise to enlist such sympathies as glow in all young hearts on behalf of this cavalier?”

“Will ye murder him? will ye murder him?” said Ramona, wildly.

“Youth is rash, and Tyburn swings,” replied Tribulation, jocosely; and although Ramona absolutely raved in her attempt to gather the why and wherefore of the dismal intimation, she obtained no other answer.

“Keep yourself easy, child,” she said at last, herself somewhat alarmed at the passionate interest expressed in behalf of the cavalier by her young charge. “Unless he be jealous of thee, Stonehenge will move no hand in the matter, nor need he.”

“But how can I hinder him from being jealous of me, dearest aunt?” said Ramona, earnestly.

“Learn to do as other wives do, that can wile their husband’s heads off their shoulders with sweet words,” replied Tribulation, whose expressions concerning the married state were sometimes excusably bitter, considering the little for which she had to thank it.

But Ingulph's anger was excited at the mingled folly and falsehood, as he believed it, of the statement.

"Rest assured, Mistress Grizzle," he said with vehemence, "heaven will demand an account of the charge in your hands with infinitely more rigour than these shallow pcdantries of theology; and you are now duly warned."

"Keep your breath to cool your pottage," replied the dame, tartly. "But if it be any comfort to you, and I trow not, Ramona shall never be out of my sight unless she be in her husband's."

Ingulph could scarcely forbear shuddering at the prospect of Ramona's coming enjoyments, and the plaintive look which she cast at him seemed to reproach him more emphatically than words.

{ CHAPTER XXVI.

THE DESERTED PALACE.

THE words of Tribulation were enigmatical enough, but on reflection Ingulph began to suspect some deeper meaning in them than he had at first imagined. He thought it possible, remembering the intrigues of the party volant, and De la Pole's late extraordinary conduct, that he was engaged in some rash plans which his daring and subtlety might yet make dangerous. The dread too of his designs on Ramona, all seemed to point out what was proper for him to do at this juncture; and then indeed began the tempest of his soul, for the only safe course which circumstances allowed was that he should procure the cavalier's liberation. The next news which, in the irritated state of the court, he might then expect to hear from Oxford, would be the marriage, willing or unwilling, of Marie with her betrothed.

Some little time was, however, afforded him for hesitation, for he heard from the mulatto who attended the cavalier as a sort of guard, that he was ill and kept his chamber. But after awaiting in a tossed state of mind for two whole days, a suspicion suddenly occurred to him that his illness was feigned.

To satisfy himself on this point, Ingulph hastened to De la Pole's apartment, and in the antechamber encountered the mulatto, who was gliding about, dark and soft and silent as an eel.

The mulatto was obviously startled with his abrupt inquiry for the young lord, and he replied so confusedly that he was still confined to his chamber by a slight fever, that Ingulph immediately proceeded to ascertain the truth by personal inspection. It was as it might almost be said he feared. De la Pole was not in his apartments, but the window of one of them, in which he usually sat, was open, and showed that by an easy drop it was possible to reach the tilt-yard.

Ingulph turned to the mulatto, who had followed him in, for an explanation; and the fellow very confusedly answered, that he had Master Stonehenge's orders to wink at all the prisoner's proceedings, and only to take notice of whither he went.

"To what purpose?" said Ingulph, much startled.

"Is it for a slave to question his master?" returned the spy, with more than Oriental abjectness.

"And whither has he gone now?" continued Ingulph.

"To the city, Master Chaloner tells me, who has just brought home this portrait," replied the mulatto, in broken English; and he produced one from a side table, in a little casket, which he opened and displayed to Ingulph before he could forbid him.

It was the portrait of Lady Marie, richly set in precious-stones; and as Ingulph gazed on the well-remembered loveliness, a quick succession of pangs crossed his heart. He closed the miniature with sudden pettishness, and left the chamber.

Absorbed in unpleasing thought, his steps took the usual direction almost without an effort of volition, and he found himself in the old palace, and in the apartment usually occupied by the family, ere Tribulation, who was the only person in it, and busied in poring over a massive theological work, perceived him.

After some general observations, Ingulph inquired for Mistress Stonehenge.

"What manner of unclean knowledge is this you have been pouring into the pearly vessel of her mind?" said Tribulation, without replying directly. "But you began by making love to your father's wife, and no marvel you go on with it."

"To my father's wife!" exclaimed Ingulph.

"Yea, verily, for the king is called the father of the people," replied Tribulation, hastily; and screwing her mouth up to a kind of purse, she seemed to await what further he had to say, in no very conciliatory mood.

"Methinks you should not be too ready at believing in slanderous reports, aunt," said Ingulph, much irritated.

"Ah, well-a-day! ah well-a-day! these are the locusts that alight on the green corn, and devour the husbandman's hopes in the bud," she exclaimed. "And well, ah, well, did that zealous though silenced brother, Brand-the-Fox Ingle-doo, call me in the way of the saints Tribulation, for Tribulation have I been from my cradle upward, and Tribulation shall I descend into my grave."

"Your lamentations are without cause," said Ingulph, more mildly. "I have a word to say to Mistress Stonehenge, and you will not answer me to tell when I may see her."

"You have spoken too many words to her, Master Ingulph!" said Tribulation, passionately. "You would spill the ambergris from that precious lamp, which I have filled so full, that now of the clear harvest evenings she spends all her time in the orchard, digesting the tidings, and chewing the precious cud of truth till she oft forgets, thinking of eternity, how time goes; and we are fain to seek her in again, for there is nothing more consumptive than your long wet grass in summer."

"And do you suffer her to wander in the gardens alone, by night?" said Ingulph, vehemently. "Good heaven! I thought you had at least common sense."

"And who has told you to the contrary, my fine master?" said Grizzle, her gray eyes flashing fire.

"After the warning which I gave concerning Lord De la Pole!" exclaimed Ingulph.

"Rave on, rave on," said Tribulation, pinching her eyes up as if to endure some martyrdom.

"'Tis ever the way with you saints; you complain of the heat of the fire in which you burn your victims!" retorted Ingulph.

"I heed you no more than the young cedars of Lebanon the clamour of the winds!" said Grizzle.

"You live too much in Palestine to take proper care of your duties in England," exclaimed Ingulph. "Why, it is dark night now, I will seek her in myself."

"You shall do no such thing," said Tribulation, doggedly, and setting herself in his way; "I will suffer no youngster to wander by moonlight with any girl under my charge."

"Mayhap you remember some such scene where ill followed," said Ingulph, exasperated at once with the insinuation and his secret fears. But he repented when he observed what effect his speech had produced. Tribulation turned ghastly

pale, as if struck with sudden death, and leaned staggeringly against her chair, and yet continued to gaze at Ingulph with the glare of a famished she-wolf from a thicket.

“Look at home, look at home, bastard, I say; look at home!” she yelled. “And throw you the past in my teeth?”

“You are mistaken, I spake but at random,” said Ingulph. “But I beseech you suffer me to pass; and believe me, De la Pole but deceives you.”

“Go on your way, I obstruct you not,” said Tribulation, calming herself with a strong effort. “But I will no longer screen your faults, to my own eternal chastisement.”

Ingulph attempted not to wrangle out the meaning of this mystic speech, and fearful of a deluge to follow, he hastened out. But as he went, the thought struck him that under the circumstances, he had better not be seen with Ramona, and he determined to return to the cavalier’s apartment, and announce his novel resolution that he should accept liberty whether he would or not, and leave London.

There was a fatality in this change of resolution which Ingulph was far from suspecting. Arriving abruptly in the chamber which we have formerly mentioned as intervening between the towers of Holbein’s Gate, to his great surprise he perceived the mulatto kneeling against the old tapestry of the inner wall, with his ear to the ground as if listening, and with a shaded lamp burning beside him. Ingulph had, why he knew not, taken a dislike to this swarthy personage; and this attitude of his was so suspicious and strange, that he made bold to tread softly up to him, touched him gently with his foot, and inquired what he did there.

The mulatto started like a toad disturbed at a strawberry; and began muttering something apologetical in Spanish, which Ingulph cut short by desiring him to use his English. Finding no better could be done, he replied that he was waiting for the Lord De la Pole, and had fallen asleep.

“Your eyes are soon awake then,” replied Ingulph; and observing the tapestry stir as if with the wind, he exclaimed, “What, is he in the wall?”

He raised the tapestry and perceived a panel-door so artificially contrived that, if it had not been partially open, it could not have been distinguished from the wainscot.

“His grace has the king’s keys, and walks all over the palace when he pleases,” said the mulatto, staring with his large white eyes wide open, and trembling in every limb.

“Indeed!—give me the lamp,” said Ingulph, attempting to thrust the door open, but he discovered immediately that

it slid backward on grooves. He pushed it open, and perceived an exceedingly narrow and dusty corridor.

With a throb of extreme anxiety, Ingulph stepped past the mulatto into this passage, which was so narrow as scarcely to allow him room to turn, but so high that he could scarcely discern the ceiling, and which wound off in a circular bend. He concluded, and no doubt with justice, that this passage was one of those so frequent in ancient architecture, contrived to facilitate escapes or sudden sallies. Whither it led, and in what purpose De la Pole was engaged, naturally excited his curiosity, and perhaps a more powerful feeling. He took the lamp from the mulatto, commanded him to wait his return, and entered, holding it above his head, to throw the beam as far forward as possible.

Ingulph wended along for some time, observing with surprise that the passage neither widened, nor abated its constant though slight tendency to the circular form. The walls were massive, but of smoothly-set stone, and Ingulph's curiosity increased at the evidently secret and subtle contrivance of the passage. It must not be denied that he experienced some unusual sensations, for there is something inexpressibly disagreeable to the human mind in narrowness and seclusion; but Ingulph was incited by a stronger motive than curiosity; and it was not to be imagined that so much trouble would have been taken by an ancient architect for the sake of a childish puzzle.

The corridor soon began to widen, and in a very tortuous manner, as if traversing the walls of the vast palace. Once or twice the thought occurred to Ingulph, that if the mulatto were cognizant of the passage-windings, and had any peculiar reason to conceal it, he might meditate some treachery—might possibly lurk in some ambush, whence he could dart out and overpower his victim by surprise.

But the absurdity of this suspicion reassured Ingulph, and moreover his lamp, which burned brilliantly in the dry air, seemed to secure him against surprise. But he went on with considerably more caution, until he perceived the termination of his travels in what at first appeared to be a wall blocking the exit of the corridor. But examining more nearly, he discerned the outline of a door similar in construction to that in the Gate House.

Pushing it aslant in its grooves, in his eagerness, but wide enough to admit his person, Ingulph perceived the grotesque reverse of tapestry figures, raising which cautiously, he stepped out; and, considerably to his surprise, after the

darkness he had traversed, found himself in shadowy daylight. He was in a large gallery, lighted by lofty windows, which, judging from the innumerable paintings in carved frames, and statues covered with dust, he concluded to be the famous collection of Charles the First.

Silence and desolation reigned throughout the extent of the gallery, but the sepulchral silence encouraged Ingulph; and carefully registering in his mind that this place of entrance was covered by arras representing the flight into Egypt, he slowly wended up the gallery, viewing by the dim and dying light the treasures of art which the monarch's taste had collected.

In common with the majority of his contemporaries, Ingulph was disposed to regard as effeminate, and Italian, the fondness for painting, sculpture, and splendid articles of *vertu*, which Charles laboured to introduce among his subjects. But the beauty of many of these works, some of them masterpieces of famous artists, the funeral silence of this once favourite haunt of a great and magnificent court, somewhat affected him. The portraits of the monarchs, statesmen, warriors, and high-born dames, seemed to frown darkly down upon the republican intruder; and with such force, in the grim limnings of Holbein, or the colours of Reubens, that Ingulph's eye almost transferred them from the canvass into the darkness which filled the remoter parts of the gallery.

Leaving his lamp on one of the pedestals, from which a bust had by some accident fallen, Ingulph walked to the end of the gallery, passing several richly-carved doors, which he found all locked, but which, doubtless, conducted to the vast ranges of apartments once occupied by the court. All was silence—utter, as in the chamber of death.

Glancing as he went, almost fearfully, even at the most voluptuous visions of the Italian masters, luxuriating in the beauteous mythology of Greece, Ingulph observed a lofty portal in front, which he concluded to be the great entrance to the gallery. He essayed to open it, and the door swung easily back at his pressure; but so sudden a richness of light saluted him, that he actually started. He found himself on the summit of a staircase of great width, the steps of curiously inlaid ebony and marble, balustraded with massive gilded bronze. This descended to a grand landing-place, lighted by a lofty Gothic window, emblazoned in every pane with arms and scriptural figures, whose scarlet and golden hues produced an indescribably rich effect. How many

gorgeous processions of royal pomp and pleasure, or, as was likely, since it was a part of the palace built by Wolsey, how many superb exhibitions of priestly grandeur had traversed this now silent way!

Led on by a vague feeling of curiosity, Ingulph descended the staircase, and perceived on either hand two lofty portals, the door of one of which was slightly ajar. Ingulph was naturally directed in his choice by that circumstance, and pushing the door open, he found himself in a vast and exceedingly gloomy apartment, principally of black oak very elaborately carved, which he conjectured to have been the presence-chamber, from two rich chairs of crimson velvet, surmounted by royal crowns, which stood on a dais at the extremity. Banners and shields, whose blazonry was lost in dust, hung at intervals along the walls, and formed a singular contrast with the ecclesiastical character of the chief ornaments of the woodwork, which were carved croziers and fantastic mitres, while the innumerable chairs of cedar-wood and tarnished velvet, ranged in solemn order along the walls, closely resembled the canons' stalls in cathedrals.

Ingulph advanced a few steps into this chamber, but its immensity and gloom struck him with so chilly and melancholy a feeling, that he paused irresolutely. It seemed as if the vast and desolate chamber were still haunted by phantoms of its once possessors; and so strong was the influence of his imagination, that Ingulph almost expected to behold the figure of the great cardinal glide past, or that of the royal ruffian who had despoiled his favourite of a residence on which he had lavished a magnificence more kingly than his master's. The unwonted air which Ingulph's entrance admitted, aided the vagaries of his fancy by stirring the banners with a faint and spectral movement.

While Ingulph stood gazing down the chamber, he heard, with a sudden beating of the heart, which the bravest could scarcely have suppressed under such circumstances, a sound like the sliding of a foot on the stairs outside. He returned to the door, and glanced with wild eagerness up the staircase. The shadows were now much deepened, so that the summit of the flight of stairs was very indistinct and dark; or surely fancy played him one of her tricks, but it seemed to him as if he caught a distant view of a piece of floating black drapery, like the robe of a Dominican monk, which instantly vanished.

The absurdity of the vision simultaneously occurred to him, and he resolved it into a caprice of his excited imagina-

tion. The sound he had heard resembled the flapping of a naked foot on such materials as composed the staircase; and was it possible that the movement of a spirit, even though walking in the person of a barefooted friar, could give so fleshly an echo?

And yet the thought was so full of dread, that Ingulph paused for some minutes in a flood of hurried, and, truth to say, wild conjectures, until he suddenly lighted on one which reconciled all so efficaciously, that he wondered it had not immediately occurred to him. The mulatto had followed in search of him, but unwilling to give offence, had retired abruptly on being observed. He wore a dress which was sufficiently dark to become black in so deep a gloom. To be sure, it was neither long nor waving, but that might be fancy.

Satisfied with this explanation, Ingulph crossed to the opposite door, to ascertain whither it led, but he found that, like nearly all the others, it was locked.

Smiling at his own superstition, he returned to the presence-chamber, and continued his explorations in that direction, musing on what De la Pole could have to do in these lonely and deserted chambers, but imagining he had some secret commission from the court. He crossed several corridors, and came to some long intricate suites of apartments, which, from their ruinous and unfurnished condition, he concluded to be a very ancient part of the palace, and probably that which, but for the intervention of the troubles, Charles intended to have pulled down and rebuilt on the magnificent plan of Inigo Jones.

Ingulph was confirmed in this opinion by observing that the windows overlooked the gardens of the old palace, and his curiosity to know what had become of De la Pole was much quickened by the discovery. But he found no means of exit, for although there were several doors, all were securely locked, and the keys gone.

Further progress was at length prohibited, for Ingulph reached a flight of stairs, after ascending some windings of which, he perceived that he was in the interior of a tower which was little better than a mass of ruins, the chambers and galleries being frequently separated by deep black gulfs from the staircase. These gaps being very large and dark, presented many fearful precipices, down which it was very easy to slip, the steps being full of interstices, loose and without balustrades. But across some of these dilapidations, planks were laid as if to allow a passage, and Ingulph thought he

discerned a hugh round outline, somewhat resembling that of the ancient keep in which Stonehenge pursued his astrologic labours.

The increasing darkness, however, made it dangerous to attempt satisfying this doubt, and Ingulph returned the way he came. Occupying himself in vain conjectures as to how he could have missed Lord De la Pole, he had re-entered the presence-chamber, when suddenly he heard a murmur of voices speaking fast and eagerly at the opposite extremity of the chamber. Surprised at the circumstance, and ashamed of being detected in what might almost be considered an espial, and which might also prove a dangerous position, Ingulph rapidly ensconced himself behind an oaken carved beaufet, in one of the deep embrasures of the windows. The next instant, four or five of the interlocutors appeared traversing the hall rapidly, and talking sometimes altogether in their eagerness. De la Pole was foremost, and, dark as it was, Ingulph discerned that he had a great bunch of keys, which he shook occasionally in the vehemence of his discourse. Lord Holland, Waller, Tomkins, and two other cavaliers unknown to Ingulph, were his companions.

Ingulph could not ascertain, during their rapid progress up the hall, what the subject of the conversation might be, but it was with some alarm and more curiosity that he heard his own name pronounced once or twice, with divers inflections, some of them not expressive of very kindly feeling. But De la Pole seemed in a hurry to be rid of his company, for once or twice, when Lord Holland paused, he hurried him on, and finally, the whole group rattled out of the chamber.

Ingulph paused not to conjecture the meaning of this apparently secret meeting, for he foresaw the inconveniences of suffering De la Pole to know that he had been a listener to however small a part of it. No doubt he had some rash plans in view, which the dread of discovery might precipitate into still rasher action. Relieved of his worst suspicion, Ingulph therefore resolved to return quietly, and by his own decisive measure of liberating the cavalier, render his schemes abortive.

CHAPTER XXVII.

RETURNING to the grand staircase, Ingulph found how he had missed encountering De la Pole; the opposite door was now partly open, for he saw a bluish light at the chinks, easily distinguished from the colours of the emblazoned windows above, which showed as if it were not quite closed, although he had formerly found it locked.

Ingulph made no delay beyond slightly pushing at the door, which confirmed his suspicion by yielding as if to open, and then re-ascended the staircase. The gallery was darker than the apartments below, owing to the great height of the windows. A faint moon glimmered in the sky, but its ashy tints only deepened the gloom, and threw shadows of strange forms around. Under the circumstances, Ingulph was not sorry to perceive the mulatto, peering forward with his lamp in hand, and apparently in a state of very great anxiety.

“Where is my lord?” he said, starting and gazing tremblingly at the young man, as if he expected to discern traces of some terrible tragedy.

“Are you sure he is still within?” replied Ingulph, with justifiable evasion. “I have traversed a range of deserted and ruinous chambers, where he was not; but I would have you seek him, and come to inform me in my chamber when he returns to his own. I have business with him.”

The mulatto grinned with an expression of infinite pleasure at the announcement, and muttering something that he feared his lordship had lost his way in the dark, waited respectfully until Ingulph resumed his way up the gallery. He even watched him until he raised the tapestry which covered the secret entry, and then, as if afraid to be observed, went on his own course down the staircase.

It was in truth Ingulph's intention to have returned instantly to the gate, but as he raised the arras a singular phenomenon arrested his notice. This portion of the gallery was lighted by a lofty bull's-eye, chased to represent a beaming sun; and a sudden ray of moonlight shot through it, and illumined a deep recess in the gallery, directly opposite. Ingulph's eye was caught by perceiving, or imagining he perceived, a female figure, clothed in white drapery, and with a countenance which, although very beautiful, was full of mournful expression, and which raised its hand and beckoned to him.

It was but an instant, but Ingulph's heart stood still as if with death, and a cold dew burst in streams to his temples. But in that short period he had concluded that what he beheld was a statue in white marble, to which his fancy had given movement. The moon almost immediately shadowed over, and the form disappeared; but determined to ascertain the truth, he groped into the recess in the darkness; but when he reached the spot where he thought to find it, the moon again brightening up, showed him that there was no statue there. But looking back he perceived, hung high above the tapestry over the secret door, the portrait of a lady exactly resembling that which his imagination had raised in the darkness.

He now thought that, when he was noting the way by which he entered the gallery, he had unconsciously fixed this portrait, which was sufficiently remarkable, in his mind, and that by the chance association of the white moonbeams, his fancy had transferred it visually before him. Yet with all this philosophical explanation, he breathed pantingly for some instants, as he gazed at the portrait. So exquisitely had the painter played his part, that Ingulph almost believed that the eyes looked down upon him with a mixture of tenderness and melancholy, which was the predominant expression of the very lovely countenance.

Ingulph's feeling on this subject was heightened by observing the name of the lady of the portrait, cut in gilt letters on the ebony frame; it was Editha De la Pole. He concluded hastily that it was some ancestress of that noble name, and with a mixture of feeling and superstition for which he himself could not account, resolved to hasten from the gallery; and he had advanced a step or two, to recross it, when a red flash of light along the ground made him halt.

The little incident we have described had occupied but a few moments, and Ingulph, from the recess which concealed him, beheld the mulatto return on tiptoe, raise the arras pryingly, and listen for some time with evident anxiety. As if satisfied with the result, he closed the panel, and pushed a piece of wood in the grooves, which would make it difficult if not impossible to open, on the exterior. He then returned to the opposite end of the gallery with the haste of one who imagines he has done his work cleverly.

Ingulph liked not these precautions, although he imagined that the mulatto thought he was bolting him out, not in. And still less did he relish the proceedings, when, peeping from his recess down the gallery, which he could safely do in the darkness, he saw De la Pole come forward and meet the

mulatto, exchange a whispered conversation, in which he gave one or two slight derisive laughs, and then hand a bunch of keys to him, with apparently some instructions, for the mulatto nodded intelligently, and disappeared down the staircase.

These appearances struck Ingulph with very strong though indefinite suspicions, that all was not right; and observing that the cavalier almost immediately followed his emissary, and left the portal open behind him, he glided down the gallery after him. On reaching the summit of the staircase, he distinctly saw the two figures standing below, in another muttered conversation, and then the mulatto entered the presence-chamber, jingling his keys, while the cavalier retired through the opposite door.

Ingulph's curiosity, or rather apprehensions, were now so strongly excited, that he determined to follow De la Pole; and unless he had more visitors with him, ascertain the meaning of his singular conduct. But again, it struck him that his best chance of ascertaining it with any certainty was to observe him, if possible, unobserved.

He therefore allowed an interval to elapse, and then descended to the landing-place. The door by which De la Pole had disappeared was left partially open, and revealed an antechamber, fitted up with a light splendour which formed a complete contrast to the rest of the palace. Beyond was a long vista of apartments running one into another, all so clearly lighted, that Ingulph wondered how it was that the more ancient buildings were apparently dark with night.

The cavalier was nowhere in sight, but Ingulph continued his exploration of this brilliant suite very cautiously. The thought soon occurred to him that it was the part inhabited by the sovereigns before their abrupt departure. The architecture was more modern than the rest of the pile, the velvet hangings and gilding were fresh, the furniture lighter, and very magnificent. The superior brightness of these chambers was explained by the fact, that the windows all opened upon the river, and so caught the full reflection of what remained of light in the skies, from the water.

Ingulph's conjectures were confirmed by arriving at a peculiarly rich suite of chambers, furnished with all possible luxury and magnificence of decoration, which from the numerous feminine appurtenances, and the fleur-de-lis and crowns ornamenting it, appeared to have been the queen's private suite. Love and taste had lavished all the refinement and splendour of Italian luxury on these chambers; and all doubt

as to their destination was removed from Ingulph's mind, when he discovered an oratory, fitted up with elaborate Catholic decorations, and with a colossal crucifix on the altar, of black marble, evidently the work of some noble sculptor.

So hurried was the royal departure, or so unexpectedly protracted the return, that scarcely any arrangement had been made to protect all this splendour from the consequences of neglect. In one superb saloon, probably the queen's drawing-room, the immense Venetian mirrors which covered the walls were so obscured by dust, that at first he thought they were hung with a kind of muslin. The chairs and couches of silver damask were uncovered, embers still remained on the marble hearths, and a chess-table was still covered with its combatants, as they had been left at the close of a drawn game.

Ingulph was about to enter this sanctum, continuing his pursuit, when he suddenly discerned the cavalier lolling at his ease on one of the couches, and seeming to indulge in a gay vision, for he was humming a merry air to himself. It was now so dusky that the chamber was but partially illumined, and that in which Ingulph stood was quite dark, the windows being closed. Tormented with a suspicion which momentarily increased in force, Ingulph determined to await the event from the position which he occupied. But suddenly observing the remote gleam of a lamp on his rear, he had no resource but to step into the saloon, and ensconce himself in the dark corner of the open door.

Luckily, De la Pole was too much occupied with his own thoughts to heed any sound which might have accompanied this evolution; and with a heart beating wildly with expectation, Ingulph awaited the result. In a few moments his most direful anticipations were verified; the mulatto appeared lighting in, and leading—Ramona.

She came with a timid, hesitating step, and he seemed to be encouraging her, but he spoke in Spanish, and Ingulph could not recognise what he said. To know the worst was now his object, sinking from thought to thought into an abyss of anguish, which only those who have discovered the turpitude of some one beloved and near can conceive.

"My love, my soul, are you here!" exclaimed De la Pole, rushing forward and attempting to seize Ramona's hand, but she started back like a frightened bird.

"No, no, señor," she exclaimed, with a strange mixture of childish simplicity and womanly pettishness. "I know not why Lolo should bring me here; for I only wanted to speak

a few words to you ; and how long the moon has been shining and you did not come."

"I was detained by persons of whom I could not rid me ; but my heart has never been a moment from you since I first saw you, loveliest!" said the cavalier, with all the tenderness which he knew how to infuse into his manner, and which was indeed natural to him when speaking to women.

"And I never forget you," said Ramona, with an innocent sigh ; "especially since they told me that you were to be killed ; but my dueña does not know I am here, and if Don Ambrosio did, he would kill me."

"Don Ambrosio ! who is that?" said De la Pole, taking her hand, and pressing it to his bosom with a smile.

"What—do you call in English—mi señor ? my husband, yes!" said the young girl, with a glance of surprise at the cavalier.

"No man breathing, were he ten times your husband, should dare but to dream of harming you in my presence!" said De la Pole, vehemently.

"Ay, but you could not prevent, señor ; I am his wife," said Ramona, as if it were the most natural event possible to be killed by a husband. "But I am more afraid, I fear more, *O Dios !* if he should kill *you*."

"Kill me for but admiring your beauty, lady ; he must make a general slaughter of humanity then !" said De la Pole, with his characteristic gallantry. "But tell me how it is, and what you mean, for I do assure you, sweet one, while you live in it, I shall take it very unkind of any one that shall take it into his head to remove me from this world, even were it to Heaven."

Touched with the thought of his imagined doom, Ramona suffered herself to be led to the couch ; and seating herself with great simplicity and good faith beside De la Pole, she told him the mysterious threats of Tribulation, which it seemed had taken a strong hold of her imagination.

Ingulph, who was without arms, for he had thought it best to go without any to his projected interview with De la Pole, had yet resolved to interfere the moment he discerned how matters stood. But the effect which this revelation had on the cavalier, and the dread of compromising Ramona, now he perceived her innocence of any wrongful intent, kept him in his concealment.

De la Pole arose and walked in an agitated manner up and down the chamber ; he then paused, and inquired of Ramona if she understood any of the particulars of the plan for his

destruction, which it seemed was entertained. But she knew nothing beyond the mystic announcement of Tribulation.

"They have, perchance, some inklings of a plan I have formed, to refute the insolent calumnies of Dethewarre," he said at last. "But they may perhaps find themselves caught in their own springes; but what would you have me do, sweet Mistress Stonehenge? I am a prisoner, in their hands."

"Can you not go to your king, and leave this cruel city?" she said, mournfully.

"And leave you? No, I will rather stay here and die," said De la Pole, passionately. "For love alone is life, love alone is thee, Ramona!—but above all, love is respect and adoration!" he concluded, observing the alarm which Ramona took at his vehemence.

"Lolo! where is Lolo?" she said, starting up, but he had gone; then colouring deeply, she added, "I have told you all, and I must go now, or they will miss me; and you are, I fear, one of those cruel men of whom my husband has oft told me, that they lure young wives with music to devour them."

"The jealous old curmudgeon!" muttered the cavalier. "Do I look like an ogre of so horrid a species, lady? But love him! Love a frosty old conjuror, who can think any stars worth gazing at in preference to your eyes! No, fair mistress, love is a liquid flame that flies through the veins of youth, not a winter stream lagging bluey through snow in those of age!"

"What you mean?—what for you tell me this?" said Ramona, blushing to a ruby tint, and with an electric glance of her dark eyes, which she instantly shaded with their long lashes.

"I mean that I would be your cavalier, your 'knight,'" said De la Pole. "I would I were even that screeching bird who fancies he has found his native paradise again in your bosom! Yet in all Spanish countries that I wot of, a cavalier *servente* is as allowable to a lady as her fan, and even here the custom gains! I pray you, let me serve you."

"Stonehenge would kill you and me too, if he knew that you spoke to me thus, for he loves none of the customs of my country," said the young Mexican, tears gushing from her downcast lids.

"But a woman should never think of consulting a husband in such matters, more than in the choice of a head-tire or of a curious lap-dog," said De la Pole, laughing. "The fashion

varies every month, and what a plague were it for an astrologer to be teased into a lunacy of ribands."

"But Don Ambrosio knows everything! The stars tell him all," said Ramona, gravely.

"What a statue formed by nature art thou for the spark of love to animate!" said the cavalier. "Believe it not, lady; they impose upon your credulous innocence, that because he is old, crusty, and joyless himself, he may keep you from sharing the delights which youth and beauty and love should make all your own!"

"Do not speak to me in this way; I must not hear you," said Ramona, with a sigh. "But if you love me as you say so oft you do, when our good dueña is telling us the way to Heaven, for my sake, do not let them harm you, for I should never, never, never be happy again!"

"You love me then, my sweetest innocence?" said De la Pole, seizing her hand and detaining her. "Do but tell me so, but I can never tell you how I love your beauty and pure tenderness, which knows not its own name, except in deeds; and when I have restored the king, which I trust in Heaven shortly to do; when I have made some of these overgrown traitors shorter by the head, I will prove it, for I will never rest content until you are mine, and mine only."

"It cannot be; I am Stonehenge's wife; it is wicked of you to say these things to me," said Ramona, with an unwonted dignity and anger.

"But Stonehenge is a traitor; and so is the insolent bastard Ingulph, who has even dared to pretend to the love of my betrothed wife," said De la Pole.

"He is no traitor—he is my kind and dear brother, and loves me well," returned Ramona, with warmth.

"But he loves another infinitely better, whereas I love you better than myself," said De la Pole; and observing the effect which this produced, he continued, "I swear to you, he is in love with my betrothed Marie; but I love you far more than I do her, and when the king's reign is restored, he will not suffer your beauty to be bound to this old traitor's age; you shall be divorced from him, and I will wed you, and Ingulph may marry my betrothed if he pleases."

"How can that be when I am married to Stonehenge? No, no, it is impossible," replied Ramona, mournfully.

"You are not married in England until you are married by the English church," said De la Pole, with bitterness. "But he has kept you in ignorance of all that is worth knowing in life. If he were so wise as you imagine, would he suffer

you to be so long with one who loves you indeed as purely, as passionately, without some prodigy?"

"*Dios!* what is that?" exclaimed Ramona, starting and turning pale; for Ingulph's impatience began now to get the mastery of his prudence, and he made a slight movement from his concealment. But the dread of an open rupture, and perhaps some idea that the mulatto was not far behind, and usually carried a poniard, restrained him.

The artful cavalier took advantage of Ramona's panic; for, affecting to share it, he stepped towards her, clasped her with one arm, and laid his hand on the hilt of his sword with the other, as if to defend her.

The attitude of terror, and the extreme beauty of Ramona, cowering fearfully in the grasp of the young cavalier, whose countenance expressed at once delight and derision, composed a picture which Ingulph was far from admiring. But fearful of heightening the fears of the superstitious girl to some outburst which might attract notice, he stood perfectly still.

After a few moments' fearful attention, Ramona's alarm subsided, and she turned smilingly and trustfully to De la Pole.

"It is nothing," she said, rejoicingly. "Bid Lolo come and guide me back again, for I dare not go alone; but now I have warned you, you will not stay any longer among these stern men, will you?"

"And do you leave me for ever—do we part for ever, and without one token that you do not hate me?" said the cavalier, and Ramona, gushing with tears, turned reluctantly towards the cavalier. The action brought her lips so closely to De la Pole's, that it was scarcely possible to avoid it, and her words were stifled in the long passionate pressure with which he met them. But the next instant, and Ramona sprang from his arms with a shriek of despair, for there stood Ingulph before them.

De la Pole stood for a moment like a statue, and then starting back, drew his sword, which gleamed sharply in the moonlight, not immediately recognising the intruder; but he dropped it as soon as he perceived who it was, meeting the wrathful glare of Ingulph's eye, and exclaimed, "What! brother Dethewarre, eaves-dropping?" as if it were an unfraternal act of which he had reason to complain.

"Villain!—but we now understand each other," said Ingulph, furiously. "Come with me, Ramona, or, unarmed as I am, I will do you right on this perfidious wretch, who would betray your credulous folly to perdition."

"In heaven's name, in mercy's name, Ingulph, do not give

me to the slaughter," shrieked Ramona, sinking at his feet. "Oh, indeed, if my husband knows of this, he will never believe that I did it only that the poor cavalier might not be killed—and he will tear me to pieces."

"Come with me, and no one shall harm you; this man whom you trust is more to be dreaded than a wild beast," said Ingulph, vehemently; and seizing her violently, he dragged rather than led her away. But she made no resistance, and the cavalier himself made no movement to prevent their departure, although he continued to gaze after them with a look of inexpressible malice.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

INGULPH led his pale and panic-struck companion to the great staircase, before he precisely resolved on whither he was taking her. But he paused there in perplexity, for he remembered that the way by which he came, would lead them out in his own apartments, at a distance from Ramona's abode in the old palace, and consequently liable to a thousand misconstructions, not to mention the difficulty and length of the way.

He turned to the trembling girl, and sternly inquired by what means she had entered the royal apartments; to which she replied tearfully, that Lolo had brought her, but that they descended no stairs.

It was now dark night, and Ingulph's agitation increased, for he began to imagine that Ramona's absence must now have excited attention. He called Lolo's name in a loud voice, and Ramona timidly joined in; but although innumerable echoes answered, the treacherous mulatto did not. Irritated to the highest degree, he rushed up the stairs, leaving Ramona weeping at the base, and strove to open the portal of the gallery, hoping to find him there. But it was barred within. Ingulph instantly concluded that the wretch had retired, probably to mount guard upon him; but he therefore concluded that the way by which poor Ramona was inveigled in from the gardens was still open.

He returned, and taking her now very willing hand, for she was much terrified, they crossed the presence-chamber together in almost total darkness. Luckily, as Ingulph had explored the corridor which led to the ruinous chambers formerly described, he knew that it was useless to take that way, and was thus saved an irresolution which might have been fatal. He took a passage in a contrary direction, which

after some windings, to his incredible joy, suddenly terminated in a small postern into the gardens, in which Lolo had left the key.

It may be imagined with what satisfaction Ingulph found himself and his rescued companion in the free air. It was in the old palace grounds, but at some distance from the part inhabited by Stonehenge, at a spot usually known by the name of the Hermitage, from a caprice of Wolsey's, who had formed himself an image of the solitude and religious retirement of the ancient eremites. On the brow of an artificial acclivity, covered with flowers and trees of drooping foliage, was a cell formed of interleaved branches and thick moss. A flight of grassy steps ascended to it, and all around were woody steeps artificially raised, covered with flowers and weeds, from a cleft in which descended a little cascade into a marble basin below, once peopled with golden carp.

With what vehemence Ingulph reproached Mistress Stonehenge with her folly, not to say culpability, may be imagined; but she besought him with such ardent supplications not to reveal what had happened, that he could not long refuse to promise her that he would not. But it was on her solemn promise that she would never willingly see the cavalier again, under any pretext, that he consented. Yet compassion for her was not his sole motive, but for Stonehenge himself; for he instinctively felt that the love of his young wife was the oil which lay on the surface of his troubled soul, without which it must needs break in tempests.

Resolving at the same time that the cavalier should not remain in London, he quieted his conscience, and they walked along in silence together for some minutes, when suddenly the sound of Ramona's name, in the distance, met their ears. It was the voice of Stonehenge, and soon the shriller cry of Tribulation echoed it; lights gleamed remotely, and Ingulph immediately guessed that an alarm was raised, and that they were in search of his charge. Ramona clung to him in excessive terror, and he himself was for a moment very seriously alarmed.

But taking courage from the consciousness of innocence, he desired her not to fear, or at least not to show any signs of emotion, which would be taken as a confession of some consciousness of wrong. He then answered the calls in a loud, cheerful tone; the lights glanced nearer, and in a few instants Tribulation came running towards them at a most unwonted pace, followed by several servants, venting a torrent of reproaches as she came.

Ingulph was surprised and somewhat vexed at the dexterity with which Ramona took her cue. She told her enraged dueña, laughing merrily, that they had been playing at hide and seek with her for a long time, and ran bounding forward to meet Stonehenge, who followed at a sober pace. Her excuses seemed to be sufficient in this quarter, for when Ingulph reached his uncle, he only inquired where they had hidden themselves—but he looked exceedingly pale. Unluckily, Ramona answered, that they were in the hermit's cell; and his countenance became for a moment strangely agitated.

Tribulation came up, and resumed her scolding, without, however, making any definite charge; and Ingulph lagged behind, that he might not seem to avoid a private dialogue with his uncle, which he saw he was inclined to have.

Stonehenge began with a question which was not probably uppermost in his mind, by inquiring when he would be ready to join the army of the earl of Manchester, which was shortly expected to take the field.

Ingulph readily replied, that he awaited only orders, and Stonehenge's usual benignancy returned.

"We have done all that can at present be done in the parliament, until I can collect the proofs which are necessary to substantiate your claims," said he. "But Montacute foils us with silence. Nevertheless, the hour of bitter anguish and retaliation is approaching for us, without our moving a hand, or stirring a muscle, in the terrible but necessary work."

"You have then detected some conspiracy in which De la Pole is engaged, which may bring him and others into peril?" said Ingulph, with great anxiety.

"Be innocent of the knowledge; and since you cannot prevent the irresistible decrees of fate, be ignorant of them," returned Stonehenge, with solemnity. "Of a certain brood he comes, and serpentine are all his movements; but I have other and surer intelligencers than even my faithful mulatto, whom he thinks he has bought over to his service."

"Is the mulatto your espial?" said Ingulph, with a start which was not unnoticed by his mystical relative. "'Tis a work which asks a treacherous spirit, and how know you but that he may play false two ways, and carry his treason with a double edge?"

"Fear you that he speaks ill of you?" replied Stonehenge, with a somewhat tart smile; "that you would destroy his credit? What can he gain by betraying me? And he owes me all—life itself!—for I rescued him from a cruel death, being for some heavy offence smeared with honey and hung in

the burning sun of Mexico, to be stung to death by wasps and hornets. But I hold intelligence with spies which the foulness of the earth may obscure for a few passing moments, but cannot corrupt nor change."

"Yet the interpreters of these bright oracles may dim or reverse them, passing through the medium of their fancies and prejudices, as the light of the stars may be passing through the depraved and foggy air," returned Ingulph.

"Wherefore do you reason so earnestly against the science and its expounders?" said Stonehenge, with a glance so full of suspicion and anxiety that Ingulph shrunk under its scrutiny.

"If Master Lilly has warned you against the intriguing qualities of Lord De la Pole—in other than political respects—I shall honour it more," he replied, after a pause.

"I am not the guardian of Tribulation's maids—nor methinks do they need any," said Stonehenge, with a sportiveness very unusual to him.

"But there is one in this palace whose beauty might well invite the artifices which her innocence cannot—to which at least it would be dangerous to expose her!" said Ingulph, with hesitation, although he felt the necessity of putting Stonehenge on his guard.

"So then, you are jealous—for me?" replied Stonehenge, with asperity. "The old man hath no security in his young wife's love!—Age is not lovable; only the frosty mistletoe bestows her fruit on the hoar oak of winter?—But pray you, what cause is there for fear, and what would you have me do?"

"De la Pole is the very gerfalcon of beauty, and stoops at all game, and I do oft see him hovering over your gardens here," replied Ingulph. "I would not suffer Ramona to wander about as she now doth at her own fantastic will, but keep her within doors, unless when attended abroad by Mistress Tribulation, or some other watchful friend, whose experience may supply the want in hers."

"Such as yourself, nephew?" replied Stonehenge, abruptly. "And who I pray is to profit by my withdrawing my confidence and love from her, mewing her up from the free air, and becoming a jealous old jailer, and no longer a husband such as my sweet snowdrop hath hitherto contentedly bloomed beside, wintry as you deem mine age."

"Not so, Master Stonehenge!" exclaimed Ingulph, much irritated by the insinuations contained in this speech. "Nay, I refer you to Mistress Stonehenge herself, whether Lord De la Pole has not found occasion to reveal his liking so

warmly, that—but for my interference—he had perchance carried his insolence beyond words!”

“I do beseech you, say not so, Dethewarre, say not so!” said Stonehenge, with a dark flush. “I have struggled hard with the demon in my soul, but this would give the casting throw; she is my last hold on humanity; without her I should become a raging beast, a madman, but yet not of the sort which men chain from harm. “Let us not think of it; the bare imagination lets me loose into—I know not what—but I discern the crimson splash of a sea of blood!—Do you shudder?—Let us in, I will question her, and the fool Tribulation.”

“Nay, do not so—I promised to conceal the circumstance—which, after all, perchance my fancy exaggerated!” said Ingulph, eagerly, for he had already repented of the rash statement he had made.

“Do you trifle with me on such a point as this, Ingulph?” exclaimed Stonehenge. “Or do you hope with inventions to kindle my hatred against mine enemy’s blood, to its extirpation, that he may gladly seek you as his heir? Boy, it is impossible! he regards you as worse than alien to his blood,—perchance you are so! But let us in; I will know the truth of this matter.”

It was too late to retract, and Ingulph—cursing his own rashness, and foreseeing the worst consequences from the event, followed Master Stonehenge into the palace, whither his wife and her scolding dueña had for some time preceded them.

Ingulph felt that, however unintentionally, he had broken his agreement with Ramona, and he would have given anything for the opportunity to put her on her guard not to reveal too much in reply to the questions which he knew would be addressed to her. But this was of course impossible for him to attempt; but, unhappily, while he was lagging at a distance after Stonehenge, the mulatto came crawling up to him, and in the most abject terms implored him not to reveal his villany to his master, declaring that he did not know it was Ramona whom he was guiding to the presence of the Lord De la Pole.

Loathing the treacherous wretch as he did, still Ingulph felt that he had only the choice between revealing his villany to the full, or affecting to believe his apology for it. But he severely reprimanded him, and desired him, if possible, to communicate to Ramona in secret, that he had been obliged to inform her husband of De la Pole’s caprice for her, but not at all of the circumstances of her late interview. She was therefore

to confess only so much as supported his statement, that he had interrupted the cavalier in some foolish declaration of his liking in the gardens. The mulatto performed his commission but too well.

Entering the palace, Ingulph found Stonehenge in anxious conversation with Tribulation, and he soon found that she was strenuously denying the possibility of the accusation which he had made against the cavalier. This was of course necessary, or her own character for sagacity and penetration was gone; and Ingulph was now pressed for particulars. This again puzzled him, as he knew not what to say so as not to clash with Ramona's subsequent statements, and his confusion and hesitation were triumphantly pointed out by Tribulation, when luckily Ramona herself entered.

She had removed her hood and mantle, and had taken unusual pains with her toilette; and Ingulph had never seen her display so much fascination and cajolery before, in her demeanour to Stonehenge.

But the explanation could not long be deferred, when all present, whatever they might affect, were overflowing with it. Stonehenge, pleased with his young bride's lavish display of tenderness, happened to call her his good little wife.

"The qualities of a good wife," said Tribulation, in a catechetical manner, and closing her eyes as if delivering an oracle, "are simply these—she must be humble, pious, chaste, submissive, helpful, loving, manna-seeking; thirsting after salvation as a hart for the brooks; with neither will, nor way, nor purpose, nor delight, nor interest in existence, but through and by and with her lawful husband; for is she not flesh of his flesh, bone of his bone—?"

"And what of these things am I not?" interrupted Ramona, with a vehemence which it is probable she had never used before, for Tribulation started as if a pistol had gone off in her ear.

"Thou wert not altogether in my interest, Ramona," said Stonehenge, gently. "For whereas they tell me that the Lord De la Pole has had the insolence to speak to you words which should only issue from my mouth, and you have not told me, that I might do you right upon so impudent a villain."

"It is all Master Dethewarre's imagining—he loves me too well, and is too anxious for me," said Ramona, colouring deeply. "At times I have spoken to my Lord De la Pole, nor could I less in civility, being Dethewarre's brother, and my dueña's favourite convert. But our talk was ever of a

lady whom he loves, and to whom he is betrothed ; and when Ingulph chanced to find us in discourse this evening, it was upon this portrait, and I did but jest with his kind jealousy when I said otherwise."

And so saying, she produced the portrait of the Lady Marie, which Ingulph had seen in the Gate House.

The skill and deception of this manœuvre struck him absolutely dumb ; at the same time he felt that it was impossible, without exposing his own share in the deceit, to confute it. Stonehenge seemed satisfied with the explanation, so far as regarded his wife and De la Pole, but he turned angrily upon Tribulation.

" Was this the care I expected from you ? " he said, bitterly. " Had it been that this young lord's imagination had not been turned another way, to gratify your foolish fancy of conversion, you would have exposed my wife to temptations the force of which no one knows better than yourself."

This sarcasm seemed to produce its full effect upon Tribulation.

" Master Stonehenge," she said, arising with a countenance resolved, but very pale ; " mayhap you can manage your own affairs better—I have given you light enough to steer by if you are not resolved to be blind ; but after this I will not sleep another night under your roof for all the wealth, for all the revenge, which is much more, that you can yield to induce me. So fare you well, I wish you joy of your confidence, and hope you will not find it misplaced as long as your wife's story is so well concerted with your nephew's."

Having thus offended all round so poignantly that no one offered the least remonstrance to her departure, Tribulation stalked out of the apartment ; and in a short time they heard that she had returned, bag and baggage, to her brother-in-law Bulstocke's house.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE circumstances narrated in the preceding chapter were all in the highest degree disagreeable to Ingulph, especially the removal of Tribulation, who, with all her faults and follies, was a great check upon any sinister proceedings of the cavalier. But Ingulph fondly imagined that he had a panacea for all ; he sent De la Pole a notification that he released him from imprisonment, and desired him to name a day when he would receive his passport and depart. Under

the circumstances, he considered that De la Pole would understand this civil message as a command; but so it did not seem. The cavalier returned word that he required not his pass or permission, as he expected both from the parliament; and the disdainful tone of the response taught Ingulph that he was considered to be as much implicated in preserving the late event secret as its most guilty participators.

Still Ingulph thought it not probable that, with the suspicions which De la Pole knew were awakened to his intrigues, political and amatory, he would find it advisable to stay much longer in London. But while waiting the upshot, his apprehensions for Ramona increased hourly; and to supply as much as possible the absence of Tribulation, whom no indirect overtures could induce to return, he spent as much time as possible in the old palace, keeping a continual and zealous watch on her movements. In vain did he observe with sorrow the increasing coldness and suspicion of Stonehenge's manner; he was too well aware of the treachery which surrounded him to venture to relax his precautions.

On the contrary, De la Pole was seldom or never observed in the gardens of the palace, nor, in fact, in the palace itself; for he spent nearly all his time abroad. His projects continued to be an everlasting subject of uneasiness and doubt with Ingulph, though he could discern nothing tangible; but he still feigned the most earnest zeal as a convert, frequented all the chief fanatic meetings, and scarcely a day passed but he visited Tribulation in her disgrace. To use her own words, "his pitcher was seldom far from her fountains of experience."

But Ingulph had the satisfaction to think that, if he had formed any serious projects upon poor Ramona, he felt that they were foiled, and had abandoned them. He had not the heart to make her return the portrait of Marie, for he feasted his own eyes daily with viewing it; and how was it possible to imagine that the portrait of a rival could be presented to any woman as a mark of devotion from one who aspired to her affections?

But Ingulph's honest nature could not fathom that of his rival, which, with all its daring and extravagance, was infinite and subtle. Ambition was perhaps the master passion in De la Pole, quickened by a royalist enthusiasm amounting to a passion; but it was now heightened by love and revenge to a species of mania. The dread of Ingulph's pretensions, so powerfully supported as they seemed; the dishonour his accusation had thrown upon his father, which that nobleman

seemed unable to refute ; an old and deeply-rooted jealousy of his favour with Marie, all now combined in urging him on in the extraordinary projects he had formed.

The very innocence and artlessness of Ramona, which should have been her protection, were chief allurements to the passions of the young debauchee, exhausted, even at that early age, by excesses. The influence of the astrologer Lilly, and the use which might be made of him, had early attracted his attention. Lilly was, on the whole, a well-meaning man, and it was with an equal desire to preserve his patron from a great misfortune, and to exalt his own mystic skill, that he continued infusing into Stonehenge's mind the poisoned insinuations which he himself received from De la Pole, in the form of prophecies and mysterious warnings.

It was long before the noble nature of Stonehenge could disbelieve in that of his nephew ; but long years of sorrow, and bitter experience of the treachery of mankind, had not rolled over his head in vain. It is marvellous how readily even the most contradictory circumstances adapt themselves to the hues and forms of any dominant suspicion in the mind. The affair of the hermitage struck Stonehenge for the first time with any feeling stronger than vague surmise ; and De la Pole immediately perceived and unscrupulously seized his advantage.

Meanwhile, Ingulph did not fail to remark the change in Stonehenge's manner ; and to counteract the thought which he feared gained ground in his imagination, he told him, as if by chance, and in the presence of Ramona, the story of his expulsion from Oxford, taking care to insinuate the reality and continued fervour of his love for Marie. Stonehenge listened with eagerness, and yet with a mixture of incredulity.

But the most singular mutations came over Ramona ; for some time she seemed to have taken a real aversion to Ingulph, and spent much of her time in melancholy musings. Ingulph imputed something of this pettishness to the seclusion in which she was now obliged to live, as well at Stonehenge's desire, as in policy, well knowing that Ingulph's eye was upon her in perpetual watchfulness. She might also feel that he had in some measure betrayed her secret ; nor did he take any pains to alter her opinion, for the evident coldness and estrangement between them were, he thought, likely to baffle Stonehenge's suspicions.

CHAPTER XXX.

MATTERS continued thus for some time, and although Ingulph felt in his conscience that he ought to take some more active steps to remove the dangerous cavalier, the portrait of Marie acted upon him like a spell. All, too, seemed lulled and quiet, for De la Pole threw up but little earth in his operations. Yet Ingulph remarked with some surprise, that while the cavalier was a general favourite in the city, he himself was slighted and neglected, who had so much better claims on their kindness.

Even Bulstocke was found among the faithless ; and after Tribulation's return, neither invited nor came to see him. Ingulph ascribed this at first to resentment at his share in her discomfiture ; but as Stonehenge had now relieved him a good deal of his task of safeguard to Ramona, he determined one afternoon to ascertain how matters really stood. Leaving Stonehenge stretched listlessly on a couch, with Ramona singing merry airs to him, half in tears, he accordingly made his appearance in Ludgate.

He found the rich armourer and his family sitting in the kitchen, which was so clean, warm, and comfortable, that, excepting on great occasions, it was their usual sitting-room. The presses and dressers of massive oak were polished to the brightness of mirrors, and garnished with brilliant lines of pewter and gleaming pans. A fireplace large enough for the Cyclops to have cooked at, roared with a huge fire in all weathers, the only distinction of season being, that in summer, the doors, opening on a pleasant garden, were ajar.

On one side of this blaze sat Bulstocke, fast asleep, with an open Bible on his knees. Opposite to him, superintending the baking of some cheesecakes on a girdle, and occasionally nodding too, was his spouse. The servant girls were all busy around at their wheels, the drowsy hum of which mingled with the still more drowsy voice of Tribulation, who was reading aloud, probably some polemical tract of the time.

Ingulph's presence created an immediate sensation. Dame Bulstocke jogged her husband, who started up, and let the Bible fall in his haste.

"What's up ! what has happened, Master Dethewarre ?" exclaimed Bulstocke, staring aghast.

"Nothing very terrible that I wot of, Master Bulstocke,"

replied Ingulph, much surprised. The citizen glanced at him, and then at Tribulation, with a look so full of meaning, that Ingulph involuntarily stared. But imagining that he was to deprecate her wrath, he turned to her, and made a somewhat laboured apology for his unwitting share in her quarrel with Stonehenge.

Tribulation listened with a starched and strangely malignant expression of countenance.

"All will be known at the latter day," she said, sternly. "Meanwhile, Master Stonehenge is of man's estate, and if his wife is not of woman's, more shame for him that wedded her."

"Well, come, all will be right enough at last, Sister Grizzle," said Bulstocke, stirring the fire with a chuckling laugh, and winking most knowingly at Ingulph. The good dame, his wife, immediately laughed with infinite enjoyment of her husband's wit, for wit it evidently was.

"But your proselyte still needs your light to go before him in the wilderness of theology," said Ingulph.

"You have taken the seat of the scorner, and you fill it well," replied Tribulation, sourly. "But there are others groping and stretching in the dark that wot as little as he what lean arms are stretched out to clutch him!"

"Ay, ay, my lord comes here so often, that methinks he is either making love to my wife or Mistress Grizzle!" said Bulstocke, laughing till the tears ran over his eyes.

"Beshrew me now, John Bulstocke, if he is not much oftener at Mistress Chaloner's!" said the good old dame, somewhat testily. "And Master Tomkins' lady, that holds up her head as high as Paul's, vows he visits none but her; and yet he is full oft at Pennington's, too, at the Tower, and his wife is a gay bit younger than either of us."

"I'll warrant, by a score years," said Bulstocke. "Though I say not, 'tis to be noted when ye are apart, Bessy!—but, eh, woman! the cheesecakes are burning."

All attention was immediately directed to this important point, and it served to change the conversation. Ingulph was easily induced to share the little feast, and during its progress, he was remarkably struck with the air of mysterious intelligence which Bulstocke persisted in keeping up with him.

Once or twice he thought to ask an explanation of this peculiarity; but whenever he threw out a feeler in that direction, he was met with so many nods and emphatic glances at Tribulation that he was deterred, until the time of his depar-

ture came. Bulstocke and he had crushed several pottles of wine, and the former waxed more communicative; so that Ingulph took the opportunity of Tribulation's retirement for a few minutes, to inquire why he stood in such apparent dread of her.

"Why, she is as rigid as a presbyter, and as great an enemy to the king as Jacky Pym himself," said Bulstocke. "And when I saw you bounce in so suddenly, my heart jumped in my mouth; for I thought they had caught scent of our petition."

"Of what petition?" exclaimed Ingulph.

"Ay, truly, you must keep it up—yet I think she is not listening anywhere!" said Bulstocke, looking around in some consternation. "Truly, if the king does not make a belted earl of you, he is a worse fellow than I take him to be, for the half of us would never have signed, but that we knew you would stand by us tooth and nail."

Ingulph stared in great amazement; but considering for a moment, he refrained from any open display of his feelings.

"De la Pole is very active—but his promises far outrun his authorities," he said, hastily. "You speak doubtless of a petition to parliament for a personal treaty with the king."

"Marry, Master Dethewarre, speak not so loud; walls have ears as well as jugs!" said Bulstocke.

"But let him not engage you in any open demonstration without my sanction by word of mouth, or he will betray your neck into a rope," said Ingulph, much perturbed; but unwilling to alarm Bulstocke unto the full power of his dexterous rival. Whatever he might have added was cut short by the return of Tribulation, and shortly afterwards he took his departure, leaving the worthy alderman in his error. Neither would it have been easy to convince him of it, for De la Pole had subtly given out that the caution of Dethewarre's nature would not allow him to acknowledge his share in the plan, even to his most trusted friends.

De la Pole had availed himself with great skill of the general weariness of the war, by throwing out this bait of forcing the parliament to consent to the equitable conditions which he declared the king was ready to grant. His high rank, favour at court, and acquired popularity, made all his statements plausible, and accounted for the extraordinary influence he had obtained.

But Dethewarre, knowing well the notions entertained at court, the intrigues of the Party Volant, and the reckless

daring of De la Pole, was convinced that he had some deeper and more dangerous designs in formation. That these were in some manner betrayed to Stonehenge, and that thence he expected his vengeance, occurred to him with the force of conviction. The motives which would have swayed most men, were all arrayed to prevent any interference on Ingulph's part in averting the catastrophe. But the humanity and generosity of his temper, the fineness of his conscience, which represented his consenting to the destruction even of so unbrotherly a brother as a fratricide—doubt of the magnitude of the danger to be feared, and regard for those who had so foolishly involved themselves in what would necessarily be regarded by the parliament as a conspiracy—made him resolve on a middle step.

Without divulging all that he knew or feared, and certainly without revealing the parties concerned, he determined to let the committee of government understand what a dangerous inmate they had in De la Pole, and procure his dismissal from the scene of his intrigues. As the business of this body was carried on with the secrecy and despatch of a Venetian tribunal, and Ingulph's claims to their attention were indisputable, this might easily be accomplished without alarming the guilty parties to their own betrayal.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE PARLIAMENT CHIEFS.

THE Committee of Safety, as it was called, which performed all the functions of a supreme council of state, sat in the Painted Chamber, Westminster, and thither Ingulph proceeded, as early as it was at all probable they had met.

Crossing Westminster Hall, Ingulph met Waller coming from the committee, smiling, and evidently in the highest spirits, as if perfectly content with his reception. He looked, however, somewhat surprised at perceiving Ingulph; and saluting him with his usual florid elegance, hoped he was going to ask some favour of the committee, for he had never seen them in a better humour.

"I had more important matters to chaffer with them," he continued, observing that Ingulph returned a very vague answer to this question; "but Harry Marten must needs have me recite my last Impromptu, on the Rose, wherein I

fable that 'tis the only flower of paradise which grows on the earth; and that we should not have even that but for Eve's cunning, who so dearly loved the flower, that when she was driven out of Eden she secreted it; where, is not much to the story—'tis sufficient we have it, however obtained."

"That was but lax morality, for heaven," said Ingulph, gloomily.

"But it won me a kingdom in my Lady Carlisle's smiles," returned the courtly poet; "and made even St. John give that gloomy scowl which he holds to be a laugh. It began thus—but you seem yourself somewhat out of the sunshine!"

"I own I care little for either Phyllis or Amoret to-day," replied Ingulph, striving to look cheerful; for with all his forced vivacity, Waller evidently regarded him with anxiety.

"It hath so neat a catastrophe in my imperial Carlisle's praise, that methinks you will like it well enough," returned Waller; "for she is a lady who hath a marvellous esteem for you. In fact, there are few great matches, were you better backed by fortune, to which you might not pretend, with your good wit and valorous reputation. I have heard some say it, with a sigh; and, of a truth, being a woman, Fortune hath seldom offered herself more barefacedly than she hath done of late to you. But to the epigram:—

"When the rude angel's flaming sword
Drove weeping Eve out, with her lord—"

"You shall pardon me, Sir, I am hurried," interrupted Ingulph.

"Shall I accompany you before the committee? Knowing them all, I may be of service," returned the poet.

"I need no man's countenance, and my business is of a secret nature," interrupted Ingulph, still more impatiently; and with the usual courtesies of leave-taking he passed on his way.

There was little difficulty in obtaining access to the committee; two halberdiers at the door, and as many ushers within, were the only guards of this potent body, whose acts have influenced the subsequent history of all mankind.

Seated on benches at a table covered with crimson cloth, with pen, ink, and paper before them, the committee despatched the vast business of their office with as little parade and as much punctuality as any private merchant his petty concerns of trade. Pym sat in a raised chair, as president, with an air indeed of exhaustion in his pale and careworn features, but still animated and restless as if quicksilver flowed

in his veins. Lord Saye and Sele, Vane, Marten, Selden, and St. John, were the only other persons present.

“The oysters are fatted at my too great expense and anxiety to be wasted on unappreciating mouths,” Selden was saying as Ingulph entered. “So, sirs, you must expect nothing but a Welsh rabbit, or mayhap some Italian salad to relish your cheese withal.”

“We shall have a great deal of learning and policy among us, but we should have one to make us merry; so, Marten, do not fail us,” said St. John, sarcastically.

“Nay, for he will swear he hath supped, and yet eat me as many oysters as all of ye put together,” said Selden. “But I marvel, master Pym, you mislike my thought of making this Colonel Crombell—or Cromwell is it? major-general in Pembroke’s room, for the man hath a good heavy knock-down way about him, and a sharp contentious tongue, which we need not among us here.”

“Nay, for he is of the independent judgment,—let him wait till they have the mastery,” said Pym, contemptuously.

“To the Greek Kalends, then,” replied Selden, laughing. “But here is a gentleman would be speaking, by his visage. What! this is my client, Master Dethewarre, and strangely in the nick of time.”

“What is your matter with us, colonel?—yes, colonel, I believe it is,” said Pym, with a somewhat stern look at the young soldier.

“You were pleased to allow me a prisoner, taken at Newbury fight, honourable sirs,” replied Ingulph. “I have released him, and I humbly request your pass for him to leave London instantly.”

“Speak you of your brother, the Lord De la Pole?” exclaimed Pym; and a murmur of surprise was audible all around.

“I speak of the Lord De la Pole—brother I have not much learned to call him,” replied Ingulph.

“If this be a play, ’tis very fairly acted,” said Selden. “If it all be the same tune, the flutes are marvellously little of accord! ’Tis but just now, young gentleman, that Master Waller was with us, obtaining our permission—but I will read the minutes for the more evident clarity. *Imprimis*.—My Lord De la Pole demands to be heard at the bar of the House, against the allegations of one Ingulph Dethewarre, on behalf of the marquis of Montacute, his father, unhappily suffering under our high displeasure. *Secundis*.—Requires time and

liberty to collect evidence in the disproof; and access to his grace of Canterbury, who is in possession of important evidence. Tertiis.—A pass for the Lady Marie, his wife—no, betrothed—and such attendance as her quality may demand; with divers papers of moment to the cause; and for the purpose of seeing my lord archbishop, on her own affairs, he being her guardian by grant from the Court of Wards.”

“The Lady Marie! and you have allowed this lady permission to come to London on such a business?” exclaimed Ingulph, in a very disordered manner.

“Wherefore not? We would not mar the young lady’s fortunes; and Canterbury’s time on earth, being an old man, secluded upon so just and heavy accusation, cannot be long!” said Pym.

“I do beseech you, sirs, rescind this consent, if you have given it,” said Ingulph, warmly. “Who can tell what mischief may be plotting; and I have cause to fear that the seeds of a rank conspiracy are scattered, which need but a little sunshine to spring up too fast and thick for your scythes.”

“You are mistaken, young man; nor do we desire better than that the tares should spring, that we may root them out,” said Vane, sternly. “There are older heads than yours who deem that liberty will never thrive till the ground be well soaked in blood.”

“Nay, good Sir Harry Vane, ’tis not our business to empty the pottle, and show how many of our mulberries are musty; we are the hucksters,” said Selden. “’Tis all one as if I, giving myself out to be a rich man, should pull out my pockets and show them empty.”

“Blood is abhorrent to my nature,” said St. John. “Yet should the necessity arise, Phidian sculpture though my Lady Carlisle’s neck may be, I know not that it may not become as headless as any marble crazed Arundel has brought home among us.”

“Forbid the Lady Marie then to come!” said Ingulph, with increasing vehemence.

“Do you dread so much the evidence she may bring with relation to your cause, Master Dethewarre?” said Lord Saye. “For my part, I am that justice should be done, whatever come of it.”

“Ay,—to our enemies, my lord,” said Marten, with a sly smile.

“’Tis not that, my lord,—I value it not the whistle of the wind,” said Ingulph. “But I have some reason, nay, I have

much, to believe that a plot is forming in this city against your authority; and who can say but that these pretended documents against my claims may be commissions and letters from the king?"

"By my faith, sir, I would fain know what you mean by so wild a supposal!" exclaimed Selden. "Though, in a legal sense, I blame you not to keep off the damnatory evidence, if such it be; but assuredly we must hear both sides ere we can give judgment."

"There is little passes in this city of which some bird or another chirps not in mine ear;" said Pym, with a troubled smile. "But the vapouring words of hair-brained courtiers are scarcely worth so much of our consideration as to despise them asks. But the Lady Marie, a young and timid girl! and the king who loves her as his daughter,—could even the ruthless politicians around him counsel to expose her youth, beauty, and innocence, to such danger?"

"Perchance selected for those very qualities, to blind us!" said the astute Vane. "Ah, Master Pym, you do not yet understand how rotten the tyrant's heart is, nor of what cruelty politicians are capable, to advance their favourite designs; and what is desired more at Oxford than the means to set our heads a-grinning on the spikes of Traitor's Gate?"

"Nay, but surely it cannot be," continued Pym, with a deep sigh. "I would not have a simple girl the victim of a heartless state-craft; and Master Selden, is it not treason to bring such missives from the king within these walls?"

"A council of war could answer you more to the purpose," replied Selden. "But 'tis certain that on any outbreak, our bloodhounds, which already strain enough in the leash, will break loose, and devour all before them."

"London shall be declared a garrison town to-day, and the law-martial may be administered at a moment's warning," said Pym, coldly. "But let us know the worst you have to tell us, Master Dethewarre, for although Cain's hair was red, and yours is black, I doubt it will not grieve you much to be rid of your brother, the heir of Montacute."

"I have not a word to say against him, save my suspicions; but he hath a head to plot, and a hand to execute, and thereupon I desire you to dismiss him ere he can mature his harmful projects against you," said Ingulph, passionately. "If I desired his destruction, methinks this would be the last of my requests."

"If there be not some false seeming beneath this show, you are one of honour's noblest works," said Pym, with a keen,

penetrating look. "We have heard it said, that when at the court you by no means held the Lady Marie as a Medusa, whose gaze turned into stone, but to the contrary, melted into wax."

"Ingulph coloured deeply, but after an instant's hesitation, answered—"The Lady Marie is betrothed to the Lord De la Pole, whom I would have you restore to liberty."

"And just so, I may have a herring which I intend for my breakfast; but the cat comes in the mean time, and where am I?" said Selden, smiling.

"Shall we then give the malignants the laugh at us, acknowledging that we are afraid of a pretty woman?" said Marten.

"Methinks we cannot do better than let them plot on; and when they are fairly out we can crush them once and for good, and sit down under our vines in security," said Lord Saye.

"Truly, you are Saye—and Sele, my lord," said Pym, sharply. "But I like not antidotes more certain to destroy than the poison itself. And methinks we can find a way with them, without divulging our fears or retracting our promises. We all know Master Stonehenge's devotion to the cause, and he hath offered that this lady should be lodged in the Old Palace, under his own care, and that of his wife. I trow, they cannot plot treason under his beard; and at the same time, if Master Dethewarre truly takes any interest in the matter, he can keep an eye on what she does to run her fair neck into jeopardy."

"Stonehenge! so liberal of his hospitality to one who comes as the enemy of his nephew!" said Vane, suspiciously shaking his head.

"The greater vigilance will he exert; the more will they look to their feet," said Pym. "Moreover, strangely enough, the Lord De la Pole, to banish all doubt on the subject, hath humbly requested that she should be lodged as thus, in the Old Palace, under such resolved espionage that a mouse might better hope to stir the straws of a cat's litter unnoticed."

"Moreover we have Master Dethewarre there, who hath a thousand reasons to keep his eyes open," said Lord Saye.

"I am no spy, my lord; but I have duly warned you, and the consequences be upon your own heads!" said Ingulph, much irritated. "You know the humour of those who smile upon you at Northumberland House, and whether you are the majority in parliament, if a petition, signed by nearly the whole city, should call upon you to make peace with the king!"

“Peace is the object of war,” said Pym. “But we must stand in the gap—we must stand in the gap, or not only is this people lost, but all mankind, for ever. Treasons and the chance of battle may in a moment overthrow us, but let us not turn bloodthirsty butchers in so pure a name as that of Freedom! There is a sort of people at our backs, more dangerous than those in front, who would push us on into I know not what, but it doth almost seem as if anon we shall have no choice between despotism and —”

“A republic,” said Ingulph, vehemently, filling the pause.

“Ay! there, there spoke the voice of the coming times,” said Vane, enthusiastically.

“And how will posterity judge us, that have broken down so vast and famous a fabric?” said Pym, in a melancholy tone.

“Even as it shall chance that this land becomes one of crouching Asiatic slaves, or of free-born generous men, who shall esteem light and liberty but equally dear,” said Vane.

“I shall scarce live to see the upshot; this perpetual flame drinks fast the oil of life,” said Pym, with a sigh; and then musing for a moment, he continued, “we have no reason to allege why we should deny Lord De la Pole the justice he demands; the subject hath no dearer right than to defend his good name when assailed, and ’tis a rare submission from one in royalist quarters. If your story will not bear a breath of contradiction, Master Dethewarre, it must be weakly put together indeed.”

Ingulph made no reply, for what indeed could he have made? His own suspicions of De la Pole’s intentions, unsupported by evidence, or to the ruin of those who had confided in him, supposing his authority could outweigh the universal contradiction he might expect, were all he could offer in reply. Every motive of honour and justice seemed on the other side, and—must we confess it?—the hope of seeing Marie again, insinuated itself into the argument. Moreover, Stonehenge’s conduct was an enigma which he explained to himself by supposing that he wished to test the reality of his devotion to Marie; and would not his jealousy to the contrary be confirmed by his being the means of preventing her arrival in London, and entering into the society of his wife?

De la Pole’s share in the singular intrigue admitted not of so ready a solution, but it seemed at least to be full of contempt for Ingulph, and undoubting confidence in himself.

“It is enough,” said Pym, rising, after an anxious perusal of the young soldier’s working countenance. “I see we may

safely trust our complotters to the care of Master Dethe-warre."

"And yet," said Selden, with a significant smile, "I must tell you, Master Pym, that last night, missing my extinguisher, I made me one of paper to put out my *bougie*; but so far from that, the paper took fire too, and I burned my own fingers into the bargain."

No reply but a general smile was made to this apology, and Ingulph, observing that his departure was expected, no longer delayed it.

CHAPTER XXXII.

INGULPH felt himself to be in a position of the greatest perplexity and entanglement, without having the least power of extrication, so strong and various were the shackles in which he was held. He therefore quietly resigned himself, and until some means of escape should appear, determined merely to occupy the post of observer.

Meanwhile, the hope of beholding again the idol of his young affections diffused a sunshine over Ingulph's existence, which, unknown to himself, influenced all his actions. Whether it was the efforts which, in this bland disposition, he made to restore himself to Ramona's esteem, or the effect of some secret motive on her part, but she suddenly became more than ever friendly with him. But there was something unreal and acted in her manner, which at another time would have excited his suspicions. Stonehenge, meanwhile, continued cold and reserved; but as he never made any allusion to Lady Marie, nor her expected arrival, Ingulph feigned ignorance on the subject, lest broaching it he should be obliged to confess his interview with the committee, which for many reasons he wished to conceal.

Even when at last he received an intimation from Stonehenge that he desired him to be at the Old Palace on the following evening, to assist in receiving some personages whom the parliament had thought proper to confide to his charge, Ingulph made no observation. Nor could he, indeed, without betraying an emotion which made him blush at his own weakness.

Mingled delight and alarm deprived Ingulph of all sleep on the night preceding this arrival. No coquette could have glanced more despitely at her mirror, under similar expect-

tations, than Ingulph remarked his own haggard and agitated appearance in the morning. And yet he suffered the hour named by Stonehenge to pass over some time ere he presented himself at the Old Palace. It happened that just as he entered the quadrangle by which visitors usually approached, a large gilded coach with the royal arms upon it, and with a considerable retinue of lackeys, drove into it. Ingulph's agitation became so great that he concealed himself in the gloom of the cloisters, as the walk round the quadrangle was usually called, and thence he witnessed at a distance the arrival.

Stonehenge himself appeared with his young wife to welcome the visitor; and although he was attired only as a citizen of a higher grade, Ingulph was struck with the stately courtesy of his manner. Ramona came with a staid and even hesitating step, very unlike her usual bounding rapidity. In her costume she had exaggerated even the usual glitter and effulgence of colour in which her southern taste delighted; but the beautiful wildness and vivacity of her manner was gone. She seemed like some woodland bird handled and breathed upon by its capturer until it is tamed into passive endurance. She was very pale, and her dark eyes, usually fraught with fire, were cast on the ground with a sunken and tearful expression.

Stonehenge handed Lady Marie from her coach, and Ramona advanced to welcome her with something of the impetuosity of foreign manners. But when she saluted the lady, and raised her eyes to greet her, her cheeks flushed deeply, and her gaze was so wild, intense, and eager, that Lady Marie glanced from her to Stonehenge in surprise.

"My wife is of foreign extract; but she will do all in her power to make the guest of the parliament most welcome," said Stonehenge.

Ramona grew pale again as he spoke, but repeated what he had said, with warmth; and the lady, smiling courteously, entered the palace.

It was some time before Ingulph could sufficiently master his agitation to resolve to follow; but he was satisfied that Stonehenge expected him, and that absence would do him no service. He therefore mustered more courage than would have taken him to the front of a battery of cannon, entered the palace with an air of indifference, and almost at the second step met Stonehenge.

The latter had evidently been waiting for him, and immediately sent the mulatto forward to announce their approach.

It was no longer possible to hesitate, and Ingulph followed his uncle into the presence of the Lady Marie.

She was seated in a low armchair in the bay window, with Mistress Stonehenge, apparently on very social terms, simply attired in a travelling garb. Agitated as he was, Ingulph could not but notice the contrast between the dark southron and the exquisitely fair northern, which heightened the beauty of both.

Marie turned eagerly round as they entered, and clearly as Ingulph preserved her portrait in his heart, never had she seemed so lovely as now, when springing up, her fair face blushing to the very tint of a rose, and sparkling all over with a smile of delight, she glided forward to meet him. In a moment, though he afterwards stood amazed at his own daring, he had pressed the hand which she extended to his lips; and both blushed so deeply that Stonehenge, who was intently looking on, smiled with a supremely satisfied and benevolent expression.

“Master Dethewarre seems to remember you, madam, and therefore it needs not that I present him to you,” said Stonehenge.

“*Colonel* Dethewarre has forgotten far more than me,” said Marie, giving him his new military title with emphasis.

With so much feeling and even tenderness were these words pronounced, that Ingulph involuntarily echoed the sigh, and murmured somewhat which sounded like an apology.

Stonehenge interrupted this doubtful oration. “My Lord De la Pole will be here on the instant,” he said to Marie, in a mild but very determined manner. “At his request, and the parliament’s command, lady, I am your host; but I have the Arab’s dislike to eating salt with his enemy; and therefore I delegate mine office to my nephew Dethewarre. They are brothers, it seems; and the accusations against the Marquis Montacute are of my bringing, and look alone to me for support; therefore I pray you pardon me, if I inform you, that henceforth my wife or he must represent me in your presence.”

“It is a noble substitute,—but I hope to make all friends yet, to reconcile all, Master Stonehenge,” said Marie, with extreme gentleness, but slightly paling at the words.

Stonehenge smiled mournfully, but without making any farther observation bowed and withdrew.

How rapidly did the minutes fly that followed! It is true that Ingulph had never before found himself so foolishly

timid, so abandoned by his good wit. He weighed every word which he spoke as if his existence were involved in what he said, hesitated on the most indifferent, blushed like a young damsel without knowing why, and yet the atmosphere of heaven seemed breathed on all around. By a singular inversion of the natural order of things, Marie took the ascendant in a most unaccountable manner. Yet with all her profusion of smiles and raillery, and deliciously conscious insolence of womanly triumph, whenever Ingulph ventured to steal a glance at her, and her blue laughing eye met his, her lovely complexion mantled up, and it seemed as if the sovereign feared the vassal.

Not a word was said on the great alterations which had happened since Ingulph was a favoured courtier at Oxford. Ingulph even imagined that his intervening exploits, though in quality of a rebel, had given him a loftier standing in the opinion of the beautiful royalist. There was an unconscious but visible submission in her manner, which women always feel for the qualities in which they are themselves most deficient—personal courage and strength. Men sneer at this predilection, as if it had its origin in a foolish admiration for mere animal qualities; and yet what can weakness more reasonably attach itself to than force?

Ramona seemed to share unboundedly in the pleasure of this meeting; and her manner to Ingulph was so full of coquetry and playfulness, that, after making allowances for foreign vivacity, Marie looked once or twice with some surprise. Ingulph's embarrassment rather increased the feeling; but the scene was very shortly interrupted by the arrival of De la Pole.

He entered with all the gaiety and nonchalance of his usual manner, accosting Ingulph as if nothing had ever occurred to disturb their good understanding; and despite Marie's evident reluctance, saluted her coy lips with a tenderness which his relations to her no doubt justified, but which stung Ingulph to the soul. Ramona had sprung up, but save that a dark flush visited her complexion, and then left it ashy pale, she returned De la Pole's cold greeting with equal sobriety.

Marie coloured deeply, and glanced almost apologetically at Ingulph.

Inwardly stung to the quick, but dissembling his feelings, Ingulph affected to understand this look in a manner far different from its meaning.

“Mistress Stonehenge and I will leave you to your private converse awhile,” he said, hurriedly. “Our office is to wait on the Lady Marie’s pleasure, but not to control it.”

“Nay, ’tis poor virtue in the fox to leave the white grape for the richer ruby,” said De la Pole, laughing carelessly. “But with our lovely hostess’s leave, I will indeed inquire the court news.”

Ingulph offered his arm to Ramona, and they retired into another chamber of the suite together, closing the door after them.

“What deem you, Ramona, of my lordly brother’s betrothed—for I think you have as yet seen none of our court beauties?” said Ingulph, not without an idea that his feelings were shared.

“How fair she is, how very fair!” said Ramona, with a smile expressive of aught but mirth. “And I am as dark as midnight.”

“But midnight shining with stars,” said Ingulph, with a melancholy affectation of gallantry; and they continued for some time together in almost utter silence.

De la Pole’s *tête-à-tête* with his betrothed lasted, as Ingulph thought, an insupportably long time; but at last they entered the antechamber together. Ingulph imagined he perceived traces of tears and of mental suffering in Marie’s countenance; but De la Pole gave him little time to think. He advanced and congratulated him with an ironical smile upon the enjoyment he must have derived from his interview with Mistress Stonehenge; and glanced at her with so singular an expression, that she cowered and trembled like a bird in the gaze of a serpent. But shortly after, she turned to Ingulph, and began caressing him and chattering to him with something of the wild vivacity of delirium.

Indeed, during the whole interview she continued this conduct so remarkably, that once or twice a wild thought crossed Ingulph’s mind that she did it purposely to excite suspicion in Marie. But it soon concluded; the lady pleaded weariness after her journey, and the young men retired, De la Pole persisting in the most friendly demeanour to Ingulph, notwithstanding their public dispute.

“I see how it is,” he said, laughingly, and in a very loud voice, as they left the palace. “And now I do no longer wonder at the jealous watch you kept on my vagaries; you are enamoured of the old conjurer’s wife!—I would she were a widow for your sake.”

This was said with such an air of good faith and confidence,

that Ingulph, who earnestly desired that the cavalier should no longer suspect a rival in him with the Lady Marie, had the weakness not to repel the insinuation.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A WEEK passed, a week which was to Ingulph one continued dream of happiness; or if any drop of verjuice mingled in the nectar draught, it was the dread that it could not last—that he was draining at one draught the only cup of bliss which life could offer.

A general lull seemed to have taken place in the turbulent passions which had so lately raged in men's bosoms. Stonehenge had, apparently, no longer any suspicions, for he spent his time remote in his laboratory; De la Pole had forgotten his, for he visited at the old palace only as often as ceremony required; Ramona was more affectionate than ever with Ingulph; the war without languished, and politics ceased to be the object of paramount interest.

Yet was there something inexplicable in the whole affair, which, like one conscious that he is in a pleasant dream, Ingulph dared not search into, lest he should break the beautiful illusion. Marie's manner was at times strangely contradictory. When they were not alone, she would delight him with a thousand fanciful caprices; dance with him, sing with him, laugh with him, like some malicious fairy, and yet with a womanly consciousness which enabled her to exercise her witcheries with ineffable power. But when they were left alone, which Ramona in her pranksome way frequently contrived they should be, this vivacity vanished; and an infinitely more touching timorousness and reserve succeeded, which deepened at times even into melancholy. But no woman, however innocent, could doubt the feeling which breathed in every look, word, and gesture of Ingulph; and it was rather the consciousness of her empire than the doubt of it which perplexed the beautiful royalist.

But the week passed, and Ingulph's spell was broken. Marie herself, with some hesitation, informed him that Laud denied all the circumstances relating to the fictitious marriage of his mother; and desired to see him, to make peace between the brothers, by convincing him that Stonehenge's allegations on the subject were unfounded. Without acknowledging a

share in the calumny, if it was one, which in him would be unnatural, Ingulph could not refuse this request; and he hastened to Stonehenge to require his proofs.

To his great surprise the sage listened with a calm, sceptical smile; and in reply informed him that the only proof he could furnish him with was to remind the archbishop of the circumstances under which he had deprived a Puritan minister, one Hugh Peters. But for the rest, it must be before another tribunal than an imprisoned prelatical tyrant, that he would produce his proofs, as soon as Montacute joined issue. Without this he declared that he would not and could not attain the necessary testimony.

Ingulph was much irritated with so evasive a reply on so important a subject; but no other could be obtained from Stonehenge. And thus ill prepared, but not without hope that he should obtain some information from the archbishop himself, the day arrived. But with all the friendship which De la Pole seemed resolved should subsist between them, Ingulph was surprised at a request which he made him to escort Marie to see the archbishop, in his company, having no power himself to procure her the gratification, which she earnestly desired. Ingulph was almost offended at so total an absence of suspicion, so unreserved a trust; and he assented with an asperity which escaped not his subtle rival, who carelessly declared that he should be in waiting for her there, and would relieve him of the charge on their return.

The appearance of a royal coach excited too much notice in the streets; but it was with a deep blush that Marie alluded to her wish for privacy, and desired Ingulph to procure a sedan. With the prospect of such a *tête-à-tête*, it may be imagined that Ingulph was punctual to the moment. He found the lady wrapped in a long mantle, with a black hat and vizard, the usual garb in public of a woman of condition. The black mask did not show ill against the whiteness of the small moulded ear and neck; but Marie was obviously much agitated, and she hardly waited for him to escort her, but hurried into the sedan.

In a few moments the sedan was in movement, and Ingulph found himself alone with one whom he loved the best in the world, and yet he wished himself anywhere else.

Marie herself seemed embarrassed; for after arranging the ornaments of her dress, and removing her vizard so as to breathe the air more freely, Ingulph saw that she glanced at him and coloured. He was, therefore, bound to say some-

thing, and he began to felicitate himself in courtly no-meanings on his good fortune in being where he was.

“Nay, Master Dethewarre,” she said, interrupting him, and turning very pale; “we must speak seriously now; this is no time for these court sugar-plums; but for all rustical simplicity, that we may fully understand in what we have to trust.”

“Would that I dared trust myself to speak as the very simplicity of truth might prompt!” said Ingulph, warmly.

A rosy blush suffused Marie’s countenance; she resumed her mask, and drew herself as far back in the sedan as possible.

“Nay, Master Dethewarre,” she said at last with a wavering smile; “you are known to be of complex meaning in your discourses, or at least have left that reputation at court, with this ruby heart, which I wear, you may believe, out of the queen’s sight.”

And with an enchanting mixture of coquetry and tenderness she drew from her bosom the renowned gem.

“You do not altogether despise me then, celestial Marie!” exclaimed Ingulph, in a delirium of joy. “Me that have nothing to offer in return for such goodness but the unbounded and endless love with which I worship you!”

“And deem you that I—that all women,” said Marie, hurriedly; “do not prize the sole devotion of a noble heart infinitely beyond the most glittering parade of gallantry?”

“I have lived to hear this! let death come when he will!” said Ingulph, forgetting all fears in the full rush of happiness which inundated his soul. “You do not hate, despise—you love me, Marie! say but that you love me, and slay me if you will upon the word!”

“Can Strafford’s daughter love one who serves his murderer?” said Marie, melting into tears, but not withdrawing the hand that Ingulph devoured with kisses.

“The king, the king, is that, Marie, who encouraged your father in the rash acts which he committed, and then abandoned him to their punishment!” returned Ingulph.

“We are to speak in all simplicity—and well you know, Ingulph, that it was the bloodhound Pym that tracked him to destruction; the king a helpless looker-on!” replied Marie, shuddering at the recollection. “Else I were not now here, on a task which, but for the pure motive which animates me, were base and inhuman—to use the influence which some who are little your friends imagine I have over you, to win you

back to that noble cause which a heart so noble can never really have deserted!"

"Marie, Marie!—no, you are mistaken; the cause I have embraced is the noblest on earth!" said Ingulph, starting at this revelation. "Is it for me, deem you, to labour in the restoral of a power which declares my mother's memory infamous, and will force you—even if you love me—into the arms of another?"

"No, Dethewarre, no! Not all the power of all the kings on earth shall ever force me to link this hand with any but yours, if you accept it on the conditions I affix," exclaimed Marie, with a firmness and determination which, in contrast with her usual feminine softness and timidity, diffused an air of majesty over her beauty. "I am Strafford's daughter, and inherit at least so much of his spirit as disdained all that is indirect, and base, and narrow-hearted; and most base do I deem the office which De la Pole imagines I have taken upon me. Let him blame himself if he scorches his hand with the irons he has heated to sear another."

"But your conditions, Marie, your conditions!" said Ingulph, trembling with eagerness. "I implore you, let them be aught that is possible but the sacrifice of my honour, and there is no form of terror or danger shall fright me from achieving them."

"What honour can there be in serving traitors against your king, the protector of your youth;" said Marie, enthusiastically. "But you shall soon see whether Pym and his confederates have not lured you with false pretences; but meanwhile, do you, can you, doubt that if I love you, and, Dethewarre—can you believe that if I loved you, your honour is not as dear and essential to me as my own?"

"Say then that you do love me, say but the word!" exclaimed the transported lover.

"Will you believe me when I answer you thus?" she said, bending towards him and touching her trembling lips to his forehead as he leant eagerly forward. And yielding to the wild embrace in which he clutched the beloved form, their lips sealed the compact in one long and passionate and pure embrace, such as loving spirits exchange when they meet in heaven, after a long separation on earth. A torrent of mutual protestations, pledges, and oaths, ratified the wild betrothal.

In the midst of this bewildering transport the sedan suddenly halted, and opening one of the shutters, Ingulph found they were in a courtyard of the Tower.

A crowd of distracting fears and recollections suddenly rushed over his splendid vision; but all vanished again when he handed out his lovely companion, and felt with what absolute trust and confidence she put her arm in his, and saw the wavering of her complexion in the light.

The parliament had confided the lieutenancy of the Tower to a devoted creature of their own, and a rigid Presbyterian, the Lord Mayor Pennington. By this dignitary they were received with much ceremony, yet with some surprise at the apparition of a lady visitor. But Ingulph's presence solved all difficulties, and Pennington himself deigned to escort them to the archbishop's apartment.

Traversing the gloomy chambers, once or twice Ingulph felt a shudder run through his fair companion's frame, probably at recollections of her father's fate. He himself felt some emotion of more than curiosity when the door of a dark low-roofed chamber opened, and the archbishop appeared.

There was little in the personal appearance of Laud to excite attention. He was of low stature, with a melancholy, stern, and yet somewhat whimpering expression of countenance, probably induced by the peevishness of age and suffering. His garb was that of a dignified ecclesiastic, and had once been of rich materials, but was now sordid and patched; for his vast revenues had been long sequestered, with his wardrobe and nearly all his property, by the rage of the enemies whom his own unrelenting persecutions had rendered vindictive to the meanest excesses.

He was reclining in a large chair, his hands devoutly clasped on his bosom in an habitual manner, but seemingly in conversation with De la Pole and an ecclesiastic, of a benevolent but somewhat apathetic countenance, who was leaning on a large open volume, which he had probably been engaged in reading to the archbishop.

Laud turned eagerly as the door opened, and observing who entered, arose and advanced somewhat totteringly to meet them. Marie hastened to prevent him, and reverently knelt at the old man's feet, who fervently blessed her, raised, and kissed her with fatherly tenderness, while the tears stood brimful in his eyes. De la Pole surveyed the arrival with a quick scrutinizing glance, but a dark scowl gathered for a moment on his brow, which he dissipated into a smile of welcome.

Pennington, without the slightest mark of reverence or respect, in a formal, severe tone, informed them that the com-

mittee limited all interviews with ecclesiastical prisoners to an hour.

"Then we have the less time for ceremony," said the archbishop, hastily. "But I presume, Master Pennington, this brief time may at least be allowed us in privacy."

"You will be pleased always to remember, sirs," said Pennington, without deigning a direct reply, "that Canterbury is excluded from exercising all offices, privileges, rights, immunities, services, and business of a priest; and to engage with him in any is a high breach of standing orders;" and he retired.

"An old man's benediction can do thee no harm, my sweet orphan," said Laud, with a momentary gush of tears. "Alas! it was the last your martyred father received on earth, and which I am well persuaded he took with him to Heaven!"

"Speak not of that, my lord," said De la Pole. "The noble Strafford hath been sufficiently lamented; it is time now to avenge him."

"Truly, truly, and our pale Marie should show more of his blood in her cheek," said Laud, tenderly. "How say you, Juxon, is my credit good enough in the Tower kitchen to procure us a cup of sherris and a manchet for luncheon?"

"The ex-bishop of London bowed with a quaint smile, arose as if to obey, and was about to close the volume before him, when Laud hastily exclaimed, "Nay, finish the chapter; we must not do that irreverence to the word of God, to stop it short for earthly convenience, and it may bring a blessing on our present task."

"Nay, it is a homily of holy Chrysostom—your grace remembers?" said Juxon, with some surprise.

"Truly, but I am old! God leave me my memory, at least until I have less occasion for it; for soon must I be called upon to answer the subtle urgings of mine enemies!" said Laud. "We will conclude another time, but meantime, and at all times—Glory be to God!"

He clasped his hands, and looked upward with an expression of devotion which illuminated the expression of his hard features; and then feebly attempted to wheel his chair towards the fireplace, in which a few embers burned, but probably for the reason that it was farthest from any espial at the door.

"Fie on me, I grow as sluggard as my old tortoise at Lambeth," he said, as Ingulph vigorously seconded his intention, and Marie silently offered her arm to assist his movements after the chair. "But, alack, I begin to feel the weight of years—seventy and odd!—and yet to thirst for the old man's

blood as some men do, God forgive them! and most of all that caitiff Prynne, whom I spared from the full punishment his treasons and blasphemies merited, even as one who whets a sword for his own breast, or twists a rod for his own back."

And with a deep sigh he seated himself. Hitherto he had scarcely glanced at Ingulph, but now his eye fell unexpectedly upon him, and he gave a slight start.

"Is this the gentleman—your brother?" he said, after a pause, and turning to De la Pole.

"Faith, my lord, my father admits so much," replied the cavalier, carelessly.

"I knew not that your branch of the family—but no doubt all that spring from the same trunk must resemble, however slightly we may at times remark it," said the archbishop; and observing that there were only two chairs beside that which he himself occupied—"this is not as it was at Lambeth," he said, glancing mournfully round. "Nor have we much the aspect of a Pontifex Maximus. The vanities of this world are unstable as water; yet who could have dreamed that it would ever have come to this? The noblest monarchy, the most glorious priesthood, or which would have been when I had thoroughly repaired the temple! and all slighted, set at nought, overthrown in dust! All things changed, and nothing to advantage—unless it be my Lady Marie, and in truth she is infinitely grown since I saw her last, a tiny thing, weeping for her father, at the bar of this inexorable parliament."

Marie turned away her face, with so sad and imploring a glance at Ingulph, that his heart died away in his bosom with compassion and dread.

"Take not on, take not on, child! though in truth the recollection of those times plays the onion to mine own eyes," said Laud, sorrowfully. "But where are your papers, my daughter? we have no time to lose; for my jailers never stretch a point toward me in the way of civility."

"They are here," said Marie, with a faint smile, and loosening her cloak, she began to open one of the seams.

The prelate made some general inquiries of De la Pole concerning the king and certain personages of the court, in which he seemed to take an interest, although his eye was continually and uneasily fixed on Ingulph. At last the lady produced a paper from this strange concealment, which she handed to Laud, who read it aloud with strong emphasis.

It was a letter from the marquis of Montacute, utterly denying the allegations concerning the inveiglement of Ingulph's mother into a fictitious marriage, declaring that she

was still alive, and residing in London, and calling upon the archbishop to pronounce whether such a case had ever come before him.

“And most truly I can aver, never!” said Laud, turning with an inquiring expression to Ingulph.

“My uncle, Stonehenge, denies your grace’s jurisdiction,” he replied, confusedly. “He will only produce his proofs against the replication of the marquis of Montacute; but he desired me to remind your grace of the circumstances under which you persecuted a puritan minister, Hugh Peters.”

“Out of their own mouths doth He confute them!” said Laud, eagerly. “Hugh Peters was, as I can well remember, disrobed for marrying two persons against the canon law, in the Fleet, by night, in masks, and without the consent of their relatives, being the marquis and his first wife, the Lady Editha De la Pole! For the sake of blackening his enemy, this factious Stonehenge hath confused this charge with the more ancient one of his seduction of your mother, Grizzle Dethewarre, which I had formerly occasion to examine.”

Ingulph stood for a moment as if paralyzed. There was such a rush of probabilities in the statement, that it came upon him almost with the force of conviction; and the grief and indignation of his feelings overcame him to utter silence.

“Did I not say, Dethewarre, that they had faithlessly lied to you, to win you over to their murderous cause?” said Marie, vehemently. “This uncle of yours scruples not to make you affirm a monstrous calumny against your own father in the face of the whole nation, in order to overwhelm you with ignominy, and thus secure you of their party, to which all that is base naturally belongs. But now behold what your king does for you—what your father would do!”

And tearing open the lining of her mantle with impatient violence, several vellum parchments, sealed with the broad seal of England, fell out, which she handed to the three, apparently according to the endorsements.

“God bless his most gracious majesty, God bless him!” said Laud, clasping his hands enthusiastically. “To remember me in his own so great troubles! Oh! what a mercy and a tenderness hath he for his poor, faithful servant, that in anticipation of mine enemies’ rigour, hath sent me his gracious pardon! But that will avail little if their violence be not rebuked.”

“Which I trust it shall be!” said De la Pole, delightedly. “His majesty is here graciously pleased to issue his commission of array to me, appointing a council of war in

London, with absolute powers to suppress all tumultuous meetings, gatherings, assemblages, against the peace of our sovereign lord the king, and to destroy, slay, and imprison, all rebels, and evil-disposed persons resisting his majesty's rightful authority and the privileges of parliament."

"But you, Master Dethewarre, what have you there?—you do not speak," said Marie, remarking with infinite agitation the changes in Ingulph's countenance.

"The council itself deigns to beseech me, that did not once deign to listen to me," said Ingulph, quivering with contending passions. "I am promised the legitimization of my name, succession as my younger brother's junior, knighthood, an estate, and for crown of these royal favours I am confirmed in my rank as colonel of the troops I have raised—only in his majesty's service, without mention of the parliament!"

"All the peers, the majority of the commons, are with us!" said De la Pole. "For the citizens, I have their hands to it, we cry halves at the least; your soldiers are the only body of troops now assembled within the lines, for the trained bands cannot muster without time allowed. Essex himself is favourable to us, whose army lies the nearest; or at worst he will remain neutral. We need but the smallest beginning, but the least gleam of success, and our friends will declare themselves as plenteously as grasshoppers after a shower. Do you and your armed fellows but suddenly declare for us; in the panic nothing easier than to seize on the Tower, Baynard's Castle, the City gates, and then we have only to let the cavaliers loose from their prisons, shut up my lord mayor in his chandlery, cut off the heads of the hydra in those of Pym, Saye, Wharton, St. John, Selden, and Vane, hold out the city till Rupert gallops into it, and then *Vive le Roi, Vive le Roi, Vive le Roi!*—who will be last?"

"Rejoice, O my soul! and be not thou cast down, my heart! the church shall yet be saved!" said Laud, clasping his lean and quivering hands in rapt enthusiasm. "But who can marvel, that remembers how His people, in the ancient time, crossed the Red Sea dry-shod! *Laus tibi, Domine!* Thy church shall be saved, and not, I trust, by a race of men who, like Cornish wreckers that save only to plunder, did formerly rescue it from the Romish idolatries; yea, its despoilers shall regorge their prey, the treacherous nobles of Harry the Eighth shall render all back again to the besotted people who aided them to rob themselves of their dearest heritage!"

During this rhapsody, of which Ingulph heard not a word,

he remained lost in thoughts so rapid, various, and violent, that it resembled the whirl of madness. The republican hopes which he had long nourished, the wrongs he had sustained from the court, infinite motives of honour and gratitude were on one side; on the other, the prejudices of his youth and natural inclinations to pomp and splendour, and that dreamy but delicious hope whose rosy light now flooded the bounds of existence.

But to do Ingulph but bare justice, tremendous as was the moment's struggle, it was not longer doubtful.

"I am the sworn soldier of the parliament!" he said, rising abruptly. "I know not what ye have seen in my conduct to justify the belief that I am a traitor of so black a dye! Again I tell you, that triumph or defeat, life or death, I am body and soul the friend of freedom, and the foe of tyranny!"

"Why, so are we; our object is perfectly legal," said De la Pole, vehemently. "It is but to maintain the true Protestant religion, against papists and sectaries, to resist illegal assessments, and to restore the laws to their ancient power."

"Young man, hear me; listen to the voice of reason!" said Laud. "What recompense both from God and man do you reject? Know you no duty to either, that refuse this noble project to restore both to their rights? Will you draw down on your head the eternal execration of heaven and earth, by this obstinate treason against their visible representatives, the church and the king!"

"I am to suffer the punishment, none else—on my head let it fall!" exclaimed Ingulph, turning desperately from the clasped hands and streaming eyes of the daughter of Strafford.

"Then, O God! what will become of this land? for, indeed, I know not what order of men speaks through this man's lips!" said Laud, sinking back exhaustedly in his chair.

"My project is then utterly ruined! You have only to betray it and me!" said De la Pole, rising in a paroxysm of rage.

"Nay, my lord—nay, hear me!" said Marie, in a voice which did not tremble, and yet expressed the extremity of feeling. "Since the murderers of my father are so dear to Master Dethewarre, bear witness, sir, that I have brought these commissions from the king, that I have now the custody of them. Hasten then to your committee of safety; tell Pym to join the blood of the child to that of the parent;

I will lay my head on the block with a smile ; but betray us all together, for you cannot do it separately."

And as she spoke these words she huddled the papers back into the lining of her mantle, which seemed artfully contrived for the purpose.

"I am no betrayer, Marie ! had I one drop of treacherous blood in my veins, were I not now my country's Judas, since you would have it so ?" said Ingulph, furiously. "I will not betray ye, but I will die at my post against your treasonable attempts ; you have your commissions and I have mine."

"He knows full well, the born beggar and churl, that without his concurrence all our projects are in vain !" said De la Pole, who felt himself caught in his own net, and in whom all the passions which the dominant one of ambition had suppressed, began to raise their hissing heads. "And so, my sweet Marie, we have only to ask my lord archbishop's license to celebrate our marriage, and return to Oxford together."

"My lord archbishop is secluded from all offices of the priesthood, heard you not ?" said Ingulph, wildly laughing ; and Marie melted into a passion of tears, which she vainly, but haughtily endeavoured to conceal. The veins of De la Pole's forehead swelled, and his rage was obviously rising above his mastery, while Ingulph watched the struggle with silent scorn ; when it was luckily terminated by the entrance of Pennington, who, with sententious brevity, announced that the hour was elapsed.

"Then, since we shall scarcely meet again on earth," said the archbishop, resuming his firmness ; "my children, take with you an old man's blessing ! And tell his majesty from me that I will die as I have lived—the most grateful, if the least fortunate of his servants."

"I trust we shall live to hear you tell him so yourself," said De la Pole, fiercely smiling.

"Nay, for I am very old, and they are resolved on my blood," said the prelate, shaking his thin gray locks, while Pennington gave an impatient clink to his bunch of keys.

The farewell was hastened by this gesture, and while Marie was speaking a few words in a low tone to the archbishop, De la Pole recovered his characteristic manner.

"Do not leave us, or they will suspect something," he whispered to Ingulph. "I have a barge waiting."

Ingulph nodded gloomily, and by this time Marie had turned, and taken the arm of the cavalier. The archbishop

escorted her to the door of his chamber, and she went without casting even one look back on her late companion.

In a short time, as if passing through the phases of a dream, Ingulph found himself seated at the prow of a barge, while his captives, as they might be called, sat moodily at the other end, dashing rapidly through the waves to Whitehall.

As they approached the palace, a sound of music was audible, playing some light and galliard airs. A fleet of wherries, handsomely gilded and decked with streamers, came bearing toward them. Ingulph turned his helm, and shot across the water to avoid them, but the manœuvre was baffled by a corresponding one in the opposite party. His barge was quickly surrounded by the gay little flotilla, and one remarkable for its elegance and profusion of ornament, playfully dodged with him on the water for some moments, baffling his efforts to escape.

The barque was crowded with persons whom Ingulph had no desire to meet. The earls of Northumberland and Holland, the latter steering, Waller, and several other eminent members of the party volant, were there. Surrounded by these adorers, and reclining like another Cleopatra on a silken couch, was Lady Carlisle.

Finding it useless and ridiculous to protract the contest, Ingulph ordered the rowers to drop their oars, and sullenly awaited the pleasure of his vanquishers. Holland laughed heartily, and his intentions soon appeared to be not at all hostile, for Lady Carlisle herself came bending over the vessel, and fixing her bright eyes smilingly on Ingulph, invited them on board her barge to partake of a Venice collation, as feasts on the water were called.

It struck Ingulph instantly, and with infinite anguish, that the whole affair was preconcerted, and that the party volant imagined they were about to celebrate the triumph of their treacherous policy. He therefore at once and sternly refused, and in spite of the eagerness with which De la Pole himself pressed him to consent, awaited only until the lady and her betrothed had entered the countess's barge to push off in his own.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

IF Ingulph were in no humour for anything else, he was certainly in one for an explanation, as an explosion is speciously called, when discontents have long been smothering in men's hearts. He resolved to demand a clear account from Stonehenge of the circumstances of the alleged marriage, which Laud seemed to have satisfactorily refuted.

It was drawing towards sunset when Ingulph reached the palace, an hour at which Stonehenge was certain to be in his study or laboratory in the round tower, and mostly alone. There he frequently remained till midnight, and even at times all the night, engaged in his mystical toils, so absorbing in their sublimity and silence. Ingulph resolved to proceed thither at once, but it was not without some strange feeling of awe that he found himself winding up the tower, in the gathering gloom of night.

He found the merchant quietly seated opposite the open window, apparently watching the rising of a star which appeared twinkling on the horizon.

"I expected you, nephew, but you are early," he said, placidly. "And now, without more words, what have you discovered?"

Ingulph had intended to begin with some reproaches on the deception of which he now believed he was made the tool; but the calm, dignified tone of the merchant surprised him into more respectful carriage. He contented himself with plainly stating the archbishop's refutation.

"He admits so much—that is well," he said, instead of the confused asseverations which Ingulph expected. "He is wrong only in the personages of that fatal marriage, but mayhap he knows it not, for subtle heads did plan it. But in good time I shall unravel it all; and yet take courage in my solemn assurance that Tribulation is not your mother."

"You deal in mysteries which I cannot fathom, and which will I never more attempt!" said Ingulph.

"And do not you, my nephew?" said Stonehenge. "How is it that you are returned alone? Have you quarrelled with your company?"

"What mean you, sir?" returned Ingulph.

"If you have swallowed poison, here is the antidote," replied the sage, throwing a paper to him. "De la Pole imagines he has corrupted my mulatto, and trusts him to for-

ward his correspondences by aid of the Water-Poet, and this is of them."

Ingulph glanced at the paper, and soon saw enough to rivet his attention. It was a letter from De la Pole to his father, written probably just before his sally on the visit to the Tower. It was cautiously worded, but intimated that he had no doubt of the success of some great stroke in preparation, and desired that a messenger might be waiting at Beaconsfield to carry immediate notice of the "arrival of the great ship in the Downs" to Prince Rupert.

But the conclusion chiefly fixed Ingulph's attention, inasmuch as it related to himself personally. De la Pole spoke of him in a very strange style, considering that it was to a common parent; expressed his infinite disgust at the presumptuous hopes which the "half-born fellow" had evidently conceived from the encouragement which Lady Marie found it necessary to give to lure him into the scheme; and declared that immediately on his success he trusted that the king would be graciously pleased to send his brother to the plantations, as had been formerly determined, although no longer as a prisoner or exile, but in any high capacity which his majesty might judge commensurate to his merits. As to the rank traitor and insolent calumniator, Master Stonehenge, he should not fail to attend to his noble father's instructions, and make him the first taster of the rigorous justice of martial law. Whether the commissions which Marie was that day to deliver to him, in the presence of Laud, would authorize the sudden execution of these arch-rebels he did not know, but was determined on his own responsibility, as lieutenant to the king and president of the council of war in London, to effect a riddance of them ere time was allowed to plague his majesty on the matter.

"Well, sir, what say you? Hath she her grappling irons so well fixed in you, that she can take you on this voyage over the Atlantic?" said Stonehenge, with a caustic smile. "If so, you are the moth of beauty, and not the butterfly, which some men would have me deem you are."

"If you are so generous as to resolve to heighten your wife's beauty by putting her in widow's weeds, I see not why I should refuse!" said Ingulph, whose thoughts glanced at a deeper motive for the cavalier's hatred of Stonehenge than that expounded in the epistle. But the merchant started, for the expression occurred to him in another point of view.

"How fell it at the interview with my lord of Canterbury?" he said, after a slight pause. "If you have suffered

yourself to be seduced by the outward fairness of this woman into the detestable projects formed to betray the land to slavery, surely you need no other light to warn you off the rock of her temptations, than this discovery of her unfeeling treachery?"

"Thank God! though all her infinite allurements were exhausted upon me, all have failed!" said Ingulph, laughing with a wildness which relieved his overcharged and bursting heart better than tears. "I have balked their conspiracy, although she tempted with a bribe for which I would have perilled my salvation, but not my honour; yet, thank God, all has failed, and they have their commissions as uselessly in their possession as henceforth all the affections and trusts of my soul must be."

"Magnanimous spirit! now indeed I understand why the heavens themselves have chosen you out to work their purpose!" said Stonehenge, with a gleam of triumph lightening over his visage, but it was succeeded by a singular expression of doubt and mistrust. "What has supported you then in this so direful a struggle, as it must have been, if ever you loved this lady?" he continued; "or hath some new flame devoured the first?"

Ingulph was staggered and confused with the suspicion implied in these words, and still more by the glance of his uncle; and he made no reply for a marked minute, and then said, with a degree of scornful bitterness which only the misery of his feelings could justify—"Ask of the stars, since they are your gossips, and tell you all things?"

"Then we have only to draw the threads of the net, and the stony hearts of Montacute and of his king are reached on the sole points where they are vulnerable!" said Stonehenge, hurriedly. "His martyr's daughter following the fate of her father,—thine only son, base Montacute, perishing by a shameful, ignominious doom! This is vengeance, but it is justice too! And the same storm shall blast the rank crop of traitors springing among us, and bear you forth to the gaze of men as the deliverer and saviour of the land; for, Ingulph, your duty as an officer of the parliament is instantly to appear before the committee, and denounce these traitors and this treason."

"Send Marie to the block! Slay my brother! Pour forth a deluge of blood!" exclaimed Ingulph, with an aghast stare.

"Yea, and were your soul so seared with wrongs as mine, it would bathe delightfully in an ocean of the blood of

tyrants!" said Stonehenge, rapidly. "The Norman William was not legitimate, and yet five crowns encircled his brows! A gorgeous destiny may be thine, Ingulph! and yet full of good to all humanity."

"The destiny of Cain—to slay my brother, and then found empires!" said Ingulph.

"If your heart flinches in the presence of this terror of fate, say so, and I will hasten before the council myself with the revelation," returned Stonehenge, with some infusion of contempt at the weakness thus betrayed.

Ingulph paused for some moments, agitated by the contention of numerous passions; rage at the cruel and contemptuous use which he now imagined had been made of his deepest and purest affections; promptings of revenge and rivalry; but over all predominated the mighty feeling, which once entertained in the human heart, is never finally extinguished by all the accidents of time and change.

Fear for Marie's safety, which must be almost equally compromised by his consent or refusal of the office which Stonehenge pressed on his acceptance, became the principal idea in his mind. To avert the danger his main object.

"It is a butcherly office, but if the heavens impose it upon me, I accept it," he said, with a deceptiveness which added another pang to his full store. "But are you sure on this point? Have you consulted your oracles above?"

"You know not then, Ingulph, that the sage must prepare himself by many hours of abstinence and retirement for these high questionings?" replied Stonehenge, in the enthusiastic tone of an adept.

"We are not hurried," said Ingulph, earnestly. "The conspirators are balked, but not quite out of hope; matters may be easily delayed for the time which may be necessary, and meanwhile any proceedings on their part will but precipitate their ruin."

This project fell in so speciously with the delusion which possessed the otherwise powerful mind of Stonehenge, that he assented, but not without suspicion; for he stipulated that Ingulph should spend the interval at Bulstocke's, and pledge himself not to speak either to the lady or the cavalier. Under the circumstances, Ingulph dared not hesitate in giving the required assurances, and Stonehenge signified that he would devote the next day to his abstemious preparations, and the subsequent night to the starry consultation.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE FEAST OF ST. JOHN.

ACCORDING to promise, and not without suspicion that he was watched, Ingulph, immediately after the interview with his uncle, left the palace, and hastened to Ludgate. Devising and rejecting a thousand means of communicating their danger to the conspirators, and urging them to flight while there was time, he reached Bulstocke's house, without deciding on any one.

But on his arrival, chance suggested the expedient which wisdom could not contrive. He found Dame Bulstocke and her maidens actively engaged in making preparations for a feast. On inquiry he learned that the following was Midsummer-day, the feast of St. John, which from time immemorial was observed with great pomp and ceremony by the Londoners, but which had been lately changed into a fast by order of the parliament.

Of all the graceful and poetical observances of the Catholic church, the vigil of St. John was the most distinguished for its beauty and elegance of sentiment. Bonfires were kindled in the streets; the citizens hung blazing cressets at their doors; and the summer being usually in its profusion, flowers decorated every house, and the young men and maidens, crowned with garlands, and bearing nosegays, danced and frolicked beneath the eyes of their elders, in all innocence and delight. But the parliament applied its zeal and severity to the extirpation of these attractive relics of popery, and Ingulph was not a little surprised to find that Bulstocke ventured openly to infringe its ordinance.

The mysterious laughs which the alderman gave when questioned on the subject, the scorn and defiance he expressed for the parliament; above all, his intimations that Ingulph knew all about the matter, convinced him that it was necessary to affect that he did. It occurred to him, especially on hearing who were invited, that the meeting was for political as well as festal purposes. He took his cue from this supposition, and informed Bulstocke that, in order to avert suspicion from the festival, he would spend the night where he was, and be art and part in the whole affair on the subsequent day.

Bulstocke readily closed with this offer, for with all his blustering outside show, he had in reality many inward

qualms, and was alarmed at the caution which his nephew observed with regard to taking any share in the plans afoot. But he was somewhat staggered, when, by way of additional blind, Ingulph proposed that he should invite Mistress Stonehenge to the feast, as one whose flowery pomp and gaiety would please her southern fancy. Bulstocke started many objections, and Ingulph was astonished to perceive, despite his efforts to conceal it, that he had really a superstitious fear of the young Mexican; although he had not clearly assigned her the qualities of witch or fairy.

When Ingulph had laughed away this objection, another more solid remained. Stonehenge had always shown a great dislike and unwillingness to allow his wife to mingle in the society which she was likely to meet at Bulstocke's house—or in fact in any; and it was not probable that he would break his rule on this occasion. But Ingulph assured him that Stonehenge would be busied in his tower in his astrological pursuits late enough to allow of his wife sharing the festival and returning unnoticed, so that there was no necessity to ask his permission. In case of discovery his own presence was a sufficient authority for hers; and in conclusion, he mysteriously assured Bulstocke that the success of their great combination depended a good deal on his being enabled, in an unsuspected manner, to obtain intelligence from Ramona on certain proceedings of Stonehenge which seemed to argue suspicions of himself.

This last argument was quite convincing to Bulstocke, and he agreed to go to Whitehall, and deliver an invitation to Ramona, certain that he should not be seen by Stonehenge, who continued his seclusion ever since the arrival of the Lady Marie. But Ingulph doubted whether Mistress Stonehenge herself would accept so singular an invitation without some cogent reason. He therefore instructed Bulstocke to inform her that the life or death of the stranger she had met in the royal chambers at Whitehall depended on her compliance.

Bulstocke had but little heart for the enterprise, and he still ventured a feeble dissent, on the score of the quarrel between Ramona and his sister-in-law. But Ingulph was aware that Tribulation highly disapproved of this idolatrous festival, as she called it, and had declared her resolution to spend the whole day at church, fasting from all but the manna which might be expected in profusion from the presbyters on such an occasion.

Finally Bulstocke proceeded on the exploit, and during the whole time of his absence, his wife showed as much anxiety as

she probably did when he was exposed to real dangers, with Essex's army. At last he returned, but with an aspect not much lightened, and Ingulph found that although he had seen and conversed with Mistress Stonehenge, and that after hearing his signal, she at once accepted the invitation and promised to observe all the conditions, his apprehensions of her supernatural attributes were not much diminished.

An attachment to pleasure and revelries was at the period considered a sign of royalist tendencies; and yet Bulstocke was so resolved to celebrate the feast in the ancient manner, that Ingulph with difficulty prevailed upon him not to prepare a bonfire in his armoury. Accordingly when the guests arrived they found the huge oaken hall or parlour hung with green birch, intermingled with the golden laburnum; garlands lay on the table for the guests to wear; and a vast crown of the richest summer flowers hung in the centre of the roof. A fire of scented wood blazed on the hearth, for without fire the vigil of St. John could not be duly observed, and it was judged inexpedient to kindle it as usual in the open air.

Dame Bulstocke exhausted her culinary skill in preparing the eatables, for her anxiety to please a visitor who was suspected to be a sorceress, and not only a sorceress, but one of the remote and wondrous land of which such strange tales were told and believed, was very great. Such examples as Shakspeare's witch made of the sailor's churlish wife who denied her the chesnuts, were but too familiar in the national mind.

Confectionery of such various ingenuity as to be justly reckoned among the *artes perditæ* in these degenerate times, towers and landscapes of crystallized sugar, in which by way of graceful compliment, a dance of fairies was introduced, testified the good dame's skill. It had been usual to adorn these triumphs of the art with gilded figures of the apostles and the three kings; but it was much doubted between Dame Bulstocke and her husband whether these holy emblems would be pleasing in the sight of Stonehenge's wife.

Not dreaming of the real motives of the query, Ingulph advised the omission of what might give offence as a Catholic mumery; but in recompense, Dame Bulstocke took care to introduce the cross as frequently as possible in all the meats and pastries, and privately nailed a horse-shoe under the fire-place.

With all these precautions, good Dame Bulstocke suffered considerable alarm as the increasing number of her guests

warned her that it could not be long ere the fearful one arrived. Meanwhile Ingulph remarked an air of mysterious intelligence in the manner of most of the guests, deeper and more significant in some than in others. His own presence seemed to give exuberant delight; and Mistress Chaloner, who entered with a very unusual air of gravity, and even gloom, was so delighted apparently to see him, that she instantly resumed her usual rattling merriment. The existence of the royalist conspiracy, in its deepest and most dangerous ramifications, was probably known to very few present; but all were more or less engaged in promoting the petition for a peace; and in joining in this prohibited festival, felt as if tacitly pledging themselves to one another.

Among those who openly expressed their satisfaction with this defying revelry, Mistress Chaloner was conspicuous, who dragged her good man about, and compelled him to applaud everything. This was done partly in opposition to the stiff pomp and state in which it pleased Madam Tomkins to preserve her dignity intact.

"Ay, this is as it should be; and we will keep midsummer as long as it comes, despite of all their ordinances," said Mistress Chaloner. "Husband, thou art a fool to live in such terror of them, as if they had heaven's eyes, and could see everywhere. Look you, how pleasant 'tis! Oh, for the good old times again, and I care not if I kiss the pope's slipper in Paul's, and sing carols to a tabor on Christmas day."

"Thou art silly, woman, if aught but honest men heard ye," said Chaloner, gravely.

"Ay, but, neighbour, let Mistress Chaloner talk;" said Madam Tomkins, with condescending kindness. "Barking dogs bite not; and 'tis well known—in more places than Parliament House—that Mistress Chaloner's tongue goes faster in a day than she will follow in a fortnight."

"Well, they say the contrary of you, Madam Tomkins,—but 'tis not for want of wit," said Mistress Chaloner, sharply. "You value your words at so much a piece; yet, for my doings, when yours have made your husband a knight, mine shall not be far from being his worship."

"'Tis the still swine swallows the draff," said Bulstocke, striving to turn this edge of this allusion. "And so Madam Tomkins says the less, and thinks the more, my winsome magpie."

"Yet for all that, I will wager my red velvet cardinal, that Madam Tomkins' silence shall sooner hang a man than my chattering," said the fair citizeness.

"Nay, Mistress Chaloner, you talk it strangely; what is this about hanging?" said Tomkins, with considerable emotion. "I know not what you mean."

"There is the less occasion to cross yourself then, Master Tomkins," replied Mistress Chaloner.

"And for your red velvet cardinal, I like not the fashion of it," said Madam Tomkins, disdainfully. "Methinks, wrought cardinals have been held in slight opinion since Racheheu died; and I am glad on't, for 'tis mighty unbecoming, unless, indeed, one's neck were as wizened as a last year's apple."

"That cannot be said of mine, can it, master soldier?" said Mistress Chaloner, unbuttoning her ruff, and rather liberally displaying the beauty of her neck to the company in general, and Ingulph in particular. "I would I could make thee jealous, Chaloner; but what is he dreaming of now?"

"I was thinking, wife," began Chaloner, when he hemmed and coughed, and there was a singular silence for some moments. "I do marvel, Master Tomkins," he continued; "why Pennington is so resolved against our having the chains set up in Ludgate, against the cavaliers?"

"Good truth, because what will bar the wolf will bar the dog," said Mistress Chaloner. "And the jewellers' guild, and right they should be, are too much for the king, God bless him, whether it be treason or not to say so!"

"It is worse, Mistress Chaloner, it is folly," said Ingulph.

"Life's troth, Master Dethewarre," replied the citizeness, laughing at his grave manner. "For all you are so wise, I do think if I asked you to sup with me some evening when Chaloner is at the Three Swans, busy at his politics, I could keep you while two or three honest lads shouted 'Hey for the king!' at Master Pym's bedroom door."

"But now your trick is known it will not conjure," replied Ingulph. "Besides, I love mischief, and wherever 'tis afoot, will be in it."

Tomkins and Chaloner exchanged mute glances, and drawing up to one another, began discoursing in a low tone. Dame Bulstocke, who was bustling in and out, arranging her guests and superintending the kitchen by turns, now solemnly inquired of Ingulph when he thought that Mistress Stonehenge would arrive. There was an immediate buzz of curiosity and surprise.

"Now, popish though it be, let us cross ourselves, if we are to dine with Mistress Stonehenge," exclaimed Chaloner's wife. "I' faith, it affrights me, and yet I would give a broad

piece any time to see her! What, hath she in reality—nay, it must be men's lies—hooks for fingers?"

"Nay, but as fair and shapely a hand as your own," said Ingulph, with a smile.

Despite this assurance, there was a visible gloom came over the company, and several ladies hesitated between fear of the guest and expectation of the feast. The conversation gradually sunk into monosyllables, and even Mistress Chaloner had little to say, occupying herself chiefly in mimicking Madam Tomkins's sullen majesty of demeanour, whenever she could do it unobserved by her.

In the midst of this silence the rumbling wheels of a caroché were audible in the yard, and as all the guests had arrived but Stonehenge's wife, Bulstocke looked imploringly at his nephew, who instantly went out to receive her.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

INGULPH returned leading in Mistress Stonehenge, after a longer time had elapsed than seemed strictly necessary. The whole company arose in a flutter of curiosity and alarm, even the men sharing both, for the belief in witchcraft was common to all conditions. Ramona's appearance was calculated to increase the curiosity, and perhaps not to diminish the alarm. Dressed in a costume the like of which had never been seen in England, blazing over with jewels of extraordinary size and splendour, exceedingly pale, but with a wild and troubled brilliancy of eye, she entered.

The distant courtesies with which she was received, she reciprocated with the stiff ceremonials Tribulation had taught her; and her eye wandered tearfully around, as if in quest of some kindly or less foreign object, when the gay aspect of the flowers seemed to strike her. The sadness vanished for a moment from her face, and she ran from nosegay to nosegay, kissing them in delight. But suddenly she stopped short, and the darkness fell again upon her vivid features.

Mistress Bulstocke took courage from this display of natural and childish feeling; she welcomed her young visitor with more propinquity than she had yet ventured on; and when Ramona's eye fell on the benevolent, motherly expression of the good old woman's countenance, she snatched her hand and kissed it repeatedly, uttering a torrent of Spanish salutations, which she listened to in passive alarm, not knowing but

that it might be a spell. But Mistress Chaloner, who was never long dashed by any circumstance, now approached.

“Good troth, Master Stonehenge is in the right to keep you under lock and key, though 'tis an affront to the whole worshipful guild of merchants' wives!” said she. “And, lackaday! what monstrous and profane lies are believed in this city, merely because folks cannot be ever at their own backs to contradict them!”

Ramona understood but little of this speech except its kindness; and she glanced at Mistress Chaloner with a tearful smile which somewhat startled her.

All now proceeded to table, and it needed but the example of Ingulph, who put one of the garlands on Ramona's head, to induce the rest of the men to offer the wreaths to their fair companions.

Madam Tomkins at first declined hers on the plea that it would derange her head-tire, but grew less fearful on the subject when Mistress Chaloner discovered that in each garland was a gem of apparently considerable value. So magnificent a present—for such it seemed to be—excited general astonishment, and all looked at Bulstocke for an explanation. The good alderman solemnly averred that he knew nothing about the matter, and somewhat tremulously observed that, whoever had put the gems there, he hoped it was in God's name.

“If mine turn not to ashes, 'tis as large a sapphire as I saw on her majesty's finger, when I was last at court,” said Madam Tomkins, with an indescribable glance at Ramona, whose musing melancholy had returned so strongly that she scarcely noticed what had happened, and not at all that her own wreath of lilies was undecked with any such splendid gift.

“Be it witchery or not, if it sparkle thus but for an hour, I will wear it so long,” said Mistress Chaloner.

“Heaven knows if it be offended with our feast,” said Dame Bulstocke, looking as if she herself were quite ignorant on the point.

“An' heaven send such chastisements as these, it were to tempt many an honest Christian to sin,” said Mistress Chaloner; and glancing over at her husband she exclaimed, “But I am a foresworn woman if Chaloner knows not all about it.”

“Good sooth, 'tis my Lord De la Pole's presenting, and none of mine,” replied the jeweller, giggling; and in the

midst of the hilarity produced by this explanation, the company seated themselves to the banquet.

Such is the force of prejudice, that, with the young and timorous creature before them, still not one in the company felt himself assured of Ramona's real character; and those who watched the troubled flashing of her eye, and the deep anxiety of expression which frequently sunk on her features, imputed it all to a conscience but ill at ease.

With the dessert came an addition to the revelry which Bulstocke's anxious looks seemed to have anticipated for some time. The harmonious breathings of horns and flutes uniting in a sprightly march, suddenly struck on the hearing of the guests, and one of Bulstocke's servants entered, smiling all over, to announce that certain maskers desired permission to join the company. It was the custom of neighbours and friends to visit one another, in various disguises, at these festivals of St. John, and Bulstocke, rubbing his hands gleefully, gave the required leave without hesitation.

Preceded by their music, appeared a group of personages, dressed in a style meant to represent the Indians of Mexico, according to the opinions entertained in England from the descriptions of romantic voyagers, consisting principally of robes of cloth of gold, and feathers of the brightest dye. They were all masked in black vizards, and Bulstocke, according to custom, bade them heartily welcome, and desired them to unmask and drink a wassail bowl to the memory of good St. John.

One of the Mexicans as courteously replied, that they were bound not to unmask until they were commanded by the ladies who had deigned to wear the wreaths which they had ventured to offer. The voice seemed familiar to Ingulph, and his apprehensions were confirmed, when, on Mistress Chaloner's laughing permission, the maskers took off their vizards, and revealed to his undelighted eyes the Lords De la Pole and Holland, and divers other gentlemen of high rank.

But not so was it with the rest of the company, who received their courtly guests with rapture, as if relieved by the presence of such powerful personages from any fears which the breach of the parliament's commands might have infused into some. The cavalier seemed as delighted to meet his brother as if they were on terms of the best possible understanding, which no doubt was an opinion which he wished the rest of the guests to entertain. It was necessary for Ingulph also to dissemble, and his manner did but slightly contradict that

of De la Pole. The maskers were then seated in places of the greatest honour, and although Ingulph saw the manœuvre which the cavalier projected, he quietly suffered himself, for his own reasons, to be ousted from his place beside Ramona.

Waller was among the revellers, and his lively wit soon broke the ice which for a moment intervened between citizen and courtier, for the lines of demarkation were in that age strongly marked. Nor could De la Pole's wild spirit of defiance and gaiety have encountered a more congenial help-mate than Mistress Chaloner, with whom he seemed to be on very excellent terms. But it soon appeared that business was to mingle in all this parade of pleasure: the musicians and servants were dismissed under pretext to share the relics of the banquet, and although Ingulph had little doubt, from the short but agitated aside which took place under cover of the loud merriment between Ramona and the cavalier, that she had communicated his warning, De la Pole seemed not to take it or to despise it. And yet Ingulph had announced that Stonehenge knew all the particulars of the secret plot, and was only seeking from the stars a favourable moment to denounce it and its planners.

Still Ingulph could scarcely decide whether it was to conceal his real intentions, or perseverance in his former ones, which induced the cavalier somewhat suddenly to rise and propose the king's health, satirically adding, "as desired by the *majority* in his majesty's two houses of parliament." Some few of the guests slightly hesitated, but were overruled by the example of the women and courtiers; and Tomkins, in enthusiasm, proposed that they should all drink it on their knees. But De la Pole wisely got rid of this imprudent motion by striking up a royalist song, which he sung so well, and the air was so lively and inspiring, that the whole company joined unanimously in the chorus, Bulstocke keeping time delightedly by snapping his fingers to the swing of the tune.

The words are thus carefully preserved in the "Evergreen Garland," to which most rare collection we can never sufficiently acknowledge our obligations:—

“Vive le Roy, Vive le Roy!
 Who fails me in the toast?
 Soldier! is it thou,
 When I drink to honour's boast?
 Wouldst thou follow a brewer
 Or a king to battle, boy?
 Come, hand in hand, together stand,
 And shout Vive, Vive le Roy!

Vive le Roy, Vive le Roy !
 Whose goblet rests unfilled ?
 Scholar ! is it thine,
 Or is the liquor spilled ?
 Wouldst thou drink not Augustus ?
 And our king's his better boy !
 Come, hand in hand, together stand,
 And shout Vive, Vive le Roy !

Vive le Roy, Vive le Roy !
 Whose lip shrinks from the rim ?
 Citizen, you last of all
 Should pause to drink to him.
 In your rare wares and jewels
 Doth Ananias joy ?
 Then, hand in hand, together stand,
 And shout Vive, Vive le Roy !

Vive le Roy, Vive le Roy !
 And if ye all refuse,
 Woman ! but thou begin,
 And then they cannot chuse.
 If we followed her from heaven,
 To return can we be coy ?
 Then, hand in hand, together stand,
 And shout Vive, Vive, Vive le Roy ! ”

“ But, gentlemen, the time has come for more than words—we must not be ever seeds and no sprouts ! ” said De la Pole, exulting in the general enthusiasm. “ To-morrow, my Lord Holland in the peers, and Master Waller in the commons, will openly present your petitions for peace.”

There was a general and obviously alarmed silence instantly.

“ It shall be nobly backed,” continued the cavalier, affecting not to notice this gloom. “ Northumberland will support it—not only with words ; Essex is discontented with them, and will not rebuke us ; Master Waller is assured of three-fourths in the commons. We poor, imprisoned cavaliers have a secret understanding among ourselves, and will not fail to add our woful plaints ; the secret friends we have are numerous, and unlike most others, will declare themselves at the moment of need.”

“ What ‘ need,’ my lord ? ” said Tomkins, significantly ; “ the subject hath no right more constitutional and subject-like than this of petitioning.”

“ ’Tis truly said, Master Tomkins,” replied De la Pole, smiling. “ But guilt has made these men marvellously fearful ; and even so fair a mother as presbytery has given birth to a swarm of impy changelings, which as they grow in strength will strangle her. No man should play with the hilt of the sword that is not ready to draw it ; and I am well informed that the fanatics wait but for some sudden occasion to burst out and make a bloody massacre of us all. Nearly all you present are captains in the trained bands ; therefore it behoves

you, on the delivery of the petition, to roll your drums, and stand to arms until you know the upshot."

There was another and still more emphatic pause, and the cavalier glanced from Mistress Chaloner to Madam Tomkins, and exclaimed: "There is but one here who cannot make himself a knight by a word, and yet Master Tomkins, who hath no command, is the only man willing to say it."

"Perchance for that reason," said Ingulph, with a derisive laugh.

"Nay, for if ever Chaloner hopes for a quiet hour again, he for one will be in Artillery Ground to-morrow," said his fair but despotic wife."

"There is no ordinance, nor act of parliament, that I know of, to the contrary," said Chaloner, but somewhat tremulously. "What say you, Master Bulstocke, is it not within the city privileges to call the muster when we will?"

"We'll try, at all events?" returned Bulstocke, heroically; adding, with a mysterious glance at Ingulph, "I wot well we have a noble band about Westminster will see none of us abused for a merciful praying for peace."

"Northumberland's retainers indeed to a man," interrupted the cavalier, gaily. "But 'tis not to be supposed we do plot any harm in the presence of ladies, and at a feast; so let us e'en keep up St. John's games in the manner of our fathers, and dance Herodias's coranto."

The wild spirit of hilarity which the excitement of danger frequently produces, stirred the whole company in unison to this joyous proposal. De la Pole led out Mistress Stonehenge, the musicians were summoned in, the coranto formed; and old and young, courtiers and citizens, masters and servants, were soon mingled in the revelry, all the more delightful for being of the forbidden order.

Ingulph alone did not join the festivity, but sat apart with an air of sullenness and reserve, but in reality lost in the most perplexing thoughts. The machinations of the cavalier, he now found, had placed all things on the brink of a precipice, to which the least awkward move might give the destroying impetus. If the fate of Marie had not been so inextricably involved in the affair, it is possible that he might have looked on with less terror, and taken some more abrupt measure to break the conspiracy. But the least false move might bring down the destruction in which she was certain to be involved; and the resolution which he now matured was to place her in safety, expound their danger to the other plotters, and if they still persisted, openly to baffle them.

He determined to return to Whitehall, with Ramona, as early as possible, without exciting suspicion, and to see and warn Marie of her danger. But he had discovered so intense an interest in Ramona for the cavalier, that he could not think of leaving her behind, and he knew that he possessed a spell which she dared not disobey.

But while anxiously looking out for some pretence of retiring, time wore on, and the revellers plunged with increasing indiscretion into all the vagaries and antique sports of the festival. They were now all gathered round the fire, dancing in its cheerful light with nosegays in their hands, laughing, coquetting, and singing some of the old rhymed spells.

“ Blessed St. John,
His eye upon,
Dance till cock-crow,
And fear no woe
Till the time of snow.

With vervain green
At his feast be seen ;
Kindle his fire
To heaven and higher,
And have your desire ! ”

chanted Mistress Chaloner, with great solemnity.

“ Say you so, fair mistress ? ” said De la Pole, laughingly. “ Then, in good truth, there is one in my heart burns as high.”

“ You are a forward gallant,” said Mistress Chaloner. “ But ere I listen to fair tales from cavaliers, I will see the king at Whitehall ; for a courtier’s love is only for the use of begging monopolies.”

De la Pole was about to reply, when an event occurred which threatened to put the revelry to abrupt termination. The door opened, and Lilly suddenly made his appearance.

“ Ladies and cavaliers ! ” he exclaimed, precipitately ; “ take honest and loving advice, *gratis*, and separate on the instant ; for I have learned by art ’tis a grand night for mobs ; and ten to one, if they hear of your proceedings, there will be clubs raised and swords drawn, and heaven have mercy on some people’s souls ! ”

“ What mean you, Lilly ? ” said De la Pole, carelessly.

“ Together like my grandame and her cat, ever ! ” said Lilly, staring at Ramona and Ingulph. “ But for my meaning, my lord—hark, ’tis plain enough to be heard in the street below ! In good English, some villain has been among the fanatics, telling them as to how you are keeping up the old poperies, and they are coming to put you right with club-reasons.”

A trampling of many feet, a murmur of many voices, which had for some time sounded dreamily and remotely amidst the revelry, were now distinctly audible. Ingulph started up, and at the same instant a terrific shout was heard in the street, accompanied with a confused uproar of staves knocking at the door, and voices demanding admittance.

“Stir none! I will find the meaning of this disturbance,” said Ingulph.

“I tell you, 'tis Barebone's whole conventicle in arms,” said Lilly. “I met them coming from their meeting-house, and as I saw Master Hopkins among them, I feared it might be after conjurors, or matters of that sort, at first, until I heard what was going on here, and so took to my heels.”

“They will murder us all!” wept Mistress Chaloner.

“Are there any soldiers among them?” inquired Tomkins, whose alarms were altogether of a political nature.

“In heaven's name, Master Tomkins, speak not so far from the purport!” said Waller, tremulously.

Ingulph had meanwhile darted from the hall into the kitchen, which, as we have formerly mentioned, opened on Ludgate. Bulstocke was the only person who followed, the servants having fled to their superiors on the commencement of the uproar.

The door was luckily of great strength, consisting of solid oak, cross-barred; and the unwelcome visitants seemed to have used their clubs in the first place merely to announce their arrival, for the noise was lulled into a hoarse murmur, as if they awaited the result.

Ingulph signified his own presence within by knocking the door with his fist, and then demanded who they were, and what they wanted, at that hour.

“Sinners, worms, the filth and scum of the Lord are we, and yet he hath sent us on an errand,” replied the harsh voice of Praise-God Barebone. “Open the door, and reveal the abomination of iniquity, for the rooting out of which from the land, the babe hath become as a giant refreshed with wine, and the foolish wiser than Solomon; lest the terrors of judgment fall upon the whole city, and it become as Sodom and Gomorrah, whose place is not.”

“I am a free citizen of London—what the fiend want ye in my house?” shouted Bulstocke, in reply.

“Deliver up the witch!” yelled another voice through the keyhole.

“There is no witch here, but citizens of wealth and their wives,” said Ingulph.

“Were she the Midianitish woman whom they call queen, and a witch, 'tis ordained she shall be burned to ashes, in an unclean place, out of the camp!” returned Barebone.

“Our errand is not concerning witches nor witchcraft!” said a third voice. “Though if one be set on that task, we meddle not; but we are truly informed that you are keeping Satan’s holiday, to the deluding and ruin of many precious souls; wherefore, I say, open the gates, and we will utterly put out the fires of Moloch, pull down the shady groves of Baal, and pluck the moony crown from Ashtaroth.”

“We are well armed; and if you attempt this unlawful entry, the consequences be on your own heads!” replied Ingulph.

“When God is with us, who can be against us!” returned the fanatic; and with a wild yell the mob recommenced their operations.

Ingulph perceived that the door, strong as it was, could not long oppose a barrier, for one of the cross-bars was already crushed in. Considering also that his own presence, known to be trusted and favoured by the parliament, would pacify them, if not chafed by resistance into fury; he called out that he would admit them quietly, if they would promise to behave so. But in that brief space the door was forced in with a fearful crash, and a yelling mob, armed with thick clubs, pistols, bibles, and pikes, came rushing over one another like surges of the sea.

Ingulph and the alderman had but just time to rush back to the hall, where the other guests remained in a state of the greatest alarm. The cavaliers had resumed their masks, and drawn their swords, and Ramona leaned in mute terror on the arm of De la Pole.

Snatching the only weapon, which was a wooden stool, Ingulph of course ranged himself on the side of the assailed; and so formidable was the attitude of resistance which the revellers presented, that their attackers flooded into a mass and stood at gaze.

Foremost of these, clad solemnly as a puritan divine, with a heated countenance full of fanatic determination, was Peters, the independent preacher; Hopkins and Barebone were the other leaders.

“So, brethren, is it thus you fight the fight, and wrestle with the kingdom of darkness?” said Peters, looking around at the flowery splendour and at the glistening garbs of the

cavaliers, "Or are these the heathen games of the strumpet goddess, Flora?"

"I know of no commandments against flowers and wreaths, Master Peters," said Bulstocke, confusedly.

"Tut, we do but keep holiday after the fashion of our fathers," said Mistress Chaloner, resuming her courage. "Come, Master Peters, I know not what leanings to Baal you may have lately discerned in me, but I have heard you commend me after a goodly fashion, not so long ago as to forget."

"Mistress Chaloner, you do wrong yourself to assist in these love-feasts of Satan!" returned Peters, but in a somewhat milder tone, for there was something irresistible in the glance of those merry eyes; and Peters, or scandal wronged him, though a vehement fanatic, had his weak points. "Ay, truly it grieves me to see so snowy a heifer wandering from the pastures, for methinks this is a sabbath to which it is no marvel if witches come on broomsticks and dogs in sieves, and the devil himself were to appear among you, with horns and fiery eyes and hoofs?"

"Why, Master Peters, how else should he come?—Not as an independent preacher?" said De la Pole, scornfully.

"Bear witness all, I take up my testimony against ye, as an unbelieving generation!" exclaimed Barebone. "And against these green birches, and vervain, and lilies, and violets, and midsummer fires; all which are works of the devil and popish mummeries."

"Aroint thee, Satan! I charge thee!" exclaimed Peters, unwilling to be outbid, and rushing at the crown of flowers, and tearing it like a mad horse at a manger. "Thus I tear down thy crown—thus I trample thy pride—and now I abjure thee!" he broke off, turning with wild fury towards Ramona, who clasped her hands and shrieked with terror. "Thus I abjure thee—if thou art what men deem thee, depart out of that goodly form, and release from the chains of hell that worthy Master Stonehenge whom thou hast usurped unto thyself!"

"What mean you, villain?" shouted Ingulph.

"This woman is a witch, a sorceress, an enchantress!—thou shalt suffer none such to live!" said Peters, ravingly.

"Thou art a fool, a liar, and a demoniac!" said Ingulph, darting forward between the furious priest and the denounced.

"I speak in the name of my Master, whose badge is long-

suffering and patience!" said Peters, foaming at the mouth. "And if this be really a human and a Christian woman, and not a devil under the form, let her suffer the assay of Matthew Hopkins, duly appointed to the work. Look how she quakes! Aroint thee, witch! Satan, I spit in thy black face—begone!"

"And here I am, with service presented to your worships," said Hopkins, stepping forward, in a tone half bully and half coward; and pulling a rope from his leather wallet, he added eagerly—"Let me bind her at once, or worse will follow."

"Bind her! whom? to what purpose?" said Ingulph, trembling with rage. "Where is your warrant, rogue, to bind or to loose?"

"Here, here!" exclaimed Peters, breathlessly, and drawing out his bible he tore it open at the denunciation in the Mosaic law against witches and wizards.

"My two chief ways of discovery, if your worship inquires that," said Hopkins, with unabated effrontery; "and as truly I explained to the honourable judges of assize, is, first to strip the witch naked to discover the devil's marks and unnatural teats to suckle the imps at; then, if that fails, the ducking stool cannot be avoided, which is as simple a trial as can be, and may be done by the silliest clowns; 'tis but to tie the witch's thumb and great toe together, on a stool, sign her with the cross, take her to a water that runs east and west—"

"Bloodthirsty villain! avoid my sight instantly, or I will put you to a worse experiment in the fire!" exclaimed Ingulph.

"Nay, my fine master, if you are possessed by a devil 'tis none of my fault; I go nowhere but whence they send for me with tears and prayers and beseechings, and as it were to clear them of the plague," retorted Hopkins. "And let me tell you, ladies and gentlemen, if you had seen what I have, ye would not be so keen at keeping witches' company; but 'tis plain enough seen on you, since the devil has got ye already to dancing jigs with him."

"Seize on her, Christian friends," exclaimed Peters, himself making a grasp at Ramona, who cowered shrinking down. But De la Pole's form interposed.

"Ye all know Master Dethewarre," he said; "he will be bail for her appearance at any time you need her; meanwhile, Ingulph, convey her home—Master Waller's caroché is at the door, and we will make you a way."

Ingulph immediately took Ramona's hand, and awed by the drawn swords of the cavaliers, the mob suffered him to

lead her through their ranks, Hopkins himself making no resistance, but bestowing a scowl of such intense malignity on Ramona, as if she had done him a mortal injury. Not to be wholly balked, the fanatics then dispersed themselves about the hall, pulling down all its floral embellishments, and extinguishing the fire.

“We shall need one another to-morrow, indeed!” said De la Pole, pointing the moral of the scene, which owed its very existence to himself; and heartily coinciding in this opinion, the discomfited guests huddled out in masses, leaving Bulstocke to lament over the ruins of his feast.

END OF THE FIRST PART.

WHITEHALL ;

OR,

THE DAYS OF CHARLES THE FIRST :

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "WHITEFRIARS."

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WHITEHALL.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

WALLER'S caroche was indeed in waiting, but Ingulph, ascertaining that a body of the city watch was coming up Ludgate, to suppress the disturbance, took a private way out by some back lanes which emerged in Holborn. Aware how strange the circumstances would appear to Stonehenge, his great object was now to convey Ramona home without becoming engaged in any public exposure. Unluckily, she was so much exhausted by fear that she could scarcely walk, and it was much later than he had imagined. In fact, the hour was past at which the usual adits of the palace were closed, and he consulted Ramona, with great perplexity, how she was to reach the old palace, when she reminded him of the secret corridor, and said she had taken the precaution to order the mulatto to be in waiting for her in the picture gallery.

Ingulph disliked this expedient, but there was no resource, and as they continued their long journey he more particularly explained the perilous position of affairs. He desired Ramona to inform Marie of all, immediately, and to desire her to be ready to start at daybreak for Oxford, taking with her whom she would—for he could not prevail upon himself to say De la Pole—and that he would be in readiness to escort her out of the city, and to answer all questions.

Ramona breathlessly promised compliance, and though nearly spent with the toil of walking so unusually far, hastened her steps until they reached Holbein's Gate. To elude observation, he wrapped her in his own cloak, but although it was dark night, one of Ingulph's soldiers, on duty at the gate, seemed at least to recognise that it was a female, by the long emphatic whistle of surprise which he gave.

The terrible consequences of discovery hastened their movements, but Ingulph did not abandon his unlucky companion until he had escorted her safely into the gallery, and

found the mulatto in attendance. He then hastened back to his own chambers, and resolved, and yet devoured by anxiety, awaited the return of De la Pole, watching in the gateway chamber.

But hour after hour passed and the cavalier returned not; the pale light of dawn began to be visible, and Ingulph, in his anxiety, was about to sally forth in quest of him, when the whole building rang with tremendous blows at the gates below.

Darting to the window to ascertain the cause, Ingulph perceived, with something of the terror of guilt, in the faint morning light, the figure of Stonehenge, striking at the gates with all his force. Lilly and the mulatto were with him, and as the sentinel at the gate kept it barred and refused to open without the pass-word, Ingulph had time to throw open a lattice in the window, and demand what was the matter.

“Where is Mistress Stonehenge? no man hath seen her since she left Ludgate with you!” shouted Lilly.

“Monster, where is my wife, my lamb, my innocent Ramona?” yelled Stonehenge, turning up a visage so deformed by passion, that it resembled some hideous mask, and flourishing an axe, with which it seemed he was striking at the gates.

At this instant, Lord de la Pole, with several lackeys, came up to the gates, singing and slightly staggering, as if under the influence of wine. Ingulph heard him inquire what the matter was, and then exclaim, “What! Saint Ingulph found out after all?” and he called the pass-word to the sentinel to admit him. But by this time Ingulph comprehended, if not all the treachery to which he had fallen a victim, enough to convince him of the perilous circumstances in which he stood. In the desperation of his thoughts only one chance of escape presented itself. He ordered the soldier not to open the gates, but rather to suffer the assailants to batter it down; snatched up his cloak and sword, and rushed to the secret corridor. Unluckily, in his agitation he tore the tapestry down, instead of lifting it up; but unheeding that he had thus left traces to guide a pursuer, he continued his way.

His intention, if the wild hope which guided him could be called so, was to hasten to the old palace, warn Lady Marie of the necessity of flight, and then to return, and, at whatever risk, undeceive his uncle from his error. Darkness and silence reigned throughout the immense palace, but he ran through the suites as if in the broad daylight; yet he had scarcely ex-

pected otherwise, when, on arriving at the exit to the hermitage garden, he found the doors fastened beyond all the efforts of his strength to open.

In this desperate pause he suddenly remembered the ruined galleries which apparently conducted to the tower where the unfortunate magus carried on his operations. Guided only by this conjecture and faint beams of light, he pursued his way recklessly, like one in a fearful dream, over all obstacles—leaping, scrambling, and tottering on giddy planks, till he found himself, how he knew not, on the remains of a gallery which conducted to the winding staircase of the tower. Without an instant's pause he ran down its apparently endless steps, and arrived at length at the base, whence he easily found his way into an inhabited part of the old palace.

Early as it was, the domestics were all up, or rather had not been to bed, and from them he learned the confirmation of some of his worst fears. Mistress Stonehenge had not been seen by anyone in the palace since she left it the night before to go to Ludgate; and the mulatto, taking the alarm, went there with intent to bring her home, and was the first to give the alarm.

Ingulph distractedly demanded to speak with Lady Marie, and then he learned that she was at Northumberland House, whither she had accompanied Lady Carlisle, after the water-party. Almost overwhelmed with grief and indignation at the conspiracy in which he felt he was with such wonderful dexterity ensnared, Ingulph determined at least to save his honour as a soldier, and baffle the political part of De la Pole's extensive plot. That Ramona was spirited away in some manner by his contrivance, he could not doubt; to save her honour was now scarcely possible, but at all events, the only hope was to secure De la Pole. He must hasten, therefore, and procure his seizure by the committee of safety, and thus strike a panic into the whole party which might prevent them from openly compromising themselves.

But fear of what might be the consequences of his revelation to Marie, and the certainty that in his absorption Stonehenge could scarcely anticipate him, induced Dethewarre to make a last effort for her preservation. There was a boat always kept at the palace stairs; he embarked himself in it, rowed to Westminster, and avoiding the great thoroughfares, arrived at Northumberland House.

He knocked for some time in vain at the portals, for it was still very early morning, but they were at last opened, and the

querulous voice of a servant disturbed in his sleep inquired his business.

Aware that he must not trust himself in the Earl's walls with his news, Ingulph opened the man's eyes with information that he came on a business of life and death, which his appearance amply confirmed. He then bade him hasten to the Earl, inform him that the "great ship in the Downs" was a total wreck, that he had an hour to provide for the safety of his daughter and the Lady Marie, and that then the committee would probably send its messengers to demand a commission of array which was stowed in his mansion.

With this appalling message, every word of which increased the panic of the retainer, Ingulph hastened away; but though he had determined that his account should personally compromise no one but De la Pole, he could not prevail upon himself to appear before the committee until he ascertained, which he did within the hour, that the earl, his daughter, and Lady Marie, had gone into the country the previous day; that is, had taken his terrible hint, and thought proper to leave the statement to account for their disappearance.

It was now, too, the time at which the committee usually sat, and Ingulph hastened to Westminster. On arriving, he found St. Margaret's churchyard full of soldiers, and making inquiry of a soldier, he learned that parliament had ordered an additional fast to that on the previous day, in expiation of the sin of certain ungodly citizens, who had dared to keep the Feast of St. John with the old pageantries, and were all ordered to attend and receive a public admonition.

This circumstance convinced Ingulph that the petition plot at least was discovered; and finding that the committee were already at their devotions, he found that it would be necessary to seek them with his news, in the church.

Henderson was preaching, and it was crowded to the very portals; the delinquent citizens, including nearly the whole party at the Vigil of St. John, were penned in a spot by themselves, and were listening with infinite humility to the invective with which the preacher overwhelmed their transgression, and which was destined to last until all dread of an armed support to the petition was over.

Elbowing his way with great difficulty, Ingulph at last got near where the committee were seated, on bare benches, like the meanest present. Pym's face was hidden in his hands, and he seemed to be praying with great fervour; but when Ingulph, to attract his notice, ventured slightly to pluck his

cloak, he started as if a dagger had been suddenly plunged into his side, leaped up, and turned round with his hand on his sword. Ingulph was amazed at the stern and contemptuous glance he cast at him the moment he perceived who it was.

He intimated by a gesture that he had something to communicate, and bending forward he whispered, "Give instant orders to arrest De la Pole, Master Pym; a commission of array has arrived in London, of which he may be inclined to make an ill use."

"You are something late in the day, my master; unhappy Stonehenge, that nourished the viper in his bosom, has the start of you," he replied, in a tone of bitter scorn; he then whispered a few words to Sir Harry Vane and Lord Saye, who sat beside him, and all three arose and left the church.

The astonishment and alarm with which the congregation watched this movement may be imagined, more especially as Pym offered no explanation, and merely beckoned to Ingulph to follow him. The latter obeyed, though reluctantly, thinking that Pym intended to extract particulars from him; but to his great surprise, when they reached the guard at the door, Pym ordered him into custody, and gave instructions to remove him instantly to the Tower.

"What have I done, Master Pym?" exclaimed the astonished Ingulph.

"You are a seducer and a double traitor, almost too worthless for the gallows!" returned the statesman, with a glance full of disgust; and without listening to any observation to the contrary, he walked off with his colleagues, leaving Ingulph in the care of the musketeers.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

IN a few hours the whole city rang with tidings of a detected conspiracy. Warrants flew about in every direction; and many persons of various degrees were arrested. Among these, it was known that De la Pole, his illegitimate brother, Waller, Chaloner, and Tomkins, were committed to the Tower. The earl of Northumberland had prudently retired to his strong house in Sussex; the earls of Holland, Bedford, and Clare, with divers members of the commons, disappeared from London, and it was rumoured, had gone to join the king.

It seemed at first as if violent counsels were likely to prevail in the treatment of this strange eruption in the body politic. Never had the parliament stood in a pass of greater jeopardy ; at first nothing was talked of but the utter rooting out of the royalist party ; and a court-martial was established, apparently with that intent.

But like the party which had constituted it, this court was irresolute and lenient in a singular degree, and the few determined spirits mingled in it were not able to force it into those extreme measures which the times demanded. On the statement of the mulatto, who now avowed himself the spy he had long been, Tomkins and Chaloner were executed ; the former for having in his possession the commission of array, the latter for having received it, through the perfidious slave, from Lady Marie, the day preceding the intended outbreak. But although the independents laboured to connect the London petition with the military conspiracy of De la Pole, the committee, acting perhaps on a wiser policy than that of blood, discredited the notion ; those who had signed it, among the rest Bulstocke, were only reprimanded with severity and dismissed to their homes.

But even against the arch-conspirator De la Pole, the policy or fears of the government proceeded with extraordinary mildness. One witness, it was admitted, was not sufficient to convict him, and only one could be adduced, so subtle was he in all his dealings ; and this one was the last that could have been expected.

It was Waller, who, struck with excessive terror, and hoping to save his own forfeit life, divulged all that he knew, concerning every one, lords, ladies, and commoners ; and not only the circumstances of the plot itself, but every scrap of intelligence which he had acquired in the confidence of private intimacy, until the parliament itself found it politic to affect a disbelief of his stories. De la Pole and others were frequently confronted with him, and all that he affirmed they denied. No direct proofs but the asseverations of the unhappy poet were produced ; much that might have been produced being probably withheld, lest it involved too many and too powerful personages.

Waller's revelations so wholly acquitted Ingulph, and the lenity of the council was so apparent, that his enemies abandoned the accusation against him of a political character, or only used it to allege that he had exposed the safety of the state to indulge in a criminal assignation with his uncle's

wife! For this offence he was referred to the jurisdiction of the assembly of divines, as the highest spiritual court.

Even among the sanctified population of London, this case almost divided their interest with the grand conspiracy in which it was so remarkably grafted. The extraordinary suspicions attached to the character of Mistress Stonehenge, the providential discovery of the intrigue, the sudden and complete disappearance of the lady ever since, deeply engaged the public curiosity. But this feeling heightened to a more tragic hue when it was generally known that the betrayed husband intended to demand the punishment of death against his wronger, which, by a recent act of senseless rigour, the parliament had decreed for the offence.

Stonehenge's mild and benevolent nature seemed indeed altogether reversed by the discovery of the extraordinary perfidy and ingratitude, which he doubtless believed had been displayed against him by the two beings whom he had most loved and trusted. Ingulph's other friends deserted him, struck with the enormity of his offence, even Bulstocke; although perhaps resentment at the part which he doubtless imagined he had taken in inveigling him into the conspiracy, had its share.

But Waller's revelations unwittingly raised a powerful friend for Ingulph. He declared that De la Pole had only feigned his conversion to worm his way into the secrets of the fanatics, and related many ludicrous circumstances which convinced themselves of the fact. But chiefly De la Pole boasted to have amused himself with the credulous zeal of Mistress Tribulation, whom he also stated to be the mother of Dethewarre, and a woman whose youth was more remarkable for gallantry than devotion.

This story, which covered her with ridicule, which revived many old ones, and which was in parts so true as not to be contradicted in the mass, roused Tribulation to fury. Perhaps, too, she had her private doubts of Ingulph's guilt, even in the abduction of Ramona; but however all that may be, one evening, shortly after his arrest, Tribulation made her appearance at a pile of buildings, forming a remote part of the palace of Whitehall, and known from its former uses by the name of the Cock Pit.

A portion of this edifice was at the period inhabited by Colonel Oliver Cromwell, either by permission or grant of the parliament; and as he was one of the principal officers of the

court-martial investigating Waller's plot, Tribulation's business was probably with him. Cromwell's residence was easily ascertained, two dismounted troopers pacing up and down before it, in solemn guard of their chief.

Stalking boldly up to the door, Tribulation struck the knocker with a single blow which ran through the paved court in echoes. Open it flew, and a gigantically tall porter, in the soberest weeds, made his appearance and abruptly inquired her business. Tribulation answered, with equal or even more asperity, that she desired to see his master on matter of singular weight and concern.

"Verily, there is none more so than that wherein he is now engaged, in a sweet and godly family exercise," replied the porter.

"Thou art superstitious to say so, knave," she replied sternly. "My business is concerning the late detestable conspiracy of the cavaliers; and what knows the wolf of the sabbath that the shepherd should leave his flock untended?"

"The sabbath, thou callest it?" replied the porter, disdainfully. "Thou art one then that stumble on after the old will-o'-the-wisps of observances? But truly, I will inquire his honour's leisure."

He disappeared, returning in a few moments to the top of the stairs, and gruffly summoning the visitor to ascend. He then pushed open a door, and left her to her own resources.

Tribulation found herself in a large chamber, very plainly but substantially furnished. In the midst was a table of oak polished as glass, on which were the materials of an evening repast, for it was supper-time, being six o'clock. A round of cold beef, bread, cheese, ale in two large silver mugs, and milk in pipkins, were the staple commodities. A homely, douce-looking woman, plainly clad, sat at one end, with two fair little girls clinging about her knees; a much younger but apparently married woman was next; and then, ranged according to age, were three tall, fat, handsome striplings, whose countenances were all mild, but without much expression.

At some little distance from this group, in an easy black leather chair, was an old woman whose thin gray hair and resigned expression gave her a very venerable aspect. Near her sat a military-looking man, apparently of middle age, strongly built and of a good stature, though not tall. The countenance was large and massive, the eyebrows somewhat heavy, the nose large, the mouth stern, the hair lank

and slightly curling; the general expression being grave, authoritative, and somewhat anxious, from the bent eyebrows and piercing earnestness of gaze. He was either reading or expounding from a Bible which he held open on his knees, with his heavy sword crossed on a stool at his feet. He wore a coarse country-cut suit of clothes, printed with divers stains of the armour worn above it, his sword fastened by rude iron links to his belt, and laid across the sacred volume to keep it open. This was Cromwell.

Another fair girl, about fourteen, sat on the stool, looking up at her father as he read, with a composed and serious aspect.

Master Peters was one of two persons who seemed to be guests in this extensive family circle. The other was a man of about two-and-thirty, of a stern, resolved, and somewhat gloomy aspect, which expressed a nature fixed undeviatingly on certain principles; or at least not likely to be turned from them by those whirlwinds of passion, or sudden gushes of feeling, to which men of finer sensibilities are subject.

The new arrival seemed to excite little notice, except with the women and children, who stared at Tribulation with great avidity, while Cromwell, without even raising his eyes, continued reading and expounding some verses of the Psalms. As both the text and the commentary were delivered in exactly the same tone, it was not easy to distinguish one from the other, though from the rambling discursive treatment they had but little relation. This continued for nearly ten minutes, and closing the book, he handed it to the young girl at his feet, sighed deeply, took up his hat from the floor beside him, and for the first time glanced at the visitor.

“Who are you, good gentlewoman? and what do you want?” he said, after a moment’s thoughtful survey.

“I am to speak to you, Master Cromwell, on matters concerning the late conspiracy, an’ it please you,” she said, in a grave but somewhat faltering tone.

“Who may this be?” said Cromwell, puckering his brows deeply and tapping his left temple, on which were several warts.

“My name in the flesh is Grizzle—Grizzle Dethewarre,” replied she, in a slightly hesitating tone.

“Grizzle Dethewarre!”—repeated the Colonel, with a start. “Truly, it seems to me, I should have heard the name before.”

“Verily and doubtless, Master Cromwell, inasmuch as I was

but now telling you concerning the heathenish vigil, wherein a Dethewarre was prime abettor, but just before the uncovering of his sin," said Peters. "But this is a worthy professing Christian, whose gifts have acquired her the rue-smelling ad-nomen of Tribulation."

"His honour may remember me; we are acquaintances of long standing," said Tribulation, putting back the muffler from her face, and fixing her sharpening eye on Cromwell.

"What! he who is before the presbytery, relating to a witch?" said Cromwell, hastily; and without once glancing at his old acquaintance, much less recognising her with the warmth of ancient friendship.

"Ay, and from which they have so carefully excluded any man of the independent judgment, lest a grain of wisdom or of justice might fall into their proceedings," said Peters, bitterly.

"Do you not remember me, then, Master Cromwell?" said Tribulation, in a deep melancholy tone. "'Tis long ago indeed, and time—time changes all things but the wicked heart of man. But truly it may well be, for our acquaintance was ere you had one of these arrows to your quiver, and verily, now, you may meet your foe at the gate."

And she glanced with a sorrowful, and even somewhat bitter expression, mingled with admiration, over the goodly progeny. The two little girls cowered in their mother's lap, who smoothed their fair hair, and glanced with a mother's fondness and pride, not unmingled with surprise, from her children to the visitor.

"In the days of my unregeneracy, yea, I remember—I should remember, I was friendly with some of your name; carnal-minded men, rufflers and roysters," replied the colonel, austerely. "But excepting to lament that time in sackcloth and in ashes, I take no pleasure to remember it nor them."

"Neither have they persevered in iniquity," replied Tribulation, significantly, "Though the pitcher be broken, still it hath capacity to retain the waters from the rock."

"Time hath done thee a good turn, then, among many ills?" said Cromwell, now looking at her stedfastly, with a slight smile. "Well, well! thy purport with me? for in regard those times are not altogether remaining with a flavour of bitterness on my lips, I were well content to do thy name a kindness in aught that is honest."

"'Tis matter coming too nigh the state to be handled in this presence," replied Tribulation, demurely.

“Let the children to bed, Betsy; or stay, they have not supped,” said Cromwell, glancing irresolutely at his spouse, who started up with instant obedience. “Nay, Frances, thy robins shall not be cheated of their crumbs,” he continued, with a smile at his young daughter. “I’ll step with this ancient gentlewoman into my closet; and thou, son Ireton, sit in my place, and bless the Lord, and eat. Methinks we have outlived scandal,” he continued, with a half sarcastic smile at Tribulation, and he then led the way through a passage, to a little chamber beyond.

Ireton immediately complied with his father-in-law’s request, and pronounced a blessing of great length and fervour, which branched off in some inexplicable manner into an invective against the king and cavaliers.

The reverential silence which succeeded was at last broken by Peters, who, after marvelling at the length of time which the colonel was absent, began conversing with Ireton on the probable subject of the conference. It seemed that both disapproved of the proceedings against Dethewarre, not from any pity or concern for the criminal, but as acts of ecclesiastical tyranny. The women ventured not in anywise to interfere in the discourse, until at last the old lady remarked, with some uneasiness, that her son was long gone, and desired Ireton to learn what he was doing.

“Nay, grandame, he is of years you know,” replied Ireton.

“But ’tis full time the children were abed,” said Mistress Cromwell, rising. “Bridget, thou hast oft delighted in that task heretofore, and though thy name be now Ireton, I trow thou wilt have a hand in tucking them in.”

The young wife rose with some appearance of reluctance, and was about to comply with her mother’s request, when the door suddenly opened, and Cromwell reappeared. The guest, however, was not with him, and though endeavouring to conceal it, such trouble appeared in his countenance that the good old grandmother rose and clasped her hands with a look of intense anxiety.

“Nothing, good mother, nothing; but of a truth our offences come back to whip us!” said Cromwell, confusedly. “But ’tis no matter. What we have to do now is of a sudden necessity. Ireton, have you your men under arms?”

“Yea, truly, but what needs them?” returned Ireton.

“It is averred to me, I am truly informed, that this Dethewarre knows the whole depth of the conspiracy, and can possess us fully of the manner of it,” said Cromwell. “So as

the committee have been pleased wholly to confide in us in the matter, we must bring him before the general,—I say we must,—whether they will or no.”

“We will have neither papist nor protestant inquisition!” exclaimed Peters.

“If the man knows what will force our masters to strike root and branch,” said Ireton, but he broke off with a smile, observing Cromwell’s look. “Come, we will to work then; though I deem the priests will hardly resist a warrant of the court-martial, backed by my hagbutts.”

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE ASSEMBLY OF DIVINES.

THE assembly of divines held its sessions in the gorgeous chapel of Henry VII., certainly a most unfit arena for their discussions, being one of the grandest monuments of the religion and monarchy against which nearly all their measures were directed. Their deliberations were strictly private, and indeed a polemical dispute, as managed in those days, perhaps even in later, could not but be a very unedifying spectacle to the uninitiated.

The assembly were seated on bare benches arranged in a square form, with a slightly elevated chair for the president, which on this occasion was Selden, one of the lay-members. His handsome dress, and the mild sagacity of his expression, contrasted strongly with the gloomy garbs, and for the most part, austere visages of his compeers.

The proceedings of the ecclesiastical court commenced with a long prayer from Henderson for an illumination on their labours, direct from heaven, and then the prisoner was ordered to be produced. He entered immediately in custody of two warders of the Tower, with a quick resolute step, more with the eagerness of one who came with the certainty of justifying himself from an unfounded charge, than with the alarm and hesitation of a man whose fate is doubtful.

Selden returned the prisoner’s salute, and then turning to the court, said, emphatically—“We are to confine ourselves altogether to the heinous charge relating to Master Stonehenge’s wife, so let us not travel out of the record.”

“If I am a prisoner on that charge, I demand to be in-

stantly released," said Ingulph, colouring with mingled shame and rage. "Were I even as guilty as I am utterly innocent, an ecclesiastical court has no right to detain my person in custody."

"You are mistaken, sir," replied Selden. "Men say I know something of the law of England, and the High Commission Court always exercised such powers; as indeed, for a court to have jurisdiction and no coercion were all one as if I should be the owner of a house, and might not enter it."

"But the High Commission, methought, had vanished with the Star-Chamber!" replied Ingulph.

"Truly," replied Selden. "But the office has only devolved into purer hands, for the tabernacle was not to be destroyed, but given into the care of the chosen tribe."

A pleased murmur acknowledged this compliment.

"And if your defence be only this impeachment of our authority," continued Selden; "I must warn you, you bolt your door with a bulrush; so e'en let us hear the witnesses."

Stonehenge suddenly advanced, outwardly very calm and collected, save that his eye had in it something of almost supernatural anguish. Nor was there a trace of the intense spirit of revenge which was said to animate him, in the plain unvarnished narrative which he set forth as his evidence. There was, however, one remarkable point, that he too spoke of Ingulph as the son of Tribulation Dethewarre.

He related the events which had brought Ingulph to London, and the obligations he had conferred upon him, without any exaggeration, or indeed emphasis. He then alluded to his own secluded habits, to the suspicions which he gradually formed of his wife and Dethewarre, which, it appeared, had been for a long time struggling in his breast with the confidence and affection which he necessarily entertained for two persons so near and dear to him. He narrated, without much visible emotion, the circumstances of her disappearance at the feast of St. John, the reasons which he had to conclude that it was a concerted plan, from the circumstance that Ingulph was perfectly aware that it was not his intention to leave his laboratory on that night.

Stonehenge avowed, indeed, that the subsequent flight and concealment of his wife were mysteries which he could not fathom; and he alluded strangely to the reports afloat concerning her addiction to witchcraft. Slight as the intimation was, it excited general attention, for belief in the crime was confined to no class of society; what was gross and earthy

superstition in one, becoming a more metaphysical and methodical madness in another.

Henderson sighed deeply, and the sigh was re-echoed in an infinite variety of shades and of meaning among the reverend assessors.

"Ye seem as if ye had all heard more of this matter," said Selden. "But if she bestride brooms, or go to sea in cornsieves, is nothing to what we have in hand, unless it shall seem to you that she bewitched this young man, which in truth I think like enough, in one sense; but for heaven's sake, if I am to be beaten for stealing pears, do not go about to accuse me as if it were all the same to have eaten a horse in a hayfield."

The illustrative absurdity of this speech excited not a smile, all sighed again.

"The age is but too much infected with this most monstrous, venomous, and detestable crime," said Henderson. "The fearsome extent it hath reached among my own country-people, hath of late continually evoked the fire and sword of the civil magistrate, so that we are in danger of becoming even as the destroyed cities of old, whose stink of wickedness offended the nostrils of heaven to that degree"——

"Well, well, a shower of sulphur might be of no ill use in Scotland," interrupted Selden, who never constrained his humour. "But let us not throw every stone at a shrovercock—let us hear the proofs; for although the will be ever so good, the devil himself must have a way."

"Or the times are much altered since I was a daft callant," said the earl of Rothes, smiling.

"I trust in God they are, my lord, or the labours of many godly brethren have been in vain," said Henderson, sharply.

"I doubt we shall never reform men into angels, natheless," said Selden. "Pigs will be pork as long as they go on fours; but now let us hear the witnesses, which in these cases, I grieve to say it, do not often promote the edification of the listeners."

Lolo now came forward, and although his dusky visage and scarlet lips betokened much agitation, he amply supported his master's statement by his own falsehoods, and the additional circumstance of the discovery of a secret communication between Holbein's Gate and the old palace.

The next witness called excited marked attention, and not altogether of a flattering kind. It was Lilly, who approached

with a slight dash in his usually confident manner, which denoted that he did not imagine himself to stand before a very favourable audience.

"Methinks this is scarcely a meet testimony for a Christian court, sithence this man is currently reported to be a diviner and a soothsayer," said Henderson; "and therefore a disciple and servant of the devil."

"The more boot to hear him, as 'tis when an accomplice turns evidence," said Selden.

"Gar ane devil ding out anither, is our Scottish proverb to the same purpose," said the humorous Rothes.

"I do assure your worships—your reverences, I should say; and in truth, might not this assembly justly take on itself to be infinitely more reverend than any popish council that ever was held, with the scarlet woman in state and her panders about her?" said Lilly. "But I do most truly assure your honours, that my art is very lawful and Christian, and never condemned by either fathers, schoolmen, holy scripture, or"—

"Well, well, man," interrupted Selden; "we hope you fear God like another, but reserve your defence to answer your accusation. So, pr'ythee, if you have nothing to say to the point, give room to him who hath."

"Your honour, I have this to say," returned Lilly, in a lower key. "Casting Master Dethewarre's scheme, I found that his lord of the ascendant was in Venus, and"—

"His lady, you mean," said Selden, testily. "But if your art be a lawful one, beseech you let it be an intelligible one too."

"Troth, that warning comes with little grace from a lawyer, Master Selden," said Rothes.

"And thereupon I bade Master Stonehenge to beware; and from time to time continued the like warnings from observations in the sextile and the quartile," resumed Lilly, very demurely.

"Or perchance from casements and doors ajar?" said Selden, smiling. "But yet methinks it had not been amiss, having a young and fair wife, if Master Stonehenge had taken the hint."

"I trusted in him—as I trusted in his father," said Stonehenge, in a tone of implacable calmness. "But the leopard leaves not his spots."

"Moreover, in the mathematical science, conclusions are seldom so exact that a man should say with certainty, it is, or it is not!" said Lilly, with an air of profundity.

"Whereof we have a late and woful example in Albertus Wallenstein," said Selden.

Lilly could not resist the opportunity of glorifying himself and his art; and he entered into a long narrative, skilfully ascribing to his consultations with the stars the suspicions which he had formed against Ingulph, in reality due to De la Pole's insinuations and his own prying credulity.

Selden impatiently interrupted the astrologer by inquiring if there were any more mundane witnesses to be examined; in reply it was stated that there was another, who was very unwilling to be examined.

"Put him in; there is more truth to be struck than stroked out of men," said Selden, eagerly, for a good lawyer always anticipates something important from a reluctant witness.

This fractious personage was Bulstocke, who felt that he himself stood on the most ticklish ground, in the statements which he was likely to be called upon to make.

The fear and embarrassment which appeared in all he did and said, stirred the curiosity of the experienced lawyer; and he cross-questioned him with such rapidity and skill, that in a short time Bulstocke was so bewildered that he answered almost at random. After enjoying this diversion for some time, Selden perceived that he was ascertaining more than it was desirable to know; but the manner and mystery of Mistress Stonehenge's invitation to the famous feast of St. John seemed to complete the chain of evidence irresistibly.

In fact, Ingulph himself stood amazed at the mass of circumstantial evidence brought against him, which was all so artfully dovetailed and complete, that he could not discern any weak point at which to break it. All that he could say in his own justification he felt would only sound like recrimination; nevertheless, confiding in the innate force of truth, he entered into a plain narrative of the facts, which of course included the accusation of De la Pole and of the mulatto, and an exposure of Lilly's means of vaticination. But as he had, from motives of chivalrous affection, suppressed all mention of Lady Marie in the story, the affair of the feast of St. John remained unexplained. He appealed to Stonehenge himself whether he could not supply a reason for his conduct in that instance, without imputing motives so detestable and base.

Stonehenge, who had listened with wild avidity, only gave a deep sigh, and averted his face. But it was easy to observe

in the countenances of the assembly what a slight degree of faith they attached to the defence.

“If ye be so varra, varra spotless an offering, young man, ye are even as luckless a steg as ever I kenned, to seem so guilty,” said Rothes. “But words will never make butter of blue milk, so I would rather ye betook ye to explaining what ye have done with the lass, and what for she is not in court to say amen to your Pater Noster.”

“Ay, where is the woman-body?” said Henderson.

“Have you not found her, then?” exclaimed Ingulph, starting.

“You ask the road you ken weel enough!” said Rothes.

“As how, that have been a prisoner these several days?” said Ingulph, passionately.

“Were you loose then you could find her?” said Selden, significantly.

“If she were between the heavens and the earth,” he returned. “I have already told you that the last time I saw her was in the gallery at Whitehall, where the treacherous Lolo awaited to escort her to the old palace. But I doubt that De la Pole immediately conveyed her away.”

“In a chariot with fiery dragons?” said Selden, scornfully. “Methinks that unhappy young nobleman hath enough alleged against him, without this black addition; but being his brother you would help to put him out of this world’s troubles?”

“You entrap me, Master Selden!” exclaimed Ingulph. “De la Pole had for his accomplice the false and malignant slave who has thrown the weight of his guilt on my shoulders, and” —

“If you are trapped, it is in a trap of your own setting, Master Dethewarre!” interrupted Selden, sharply. “And neither gods nor men are grieved at such a spectacle; so I must tell you, if you have nothing else to say, you have said nothing. There is not even a shadow of probability in your sayings; but truly a heavy mass in your doings. Wherefore I would have you make a clean breast of it—restore this girl to lawful keeping, and throw yourself on the mercy of the man you have so bitterly wronged; for I must tell you, which perchance you know not, your life is in the scales!”

“My life?—You cannot value it at less than I do myself,” he replied, haughtily. “But my honour is dear to me; I have spoken the truth; do your worst!”

“Why, all admitted, what have you alleged?” said Selden,

raising his eyebrows. "Two boys are after an apple, and one climbs more deftly than his fellow, and so gets it! But methinks there are not two opinions in the chapel; nay, not even with Master Dethewarre's."

The general assent which replied to this assertion bewildered Ingulph; he almost imagined he was in a dream, so impossible did it seem to him that rational men should imagine him guilty of such a charge, so proved. To him to feel that the belief of his guilt was the root, instead of, as it ought to have been, the slowly matured fruit of the evidence against him, indignation was of course the predominant feeling.

"We have then only changed one tyranny for another—the Star Chamber would not have condemned me on such flimsy appearances!" he exclaimed with passionate vehemence. "But it is impossible! It is not—it shall not be; you cannot pretend to believe me guilty, unless yourselves are monsters, and know not that humanity could not sin so grossly, so inhumanly!"

"Alack the day! half the statute book is an old wife's dream, so!" said Selden, as if he felt the honour of the law attacked by this appeal. "But part music should be set in the same key, or 'tis but cat-harmony; now, it so happens that Master Waller declares your brother, De la Pole, used your passion for the unhappy girl to blind you to the use which he made of your name in his own policies."

"Villanous betrayer!" groaned Ingulph. "Alas, were that poor lost one here, she would acquit me; nay more!"

"What so simple then as to produce her?" retorted Selden.

"I cannot!" replied Ingulph. "But let me loose, and I will find her if she be on the face of the earth."

"I nothing doubt it for one; the laverock kens the whistle of its mate," said Rothes, almost laughing outright.

"'Tis a bad case, and bad is the best," said Selden, throwing himself back in his chair.

"Then I demand judgment, honourable sirs!" said Stonehenge, with a slight convulsive tremor.

"Yea, verily, sir, you are to my thought a much wronged man, the damsel being so passing fair," said Lord Rothes. "That the accused is guilty, methinks, is our unanimous opinion?"

"It needs little deliberation as to whether the sun shines at noonday," said Selden; and no dissent followed.

"It remains then only that we devise how, by the severest sentence in our power, we may approach the magnitude of this offence, which methinks includes the essence of all," said a divine who had hitherto spoken but little.

"Excommunication and public penance," began the earl of Rothes.

"Nay, let us demand a direct light; why keep the lanthorn closed, when we are searching for the truth?" returned the divine, suddenly producing a bible from his capacious doublet; and opening it, either by a singular chance, or as a declaration of his opinion, at the chapter of the woman taken in adultery. But the application was too specific, and the hard Scotch features of the earl of Rothes were screwed up in an indescribable attempt to restrain his sense of the ridiculous when it came to the summons to cast the first stone.

"You opine then, brother, that we are to let this man go scot-free?" said Selden, with a sly glance at Lord Rothes.

"Nay, I have endured the like myself; and I say, excommunication and public penance, and cheap of it," said the humorous nobleman.

"Are you content with this, Master Stonehenge, if he will also restore his victim?" said Selden, irresolutely glancing at the stoical citizen.

"What can he restore to me?" replied Stonehenge, in a calm, unmoved manner. "But let this judgment be recorded."

"It needs but Master Selden's signature," said a notary, who had continued taking minutes of the proceeding.

"And now it lacks not that confirmation," said Selden, indignantly affixing his signature, while Ingulph laughed aloud in the excess of his rage and despair.

"But let me tell you, sir, that a public penance, when the mob is not on the sinner's side, and eggs are cheap, is not altogether so laughable a matter," said the earl of Rothes, for he too was scandalized by the recklessness apparently displayed by the prisoner.

"And to be excommunicated from the fellowship of the godly, and the congregation of the righteous—to be cast off as a rotten branch from the tree—might move a wretch, not altogether abandoned by God, to some show of remorse and terror!" said Henderson, in a tone of deep disgust.

"You cannot excommunicate me from the universe, and that, to my thought, is the church of God!" said Ingulph, kindled to fury by the injustice heaped upon him. "Be not

so jealous of standing-room in your conventicles ; I can pray as freely under the broad heavens as in the narrow dungeons ye call your churches."

"Alas, alas ! but we needed not this proof to know that crime and irreligion are twin-born, inseparable brethren !" said Henderson.

"Is this decree signed and penned in all the forms, Master Selden ; I would have it so that no man's skill can find a flaw in it ?" said Stonehenge, eagerly handing the parchment to the president, who carefully perused and handed it back again with some slight surprise. "Then I desire you to remit the penance and excommunication," said Stonehenge, with a lurid smile. "By this decree ye have condemned the merciless adulterer to death !"

"How mean you, master ?" said Selden, but not without a considerable change of physiognomy.

"Nay, there is chapter and verse for it !" replied Stonehenge, quietly, and producing a copy of the terrific law by which the parliament, in a paroxysm of frantic morality, had denounced the punishment of death to the offence of which Ingulph was apparently guilty.

"Certes, the law is here, and I do remember me I did protest against it as madness !" said Selden, after a silent survey of the document. "But it hath slept hitherto like a coiled snake, which the bitter wrath of jealousy hath not yet evoked ! This indeed is a case of a peculiarly black dye—and *in terrorem*—to obtain back your fugitive—if that be your object—I would have Master Dethewarre look twice ere he refused once again."

"If that be the law, I stand on it," said Stonehenge, with a concentrated and implacable expression which made all shudder. "Had he sent me suddenly from earth into eternal hell, I would have forgiven him ; but not this ! Are your laws written in water or in brass ?"

"Law is law, certes," said Selden, in an irresolute tone. "But this was devised only to show the world our resolution to enforce purity of morals, against those in vogue at court. Surely, Master Stonehenge, you do not intend to proceed on this bloody plea ; humanity revolts against a punishment which so far exceeds the offence."

"I heard you say, Master Selden, that you knew something of the law of England," said Stonehenge, calmly. "You must therefore know that, as a spiritual court, you have only to decree on the ecclesiastical offence ; and I shall

then obtain the aid of the civil power to enforce its own regulations."

"'Tis a bland word; but you say truly," replied Selden, in a troubled tone. "We must do our duty, but God forbid that you should so far exceed yours as to use this merciless law but as a threat!"

Selden proceeded to pass sentence, which he did with obvious and marked reluctance, without any of his usual quaint illustrations. The sentence purported that Ingulph was to stand for one natural day, and the remainder of the present, on a stool, in a white sheet, with a rod in his hand, at St. Paul's Cross, in penance of his great sin. That he was publicly to acknowledge his offence, and to implore pardon for the scandal he had thereby brought on the Christian communion: and that from that moment, during the space of three years, he was excommunicated from the fellowship of Christ, and consequently could exercise no employment, civil, military, or religious, during that period, nor after, unless he brought ample proof of his repentance, submission, and religious demeanour during the interval.

"Make your three years—for ever!" exclaimed the exasperated victim. "For never more will I return into the pale of your narrow, intolerant, merciless, and most unjust tyranny! And to confess myself guilty of this crime, of which I am utterly innocent, I will rather bite out my tongue and spit it to a dog!"

"The fiend is strong within him!" said Henderson, calmly and sadly.

"I beseech your reverend honours to rescind so much of his sentence as relates to the public penance!" said Stonehenge, eagerly. "He is of my blood; I demand his punishment—not his disgrace!"

"Now by the mass! (that I should swear a popish oath!) this is madness!" said Selden, starting up. "You would have his blood, and yet scruple to let him take the air at St. Paul's Cross! Let him be instantly removed thither; and after this heavy sentence executed, methinks you may well barter life for wife; for 'tis barbarous but to think of the fulfilment of such a law, unless with Draco we deem that the least crime deserves death, and only lament that there is no greater punishment for the greatest."

The officers of the court instantly advanced to seize on Ingulph, while Stonehenge looked on with many feelings contending in the expression of his countenance. But frantic

with the prospect of the public ignominy to be inflicted on him, Ingulph shook off the officers with furious violence; and it was in the midst of a struggle to overpower him that the door flew open, and a file of soldiers appeared with Cromwell and Ireton at their head.

CHAPTER XL.

THE COURT MARTIAL.

“LEVEL your hagbuts!—Peace, in the Lord’s name,” said Cromwell, quickly. “This is our man!—Master Dethewarre, you are my prisoner.”

“He is under ecclesiastical censure; presume not to touch him!” said Henderson, after a short pause of surprise.

“But he is under the state’s, firstly, Master Henderson,” replied Cromwell, coolly. “I trust we are not to hear the old prelatical doctrine of insubordination, in the things which are not of God, from such godly lips! The Lord defend us from such doctrine! The court-martial requires to examine this youth; and he must come with me.”

“We may not withstand your orders, thus enforced,” said Selden, with evident satisfaction. “But I hope you are prepared with a good account of your masterfulness to the council.”

“The court-martial, an’ it please you, is supreme in this matter,” replied Cromwell, saluting Selden with the familiarity of old acquaintance. “We may not choose, Master Selden, considering all that is alleged about this youth; but doubtless your turn will come again.”

“You have a ready-made convert there, Master Cromwell,” said Henderson, as the colonel took a deliberate survey of his prisoner. “Truly he is of the latitudinarian independent judgment, that holds the door open for all errors and schisms, innovations and laxities; and at which ’tis intended the church shall be thrust out into the wilderness again.”

“And was not the Lord with her in the wilderness, more than in the idolatrous temples which Israel afterwards built himself?” replied Cromwell, sternly. “But this is no time to stir such a mess; the council wait.” And raising his hat with some degree of mock politeness to the astonished pres-

bytery, Cromwell and his son-in-law made their exit with the prisoner.

"He is rescued, at least for awhile, from the claws of the Presbyterian wolf," said Cromwell, as they gained the open air, where several mounted troopers were waiting. "Send the men home, Ireton, thou and I will guard the lad to Guildhall."

The court-martial sat there to strike a deeper terror into the disaffected city; and Ingulph, mounting one of the trooper's horses, was immediately taken thitherward, the two commanders riding on either side.

"And now, sirs, what mean ye to do with me?" said Ingulph, in the reckless tone of despair. "I have suffered the tyranny of kings, parliaments, mobs, priests, women, and the very madmen, and I doubt not I am now going to suffer yours."

"Here is one well fitted for the great work," said Ireton, with a grave glance at Cromwell.

"Man is at best but a frail vessel—a frail vessel," said the colonel, mildly, and taking another long and somewhat melancholy survey of the young man's noble countenance, working with intense emotion. "What marvel, then, that in the hot furnace of the passions at times the finest wrought flies to pieces?"

"I am innocent of the atrocious crime of which I am accused, but truly what hath that to do with the judgment?" said Ingulph, with the bitterness of despair.

"I would fain believe it so," said Cromwell, shaking his head incredulously. "But innocent or guilty, on that point the court-martial do not inquire; you are to appear before them to certify what you know concerning this most traitorous complot. Meanwhile, you have friends who will endeavour some composition with Master Stonehenge."

"But what have I done to merit this kindness?" said Ingulph. "I thought all humanity was in arms against me."

"In the state of unregeneracy we are liable to such assaults of fear and desperation," replied Cromwell. "But the Lord visits in his own time; and thy heart, like Egyptian jewels, may become an acceptable offering in the tabernacle. What hath any of us done, that grace should come and lug us out of the moss-pot into which we have strayed of our own folly, wash our bemired souls, and make us snowy lambs unto salvation?"

“I am no theologian; I know not the wherefore in that either,” said Ingulph, still more surprised.

“Nay, to be plain, Master Dethewarre,” said Ireton, “you are needed as a witness, to bring some of the tall branches of this conspiracy to earth, in which the Presbyterians are unwilling, and we are resolved. There is only the poor dastard sing-song, Waller’s evidence, against Lord De la Pole, and the law requires two witnesses in matters of life and death.”

In spite of all the exasperation of his feelings, Ingulph shrunk at this announcement.

“What do ye demand?” he said; “that I should do the executioner’s office on my brother?”

“Your brother!” repeated Cromwell, hastily. “In what I pray you hath he played the brother? But he is none! Mistress Dethewarre led a strange life in her young days, and as good as acknowledges thou wert but palmed on my Lord Montacute; in proof whereof, in dread of the discoveries she can make, she will compel Master Stonehenge to proceed no further in his bloodthirsty accusal, if you will surrender the young witch.”

Ingulph laughed distractedly at this new revelation, which indeed tallied with some of his own secret fears; and Ireton, probably considering that no further incentive to so many motives of revenge and hatred needed to be urged, pointed out a vast and silent concourse assembled about the Exchange. The body of the unhappy Chaloner hung on a gibbet at the gates; that of Tomkins, Ireton observed, swinging over his own doorway, in Holborn.

The sight brought no terror to Ingulph, but it kindled a wilder indignation in his breast, at the injustice which had condemned these meaner actors, and would not or dared not strike at the noble plotters and contrivers.

So vast a crowd besieged the neighbourhood of Guildhall, that it was with difficulty, though backed by authority and blows, that they could make a way into it.

The court-martial sat around their president, the earl of Manchester, all of them in armour, but without helmets. They were twenty-two in number, and nearly all colonels of regiments, and rigid Presbyterians. But there were some of the milder Independent sect mingled, and when Cromwell and Ireton took their seats, there might muster about five or six. Among these might be counted the enthusiastic Harrison, and Sir Thomas Fairfax, who, although attached to the

Presbyterian discipline, was much influenced by Cromwell, who served under him.

The lord mayor and many citizens of eminence were present, though forming no part of the court; several divines and lawyers, and a mob of the deepest fanatics, formed part of the assemblage. Two prisoners, surrounded by a guard, were at the bar; one was Waller, who was very slovenly and even sordidly clad for a man of his refined taste, and looked so haggard, dejected, and pale, that it was scarcely possible to recognise him. The other prisoner, Lord De la Pole, seemed in the full possession of his brilliant spirits and nonchalance, was gorgeously clad, and at the moment Ingulph entered had just uttered some remark, which made even the saturnine Manchester smile. But his complexion slightly wavered as Ingulph appeared; yet only for an instant.

"What! the renegade spaniel of the court, that fawned till he was kicked?" said De la Pole. "My lord, is this treacherous betrayer another witness to substantiate Master Waller's ravings? Marry, ordinary liars can witness to falsehoods, but you bring a posse of poets against me, whose trade is fiction."

"Our business is to find out the truth, without fear or favour," said Cromwell, drily. "For my part I value not what nicknames a man may have, since none have more than one carcass wherein to abye the penalty of his offence."

"Truth lies in a well, Master Cromwell; if you find her there, we shall hear the water hiss," said the young lord, in petulant allusion to the colonel's nose, which was certainly somewhat rubicund.

"Peace, peace, my lord, you do yourself no good by this discourse," said the president, interposingly. "Colonel Cromwell, it is not of the dignity of the court to altercate with prisoners."

"Neither of them to be insulted, my lord," said Cromwell, very calmly. "But I trouble not at the vain young man's pratings, lord though it be. 'Tis a rare merit indeed in him to be his father's son!—considering that his mother was a lady doubtless of high degree. But methinks if we called each other by our own names, and not after harmless towns and shires, to fix on them the memories of our misdeeds and mischances, it were better."

"Say you so, Master Cromwell?—I trust the times have not come to that, as yet," said the earl of Manchester, raising

his large dark eyebrows. "You are known for a man of deep designs, but I trust the world is a thousand years too old for such democracies and levelling phantasmata. My Lord De la Pole, you do persist in denying these imputed conversations, contrivances, and plottings, alleged against you by Master Waller."

"My lord, I am a soldier and a young man, and as either perchance somewhat too rash of speech, as I am fain to confess I have been but now," replied De la Pole, with an anxious glance at Ingulph. "But to pretend to convert such idle verbiage into facts of an intended conspiracy is in you a marvellous injustice, in him a marvellous falsehood."

"Your lordship doth wrongfully accuse yourself of lacking subtlety in speech," said Ireton. "Let us hear Master Dethewarre speak, and discern if we can thence see the depths of this conspiracy."

"Speak then, Master Dethewarre! let us hear your mid-summer night's dream! Is it in blank or rhyme?" said De la Pole, with a lurid kind of raillery.

"You have but to inform the court whether Waller's statement has your corroboration," said Ireton.

"Let him repeat it," said the earl of Manchester. "Our record will testify whether he falsifies himself."

"Which methinks were little to this court's credit, two men having died upon it," said Ireton.

"I have only to repeat," said Waller, melting into tears, "that Master Dethewarre was offered any reward if he would join the conspiracy, by his lordship; that he saw the commission of array in his hands; and that it was our dread that he would betray us which hastened the explosion of the plot ere it was well loaded."

"This indeed were conclusive," said Cromwell, hastily. "How say you, Master Dethewarre? Is it true?"

"I am no spy, Colonel Cromwell," said Dethewarre, after a slight but emphatic pause. "Villain though he be, this man is my brother, and I will not bring his blood upon my head, provided only he will confess whither he has cajoled the unhappy wife of Stonehenge."

"Hear this, my lord; was there ever so strange a miracle of impudence as this!" exclaimed De la Pole, laughing with mingled irony and rage; "when within this very hour he has been condemned for this base intrigue by the reverend assembly of divines."

"The accusation was false, utterly false; I will be heard!" said Ingulph, furiously.

"Let the middin lie, let the middin lie," said the earl of Rothes, who it seemed had joined the court. "Deil's in't, my lords, ane can hardly believe but that the warlocky quean has bewitched both the lads at ance, and for all we ken, they may both be speaking the truth to the best of their abilities, puir bedazzled, misguided creatures."

"Your impartiality is injustice, Lord Rothes," said De la Pole, very seriously. "I pray you for what reason did he so secretly invite Mistress Stonehenge to the city festival, where 'tis pretended we were present on treason instead of in a merry mummerly; and who has seen her since the good citizen her husband was so uncivil as to take the alarm when he ought to have been star-gazing?"

"Would you truly learn the reason?" replied Ingulph, exasperated out of his forbearance. "I desired to save a life which was dearer to me than my own, and which your artifices had involved in your plots for that very reason! Which of you, sirs, would have willingly given to death the woman whom he loved?—as I loved the Lady Marie."

The grave auditory looked with astonishment at Ingulph, and the cavalier glared at him in mute rage.

"The declaration is public!" he said, at last. "Doubtless the Lady Marie will be highly flattered by it! . . . Yet surely you are a very general lover. The queen's majesty was not too high for your ambition, nor this poor chandler's witch for your success! But hear you what your faithful officer confesses, my masters?"

"Treason, in truth," said Ireton, impetuously, but changing his tone at a look from Cromwell, he added—"unless the Lord had given you some light which you have not yet communicated to us, inasmuch as Balaam's ass, that would not on, was wiser than his master that would have cudgelled him into it."

"And for the same reason that he would not, an angel stood in the way!" said Waller, who in all his terrors could not let slip the opportunity of saying a pretty thing.

"'Tis a scandalous and profane comparison," bawled Barebone, who was one of the spectators.

"I do acknowledge it as such," said Waller, humbly. "Oh, that I had time given me to repent, for I do begin to see the truth of many things, and to praise heaven for the

failure of our weak and criminal attempt, though until of late I had not the grace to see the sinfulness of it."

"I must own it shows a very sweet nature in you to do so; but do you still refuse to support Master Waller's witnessing?" said Sir Thomas Fairfax, with a beaming expression on his countenance, which was the suitable index of his noble and yet undecided character.

"I would give my lord De la Pole time to consider," replied Ingulph. "Let him not compel me, in my own justification, to reveal more than he can answer."

"This is a fine stroke of your policy, good troth, to murder me, and then bring back Mistress Stonehenge to your good uncle, as if it were I that detained her," said De la Pole, laughing sardonically.

"Surely this sporting with the court is not to be endured," said the earl of Manchester. "Nor can the evidence of such a traitor to every human allegiance be at all depended upon, except against himself; and I think, after what he has avowed, we have no course but to take from him a commission which he has disgraced."

Cromwell, Ireton, and Fairfax raised their voices altogether against this proposition, and the members of the court-martial wrangled for some time so vehemently among themselves, that finally Fairfax proposed that the affair should be referred to the committee. Another dispute arose upon this, for Cromwell fought the battles of his *protégé* with unflagging vigour; but at last, finding it in vain to resist, he assented; but it was conditioned and allowed that Ingulph should no longer be considered a prisoner, provided that he gave bail to answer the charge of abduction against him.

It was, indeed, proposed to detain him on the sentence pronounced by the ecclesiastical court; but the majority were of the opinion that it was in the first place necessary to ascertain the pleasure of the committee. Cromwell and Ireton readily offered their bail; and the former smilingly observed, that by way of security, he would take the young man home with him, and never lose sight of him till his responsibility was over.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE ARMY.

It soon appeared that the Presbyterians, and especially the committee, liked not the vigorous movement of their more resolved associates. Under pretext that the service of so many officers could be no longer spared, the court-martial was dissolved. In the same spirit the committee cancelled Ingulph's commission, accepted a large ransom for Lord De la Pole, and commuted Waller's sentence into exile and a heavy fine.

Even Stonehenge, for some inexplicable reason, abandoned his proceedings against his nephew; and yet no tidings whatever had been heard of Ramona, though Ingulph himself secretly exhausted every expedient to learn what had become of her. Not that he doubted she had been spirited away by De la Pole, but by what means, or whither, it was impossible to learn.

Perhaps it was owing to the dread inspired by his extraordinary talent for political intrigue, which induced the committee to consent to De la Pole's immediate liberation. Ingulph learned with anguish that his rival had returned to Oxford, to Lady Marie's presence, covered with the renown which his daring loyalty had acquired. On the other hand he remained, disgraced, abandoned by all his friends, and black with the imputation of a crime, which in Marie's eyes must include the essence of all that was base, profligate, and deceptive.

But still he was not altogether deserted. Tribulation refused to see him, yet she sent him a good round purse, with her prayers that he would turn from the error of his ways, and deliver up his paramour to a just vengeance. Meanwhile he daily gained ground in Cromwell's kindness; insomuch that when the committee deprived him of his commission, he proposed to Ingulph to join his own troops as a volunteer. Some mysterious hints he threw out, that the time was not far distant when he should be enabled to restore him to his rank. But Ingulph needed no allurements; his persecutions and misfortunes had left him only one hope—which was vengeance.

He joined the army commanded by the earl of Manchester, in Cromwell's regiment. It was an army such as the world

had never before beheld, in whose hands the Bible and sword were almost equally in use, in which every man was as skilled to expound the one, as to wield the other. It was in these military devotees that the main strength of the Independents lay; in a war of religion it was necessarily to its ranks that the most resolved and enthusiastic spirits tended, for it was there that their powers and projects could alone be developed. But the higher officers appointed by the Presbyterian parliament were of that persuasion; and thence arose an extraordinary anomaly, for the leaders of the army in name might almost be considered as the reverse in fact.

The influence of the more moderate order of democrats, such as Pym, had long been on the decay; and after his death (which soon followed the discovery of Waller's plot), bolder politicians began to assume the mastery. Numerically much inferior to either of the two great contending parties, the Independents were gradually wedging themselves between both, by mere dint of energetically decided purpose. It is true, that even among them the ultimate intentions of scarcely two men agreed; but all agreed in the preliminary, that it was necessary to reduce to ruins before attempting to rebuild the shattered fabric of the state.

With the king and his cavaliers the war was still an ordinary rebellion, the full success of which would change nothing materially, but the rank of some few ambitious leaders. But the continuance of the struggle had stirred society to its depths, and the uncongenial elements were separating into original chaos. It was no longer the contest of prerogative and privilege, but that of democracy, with the royal and feudal forms of government which from the date of the Norman conquest had swayed in England.

An army so constituted watched with disgust the slow, inactive, temporizing policy of their nominal masters; and the real leaders, gradually feeling their strength, and supported equally by their own energy and the feebleness of their opponents, were gradually maturing projects for their overthrow. The self-denying ordinance was the first open movement in this direction; in which, skilfully availing themselves of the discontents, wishes, and generous impulses of the times, they cajoled the Presbyterians into a voluntary abdication of their power. By this measure all the members of either house were to resign any office, civil or military, which they might hold, and apply themselves exclusively to its business. The Presbyterians possessed all the chief

offices in the army and state ; and another series of manœuvres was in operation to secure the few Independents affected by the measure in their places. But the bill long languished, and was only at last matured by the ill success of the war in the hands of the men conducting it, who, feeling their weakness, imagined that by handing over the reins to hotter charioteers they would exhaust their own violence, and also feel at length the necessity of repose.

Ingulph joined this extraordinary army in a mood well adapted to its own. The world seemed to him one great prison in which tyranny exercised her cruelties in unnumbered forms ; all that contempt and oppression could invent he imagined he had suffered. In the excess of his indignation he confounded all together, and the misanthropy which creeps over noble natures when they find their generous impulses crushed in the inexorable machine of the world, sunk like night over his soul.

His natural melancholy, deepened by disaster and disappointment, assimilated with the general tone of the fanaticism of the age. But in this religious army the two factions endeavoured to outdo one another in severity of morals ; and Ingulph's character was blackened over by the report of his adventures in London. Despite the favour of Cromwell and Ireton, he was regarded as a black sheep among the officers. It was some time even before he overcame the prejudices against him, even among the common soldiery.

But his brilliant courage, or rather desperation, which he had many opportunities of displaying in the course of Cromwell's campaign in the west, in which he laid the first solid foundations of his military renown, won the attention of the soldiery. His eloquent fervour and disinterestedness farther gained upon them ; and finally, even the belief of his sinful career, which offered so fine a field for conversion.

Ingulph had formed a rash project. He took no pains to conciliate the opinion of the officers ; it seemed to him a matter of utter indifference. But he mingled continually with the common soldiery, frequented their religious meetings, and while sharing in their enthusiastic reveries and projects, gradually infused his own as fervent visions of policy.

It may be readily imagined that he pleaded neither the cause of king nor parliament. To the contrary, he represented both as tyrannies, whose only objects were to enslave the masses, however various their prettexts. He exhorted them that the moment had arrived for the people to arise and

overwhelm the oppressors engaged in their own conflict. Perhaps the poetical visionary himself believed it, but he announced that heaven was at last weary of the miseries of the earth, and that a holy reign of peace, brotherhood, and equality, was about to commence, if men would unite to work their own redemption.

Upon this ideal the fifth-monarchist could clasp his hand; the republican could be satisfied; the restorer of the theocracy of Moses could smile patiently; the desperado could dream of plunder; the ambitious think exultingly of the room that was to be made of mounting spirits. Accordingly Ingulph was beloved by Ireton, trusted by Harrison, the friend of Sydney, sought by Ludlow, and the noblest and most effectual tool in the hand of the master spirit of the revolutionary age.

With that profound penetration which formed the lever of his great fortunes, Cromwell comprehended the character of Ingulph in all its details, his projects, and the results to be expected. But although the young enthusiast's doctrines spread like wildfire, and he was fast becoming a prominent figure in the great drama, Cromwell appeared to take no notice of his progress.

The campaign of 1644 matured the projects of the Independents; their leaders only were successful, and great disasters overwhelmed the parliament under nearly all the Presbyterian chiefs. But the invasion of the Scots now promised to relieve them from some of their difficulties, and to give them the support they needed against their persevering enemies, the Independents.

Nearly a year had elapsed since Waller's plot evaporated; and though Ingulph was well convinced that Stonehenge would exhaust all possible means of discovery, no tidings had been heard of Ramona. Had she been a witch indeed, she could not have more effectually disappeared. A black suspicion gradually gained ground in Ingulph's imagination, which all the perfidy and recklessness of De la Pole should scarcely have aroused. But the magnitude of the interests involved in her concealment, sometimes induced him to think that she had been murdered, or otherwise treacherously disposed of, out of all risk of discovery,

Whether Stonehenge's convictions with regard to himself were removed by the observation to which he had no doubt his conduct was subjected, he had no means of learning. Cromwell purposely would not suffer him to go to London, and his relatives there had apparently forgotten him.

If there was any drop less bitter in Ingulph's cup, it was the intelligence which from time to time he gathered, that Lady Marie was not yet wedded to his rival. The reason of the delay was apparently the absence of De la Pole, who was for several months absent in France, on a secret mission; and on his return commanded in the army of the marquis of Newcastle, against the expected invasion of the Scots. But when the Scottish army entered England, and formed the siege of York, Ingulph could not learn whether he was in that city or had returned to Oxford.

Hopeless as he must now have felt his passion to be, still the doubt served as a perpetual goad to his military ardour, that he might, even with the din of arms borne against her cause, recall to Marie the memory of the past. But suddenly this uncertainty seemed in a fair way of being resolved, for Cromwell's troops were summoned from their triumphs by their commander, the earl of Manchester, to join with him and the Scots in forming the siege of York.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE siege of York is a memorable era in the civil war, for its consequences decided the event of the contest. Between the English army of Independents, and the Scots of rigid Presbyterians, but little real concord could exist, except among the Presbyterian generals. Cromwell and his officers took no pains to conceal their dislike and contempt both of the army and nation in general of their allies.

The earl of Leven, who commanded the Scots, was a soldier of the heavy German school, in whose wars he had been bred, who had ever before his eyes the cautious maxims of Wallenstein or Tilly. In him the daring and enterprise of Cromwell excited only terror and aversion.

The siege was begun and carried on according to all the most approved forms of approach; and the two armies, lodged principally in wattle-huts, remained spectators of the clumsy progress of their engineers. This was playing the very game of the besieged, whose object was to hold out until the arrival of a powerful army which the king was preparing for their relief, under Rupert.

In vain did Cromwell endeavour to hasten the operations, and offer with his own troops alone to attempt an assault.

The instinctive hatred of mediocrity to genius was sufficient to make his proposals distasteful; and he too was compelled to keep his young troops fretting impatiently on the curb.

At length tidings of the certain approach of Rupert's army threw a little more vigour into the operations. But the besieged well understood the temper of the earl of Leven, and hit on a new expedient to protract the issue. The marquis sent him word that he was surprised, after being two months before the city, that he had not complied with a most authentic custom of war, and announced his intentions. The Scots imagined that this was an overture, and negotiations commenced which the besieged artfully protracted, and during which a cessation was agreed upon.

Cromwell, and the officers in his confidence, beheld these proceedings with an indignation which at times boiled over in expressions of contempt and dislike for their allies. Religious disputes increased the rancour, and but for the obstinacy of Manchester, it is probable that the English would have fallen on the city without the concurrence of the Scots. But this nobleman, a warm Presbyterian, was not desirous to strike too deep a blow at the monarchy, whence he derived his rank, nor to alienate the most powerful champions of his sect, by means which might result in a brilliant glory to the Independents.

Of all the ardent soldiery of Cromwell, who chafed at this delay, Ingulph was probably the most irritated. He had learned that De la Pole was with the army of Rupert, where his dashing courage daily added renown to a name already famous by his singular adventures.

As it seemed, however, that a battle would inevitably take place on the prince's approach to raise the siege, the Independents stifled their impatience. Positive news arrived of Rupert's near advance; but to the unlimited exasperation of the Independents, Manchester and Leven, determined not to defend their siege, gave orders to break it up and retire.

This was the signal for the outbreak of the secret humours which had long fermented; and the quarrel arose so high, that if Cromwell, foreseeing the ruinous consequences to both, had not exerted all his influence, the two armies would undoubtedly have separated. As it was, they broke up their siege and marched away together in the highest mutual ill-will, but in very good order, for Leven's system had at least that merit. The unfriendly allies, doubtful whether the

enemy would continue his advance on learning that they had raised the siege, halted about five miles from York, at a village called Long Marston.

The country around was a desolate moor, bounded to the north by a forest of great extent; on the other sides by dark sloping fells, thinly cultivated in patches, or still in a state of primeval wildness, grazed by half-starved cattle. The hopes of a battle suddenly returned. On the edge of the forest flowed a little river, and Rupert's cavalry appeared along the forest shore, without attempting to cross; but the impetuous character of the royal leader was so well known, that an onset was immediately expected. For once it deceived expectation; late in the evening it was known that he had proceeded to York, with only a small body of cavalry, leaving his masses in their strong position.

This circumstance was eagerly seized by the cautious generals. The prince had accomplished the relief of York, consequently there was no reason to hazard a battle against his flushed and victorious troops. It was resolved to retreat to the Humber, and defend the rich provinces to the south, until the parliament marched additional forces to their assistance; it was therefore ordered to spend the night on the ground they occupied, and on the following morning to commence their retreat. A part of the army found accommodation in Marston, but the horse were compelled to bivouac on the open moor.

It was July, and very warm weather, and this was no great inconvenience to men so seasoned as Cromwell's cavalry; and as he himself shared in all their discomforts, the grumblers were confined to execrations of the Scots, and of their brotherly assistance.

To a spectator from any of the neighbouring hills, the view must have resembled a Dantesque vision; its dark and melancholy wastes lighted by the glare of innumerable fires, round which gleamed redly, steel-clad groups of man and horse. The day went down cloudily, and a troubled moon broke out by snatches, fitfully lighting the scene with beams which showed ghastly against the cheerful blaze of the fires, but silvered the outline of the hills, and the course of the little river, and the distant towers and pinnacles of York.

The English army was nearest to the enemy, and the line of the Scottish encampment was visible in the rear, all along the base of the hills, arranged with mathematical precision. Cromwell and his officers contemptuously chose their bivouac

as near as possible to the enemy, as the neighing of steeds and the challenge of sentinels in the forest, announced.

A goodly blaze of dry heather and pine-wood formed a central point, around which the horses fed in caparison, while their riders sat among the gorse, discussing the events of the day. Ingulph took little share in the discussion as long as it continued on religious subjects, which for some time it did.

“Ay, yonder they pitch their tents, our godly *professing* brothers of the covenant,” said Ireton, gazing towards the Scottish encampment. “But of a truth it is breast to breast, not side by side, that England and the bonny Scot should stand.”

“The Lord will do his own work his own way, and we must needs bide his time,” said Cromwell, in the enigmatic style which he frequently affected.

“But we are between them and the cavaliers; if we stood to it, they must needs back us for very shame,” said Ingulph.

“No, boy, no; we must give them no handle,” replied Cromwell, with a sour smile. “I hear they are to move all their wits against me, to have me condemned for an incendiary between the nations. But we shall see anon who hath the start in the race.”

“Let them send ordnance—not an ordinance—to such effect,” said Ingulph, enthusiastically; for gratitude and the soldier’s natural love for his successful leader, had endeared Cromwell to him almost as a father.

“I doubt not thee, at least,” replied the leader, kindly. “But let us discourse of some other matter—of something comforting in our soul’s experiences. We have need to prop and lean on one another these backsliding and carnal times, which grow every day more worldly-wise and less knowing in the ways of life.”

“Where is your gifted recruit, John Bunyan, Harrison?” said Ireton, turning to that leader. “For indeed I think the general will rejoice to hear him hold forth, having had so powerful and quickening a grace in him, that it moves a man to tears but to hear of his wrestlings and sore combats with the adversary, ere he had overcome and bound him in the fetters of regeneracy.”

“Ay, truly, let him come,” replied Cromwell, musingly; and a soldier immediately started in quest of the gifted tinker, whose enthusiasm and wanderings had made his name well known.

He returned in a few minutes, bringing Bunyan, whose

rough features were marked with a very strong expression of vexation and even anger.

“What ails thee, John, with thy red hair flaming on end like a turkey’s cockcomb?” said Cromwell, jocosely. “Thou knowest ’tis time to watch and pray, for no man knows which way the enemy lies—though indeed he lies always, being the father of lies.”

“Nay, Master Oliver, but to witness the backslidings in a godly professing army like this, what need we wonder if the world is possessed of devils, and runs headlong into the sea of destruction?” replied the enthusiast.

“Why, what hath happened now?” said Cromwell. “Have some gone to sleep while thou wert tinkering their souls after thine old trade, mending one hole and making a dozen?”

“I was indeed parabolically holding forth on the ways and means to solder up our iniquities,” said Bunyan. “But oh, the lightness of earthly men! Midways to my discourse comes by a morris-juggler, with his Spanish guitar forsooth, and sings them away from me to listen to his lewd foreign kickshaws and quavers!”

“Yea, and when he heard your honours were here, after us he comes to give you a taste of his art, if he be not first whipped from the camp,” subjoined the soldier.

“Which let him be forthwith,” said Harrison.

“Nay; for music is no ill refreshment to those who understand the worthlessness of such vanities,” replied Cromwell. “Let us hear if he can sing us some quaint ballad of William of Cloudesley, and let the Scot e’en think what he will, if his long red lugs catch the tune.”

This last argument was convincing, and moreover at the same time the sound of a viol-de-gamba was heard at some distance, beyond the circular glare of the watch-fire, preluding some low and timid notes, as if doubtful of the reception its melody was likely to find.

“Bid him draw in; and if he knows any solemn and sober ditty, fit for Christian ears, let him chaunt a groat’s worth,” said Cromwell. “Or stay, if it would not stir the oatmeal blood too much, I would he might give us Chevy Chase at a slower pace, that none may mistake it for a coranto or a galliard.”

The few notes he had heard had already roused Ingulph’s attention, and he looked with startled interest in the direction whence they came. Darkly outlined in the moonlight he perceived the form of a young man clad in a long tattered cloak,

his face nearly hidden by the flaps of his Spanish hat ; but whose brilliant eyes, as the fire flashed upon them, seemed scanning the group with intense earnestness. In other respects he did not differ from the ordinary wandering minstrels of the day, who were principally moriscos of Spain, and traversed the country much in the fashion of Italian organmen at present, excepting that they usually accompanied their instrument with the voice.

But the proposed ballads were out of the singer's scope ; he bowed respectfully, but shook his head, and apparently to give them a taste of his quality began to sing some foreign air with indescribable sweetness, and yet tremulously, as if with fear or some stronger passion. Even the stern soldiery listened with attention ; but on Ingulph the melody produced a singular effect. He started up, and muttering some apology, stalked through the numerous groups towards where the minstrel stood. But as he approached, the youth seemed to take the alarm, and move rapidly off, in a direction towards the river.

Ingulph turned to the officers, and with a forced laugh said he would bring the rogue back, and followed, at first slowly, calling to the minstrel to stop. But instead of obeying this mandate, he quickened his pace, and finally commenced running.

Unwilling to furnish matter for raillery, Ingulph contented himself for some minutes with keeping the extraordinary minstrel in sight. But observing that they had now left the range of the watch-fires, and that the stranger made for a woody glen which descended rapidly to the banks of the river, and consequently to the outposts of the royal army, he paused.

Continuing his flight for some moments, the stranger, no longer hearing the footsteps of a pursuer, turned to ascertain what had become of him. Observing Ingulph's hesitation, he waved his hand earnestly in a beckoning manner, advanced a few steps, and then turned and beckoned again. The manner and attitude again struck Ingulph, and he followed on. But when he perceived the stranger take a path which was little better than the bed of a stream dried up by the heat, and which led steeply and brokenly through a thick wood of larch and oak and willows to the river, he determined to follow no farther.

Hitherto only a vague suspicion, a doubt, had led him on ; and yet the resemblance of voice was marvellous, and the air

he remembered well to have heard Ramona sing. The chances of an ambuscade or intended treason of some sort occurred to him; and he had almost determined to return, when the stranger, noting his pause, sang in a low and exquisitely melancholy and appealing voice, the burden of the air which had been his favourite, among many which Ramona was wont to sing to him.

His heart throbbed wildly, and a train of superstitious fancies passed through his mind. Was the unfortunate Mexican murdered, either by Stonehenge or the cavalier, and was this her phantom come to reveal the barbarous deed? Or was it some spirit which had taken her form to lure him to destruction; or was she indeed a sorceress sent to cajole him to some hideous revelry? All these imaginations were supported by the belief of the age, and at such an hour and under such circumstances Ingulph's mind could not wholly resist the impression.

He therefore made not a step in advance, but stood as if rooted to the spot, gazing after the figure. It remained stationary for some moments, then clasped its hands in despair, and as if comprehending his thoughts, knelt down and repeatedly crossed itself. Ingulph again, but very cautiously, advanced; the stranger instantly arose, murmured his name in a low but audible whisper full of entreaty, and proceeded down the glen. Convinced now that it was a form of life, Ingulph followed at a quicker pace, but taking the precaution to draw his sword.

The stony path widened, the trees on each side receding, until at length it ended by spreading into several deep channels, which descended to the noisy stream below. Ingulph perceived a horse tied to the stump of a tree close to the water's edge, and he heard voices in the forest on the opposite shore. But he felt that if any harm was intended, he had gone too far to show mistrust; and he continued advancing till he was within a few yards of the stranger.

Ingulph gazed for a moment, and the minstrel, as if to aid his research, threw back the flaps of his large hat, and his features were plainly visible in the moonlight. Pale as they were, still the beauty of her features, mingled with something of forest wildness in their expression, was not easily mistaken. It was Ramona.

"You have forgotten me, then! Would to God I could forget myself;" she said, in a passionate tone.

"Ramona!" said Ingulph, mournfully; and at the word,

pronounced in a low and sorrowful voice, the pride and stubbornness with which she seemed to have armed herself melted away. She burst into a flood of tears, and ere Ingulph could prevent, threw herself at his feet, and passionately implored forgiveness. Vanquished by grief and compassion, he only replied by raising her in his arms; and for some time they mingled tears and sobs in silent anguish.

It is not necessary, nor would it be easy, to repeat the revelations of the unhappy girl in her own words. De la Pole had long employed all the artifices of passion to win her from her duties; and finally, on the night of the feast of St. John, availing himself of her terror as well as love, prevailed on her to elope with him. Immediately after Ingulph parted with her in the gallery, they met; the cavalier conveyed her on board a little barque which was in waiting, and returned on some pretext, while the vessel immediately proceeded.

They lay for some time in the river awaiting him, and then arrived the news of the arrest of De la Pole. His life and even hers depended on concealing her from Stonehenge, and he sent orders to his emissaries instantly to sail for France. There she was conveyed to an obscure estate in Languedoc, belonging to his mother's heritage; and there she remained carefully concealed until De la Pole procured his enlargement, and came over to France on a mission which he had procured for the purpose.

"And you have returned with him to England in this base disguise?" said Ingulph.

"As a musician, a morisco, an appendage of his state and luxury!" replied the Mexican, her complexion crimsoning all over in the dusky light, and her eyes sparkling with a fire like that of insanity. "I, the daughter of a Spanish noble, in whose veins flows the free Indian blood, am the slave of a licentious soldier,—the plaything of his passions,—the diversion of his orgies,—the companion and mate of a lawless camp!"

"And for this you deserted the generous and loving husband to whom your father gave you?" said Ingulph.

"I cannot repent—it is impossible; I have tried in vain to melt my heart—it is marble now," she replied. "Were it all to do again—all once more to be betrayed for him, I must do it all again."

"Unhappy wretch; but I can understand this madness," said Ingulph.

“Yes, for you have loved;” she replied, with a wild laugh. “Ingulph, he swore to make me his wife—to resign Marie to you. Let us laugh together, I pray you; within a fortnight he is to wed her.”

“Ay, truly; they have been long betrothed,” replied Ingulph, with a shock, which only the deadly paleness of his countenance revealed.

“You loved her once, and doth it not trouble you, that maddens me?” said Ramona, vehemently. “And she loved you; for De la Pole himself, feigning to rejoice in it for my sake, informed me that he was convinced that it was for yours she refused compliance with the king’s desire, that she should forthwith marry him, under pretext that she could not partake of any happiness while his crown and life were at stake.”

“But she has consented now,” exclaimed Ingulph.

“The queen is resolved to see her married ere she leaves England, which is to be in a fortnight,” replied Ramona. “The king commands, and she regards him as more than father; she believes that you are my betrayer, perhaps murderer; and I have discovered that De la Pole insinuates the necessity of their immediate union, on the ground that you circulate everywhere reports that the Lady Marie loves you, and did secretly pledge her faith to you.”

“Indeed! indeed;” murmured Ingulph. “But say you not he is in Rupert’s army, yonder?”

“Gone with the prince and other of the chiefs, to York, or I could not be here; for he watches me as a snake the bird,” returned Ramona.

“We may find a means yet to prevent this bridalty,” said Ingulph.

“Ay, if you will take them,” exclaimed Ramona, eagerly. “But there is no time to be lost. They have reproached, threatened, jeered, commanded her into this compliance; but if she ever loved you, and could learn how you have been wronged”——

“It is impossible,” interrupted Ingulph.

“You are mistaken, for I am of that kind of serpent which yields the antidote to its own poison,” returned the Mexican. “Listen to me. I am not what I was—the credulous half-savage girl; I am a woman—a betrayed, a desperate woman. Listen! he for whom I have sacrificed all, honour, wealth, peace, almost life itself, he—he has dared to tell me that—that we must part; that he will give me gold in what measure

I require, but that I must leave him—leave this land, and go; O! God of my father, whither!”

“Doubtless you will obey him, what can you else?” said Ingulph, in a tone of wild raillery. “’Tis necessary, lest his bride should detect the wife of Stonehenge in the morisco follower of her noble lord.”

“But if she detected her before she was his bride, perchance she never might be his bride,” said Ramona, smiling fearfully.

“Will you proclaim yourself, then?” said Ingulph, sternly.

“Dethewarre, I have told you, and I tell you again, I love him still dearer than all that I have lost, else what hinders that I have not avenged myself already?” said Ramona, in a low melancholy tone. “The blood that flows in my veins is not of the faint colour of the women of this cold land, yet thrice has he slept when I held the dagger over his heart to strike,—I could not. But if you discovered me to Marie, and publicly, it were but a noble act of justice due to yourself; and I were then, it is true, the partner of his shame and discomfiture, but not the cause.”

“Why, there is semblance in this,” said Ingulph, vividly struck. “But how is it to be accomplished?”

“De la Pole returns to Oxford, to his marriage, as soon as your army is defeated or driven to the south,” said Ramona, in a manner which showed she had well considered her project. “Hitherto I have raved and maddened whenever he mentioned it to me, but now I will feign an entire submission, and only beg for leave to accompany him to see him wedded, and then to bid him farewell for ever, if it must be. He will consent, for villain as he is, he loves me, ay, and fears me; he dares not leave me to the workings of my despair alone. Were it impossible for you to join the wedding party, Master Dethewarre?”

“Swear to me but that you will fulfil your part,” said Ingulph. “Swear to me by the oath wherewith I pledge me to mine, by the power of evil, which has wrought all hitherto.”

“I swear by a name which is to me more fearful—by my husband, Stonehenge!” returned Ramona, and her complexion indeed became more ashy pale as she pronounced the name.

At this moment the sound of a distant trumpet was heard, and she started with a glance of terror.

“I must away! they are returning to the camp! Not for

all the diamonds in the mines of my native land, would I my absence should be discovered!" she continued, hurriedly.

"Wherefore did they go to York?" said Ingulph, breathlessly.

To prevail on the leaders there to join in an attack upon your array, which else they may not hazard," returned Ramona.

"Promise me one thing, then," said Ingulph. "If they consent, promise me to fasten the branches of yonder willow on the opposite shore, together, and I will return hither at daybreak to learn."

She assented with a melancholy smile, imagining that his purpose was to warn his friends to continue their retreat.

"I know not," she said, as she unfastened the bridle of her steed, "I know not, but you may fail me too; for all things have failed me in which I have trusted. But on that bridal day, if I am yet alive, I shall be present to await you, or to plunge a knife into my heart before them all."

She extended her hand to Ingulph, but almost as instantly plucked it back, with a wild laugh, sprang like a fairy upon her steed, and dashed nearly midway into the stream. The horse's hoofs clattered slipperily in the stony bed, and the water flew up in every direction; but she urged it on with mad velocity, and rather shrieking than calling "Remember," disappeared at a wild gallop up the opposite bank.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE BATTLE OF MARSTON MOOR.

INGULPH returned, in what mood may be imagined, to the scene he had left on this singular adventure. On his approach he distinguished an uproar of laughter, mingled with a scrambling noise and shouts. On a nearer survey the cause was apparent. The officers having finished their supper, Cromwell was amusing himself by suffering the soldiers of his guard to scramble for the fragments. To such buffooneries as these he owed much of the strong personal attachment which his soldiers bore to him, but in truth he seemed to enjoy them on his own account.

Ingulph glided quietly back to his place, and in answer to the numerous inquiries where he had been, carelessly replied that he had chased the morisco to the river, where he

had disappeared ; he therefore concluded that he was a spy. But Cromwell observed marks of deeper agitation than was thus accounted for ; still he pretended to take no notice ; and after a short interval, observed that he would visit the out-posts, desired Ingulph to go with him.

As soon as they were out of earshot, Cromwell checked his horse till the young volunteer's came abreast, and then mildly but authoritatively demanded to know what had detained him so long.

Ingulph had the most earnest desire to retrieve his character for morality in the eyes of his leader ; and he made no scruple to confide the adventure to him, under promise of secrecy. But he suppressed all mention of the compact he had entered into with the morisco.

Cromwell was surprised, and perhaps somewhat incredulous. "Look that it be so," he said, sternly, "for under no pretext will I suffer this woman in my camp ; and I should be wroth with you, but that you have found a peculiar favour in my sight, standing before me as the image of my youth, which, sinful as it was, was not altogether without promise of better things, but showed like a neglected garden, as rank of weeds as flowers."

"But if by this means we forestall all other intelligence of Rupert's intents," said Ingulph, patiently, "were not this a field on which to decide whether you or the Presbyters are to take to cabbage-growing ?"

"Truly, yea," replied the general, musingly, and reigning up his horse, he gazed with a far ken over the moonlit moor. He then slightly touched his horse with the spur, and Ingulph perceived with deep internal satisfaction that he extended his ride far beyond what was necessary to his original purpose. They returned in silence, and as Cromwell alighted from his horse, he said, with a grave and thoughtful air, "Bring me thine intelligence the first, if the espial play not false, which I misdoubt."

Ingulph spent the night on his hard couch of heather as sleeplessly as any king on his bed of purple, almost envying his horse the repose in which its large limbs lay drenched. Daylight found him wandering towards the river ; and stealing down the glen as quietly as a hare, the first object which he distinctly noticed was the garland formed by the twisted willows.

He returned to the bivouac with the intelligence, which he communicated in private to Cromwell. It was so obviously

the interest of the cavaliers, having accomplished their object, to suffer their enemies to retire in peace and disgrace, that the general could not believe it.

"The wench, if Ramona it be, is employed to deceive us," he observed. "But yet, would they fight on this ground, 'tis as fair a field as the Lord can give us." Then, after another long and thoughtful gaze over the moor, he beckoned to Ireton.

"The earls will be out of bed now, for Leven's rheumatism is no remora when 'tis to run away, *ye ken*, Harry," he said, cloudily. "Go and tell them I have certain news—the prince and Newcastle are joined to attack us; and that 'twere ill to be set upon running away, the soldier being out at heart ever at that work; nor shall we meet with better ground to dispute between Humber and Ouse."

Ireton undertook the mission very readily; and Cromwell watched him until he disappeared with his orderly's banderol and spear into the Scottish encampment. He then turned to some officers who were waiting about for orders, and drily desired them to marshal the troops, but not "to sweat themselves, as the Scots were to have the start in the race."

The whole camp was now in movement, and the Scots were observed swarming along the line of hills, whose barren slopes gleamed coldly in the light of dawn, as if nature herself gave a melancholy smile to hide some deep sorrow in her bosom. Gortray Forest was lost in mist, which veiled all the movements of the army within it.

Ireton returned, evidently unsuccessful, from the gloom on his countenance.

"Na, na," he said, mockingly. "The canny Scot will hear of nothing but keeping his sheepskin whole; Manchester joins in with him; and we are ordered immediately to trudge at their tails."

Cromwell paused for several moments ere he made any reply; but the exasperated visages of his officers seemed to counsel him to moderate his own feeling.

"We must obey, we must obey," he said. "But if the Scots be so good travellers as to be ever afoot before breakfast, we English are not, and will take our own time, and so let the matter be ordered."

The officers were willing enough to interpret this order of their chief; for shortly after, Cromwell's whole division were dismounted, and leisurely engaged in preparing their morning meal. Messenger after messenger arrived with peremptory

orders to march, and messenger after messenger returned with apologies and delays.

Meanwhile the royalists began to appear in strength on the country between York and the forest, evidently mustering for the attack. But the unmoving aspect of the parliamentarians checked even Rupert's impetuosity. Time wore on, and at length the Scots seemed resolved to wait no longer for friend or foe. Gradually their masses disappeared from the ground they had occupied; but it was not until the last standard vanished, that Cromwell reluctantly gave orders to his squadrons to follow the example.

Still, under pretence of allowing the infantry a good start, Cromwell kept his ground for some time longer. The enemy's cavalry were rapidly crossing the river in front, and apparently drew up as if they expected a battle. Having retained his position long enough to confirm them in this idea, Cromwell suddenly directed the whole line to fall back on the rising ground lately occupied by the Scots. The movement was discerned by the royalists, and a corresponding one in their ranks was soon observable, the cavalry pouring freely out into the plain.

"We have not room enough on the moor now," said Cromwell, musingly, but half aloud. "We must have yonder rye-field—I think 'tis rye! Ireton, take your men and keep it, whatever falls."

The moor was skirted on the west by this field of rye, which covered the rising base of a bleak hill, growing in furrows so thin that the clay peeped through in every direction, and gave it a bald and wintry aspect, increased by the different colours of the crop, varying through many tints, from ripe yellow to springing green.

Ireton's advance on this spot was soon perceived by the royalists, and a party of their cavalry went rushing at a gallop to seize the point of vantage first. But Cromwell had calculated the distance too surely. Ireton was there, and had breathed and serried his horse ere the assailants arrived, scattered and in disorder. He charged them instantly, and the whole party was beaten back in confusion.

Cromwell watched this skirmish with some anxiety, until it was determined thus satisfactorily. He then turned to Ingulph, who was waiting beside him as uneasily as a deerhound in the leash, and said, with a peculiar smile—"Go and tell the generals what you have seen: we are attacked!—and Rupert presses so hard upon us we must needs stand

or run; and so let them take their choice too, o' God's name."

Ingulph needed no more. He flew rather than galloped over the intervening ground, until he passed the hills in the rear of Cromwell's position. Covering the plain to a great distance, he beheld the retreating masses of the Scots, and of the English infantry. The generals were nearly five miles advanced; but as he came up with each corps, and communicated his news, certainly without diminishing the danger in which the rear was placed, the advance was stopped. By the English, the intelligence was received with hearty cheers; and many officers, in their zeal, without waiting for orders, immediately put their troops in march for the scene of action. The Scots in general contented themselves with making a dead halt.

Continuing his gallop, Ingulph in a short time reached the generals. The Lords Fairfax, Leven, Manchester, Sir Thomas Fairfax, Sir Harry Vane, and other commissioners of the parliament, were riding along in company, seemingly in deep consultation, from the respectful distance observed by their guard. Ingulph dashed his steed up with the disordered haste befitting his message, and communicated it with startling brevity.

"The lieutenant-general and the rear-guard engaged with the whole malignant army!" exclaimed Manchester, in a tone of deep vexation. "I was but now bemusing that he would force the fight whether we would or no; and so it is!"

"And I was in secret prayer that the Lord would be pleased to give us a sign, whether this flying from the Canaanite be pleasing to him; and I hope this is an answer," said Vane, with a dark irradiation of visage which could not be called a smile, but was his nearest approach to one.

"We a' ken varra weel the lieutenant-general is no man to be trusted, hating as he doth the solemn league and covenant, whilk is the tabernacle wherein the Lord is with our host," said old Leven, peevishly. "If he be suffered to gang his ain gate, he will ruinate the whole cause, and set the twa kingdoms together by the lugs like unken curs, to tear ilk ither to pieces, while the prelatie wolf devours the whole flock."

"But your lordships have not a moment to lose, unless you would that the rear-guard be utterly routed!" said Ingulph.

"We maun e'en tak our way back again," said Leven.

“ But I wash my hands of this day’s work ; and if the Lord pleases, we will in proper time and place understand whether there may not be a way found with folk wha blow the coals of contention between twa godly and god-fearing nations.”

The whole army now swept rapidly back in masses to the noble position which Cromwell’s sagacity had appropriated. But long ere any other arrived with the news, Ingulph was amusing his general with an account of what had passed. Cromwell laughed aloud at Leven’s vexation ; and observing that Ingulph’s horse was spent by its rapid transit, made him a present of one of his own.

If Rupert had intended to attack, he certainly committed a great error in waiting, as he did, until the whole army of his enemies had returned. Perhaps he was so sure of victory that he was desirous to have the whole in his grasp at once, for he was well aware of the divisions prevailing in the parliamentary host.

The generals arrived in a very bad humour, and Cromwell, surrounded by his officers, received them without affecting to disguise his own.

“ So, sir, you, being only a subordinate in captaincy, are determined to bring on a battle whether your superiors will or no ? ” said Leven. “ The like o’ this, I trow, wad not have been suffered by Duke Wallenstein.”

“ I know not, my lord, for it was never my luck to serve under Wallenstein,” replied the lieutenant-general. “ But, in all humility, it appears to me that Wallenstein himself could not have chosen better ground to fight a kingdom’s battle on than this which *chance* has given us.”

“ You speak as one putting trust in the arm of flesh, Master Cromwell,” said Manchester, sternly.

“ How know we by what means it may please the Lord to work ? ” replied Cromwell, calmly. “ Why should we distrust him ? Hath he shown himself a backsliding, timorous, unwilling God, that the sinking of men’s hearts should prevent the coming of his glory ? ”

“ What mean you, sir ? ” said Manchester, still more testily.

“ I mean that—speaking in all deference—and looking at the vantage of this field,” said Cromwell, “ truly, I see not why we should despair of the Lord’s mercies in this matter, and indeed I can answer for my men ! ”

The dragoons of Cromwell’s own regiment who were near,

caught the word, and giving a deafening hurrah, waved their swords in glittering sheaves in the air.

"I would that some men of experience would speak, for indeed you are a better soldier than commander, Master Cromwell," said Leven, testily.

"In the ordering of a retreat, God's truth, I am a long way behind your lordship!" returned Cromwell, with sudden passion.

"Yet were we totally—let us even say totally—to defeat his majesty," said Manchester, interposing, "I doubt if peace were the nearer, for success begetteth insolence and pride and worldliness."

"Your excellency speaks as if the Lord might overdo his work," said Cromwell, with a scornful smile. "But we have that assurance of the moderateness and justice of parliament, that we need not fear to make them too high, or the king too low."

"But there is a sort of men who would fain be the masters and dictators of both," said Manchester.

"And there is another which faints by the way, looks back from the plough, and is altogether unfit for the work, by reason of misgivings and carnal-minded failings of the spirit," said Cromwell, bitterly.

"Fight the fight then, but if we lose it!" said Manchester, with an emphatic pause.

"And if we win it!" replied Cromwell, with a similar one.

"And prithee, Master Cromwell, how do you intend our battalia to form on this ground, the like of whilk I never saw, for all I have been in ten pitched fields?" said Leven, disdainfully.

"They are fallen all naturally into it," replied Cromwell; and in truth the generals, looking round, beheld their host already marshalled. The English infantry were in the centre, the Scottish cavalry flanking the right, and Cromwell's the left of the whole position, the interstices being occupied by the ordnance and Scottish foot. By this arrangement the cavaliers' direct communication with York was cut off, so that in case of a defeat they could not fall back on the city for protection, while Cromwell's retreat was secured.

The day wore on, and neither party seemed ready or willing to engage; but as neither could now quit the ground without affording the other a great advantage, battle was inevitable. The ordnance continued playing, but without much effect. Finding the inutility of such distant warfare, the cannonade

on both sides ceased ; and a long and deep silence followed, the two hosts watching each other, and awaiting which should begin the work of death.

At the bottom of the rye-field occupied by Ireton, ran a bright pebbly mountain stream. The bank on the opposite side was steep and irregular, and troops attempting to pass it were likely to be thrown into disorder. Confiding in its natural strength, the royalists occupied the summit with only a few skirmishers. Ingulph had repeatedly begged to be entrusted with a forlorn hope in an attempt to break into the enemy's position on that side. But Cromwell as frequently refused permission, for he was unwilling to abandon the advantages of the strong position he had selected. But the taunts of his superiors in command, and the long delay, at last irritated him into compliance. He sent word to the generals that he discerned an advantage, if the onset were given by the whole line at once.

Although both Leven and Manchester held Cromwell in great dislike, they were well aware of his military talents and judgment. Moreover, his manœuvre had brought them to a pass from which there was evidently no extrication but in victory or flight. To delay would be certain ruin, for it was known that great reinforcements were marching to the prince's aid. It was nearly sunset, nevertheless, ere it was finally resolved to fall on ; and just as the tired soldiery were expecting night and rest, the battle commenced.

The signal was given by a general discharge of artillery and a flourish of trumpets ; and then Manchester's infantry at push of pike, and the Scots, claymore in hand, rushed down the side of the hill, and charged briskly into the plain. Leaving the great mass of his cavalry in possession of the slopes, Cromwell headed his cuirassiers in a desperate rush across the little stream, and up the opposite banks. Ingulph was with the foremost of these, in a mood of stormy joy which only men so injured and so valiant feel when the moment of vengeance is nigh.

The steep bank itself was the principal difficulty they encountered, and many saddles were emptied ere the cuirassiers reached their enemies. A short but desperate hand-to-hand conflict took place, the skirmishers were quickly dispersed, and charging furiously on the wing of the enemy opposed to them, it was soon thrown into confusion and gave way on every side. Cromwell's cavalry now followed in masses ; but with the foresight which great commanders only possess, he

ordered it to take up a position to cover any disaster which the main body might sustain, while he himself continued his career of victory.

The necessity of this precaution soon appeared. While Cromwell continued his route, the cavaliers came pouring like a hurricane on the Scots and on the English infantry commanded by Fairfax. After a very short resistance these masses were broken and put to the rout, and the prince with his victorious troops overthrowing everything in their way, Cromwell, returning from the dispersion of the right wing, imagining to complete his victory, found the enemy's cavalry between himself and his own.

Undismayed by this circumstance, Cromwell shouted orders to break through, and the enemy, numerous as they were, could not resist the one-minded shock of his cuirassiers. So perfect was the discipline of these men, that they obeyed as accurately as if on parade; and although charged at the same time in flank, broke their way through all obstacles.

This advantage seemed, however, to be of little use. Ingulph was close beside the general, and he observed him stare with amazement to find that the troops he had left on this spot were also routed and fled. Glancing over the plain, no hope appeared on any side, not one unbroken body kept the field. The whole right wing, commanded by Sir Thomas Fairfax, was in disorder and flight; the Scots had, as it were disappeared from the field, and Rupert's cavalry galloped in every direction, hewing down the flying foe and plundering at pleasure. The three generals were themselves fled, and in fact were not heard of for two days after. So utter was the rout, that the very ground occupied by the parliament's army in the morning was now covered with their enemies.

Cromwell glanced over the field with a rapid but perfectly calm and collected eye, and a sudden sparkling lighted it up as he exclaimed, "They are scattered as stubble before the wind; smite the Midianites once again, and the Lord will remember his promises to Israel. At them again, lads."

The cuirassiers shouted assent, and at this moment, Ingulph, whose wild gaze was seeking that alone, discerned the well-known banner of De la Pole flaunting richly in the setting sun, amidst a mass of horsemen engaged in a merciless slaughter of the cannoneers and guard of the Scottish ordnance. Waving his sword aloft, and clapping spurs to his horse, he yelled aloud—"God is with us!—charge again!"

and swept down towards the spoilers. For a moment he was solitary, but the next the cuirassiers came pouring after him.

Disordered and scattered, and certain of victory, the cavaliers were taken by surprise, and overpowered, they fled in every direction, leaving their infantry uncovered, which from the same causes were as rapidly broken by Cromwell's furious charge. The face of affairs instantly changed. A great body of troops which had just laid down their arms, instantly resumed them with yells of triumph; the scattered cavalry rallied; Sir Thomas Fairfax stopped the flight of a part of his beaten troops, and returned to the field. The battle was renewed in a singular manner, the two armies having absolutely exchanged positions.

"God of Joshua! give us but light enough!" exclaimed Cromwell, in a transport of military and religious enthusiasm, as Ingulph, leading a furious charge, broke through the enemies' retrieved line; and with one resistless shock the whole army followed, literally overwhelming their enemies.

But Ingulph did not witness the crowning victory which followed. Recognising De la Pole in the very thickest of the enemy, he had charged up to him—was near enough to shout his name with no very complimentary addition—when a pistol shot laid him on his horse's neck; whether fired by De la Pole or not is a matter of doubt.

CHAPTER XLIV.

INGULPH'S first perceptions after the grievous wound he had received found him stretched in a comfortable cottage in Long Marston, attended by a young man whom he immediately recognised as Joyce, one of the ex-officers of his never-matured regiment. This good fellow, it seemed, was in the army as a volunteer also, and for his conduct on the field of Marston was made a cornet by Cromwell himself, and at his desire had taken charge of Ingulph.

The latter found that he owed his life to his commander's care, who had not only rescued him when he fell, but had since watched over him with the kindest solicitude. After gaining the great victory of Marston, the army had returned to the siege of York, which was daily expected to surrender.

The wound which Ingulph had received had deprived him of consciousness, he found, during nearly a week ; but it was not otherwise dangerous. His first inquiries were directed to topics which made Joyce imagine he was still delirious ; but the replies to which did nevertheless inform him that De la Pole was at Oxford, and that the queen, in the consternation of this great defeat, was about to leave that city for some of the strong places on the western coast.

Ingulph's passions, perhaps heightened by the dreamy and delirious state in which his imagination remained, were all re-kindled at the news. Aware that it would be impossible to obtain the sanction of his friends to the enterprise he meditated, he hit on a somewhat singular device to elude their care. He sent to Cromwell a request to obtain from the governor of York a passport to Oxford, for a prisoner who desired to go thither, and who would be useful to himself in transmitting certain valuables which he had left there. This request was readily granted by the indulgent commander, who returned the passport with the assurance that, the moment he had it in his power to confer any rank, he should have a captaincy in his own regiment. Ingulph understood by this that, victorious as he was, Cromwell had not yet sufficiently gained the ascendancy to hazard offending the Presbyterian scruples by the appointment of an excommunicated man.

The daring and faithfulness of Joyce he knew made him apt to any service requiring either ; but he has unwilling to expose him to the dangers which he was likely to incur. Under pretext of returning to the camp, he caused Joyce to procure him a horse ; and as his weakness disabled him from wearing armour, he procured the plain garb of one of the Marston yeomen. When these preparations were complete, he one morning dispatched Joyce with orders to procure him a lodging in the camp, and almost immediately after set forth on his own rash adventure.

Cromwell had taken care to leave a supply of money to provide him what necessaries he might require ; and as the war was now principally confined to the north, Ingulph made his way without much difficulty over the country to Oxford. Bodily exhaustion was well combated by mental anxiety, and with the aid of his passport he entered the city in safety on the morning of the third day from leaving Marston.

Hitherto such intelligence as he had received was consolatory. The court was generally reported to be in so great

consternation, that the joyous solemnities of a marriage were not likely to be in contemplation. The queen was hastening her departure to Bristol; and the danger seemed likely to be averted for some time; perhaps for ever, if it were possible to show to Marie how her credulity had been abused.

Ingulph carefully contrived that it should be early when he entered the gates that he might run less risk of recognition. But such was the jealousy inspired by the recent defeat, that he was detained in the guard-house at the gates, until his passport had been duly transmitted to the governor, to be approved.

The lapse of time is so gradual and imperceptibly linked by events, that it is only by strong revulsions of association that we notice the chasms which separate the stages of existence. Men feel the weight of their years most heavily when they return to the spots where they were children. Ingulph felt almost shaken in the belief of his own identity when he recollected what he had been, and what so short a period had made him. An ardent, enthusiastic, dreamy student!—and now a desperate soldier full of projects of vengeance and death!—then a passionate and timid worshipper—now an exasperated and furious rival!

He remained in the guard-house for some time lost in these feverish ruminations; and finally to escape from their fangs, rather than from a hope of extracting any useful information, he entered into conversation with the soldiers, ordering some wine for them to drink. The vintner, who brought it himself, proved to be mine host of the Pot of Frankincense, and Ingulph was convinced that time, suffering, and his altered garb, must have made great changes in him; for although he stared with great curiosity at him, mine host did not apparently believe his own eyes.

The bells of Christchurch began ringing with a merry jingle; and taking occasion from that, Ingulph carelessly observed that he supposed the Lord De la Pole's wedding was to take place shortly; and adding that he had business with one of his attendants, a morisco singer, inquired whether any one had noticed such a person in his train.

“A morisco?” repeated the host, thoughtfully. “More shame to our nobles who encourage the foreign vermin, and leave our own to starve! But I do think I saw some such a fellow going up High-street, as sad and stately as a funeral; I noticed him for his fiery black eyes, and said to myself—if you are not mad, may I never chalk another pint! It was

wicked of me to say so, but I could not help it. However, I suppose he was going to Christ Church, to see his lord married."

"What say you!—married?" exclaimed Ingulph, starting up, his pale features flushing darkly, and with an expression which caused Boniface such alarm that he leaped back like a frog.

"Truly, gentlefolk do worse at times!" he said, after a slight pause. "But what for else do ye think the bells are ringing, and Great Tom at work with his clapper-claw? But what afield ails you, man? Have your friends sent you hither to 'scape funeral expenses?"

"The wine is sour!—I have been grievously wounded of late!" said Ingulph, incoherently, and smiling wildly he drained the goblet to the dregs.

"The wine sour!—but thou hast fairly given thyself the lie," said mine host, spitefully snatching the cup. "Sour!—at a groat the gill!—no, no, that cannot be."

"Too sweet, then—anything you will," replied Ingulph. "But are you sure this marriage—the Lord De la Pole?"

"Am I sure that I saw the wedding feast spread in Christ Church Hall, save the dishes, last night?" said the landlord. "Why, Joe Carlton that set it out is a special friend of mine, being that we were both 'prentices together to the Italian cookery in London!"

Ingulph heard him not; he mused intensely within himself, but only for the brief moments which the host's speech occupied.

"I should like well to see this wedding—it must needs be a fair spectacle," he said, in a voice which belied the anguish of his mind.

"It must now nearly be over," said Boniface composedly.

"The governor is in the wedding-party, and cannot be interrupted to look at passports now," said a soldier, who had just re-entered the guard-house.

The bells rung out still more merrily.

"Mine host, if you will be my security, these golden crowns are yours; and these for you to drink to the bride's health, comrades," said Ingulph, with perfect calmness of manner.

"Good faith, an' I may go with you," replied the host, and the soldiers, conceiving that it was a matter of little consequence, readily assented to their part of the agreement.

With a rapidity which almost instantly distanced the host

who yet kept him pantingly in sight, Ingulph hastened to the cathedral. He pushed his way with much difficulty into it, for it was crowded with a great concourse of persons. What his intentions were, Ingulph himself could not have said ; his last wild hope had disappeared, but still he desired to see, to know, to feel the worst.

The guard allowed no one to pass the cross-aisles ; but when he arrived at the barrier there, Ingulph saw enough to show him that he was too late. The bells were still ringing out with a stunning peal that filled the ancient precincts, and seemed to shake the roof and stained windows, which told in a glory of colours the history of the royal virgin who founded the pile nearly a thousand years before. A guard in glistening armour lined the nave at intervals, and formed a semicircle around the grand altar at the extremity. This was decorated with a splendour which would have delighted the manes of Laud, being hung with cloth of gold which blazed like sheeted light.

The ceremony was over ; and there, kneeling on the steps of the altar, with her bridegroom, was Marie, in the act of receiving the nuptial benediction from Bishop Juxon.

She was splendidly arrayed in white and silver lace, glistening with pearls ; but the pale roses which they had wreathed upon her brow were not so pale as the tints of her once glorious complexion. Her eyes were cast on the ground, and so fixed and unchanging was the aspect of her sculptured features, that but for a slight quiver which at times passed over it, she might have been taken for a marble figure stepped from its pedestal. The very bridemaids looked pale and sorrowful, as if they were rather at a funeral than a festival, and forgot to strew the flowers, of which each carried a gilded basket. The bridegroom, arrayed in white velvet, wrought with a profusion of precious stones, looked beaming with gaiety and triumph.

The queen was on one side of the bridal pair, the king on the other. Charles's countenance was even unusually melancholy and stern, but Henriette-Marie was evidently in her element, in the enjoyment of the pomp and festivity of the scene.

It seemed to Ingulph as if the whole weight of the edifice were crushing in upon him, and the air seemed as hard to breathe as if it had been stone. Years of anguish were concentrated in that short space ; and all the time the cathedral resounded with a triumphal burst of music and voices chant-

ing an hosanna on the completion of the sacrifice. The gorgeous ocean-like melody still rolled through the edifice when the bridal party began to form in procession to leave it. The guards instantly cleared a way down the aisle, and among the rest, wandering in a waking dream, Ingulph went with the stream into the portal of the cathedral.

But he was suddenly awakened from this trance of anguish by a spectacle which awaited him there. Leaning against one of the carved projections of the vestibule, lost in a reverie so profound, that all jostling and clamour seemed not to make the slightest impression on his senses, was the morisco.

The entrance of the guard seemed, however, to awaken the unfortunate Mexican from her dream. She started forward, with a wild gleam in the eye, and put her hand with a strange gesture on a poniard which hung at her girdle.

"Clear the way, their majesties are coming!" shouted an authoritative voice.

The morisco shrunk back, closed her eyes with a strong shudder, but still grasped the hilt of her poniard.

"Make way!" shouted voices again in the interior of the cathedral.

"Ramona!" said Ingulph, in a low stifled whisper, but she started as if a pistol had been suddenly discharged at her ear, turned, and without uttering a word nodded to him with a kind of mad gaiety.

"Wait my summons," he murmured, and instantly leaving her, crossed to the other side of the portal.

A flourish of trumpets announced the approach of the bridal procession. A guard cleared the way, and the sovereigns came first, followed at a very short distance by De la Pole and his bride. The latter came now with a firm but hurried step, covered by a long veil of silvery lace, and De la Pole was whispering to her with his face beaming over in triumph, and yet she seemed not to notice, or perhaps hear, what he was saying.

The king walked faster than his wont, but as he entered the portal—how or whence it was scarcely possible to discern—Ingulph had pushed his way through the guard and knelt at the monarch's feet.

"O' God's name, what matter is this?" said Charles, starting back, and nearly a hundred swords were bared as he spoke.

"A humble petitioner to your majesty," replied Ingulph,

in a calm resolved tone. "One whom perchance you may remember, but who trusts not the less to your royal justice."

De la Pole made a fierce movement forward, but Charles by a gesture restrained him.

"What is your business here, who we think are the traitor and homicide, Dethewarre?" said the king, with sedate austerity.

"I am here, sire, thus publicly, and in the presence of those by whom the calumny has been believed," said Ingulph, rising and gazing with flashing eyes around, "to give the lie to all my Lord De la Pole's assertions relating to Mistress Stonehenge, by proving that she is even now in his train, disguised as a morisco musician!"

De la Pole stared in wild amazement and alarm at these words, but the king exclaiming, "Remove the madman, by force, if not otherwise," the attendants made a movement to seize on Ingulph, but shaking off all their holds, he rushed towards the morisco, and dragged her forcibly to the presence of the amazed sovereigns.

"Do you not know her, Lady De la Pole?" said Ingulph, in a tone of indescribable bitterness, and removing Ramona's large hat, as she sunk on her knees seemingly in all the terrors of detection.

The bride started and looked at her with a strangely bewildered expression; but De la Pole, exasperated and alarmed to the highest degree, rushed forward, and exclaiming, "It is a false conspiracy!" dashed the morisco aside with such violence, that with the emotion she had doubtless suffered she lay senseless on the pavement.

De la Pole then endeavoured to drag his bride on, but she drew back, and with a mingled shriek and laugh, turned to the sovereigns, and gasped, "'Tis true, 'tis true! Did I not ever dream so? The wife of Stonehenge is here!"

"And now plunge all your swords into me at once!" said Ingulph, folding his arms composedly.

The confusion and uproar was extreme; the king alone seemed to preserve his presence of mind.

"Remove the boy, and take Master Dethewarre to custody in the castle," he said, with outward calmness. "I will myself make such examination as is necessary, for unless he hath a very plain passport, I know of no rule of war to protect a traitor and a spy in my garrisons."

"The presence of so insolent a rebel is surely condemna-

tion enough!" said the queen, taking her husband's arm with an air at once of confidence and fear.

"Away with him!" said Charles, much irritated, and Ingulph was grasped in almost every tangible part of his vestments.

"Lead on, if it is to death, I care not," said he, with a bitter laugh. "Farewell, Marie—farewell, my Lady De la Pole. Yours is an adultery of the soul, for your heart is mine—mine, and you have sworn it! Farewell, for ever."

The white lips of the bride moved as if attempting to speak, but whatever she said was inaudible, and the guards, obeying the king's gesture, hurried their prisoner away. But as they crossed the quadrangle, the full tide of the "Te Deum" rolled past in its ocean-like melody, and the procession appeared pouring from the cathedral, in bright and splendid masses.

CHAPTER XLV.

INGULPH was immediately conveyed to the castle, where his old friend, the provost, received him with unfeigned delight. But it seemed as if he could place no confidence even in the strong bolts and bars of the chamber in which he confined him, and considering the famous escape, he had little reason. Two soldiers were appointed to be with him continually, and thus he remained for nearly a week.

Still, as there are few evils without some tinge of good in them, the reproaches of his insolent jailer instructed Ingulph in the events passing without. De la Pole denounced the discovery of Ramona as the result of a conspiracy between her and Ingulph; and in a pretended fit of compassion, and as a proof of innocence, desired that she might be restored to her husband. Whether the court believed this legend or not, they acted on it; Ramona was taken to the parliament quarters, and there delivered to messengers sent by her husband.

A few days after the marriage, the queen left Oxford for the west, escorted by the king and a numerous court, including the newly-married pair. Ingulph knew not what his own fate was intended to be, and scarcely cared; but immediately after this event, he was informed that if *he desired to*

continue his studies in Oxford, and would give his parole, he might return to his former lodgings in Merton College. His reply was a scornful refusal and defiance.

After this evidence of unsubmission, he was detained for many months a close prisoner, only breathing the air at stated intervals, apparently with the intention of subduing the refractiveness of his nature. But he was made of different stuff to what his capturers imagined. Love and hope were indeed consumed to ashes in his bosom, but ashes of fire which gradually calcined the pure diamond of his nature. All was lost—but the vengeance for all! Life became once more dear to him, for life was the means of vengeance—the cup by which alone he could reach the fountains to allay that fiery thirst.

The irritation of the long captivity which he endured was heightened by the stirring events which occurred in the bustling world without. The fruits of the victory at Marston were lost by the altercations of the generals, which after a while broke out into an open rupture. The Independents now placed their hopes in their beloved self-denying ordinance, but it was not until a series of defeats were sustained in all their armies, and Montrose made his meteor campaigns in Scotland, that they succeeded in their projects.

The campaign in the west produced one event of special interest to Ingulph. The approach of Essex's great army frightened the queen into immediate flight to France, whither Lady De la Pole, it was known, accompanied her. Her husband remained in England, distinguishing himself not less by his valour than by his cruelty. But in truth, as the stakes deepened, the passions of the players became more excited; and as the war lengthened, it increased in ferocity and determination.

The self-denying ordinance passed at length into a law; the old commanders were all dismissed, excepting Cromwell, whom a skilful manœuvre of his party retained. The army was now remodelled, and altogether on principles favourable to the Independents; for although Fairfax was, in name, the general, Cromwell was in fact.

Time, however, was necessary to effect this great revolution in the army, and the cavaliers seemed to have the field to themselves. Murmurs arose on all sides, and the old commanders returned suddenly into popular favour. The hopes and presumption of the royalists returned in full tide; the new levies were held in such contempt, that, as if no such

army existed, the king left Oxford to its own protection and went northward to attack the Scots.

The army was not yet properly welded, but the triumphs of the royalists, and the murmurs of the parliament, compelled an immediate movement. Leaving Cromwell in the west, Fairfax advanced on Oxford with the intention, by forming the siege, to compel the king to retrace his steps. He sustained, however, some rebuffs not included in his plan; and the loud murmurs which arose in consequence compelled him to advance and offer battle.

This was the latest news in Oxford, when late one night the provost came to Ingulph, in a very bad humour, and informed him that he was instantly to accompany a body of troops on their march to join the king. For what purpose he did not deign to explain, and perhaps did not know; but leaving Oxford with the provost and a considerable body of cavalry, they reached the royal camp, which was pitched near the fated field of Naseby.

The army, from the great multitude of horses, consisted chiefly of cavalry; and for the first time Ingulph beheld the Irish infantry levied by the king at so great a loss of popular esteem, and which were yet little better than a horde of savages. The cavaliers were in the highest spirits, as was usual with them on any success; flushed with the plunder of Leicester, and only apprehensive that the new-modelled army would escape from their clutches.

Somewhat to Ingulph's surprise, on entering the camp he was immediately huddled into the Irish quarters, and detained there the whole day, listening to their wild gibberish and watching a haggard old Hecate of a suttler who continued cooking, quarrelling, fighting, and yelling songs till sunset, when she got drunk and fell asleep, nodding over her vast fire.

Darkness gradually sunk over the camp, and after spending many hours in melancholy ruminations on the past, and conjectures relating to the purpose for which he had been brought from his prison, Ingulph himself yielded to short and unrefreshing snatches of sleep. The rude soldiery who surrounded him, however, did the honours of their wild encampment with the greatest kindness and hospitality. His supper was brought apparently from some more civilized part of the camp, for it was delicately cooked and served with some elegance. A bed of rushes, which he was compelled to share with his guard, was spread for his repose; and fre-

quently starting at the snort of some restless steed, or the challenge of remote sentinels, the bright stars of a clear midsummer sky showed him that his only canopy was the blue vault of heaven.

Whether these radiant lookers-on reminded him of the astrologer Stonehenge, or some other of the multiplied chains of association was struck, all night his dreams were haunted with the form of the grief-blasted sage, and that of his unhappy wife. His fancy continually shaped him inflicting some vast but indefinite cruelty on the betrayed victim; and a burning thirst for vengeance preyed on his soul more intensely than formerly the drought in Huncks's tower on his body, when he remembered by whom that irremediable injury and insult had been inflicted.

The dawn of a lovely day brought no refreshment to this perturbed spirit; but it did bring a somewhat unexpected apparition in the person of Sir Jeffrey Hudson, the dwarf. The little man was much altered for the worse in his apparel, but his cheerfulness and courtly urbanity remained unimpaired. He brought some private instructions to Huncks, but he informed Ingulph—and apparently officially—that he was to go before his majesty, who had graciously taken compassion on his long sufferings, and who would restore him to his liberty, if he had the wisdom to offer such submissions as none but a madman, in his circumstances, could refuse. The dwarf added weight to this intimation by an exulting account of the flourishing state of the royal affairs, and by information that Fairfax and his army were retreating in a disordered manner before the king's advance. The only notice Ingulph took of these tidings, was to inquire if the Lieutenant-general Cromwell was with the array of the parliament; and he learned that he was still supposed to be at a distance in the west.

Satisfied that he had made the requisite impressions, the kind but pompous little courtier shortly afterwards took his departure. The provost wanted Ingulph to put himself in trim for the royal presence, but he utterly refused to make any alterations in his garb, or even to allow his hair to be cut, which had grown so long as to give him a singularly wild and haggard appearance.

A second intimation seemed shortly after to arrive; for, after conversing with a dragoon who came apparently on no other business to the camp, Huncks desired his prisoner to accompany him.

The royalists occupied a strong position on the rising grounds, about a mile south of Harborough, and passing through the masses of the army, Ingulph discerned that it chiefly consisted of cavalry, numerous, well-appointed, and in the highest flush of military spirit. So secure were the king and his officers of their superiority to the enemy, that although it was known they were distant only a few miles, they seemed so little to apprehend an attack, that Ingulph found the king attended by a large retinue, mounted, and with hawks on their wrists, intending to divert themselves with the birds in the neighbouring champaign.

Among the nobles immediately accompanying the king, Ingulph rapidly recognized Prince Rupert, and, with a dagger-like pang at the heart, the Lord De la Pole. His father, he learned from Huncks, was still with the queen and his daughter-in-law in France.

Raging within like a furnace, but outwardly as calm, Ingulph approached the sovereign, who surveyed him with a long and earnest gaze as he came, and perhaps scarcely recognised in the haggard prisoner the once gallant and handsome soldier. De la Pole looked at him with a dark and troubled expression, which yet partook in no degree of remorse or any more kindly feeling.

Rupert was speaking with his usual impetuosity, and for some minutes Ingulph was allowed to remain unnoticed. The general drift of his observations seemed to be to the effect that the king should order an advance of the whole army, for that he was convinced the enemy were escaping.

"The scout-master sends word that he has been four or five miles towards them, and cannot even hear of them; so 'tis plain they are showing us a clean pair of heels," he said. "If your majesty will but allow me to take my own fellows?"

"Thou hast few of them, nephew," interrupted the king, with a grave smile. "But we are so well posted here, that I will know for certainty they are in retreat ere I stir a foot. There are wily heads among them, though Cromwell is away, and perchance they hope to lure us from our strength here into the plain."

"So be't! and if I bring not a good account of the croppared knaves—"

"Peace, peace; I say we will wait at least till noon-day! 'Tis the opinion of all but you young Amadis, who forget that there is more than your own lives in the bargain! And now, Master Dethewarre, let me speak with you. It seems we are

sooner tired of being your jailers than you are of being our prisoner. Moreover, your brother is a powerful intercessor with us, and says he enjoys not his own liberty while you languish in captivity, a brotherly and Christian word, considering the wrongs in reputation and other interests you have endeavoured to do him. But we will not have this unnatural war further deformed with two known brothers being in arms against each other, on contrary parties, and inflamed with private hates. Therefore you must needs take the protestation, and then you may depart in peace, ever, as I hope, remembering to whose generosity you owe your redemption."

"I have already taken one—which is your majesty's and the parliament's," replied Ingulph, in a tone of rocky firmness. "I have sworn to the solemn league and covenant between the nations, and I will maintain it to the last drop of my blood—although the hot air of your dungeons has drunk my veins so nearly dry that I have but little left to shed."

"By the soul of my father, thou malapert bastard, thou shouldst perish a dry death, and on this instant, had I any say in the matter!" exclaimed Rupert, fiercely; and his black war-horse, conscious of its rider's passionate stir, snorted, reared, and pawed as if impatient to rush into battle.

"Give me a sword—keep your advantage of every other weapon—and I will answer you, sometime prince of Bohemia?" replied Ingulph.

"Peace, sirs, peace, nephew, I command you!" exclaimed Charles, angrily. "Could you argue the case on any rational principle, Master Dethewarre, I were content to hear you. I do but ask you to take a simple protestation that you will not serve against me; if you would serve for me, I have yet that remains of kindness for one whose youth I cherished, that I should be content to overlook much that is gone, in hope of a better to come."

"Your majesty may reasonably forgive and forget the injuries you have—inflicted," replied Ingulph, bitterly.

"Then there is nothing for it, but the court-martial, to deal with this incorrigible fellow!" said Rupert.

"I am in your hands, sire; but if you deal thus summarily with me, I have perchance some friends who will remember that the prisons of London are full of yours," said Ingulph, with perfect calmness.

"Truly, my brother is bosom friend with Master Cromwell; but I trust your majesty will be in London as soon as he!" said De la Pole, in a manner certainly not calculated for

Ingulph's benefit, notwithstanding its mild and moderate tone.

"Then murther me, an' it likes ye!" said Ingulph, folding his arms.

"Every process of justice is called murther among these men, save when they wrest it to their own purposes, as when my poor wife's father—" said De la Pole, interrupting himself suddenly; but the black recollection was well thrown in.

"Ay, truly, that innocent blood calls out continually in my heart!" began the king, vehemently; but at the moment the captain of his guard, Lord Bernard Stuart, came galloping up with intelligence that a party of his men had fallen in with one of the enemy's, and had cut all to pieces but one man, whom they had captured.

As he spoke, the prisoner came hurried up to the royal presence between two dragoons, scarcely recovered from a severe blow on the temple, which had probably stunned him, and thus saved him from provoking by resistance the fate of his comrades. Ingulph was grieved to recognise in the prisoner his old friend, Joyce.

"The rogue has a thick skull of his own, to stand such a bulge," said Rupert, laughing. "Now, fellow, how far from your comrades were you, and are they not running away?"

"Too far, I think," replied Joyce, with an undaunted stare around. "But they say the abbot chants before the clerk, and I think your honour's betters are here, whoever you be."

"Speak with more reverence, sirrah, and on your knee, to his majesty!" exclaimed Huncks, in a bullying voice.

"Kneel yourself, if you want clarty hose!" replied Joyce. "My limbs are free-born, and you may break, but you shall not bend them."

"Begin with his neck then!" said Rupert.

"Prince, you are ever too zealous!" interrupted the king, sharply.

"Only the gibbet can reason with these rank rebels, rogues, and rascals!" said Rupert.

"Please your majesty, there is not one of them all does belong to salvation, or would not rather stab you behind than fight for you in front!" said Huncks.

"Peace, marshal! we have not desired your interference!" said Charles, sternly. "Good fellow, you see what they would do with you, but you are safe if you answer me fairly.

What number may you be about, and at what distance from the place where you were taken?"

"'Tis nearly an hour agone, and they must be a long way farther off now," replied Joyce, in a clownish manner, which Ingulph knew was affected.

"Then they are running away!—eh, Lubin, are your friends retreating on Oxford?" said De la Pole, impatiently.

"My name is'nt Lubin—it's Toomas!" returned Joyce.

"My liege—!" exclaimed Rupert.

"And your number, what number?" interrupted the king, anxiously. "Has Cromwell joined?"

"Lord love him! he came in last night, but horse and man were all so footsore, that I misgive they'll not get very far to-day," replied Joyce.

"And retreating?" said Charles, musingly.

"Shall I give orders to advance, sire?" exclaimed Rupert.

"Cromwell, and retreating!" continued the king. "Nay, take a party of horse, and learn the truth, but the army must keep its ground here till we have certainties."

With an exclamation of delight, and beckoning with his sword to his favourite comrade, De la Pole, the prince dashed forward on his mettled charger; but he paused an instant, observing that De la Pole did not follow.

"Concerning my brother—I await his majesty's pleasure—but I would fain not find him among our adversaries?" he said, bending deeply to the king, as if in supplication.

"Since he is thus obstinate in his blasphemous rebellion," said Charles, sternly, "we will make short work with his friends, and then if he likes to share their gibbets, we will make no further effort to hinder him."

Then motioning to the provost to resume the care of his charge, the monarch impatiently tossed his hawk to one of his attendants, and rode forward with the chief of his officers and suite.

"Now, by'r lady, I should say you have as fairly sold yourself as Doctor Faustus, to the devil!" said the provost. "They must be rid of you one way or another; and let me tell you I do not think it was altogether for love that you had the offer of your liberty, for I do hear my Lord De la Pole's wife is so justly enraged at your insolent pretensions to her that she refuses to return to England, to her husband, until she hears that you are fairly disposed of!"

This assertion powerfully excited Ingulph's attention, coupled with the fact of his intended liberation; and the

thought faintly crossed his heart that perhaps she had interested herself to procure it. He was about to question the provost on the subject, though there was little probability that he knew aught but the common gossip, when one of Rupert's officers suddenly galloped up, inquiring eagerly for the king.

"I think I know his business!" said Joyce, in a whisper to Ingulph, with a quiet chuckle; "for there never was a perfecter lie than for me to tell the cavaliers, as I did, that brave old Noll had moved an inch any way but after his nose, souse upon them!"

"They are not retreating, Joyce?" exclaimed Ingulph.

"God love you!—if they retreat much further, we shall catch sight of them soon!" said Joyce, jocosely. "Retreat!—ay, as crabs go backward."

But the provost, who had gone in advance to learn the news, now returned with contrary intelligence. "It will be worth my while, after all, to have come hither!" he said, rubbing his hands. "The prince has sent word for the whole army to march up to him, and in haste, for the rebels your brothers are running away in masses, and tumbling over one another in their hurry-scurry."

"That will be a sight worth seeing," said Joyce, but considerably aghast at the information.

"Use your stumps then, and come and see it," replied the provost. "I'll warrant, there'll be fine pickings for those who are not too greedy after the glory and hard knocks."

The prisoners willingly put themselves to speed, and the provost hastened with them and his guardsmen to join the advance, which was now general, the whole army moving from its advantageous position, and rushing forward in disorderly haste, as if fearful that their enemies would escape them.

But it soon appeared that there was no great occasion for this haste, for arriving on the verge of an undulation in the land, the heights of Naseby suddenly arose in front, crowned with glittering lines of spears and banners and steeds and ordnance, giving undoubted assurance that the whole army of the parliament were awaiting their enemies there. Joyce could scarcely forbear giving vent to his exultation in the deceit he had practised, aloud.

"If they be running away," he said to the provost, "methinks they should show their backs, and yet I could almost swear yonder is brave Old Noll riding along the line! By God, I think I hear the fellows shout!—Noll for ever!

What a nose he has ; I should know it a league off, glittering like a weathercock ! ”

Huncks was too busy preparing his pockets for the plunder he expected, and examining the sharpness of a dagger which he wore, to take much heed of this observation. He had very wisely halted his prisoners out of all danger of the expected conflict, on the brow of an eminence crowned by some graceful trees. Around these were posted the king's reserve, consisting of a chosen body of horse, in the rear of which gradually assembled a great mass of carts and baggage, and women belonging to the camp. The troops were meanwhile rapidly rushing into position in a grassy plain below, which intervened between the trees and the heights of Naseby. Rupert and a great mass of cavalry were a long way in advance of the line of battle, impatiently awaiting the arrival of the main body to commence the attack.

With inexpressible bitterness did Ingulph find himself compelled to remain a spectator of a conflict which would probably decide the event of the war. It was the first time since the promulgation of the self-denying ordinance that the newly-modelled army faced an enemy, and he knew not therefore on what he had to depend ; but his knowledge that Cromwell was with them was a great source of hope.

It was now about ten o'clock, a bright and serenely warm morning, with a fresh and vigorous breeze stirring the whole landscape. Ingulph observed the king in bright armour and with a truncheon in his hand, actively engaged in serrying and forming the line of battle ; but before his preparations could be completed, the impetuous Rupert began the attack. His cavalry were observed rushing on the parliament's left wing, which Joyce knew to be commanded by Ireton, and the king against his will was obliged to give the signal for a general attack. He gave the battle-word “ Queen Mary,” as he usually called his wife, in his persevering attempts to naturalize her ; and “ Queen Mary ! ” rang in a deafening cry along the charging masses.

“ God our strength ! ” was answered in a deep, calm, and concentrated shout along the heights of Naseby.

Disregarding the difficulties of the ground, Rupert's cavaliers rushed up the heights, and as their shining masses vanished over the crest of the eminences, the issue of the charge could not be discerned. The intense anxiety and absorption of Ingulph's mind scarcely enabled him to notice in what manner the king's infantry had passed the intervening ground, but he beheld a great mass assembling at the base of

the heights, while the artillery and musketry of their possessors, from the elevation of the ground, overswept without doing them damage. Firing but one volley, with a renewed shout which rent the welkin, the king's infantry charged up the heights with swords, pikes, and the butt-ends of their musketoons. A crowd of banners rushed down to meet them—they were mingled for a few minutes in a desperate hand-to-hand conflict—and then Ingulph beheld, in an agony of vain rage, that the royalists carried the heights by main force of blows, and the royal standards waved on their crests.

The battle seemed to be lost; prisoners were brought continually in, and from them Ingulph learned that Rupert had utterly routed the troops opposed to him. Sad confirmation of this report soon appeared. It was Ireton, covered with blood and wounds—a prisoner—raving and maddening at the desertion of his troops, and hindered only by the violence of his mental anguish from yielding to that of his body. He sunk from his horse as he arrived, with exhaustion, and in the general confusion and hurry would probably have bled to death on the turf, whither he was thrown by his capturers, but for Ingulph. He tore all the remnants of linen from his own person to bandage the deep gashes of the unfortunate leader, and assisted by Joyce, endeavoured to recall him to sensibility. Engaged in this humane task, and apprehending that the field was lost, Ingulph's attention was scarcely moved for some time by the continually nearing uproar of conflict to the left of the royalist line. But suddenly the rear and baggage became flooded with a tumultuous crowd of fugitives, and the prisoners beheld with unspeakable amazement and delight that the whole of the king's left wing was in extreme disorder, and flying before the furious onset of the parliament's horse. The defeated troops fled in such total rout that for some time Ingulph's main fear was, that Ireton and his fellow-prisoners would be overwhelmed by the rush of their flight. But luckily the ground they occupied was defended by the king's reserve, which seemed to keep a steady and unbroken attitude.

As if aware that there was no necessity of continuing the pursuit, the parliamentary cavalry suddenly stopped short, wheeled, and charged the masses of the royalist infantry, which were hurrying on to complete the victory apparently gained on their right by Rupert.

The royalist infantry, disordered by the suddenness and fury of the charge, began to give way in all directions, when

the king, surrounded by a numerous staff, came riding up to his reserve, and ordered them to charge the victorious cavalry. In the fury and disorder of the onset this counter-attack might have proved dangerous; and in his desire to warn his friends against it by attracting their attention, and regardless of any personal consequences, Ingulph shouted aloud, "God our strength!" and Joyce, and the other prisoners, even the wounded Ireton—the provost-marshal himself in his terror—echoed the shout. Perhaps imagining that they were attacked in the rear, the earl of Carnewarth, a Scottish nobleman, who rode by the king, instantly seized the bridle of his horse, and exclaiming, "God's life and death, mon, you would not rush on your certain death?" turned the animal's head. A cry instantly arose of "March to the right!" and at the same instant a great body of the enemy's cavalry approaching, king, lords, and soldiers clapped spurs to their horses, and fled!

Their object, if any they had, seemed to be to join Rupert, but meanwhile a nearer conflict all around the waggons engaged Ingulph's attention. The guard left on the baggage manfully resisted, and a pell-mell conflict raged for some time around it. One of the leaders of the parliamentarians, who had been all along distinguished by the havoc which he made around him, was the first to rush into the defences, by forcing his horse to leap some hurdles placed to obstruct the charge. For some moments this valiant combatant was nearly alone; but he hewed down all in his way till he approached the clump of trees where Ingulph and his fellow-prisoners were posted. The chance blow of some dragoon struck off his helmet, at this point—it rolled to Ingulph's feet,—and the warrior's head must have remained bare amidst the hurricane of blows, but that the youth dashed forward, seizing the helmet, and threw it up to the gallant leader; a lightning glance of recognition told him that the latter was Cromwell himself; but in his hurry the general put his helmet on again the wrong way. By this time his dragoons came sweeping on after him, and all resistance in this quarter was over.

Ireton had now regained his faculties, but he had no occasion to point out what had happened to his victorious father-in-law. "It is Marston Field over again!" he said, "and so they shall find it; now lads, another charge, and the field is ours, in spite of the devil and all his works!"

With shouts of enthusiasm the victorious cavalry followed

their beloved chieftain almost over the very ground which Rupert had taken in his charge of their own routed left and centre. Ireton himself, nearly spent with wounds as he was, assisted by Ingulph, got on horseback, and followed the charging masses in the hope to rally some of his dispersed troops. The provost had fled, indeed he was first to carry the news of a defeat to Oxford; Joyce had seized a pike, and outran the horse in his enthusiasm; and Ingulph himself was one of the first to rush up the heights in the terrible movement now executed.

By this time the king with a bewildered multitude of his followers had joined Rupert, whose victorious troops were scattered in every direction in pursuit of their vanquished opponents. But in vain the trumpets resounded on all sides to recall them to the conflict; all was confusion, disorder, and amazement, at the summons, and but few seemed to hear or to obey the signals, when suddenly the rush of Cromwell's masses on their rear spread a panic which the royalist leaders found it vain to attempt dispelling. The scattered troops fled in every direction, almost without attempting resistance; and finding the diversion made in their favour, the flying troops of the parliament regained courage, rallied, and were brought back in considerable bodies to the field by Fairfax, who still kept possession of Naseby. Thrown thus between two charges, the royalists no longer made any show of resistance. The king, Rupert, and his chief officers disappeared from the field, and the rout soon became universal.

"Smite on and spare not!" was the incessant cry in the charging host, and the carnage which strewed the ground far and near bore testimony that the advice was not thrown away.

Pausing through mere lack of any thing to slay, Cromwell reined up his exhausted charger, which was bleeding from several deep wounds, and gazed about the field with a supreme expression of satisfaction; and perhaps imagining himself alone, he exclaimed, "Methinks I am the farthest of them all; yet not a hand is lifted to withstand the Lord!" when he perceived Ingulph leaning on a gory spear, not wounded, but apparently utterly spent.

"Come, we will use this helmet in thy service that so bravely gave it back to me," he said, vaulting from his horse, and hastening to a little brook which murmured as musically as if no sound disturbed the usual pastoral silence but the whistle of blackbirds, he returned with a copious draught,

just in time to preserve Ingulph from sinking insensible with fatigue and weakness.

“Thou wert a silly youth ever to leave me, and on an errand as mad as all put together that ever were devised on April day!” he said, swallowing with hearty relish what Ingulph left of the water. “But we meet well; and I hope to live to see thee stand by my side in some such brave field struck in France!”

Ingulph smiled faintly, but the words even then struck him as of strange significance.

“’Tis horrible indeed to shed the blood of our fellow-countrymen,” he replied, with a ghastly glance at his spear; but his eye quickened fiercely as he added—“and yet, God knows, I fear that it only grieves me this blood is not a brother’s!”

At this instant, Fairfax, attended by his staff, flushed with triumph and generous enthusiasm, came galloping up. “You have won the day, and you only, lieutenant!” he exclaimed. “But let the carnage cease.”

“Sir, this is none other but the hand of God; and to him alone belongs the glory—wherein none are to share with him,” replied Cromwell, demurely. “As to the carnage—we must not let them rally again.”

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE battle of Naseby decided the event of the war; and thenceforth the contest was among the victors themselves. The tide of success swept over the kingdom in a resistless flood. Faction worked as powerfully among the royalists as the sword of their enemies; but among those leaders who still protracted the contest with desperate fury, De la Pole was conspicuous. Wherever he appeared, his name became a terror; his cruelties and exactions prompted reprisals of all kinds; for the close of the war darkened into all the stormiest and most terrible characteristics of civil strife. But on the surrender of the king’s person by the Scots, he too was obliged to yield, and fled to France, where his father and young wife were with the queen.

The knowledge that, though in exile and defeat, his rival thus triumphed, was a perpetual goad to Ingulph’s passions, and urged him on to enterprises of a reckless daring which

amply supported the reputation he had acquired. Cromwell's affection and trust in him seemed now without a shadow, for whatever the court affected to believe in the matter, Ingulph's vindication with regard to Mistress Stonehenge was considered complete in the parliament army.

The intelligence which Ingulph learned as to the fate of Ramona was in part satisfactory. Her husband had apparently received her more gently than she had reason to anticipate, on her forced return. She resided under his roof in the old palace, in great seclusion, perhaps imprisonment; a measure not unjustified, even if truly reported: and after what had happened, liberty could have been of little benefit to her in the formal and religious city. There were reports, however, concerning Stonehenge, which filled Ingulph with vague fears lest his uncle's mind had suffered in the shocks it had sustained.

"I do learn," said Ireton, who told the story, "how he hath started a new, dark, and hideous sect among the fanatics which shunneth the light; and is by some said to be a revival of the accursed Manichean doctrine of the equal and co-godhead of evil and good; yea, that he adoreth the fiend with supernatural and blasphemous rites! Good troth, but this is a religious age, in which madness itself heweth its darkness out of the light!"

The contest of the two great parties among the victors became closer and more deadly when the prey was fairly run down at the termination of the campaign of Naseby. The Presbyterians had by far the majority in both houses of parliament; the general of the army was of their sect; the city was devoted to them; nearly two-thirds of the population which was not royalist; the whole Scottish people were ready to second them. They were led by men of consummate ability and courage; they possessed the person of the king; and against these formidable odds the Independents had only a small minority in the houses to offer; the genius and glory of their leaders; and the power of the army, which was devoted to their cause.

The objects of the Presbyterians were to restore the king to a crown the real power of which they intended to divide among themselves, and to establish their own system of intolerant bigotry on the ruins of that which they had destroyed. The Independents, agitated by republican sentiments, in secret aspired to the destruction of a monarchy which stood in the way of all their projects;—at all events, they were resolved to

establish the widest principles of civil and religious liberty ; and having achieved the victory, were determined not to be ousted out of their portion in the fruits.

The Presbyterians now perceived the fatal error they had been cajoled into by their submission to the self-denying ordinance. To retrieve their position they attempted a counter-mancœuvre, introducing a series of measures, the objects of all of which, however skilfully veiled, were to destroy the power of the army, by dividing or disbanding it.

To make head against these projects, and to comply in some measure with the great ordinance, Cromwell returned to his seat in parliament as soon as the troops were established in their winter-quarters.

Ingulph had a great desire to accompany his commander thither, to ascertain more certainly the fate of Ramona. But he was restrained by the conviction that his interference could do no good, and might do harm, for he could not learn whether Stonehenge was even yet convinced of his innocence. To his own projects of vengeance and destruction continual residence among those who only could accomplish them was necessary. But all doubts on the subject were resolved by Cromwell himself.

According to his custom with his favourite officers, or those in whom he wished to instil some particular ideas, Ingulph frequently slept in his commander's tent. He determined to use one of these occasions, before Cromwell's departure, to ascertain whether he approved of his desire to revisit the capital. The quarters of his own regiment, to which Ingulph was attached, were those which the general last inspected ; these were in the villages about Cambridge ; and on his arrival, as Ingulph expected, he received the usual distinction.

But he found himself anticipated. Cromwell began by asking him, with a smile, whether he was not weary of remaining a plain volunteer, and did not desire to go to London to push his fortunes with their masters in the parliament.

Ingulph replied in the affirmative, with the same derisive gravity. " Then mark what chance you have of success with these Sauls," replied the general, and opening a letter which he carried in his doublet, he read a reply of the War Committee to a request which it seemed he had addressed to them, to restore Ingulph to his former commission, enumerating his gallant services. The committee, it seemed, could not conscientiously permit such a measure, Master Dethewarre

being under excommunication ; and, moreover, being reported to hold doctrines directly opposed to the covenant, by which all men were bound to maintain his majesty in his lawful rights.

This discovery sufficiently irritated Ingulph ; and Cromwell, observing his emotion, intimated that as nearly all the chief Independent officers were to attend in parliament, it was of the highest consequence that he should have some one on whom he could depend constantly with the army. He expounded that at such a distance correspondence would be dangerous ; he therefore needed one whose intelligence and courage would suggest to him the proper measures to be taken, without direct instructions. The Presbyterians evidently calculated on the destruction of their adversaries' power by their project of sending the army to Ireland, under pretext of crushing the rebellion there. If no other means could avert it, a general petition of the army might be of efficacy.

To execute this purpose, Cromwell suggested that his young volunteer should use his influence in the inferior grades of the army, to form a combination which it should not seem to be in the power of the superior either to cause or suppress. The soldiery of each regiment might elect two or three to represent the whole body, and in case of any emergency to act for all. These persons were to be called adjutators, or assistants, and could meet, with as little parade as possible, at Ingulph's quarters. In case it should be necessary to assemble the army suddenly (which it would be if parliament persisted in its unjust measures), Triplo Heath was close on Cambridge, and well adapted to the purpose. The forces were so arranged that they could easily be brought to mass on this point, which the general proved by handing a plan of their quarters, carefully noted, which he gave to Ingulph.

Finding that he had an exceedingly apt and eager scholar, the general proceeded to point out remoter advantages to his plan. If men's injustice and backsliding should unhappily make the rendezvous necessary, the possession of the king's person was an object of the highest importance. Holdenby, where he was confined, was at no immense distance from Triplo ; it would be of advantage to him to be in the hands of soldiers rather than of mean and chaffering bigots. The troops who guarded him were as devoted to the cause as any men ; but their deputies ought to be chosen more secretly.

A project so daring had not yet entered into any bosom to conceive ; but Cromwell knew his man. Without once quitting the mysterious vagueness of his words, his meaning was

as firmly and clearly infused as if he had used the most direct expressions. Even the obscure terms to be employed in the correspondence which they were to carry on were tacitly settled; and the results were the organization of the machinery by which the great and scattered host were moved with the unanimity of one man.

The superior officers who remained with the army affected to take no notice of Ingulph's progress, or not to be able to restrain it. The congress of adjutators met, all firm, resolved, and able men, but mostly fanatics of the deepest dye. The name soon changed to agitators, which their enemies bestowed on them, but which they readily adopted. Meantime the game deepened, and the measures of the Presbyterians tended to precipitate those of their rivals. They denied the army's pretended grievances, and ordained that the troops refusing to go on the expedition to Ireland should instantly be disbanded. Ingulph felt that the decisive moment had arrived, and he directed the famous rendezvous of the army on Triplo Heath, by means of the agitators, who not only respected his commands as his own, but as secretly those of Cromwell.

But meantime the general himself almost overplayed his part, by the vehemence with which in London he condemned the proceedings of the mutinous host. Despite the assurances of Ingulph, the soldiery began to conceive suspicions of his real intentions, while the parliament were not so much deceived but that they manifested doubts, and even projected his seizure. Apprehending some such project, Cromwell warned his allies to prepare for his immediate arrival among them.

Ingulph understood that the time was come to execute the main project of seizing the king's person; a project which, from its very audacity, was in no manner provided against by the parliament. The king was retained in an open country-house, and the troops surrounding him were as zealous in the army's cause as the most violent. No open support could be hoped from the chiefs of the army; but so essential was the seizure to the success of their measures of self-preservation, that it was certain all would countenance it when it was done.

To blind suspicion, as his absence would certainly be observed, and with a generous dislike to triumph over his fallen oppressor, Ingulph decided not to go on the enterprise himself. He selected the valiant cornet, Joyce, whose great contempt for royalty, and at the same time good-nature and sagacity, rendered him very suitable to the purpose. In-

gulph's chief instructions were that no personal violence should be offered to the prisoner; and with five hundred horse, secretly assembled on the service, Joyce departed for Holdenby.

Immediately on this decisive event, Ingulph dispatched an enigmatical request to Cromwell that he would join the army, as the great blow was about to be struck. Doubtless guessing its nature, and now aware of a plot formed to seize his own person in London, Cromwell immediately hastened to the army, under pretence of calming its effervescence.

It was not without a thorough conviction of the vast responsibility he had incurred, that Ingulph awaited the arrival of his commander. If the measure failed, or if it were found advisable to disavow it, his life was probably forfeit. But to him life had long ceased to be of more than the physical value which all men attach to it, as preserving them from a state of which they know nothing, and fear much.

Cromwell arrived in the camp attended only by Hugh Peters and a single trooper, for his departure from London partook very much of the character of an escape. Very few recognised him, for it was dark night; and when the travellers drew up beside a smouldering fire in a sheepecote where Ingulph had established his quarters, he started up in surprise and joy on perceiving that it was Cromwell himself dismounting from his besplashed steed.

"How now, master scholar; beating thy brains over some puzzle of Aristotle's?" said the commander, with a familiar slap on Ingulph's shoulder.

"I do rather hope the young gentleman is considering his soul's progress," said Peters, unclasping a knapsack from his horse's wearied haunches. "For verily I do think the Lord has looked in upon him in his good time; and we none of us know when we may be summoned, as worthy Mistress Bulstocke confessed to me she did verily believe she had her call one day as she was skimming a savoury stew; for thereupon she took such thought of hell-fire, and what a stew she might make for the devil to skim, that it is wonderful to hear her tell all her miseries! But, praised be His name! here we are, safe and sound, from the hands of the Philistines!"

"We had a hard trot for it," said Cromwell, gravely. "But get me a cup of ale, Ingulph; and then for the news. But, harkye, let no man know I am here till I learn whether I might not be fitlier elsewhere."

The general then busied himself in stirring the fire into a

lively blaze, while Peters sprawled his weary and ungainly limbs on the straw which was Ingulph's couch. Cromwell observed him for a moment with a sly expression, and lighting the stick with which he stirred the fire, playfully poked Peters with it until he removed to a greater distance. Meanwhile Ingulph returned with the beverage and a beef pasty, of which both travellers partook heartily.

"They brew good ale in these parts—I am not now to learn it," said Cromwell, quaffing the generous beverage with peculiar relish. "Methinks that was the chief knowledge I picked up when I was in yonder stink-pot of prelacy. But what, boy! do you grudge me my feed that you gaze on me so earnestly, as if you thought I should never be done?"

"Your honour asked the news," said Ingulph, with quivering calmness. "The chief I know is, that the king intends to grace the army with a visit, and we expect him very shortly."

"His majesty shall be welcome, provided he comes of his own free-will," said Cromwell, jocosely, as if he thought the intelligence was only a jest.

"And escorted by five hundred dragoons," continued Ingulph.

"Ay!—a commanded party?" returned Cromwell, with a deep draught of the ale.

"Commanded enough—for it is commanded by the army," said Ingulph.

"I never heard that commander's name before; but truly 'tis a wide word to be dealt with by the provost-marshal," said Cromwell, with a hard smile. "But when my Lord Fairfax (for his father is dead—Essex, too, is dying!) asks for a man or two to hang (which he will), what names will they answer to?"

"The army," again replied Ingulph.

"Verily, Fairfax is not a fine-bolted sieve, but this will stick in him," said Cromwell, still in a bantering tone. "And prythee, what accommodation and welcome does—the *army*—intend to offer its royal guest?"

"Yonder, through the trees, is Childersley House; he will arrive there to-night; 'tis well enough aired," said Ingulph.

"I know the house as well as you can teach it me," said Cromwell. "In my younger days, I have oft caroused in it; and in the great hall I broke John Childersley's head, for swearing mine was as thin and as thick as an egg. But if

mine old syllogisms be of any use, methinks—the army—truly, I do opine—that inasmuch as the army cannot stay on Triplo Heath for ever,—his majesty—(and I drink to his good health)—I say, I conclude,—the army have decided where they shall lodge him next?”

“ Anywhere out of—the Republic of England,” replied Ingulph.

“ Dutchman or Spaniard would willingly give him entertainment for man and horse, doubtless,” said Cromwell, pettishly. “ He were worth a perpetual standing army in England to either.”

“ But is the great Barabbas really given up to our choice?” said Peters, who had been listening with his mouth wide open.

“ Nay, nay, Hugh; 'tis the learned air inspires us, and we are reasoning on an hypothesis,” interrupted Cromwell. “ Answer me that, Master Dethewarre.”

“ Did not the parliament intend you lodgings in the Tower, general?” said Ingulph. “ Methinks as a dutiful subject you cannot do less than afford the same to his majesty, and as long as he needs them—or any man can—for surely we have proved he is but man!”

“ The king's name is in itself a tower of strength!” returned Cromwell, musingly. “ What! and are matters gone so far with—in the army—that men do take on them to be judges in such high concernment? How can any man think to justify—for indeed, say what you will, the army cannot deny that he is the king, the Lord's anointed—and to go such lengths,—are there many here whose opinions stretch so far?”

“ We are but one man,” replied Ingulph.

“ You speak as one that believeth himself,” said the general. “ Ay, ay, the fifth-monarchy men do expect the sudden coming of Christ; but I doubt if we are yet in a fit state. There are some of another view—some that stumble over such snares as the old republics of Athens and Rome. But how to justify the matter to many; nay, the most part, that are of another judgment—tell me that!”

“ The godly seek not to justify themselves in the eyes of men; verily, they have their reward that do,” said Peters.

“ But the saints do not yet possess the earth,” said Cromwell, thoughtfully stirring the blazing peat. “ No, no, half-measures will never do; either we must make the king a great and glorious king, according to that superstitious covenant of the Scots, or—or—but indeed how to justify it except on

some apparent necessity ;—but being so faithless a man, how to trust him God only knows—unless his hands be well tied.”

“ To justify it!—what would he have done with us had he vanquished us, as we have him ? ” exclaimed Ingulph.

“ What, how, the block !—the king of three mighty realms, and bring him to the block ? ” said Cromwell, gazing at the young republican with a very earnest and scrutinizing eye. “ You are too early with your sickle ; the corn is yet green.”

“ Shall we then return the king into the Presbyterians’ hands ! ’Tis not too late,” said Ingulph, vehemently.

“ You cannot say so, you know nothing about it,” replied Cromwell, composedly. “ What is done for the general good, let the general avow ; but no man in particular, or, I promise you, it will go hard with the best of us ! I did leave word, praying Fairfax to follow, to aid appeasing discontents ; and he will surely obey, for he hath that confidence in my poor judgment that of late he doth nothing without it, and all things with it. But we are but sucking babes yet ! The majority of this people still lusteth after the flesh-pots of Egypt, and loathe the manna ; but let them have their fill of quails ! But indeed whatever the army does in these times is not without the Lord in many things.”

“ Fairfax’s commission is in the parliament’s name ; he will obey their orders,” said Ingulph, significantly.

“ Therefore we will treat his majesty so well, and give him such fair hopes, that he shall not desire to change our keeping for worse,” replied Cromwell.

At this moment a horseman came galloping towards the bivouac, cheerily waving his hand as if in triumph ; and before Ingulph could give him any warning he had vaulted from his horse, and exclaimed, “ The army for ever—he is safe at Childersley ! ”

“ What, Joyce, know you not this presence ? ” said Ingulph, as the cornet staggered out his excuses.

“ Truly, Dethewarre, let him tell his comrades I have come to take my share in these troublesome times,” said Cromwell, rising. “ I’ll look me out some lodgings now ; but come and see me ere you rest.”

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE particulars of the extraordinary seizure of the royal person were soon communicated to Ingulph, and by him to the general. But when the news was spread, and Fairfax himself arrived, every one disavowed but no one punished nor inquired into the authors of the enterprise. It was so obviously to the advantage of the whole army, and so powerfully though secretly supported, that Fairfax was easily persuaded of the inexpediency of canvassing it too deeply.

Charles was received by the chiefs of the army with every mark of deference and royal honour; and whatever were their real intentions, they held out hopes to him, which, with his experience of the hard dealing of the Presbyterians, made him refuse to return to his former custody, even when permitted and pressed to do so.

Ingulph was almost the only person of consequence in the army who refused to wait on the king, and he kept himself obstinately in his quarters during the three days in which he held what might almost be called his court, at Childersley.

The advance of the army on London, the struggles of the parliament, and its final submission, are events familiarly known. The great masses of the army were halted midway, and under pretence that his services were needed to control the operations of the agitators, Ingulph received strict orders to remain among them. Believing that the coalition of the grandees, as the chiefs of the army were called, with the king, was only momentary, to obtain the aid of the royalists in the struggle, Ingulph, in common with his fellow-agitators, looked quietly on. But when the parliament was apparently submissive, London itself in quiet possession of the military, the negotiations still continuing began to excite suspicion.

Reports were soon current that Cromwell and the other generals intended to replace the king in his royalties, on considerations of a private nature. Ingulph could not for a long time credit these reports of his beloved general's treachery, but such strong circumstances occurred, that his very attachment to Cromwell prompted him to oppose his will; for he knew that he would find it impossible to bend the army to his purpose, and would in all probability be sacrificed between its rage and the king's Machiavellian intrigues.

These worst conjectures were confirmed by the sudden and stringent orders which arrived to dissolve the council of agitators, as a disorderly and mutinous assembly. But the soldiers, strong in their unanimity, silently disobeyed; and, as it was suspected, for the purpose of suppressing their rebellious spirit, or to obtain their adherence to some plan of accommodation with the king, another great rendezvous was summoned at Ware.

Whether Cromwell apprehended another attempt of the machine which he could no longer control, on the king's person, and desired to have him completely in his own power, or that he really wished him to be in safety at a distance from the struggle, is doubtful. But the king's escape was generally known, though not precisely whither, when the army met at Ware.

Ingulph's zeal and resolution had breathed new fire into the agitators, and their measures were privately organized throughout the army long before the generals arrived from London. It was resolved to demand a republic openly, and all who were inclined to support the appeal were to assume a white ribbon as a badge, that their number and determination might be clearly known.

On the morning after this resolution was taken, the whole army were drawn out in array, expecting the approach of the generals. Ingulph remarked with great satisfaction that there was scarcely a helmet in which the white favour did not flutter; and as it was a beautifully clear and brilliant day, the effect was very conspicuous. He himself quietly mingled in the ranks, exhorting his fellow-agitators to firmness, for he much doubted the effect of their formidable general's presence.

With little display of military pomp, but surrounded by his chief officers and a chosen body of troopers, Cromwell at last appeared. He looked pale, and even anxious; but there was a stern and resolved expression in his countenance which caused misgivings in the boldest. Ingulph happened to be in the first body of soldiers decorated with the white favour which Cromwell encountered; he reined up his horse immediately before it, with all his suite.

Cromwell's eye wandered for a moment from the pikemen before him over the whole plain, covered with the silent legions which had been wont to receive him so enthusiastically. Far as the eye could discern, among horsemen and infantry fluttered the white ribbon, decorating even the spears of the standards.

“What great wedding is this?” he said at last, with such austerity that no one ventured to reply.

“It is not a wedding, sir, but a birth-day,” said Ingulph, at last stepping from the murmuring ranks. “The birth of true liberty; and all of us who wear this favour are the gossips who swear never to desert this badge until the government of the nation, by the nation, is established.”

“You scarcely know well enough how to obey, to command, Master Dethewarre,” said Cromwell, sternly. “But as long as you are an officer of mine, you shall understand who is master. Give me your sword.”

And snatching it simultaneously, he threw the naked blade to one of his guards, and ordered Ingulph to surrender himself a prisoner. The sudden clash of the pikes to the ground which followed seemed to announce resistance; but Cromwell tore the badge from the helmet of one of the mutineers, and observing the fellow made a movement with his weapon, immediately drove his horse upon him, and knocked him down.

The recollection of all the benefits he had received from Cromwell scarcely controlled the rage which boiled in Ingulph's veins at the sight; he turned to the pikemen to observe if they would support him, but at the same instant Cromwell shouted the word of command to ground their weapons—and they obeyed!

Cromwell directed the guard to remove Ingulph instantly to his quarters in Ware; and he was immediately escorted from the field amidst a low hollow murmur from the soldiery, which showed they needed but a word to break into open mutiny. But that word he now felt would be the ruin of all, since it must produce a schism which would rend the army to its own destruction. Still it was fortunate that he was at too great a distance to return, and too strongly guarded, when suddenly the ominous stillness which succeeded his departure was broken by the report of musketry; and looking back he beheld the soldier who had supported him fall beneath the fire of a platoon, in the centre of the plain.

The deep silence which again followed showed that panic and not fury was struck into the military multitude by this example; and Cromwell was seen galloping from division to division, compelling them to throw away their snowy favours. No further resistance was attempted, and by the time Ingulph reached the little inn where he was to be confined, the whole army was marching off the ground in gloomy and crest-fallen submission.

Ingulph learned with surprise that in this inn the general was to rest and dine; the best room in it was a large uneven drinking-parlour, furnished only with a few benches and a ricketty round table in the middle. To do justice to the extraordinary honour conferred on her dwelling, the hostess was busily engaged in scouring the stone floor, and whitening it with marl. A great fire blazing up the chimney supplied the place of every other comfort; the scraggy old woman averring, that although it was a fine day, his honour's worship's excellency had declared he loved ever to see a good fire. The blue sunshine on the exterior and the red glare within mingled in a quaint contrast, which, strange as it may appear in a man placed in so alarming a position, engaged Ingulph's notice as he watched the long succession of helmets, and horses, and pikes of his returning friends passing at the window.

Without making the least inquiry as to what was to be done with him, perhaps nearly reckless, Ingulph sat on a low bench in the chimney corner, between two of his guards, until the tramp of heavy boots announced the approach of some addition to the party. Cromwell and Ireton entered, both flushed and excited from their arduous achievement.

"Get ye to your ale in the kitchen, and leave the prisoner to us," said Cromwell to the troopers, who obeyed like machines as they were. "Thou art a pretty fellow, of a truth!" he continued. "Not a pie is baked, but thou must have a finger it. What the fiend (the Lord forgive me!)—this spirit must indeed be black among you, when even thou betrayest thine old general too!"

"You have betrayed yourself, not I, general," said Ingulph, doggedly.

"And for a plainly rejected man, so notorious a dissembler!" said Ireton, in a tone of discontent and reproach.

"I have taught the proudest of ye a lesson ye will not soon forget to-day," replied Cromwell, as if not noticing the observation. "Deemed you that with mine own hand I had fashioned me a god? But such a show of white ribbons; I did not know we had so many ells of it in all London city! But yet, verily, they showed the white feather still more unanimously."

"You are our general that disarmed us; none other should have taken my sword, and not my life," said Ingulph.

"Truly, I have known thee for a lad of metal," said Cromwell, gloomily. "You say I would save this man—and how

is it possible when we see how this army do so hate him that they forget how they loved me! Surely, he trusts in me, and would at last deal fairly, since I hear now—and all men will shortly hear of it, God knows with what thoughts!—that he is safely fled to my kinsman, Hammond's, in Carisbrook Castle; out of reach of such mad fellows as thou and the rest, Ingulph!"

"'Tis plain the Lord will have his work wholly done, since he is so bewildered in judgment as not to use his liberty when he had it, and get to France!" said Ireton.

"Alack-a-day! there may be human suggestion in it," said Cromwell, in a troubled tone. "But I have wrestled in vain for an answer in the matter! No man is to be pleased with anything we do! the army, the cavaliers, the presbyters, friends and enemies, 'tis all a chaos! Oh, that light were vouchsafed to the prayers of godly men, that we might see our way clearly!"

"'Tis as clear as the path of the sun!—proclaim a republic," exclaimed Ingulph.

"In which all men shall be sovereign, and do what liketh them best. A pretty kettle of fish we shall make of it," returned Cromwell. "We are encompassed all round with bulls of Bashan; do but hear how they roar! Proclaim a republic!—and presbyters and royalists fall on us together;—restore the king! and the army goes mad and tears out its own bowels! But were he now restored to, as it were, a toy royalty"—

"And yourself earl of Essex, and Master Ireton Lieutenant of Ireland,—until they can get the blocks prepared behind your crimson velvet canopies of state!" said Ingulph bitterly.

"I shall care for that, for I will keep the sword in my hand!" said Cromwell, hastily.

"It will soon rust in the scabbard," said Ingulph. "Men will not long remember how your armour became so hacked, when they see cloth of gold shimmering on a king beside it!"

"But I am to have the outward gauds, too; the Garter, is't not, Ireton?" said Cromwell, with a somewhat bantering smile.

"Look you there; hath he not a proper slim leg for the Garter?" said Ireton, with a grim smile at Cromwell's boots, which indeed enclosed a limb more stalwart than graceful. "I marvel whether her popish majesty will tie it on for you with a loving pinch, as she did velvety Buckingham's!"

“Nay, for that matter, I have worn a royal mantle ere now, and was thought to become it,” said Cromwell, in a manner which seemed scarcely to relish this jeer. Then laughing aloud at the surprised look of his hearers, he added, carelessly, “’Twas when I was a schoolboy, at Huntingdon, and we acted a play of the ‘Five Senses;’ and so clerkly written too, that ’twas a pity the poor man who penned it wasted his good wit on so vacant an allegory. But in it I enacted one Tactus, that did by chance stumble over a royal crown and mantle; and I do remember me, the struggle was for the crown, and when all came to all, methinks only the mantle was adjudged me.”

“This ranks with your good old mother’s tale, of how, being a child, you dreamed a giant drew your curtains and saluted you a king,” said Ireton, with a keen glance at the general.

“Dream! nay, it was no dream—a phantasy, perchance; but I do remember the infinite formless form with a perfect distinctness, albeit nothing else of that time,” said Cromwell, gravely; but he continued, in a more indifferent tone, “yet granny mistakes if she reports it said king,—it was not that, but something vast and indistinct,—no word that ever I could remember; but it meant power, of some sort; as it were, to ride in a chariot and guide the winds. I would I could meet with the word in any language. When I was a boy, I thought to find it in such stately noise as Latin and Greek make, and so I learned what little of either I know; but I found it not, and so I took to roystering and the cudgels.”

“And thence to the sword,” said Ireton, with a stern and prolonged gaze at his father-in-law’s musing countenance.

“But these visions trouble me little, it seems,” said Cromwell, with sudden vivacity; “for I do believe I am the only man among you who sincerely wishes the matter were but resolved—the king restored. I alone would shut the door on this chaos—this infinite unknown, from which all of you hope to shape some wild creation of your own. And surely ’tis terrible to imagine an utter change of earth’s history; yea, to do things which man hath never yet done, and yet to hear the blood of the saints calling so loudly for vengeance! Deem you, Ingulph, that your fellows in the white ribbon would stand more stoutly with me than they did against me?”

“Let my life answer for the faith of the meanest camp-boy,” said Ingulph, passionately.

“Why then, nothing is as yet resolved,” said Ireton, looking anxiously at the general.

“Nor shall be, without the general consent and for the general good, and so I would have you assure men, Ingulph,” said Cromwell, somewhat irresolutely. “I will be certain before I mistake a hempen rope for the dragon-chain, and for this purpose you shall remain in the camp, a prisoner at large, under some displeasure, so as not to leave the cantonments without permission.”

Indefinite as this command, or rather permission, was, Ingulph readily assented. He thought he perceived an indecision in the general's mind, which the force of circumstances might guide; and he had little doubt to produce a state of things in the army which should have an effect on his deliberations. These hopes increased in a conversation which he subsequently held with Ireton, whose republican sentiments were as strong, though not so passionate, as his own. In common with other officers, Ireton was subjected by the ascendancy of Cromwell's genius and the pressure of circumstances, but nearly all were averse to the projected treaty with the king.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

LEFT at liberty within the range of the army's quarters, and backed by the secret good-will of the officers, Ingulph returned to his former labours. He now devised a petition to the Lord General Fairfax, in favour of a commonwealth, to be signed by each individual man. But the panic infused by the late severity made this a task of difficulty, and as his old co-adjutors hung fire, Ingulph was obliged to do the work almost entirely without assistance.

The cantonments of the army were very extensive, and he had frequently to ride to great distances; but his perseverance overcame all obstacles, and he had nearly achieved his purpose, when he happened to return one evening to Ware, rather late. On his way he had to pass a very disagreeable object, the body, or rather the mummy, of a man which had been hung in chains for many years, for a murder committed on the spot. The gibbet hung on the banks of a shallow water, which crossed the road at the base of a very steep hill.

Buried in meditation on his project, Ingulph scarcely noticed his approach to this unhallowed locality, until the downward stoop of his horse compelled him. He glanced forward, with-

out any particular interest, but his eye was caught by observing a somewhat singular horseman halting at the ford below. He was mounted on a large gaunt white horse, and wore a black riding-habit, with a conical hat of extraordinary height; his face was turned away, but it was a fine moonlight, and showed that he had a long gray beard. He seemed looking so intensely at the malefactor's grisly carcass, swinging in its iron network, and listening to its sullen creak, that he took no cognizance of Ingulph's approach, though his horse's tramp was very audible among the loose stones.

At first Ingulph thought that it was a patrol of the army, but as he wore no armour the idea vanished as soon as it rose. Next he thought it possible it might be a highwayman, but that was improbable in a country so continually scoured by troops. Still the horseman's fixed manner had in it something so singular, that Ingulph laid hand on the pistol in his holsters as he approached. His surprise increased when he found that the stranger still preserved the same attitude; he therefore suddenly reined in his horse, and said in a loud tone, "Good night, companion; and take the ford first, since you are first at it."

"I have no business over the ford, and but one in life," returned a voice which made Ingulph's heart leap, although its accents were even too icily calm.

"Stonehenge!—Master Stonehenge!" said Ingulph, keeping a wary eye on this awful visitor.

"Be not dismayed!—I am not here in my quality of prophet!" replied Stonehenge, turning with an air of lofty dignity; and the moonbeam falling on his face revealed features so haggard and worn, and lighted by an eye so full of insane lustre, that the view was far from diminishing Ingulph's alarm.

"For what then are you here?" he said, in a voice which quavered despite all effort to keep it steady.

"To do you good, nephew," replied Stonehenge, with a lurking cajolery of tone inexpressibly fearful.

"I never did you harm!" exclaimed Ingulph.

"What harm have any of us done, before we are born, and yet what wretched wretches we are made!" said Stonehenge, in a strangely mock canting tone. "But our misery is justly deserved, neglecting as we do,—even the holiest of us,—one half of the worship and rights we owe! Two powers divide the universe, and yet we continually provoke the other to vengeance!"

“And you would introduce,—would restore this double worship?” said Ingulph, with a cold shudder.

“Nay, I am not to be caught in that trap!” said the prophet, with a terrible smile, or rather an exposure of his teeth, while his eyes shone with unnatural brilliancy. “These are moot points, on which wise men clap their neighbours up in straw, while others worshipfully heir their wealth, and their pretty wives! But I do say, ’tis strange that yonder carrion should have had an immortal soul, and yet swing rotting there in the sun from day to day, and from year to year! Not that I mistake this moon that is shining for the sun; you cannot say that! But whatever comes of it, these are times when men may think each his own folly, and not be broiled for it, I hope!”

“Doubtless,” replied Ingulph, soothingly; “I did but speak as one that has heard of your new doctrine, and would be glad to learn its nature.”

“’Tis not my doctrine; it is preached to us by all we see, know, feel, remember, or foresee!” said Stonehenge, forgetting his caution in his fanaticism or madness. “If thou hast wronged me, I blame thee not; the cycle of things is perpetual wrong and wrong and wrong, revenge and revenge and revenge!”

“Yet surely this doctrine is not preached by this fair moonlight, by this sweet evening scent of the fields around us?” said Ingulph, in a tone of great mildness.

“Nature is insensate; perchance she is happy, at least suffers not,” said Stonehenge, gazing on the tranquil landscape with a tinge of sadness which gradually restored the look of sanity to his naturally nobly intellectual countenance.

“But are you come merely to tell me this in kindness?” said Ingulph, with gentleness.

“Nay, I come to tell you another matter—in kindness!” said Stonehenge, sharply. “Questionless, you are willing to advance your own interests and projects? They tell us in London, that you labour at great hazards to prevent Cromwell’s agreement with the king. You may effect it with none.”

“And how?” said Ingulph, after a pause.

“You remember!—I am an astrologer!” replied Stonehenge, in a very rational tone, yet with another of his fearful smiles. “But the stars are not my informants in this. If tomorrow evening, at seven o’clock, you be on the watch at the Water-Poet Taylor’s house, one will come who is a messenger bearing letters from the king to the queen. The contents

thereof will stifle this new fit of loyalty in Cromwell's breast, —and you will have all the honour."

"Know you this for certain?" said Ingulph, rapidly revolving the probabilities.

"Here is one from the batch; the rest are there for your discovery," said Stonehenge, producing a letter, superscribed to "My wife," in the king's own hand, and sealed with his signet.

"But wherefore do you not yourself inform the government?" said Ingulph, amazedly receiving the token, but at the same time carefully guarding against any sudden surprisal.

"You take it as gingerly as if he who wrote it had the plague!" said Stonehenge, impatiently. "What if I told you I am inclined to do you a service in return,—to wipe off any former injustice may have been between us,—would it make you laugh?"

"You do mine innocence justice then!" said Ingulph, pathetically.

"Do you accept the office?" interrupted Stonehenge, in a tone which effectually froze this flow of feeling. "If it is of no other service, it will give you a pretext to come to London —and I know you long to be there!"

"I have no great cause!" said Ingulph, with a confusion which he could not altogether hide.

"What, not to see your old friends?" replied Stonehenge, fixing the unmeaning glitter of his eye on Ingulph. "But you are right; the chief charm of these meetings lies in the privacy; and the old way from Holbein's Gate is blocked up now!—But choose your time: I am generally gaping at the stars from sunset till sunrise."

"I will do this office; but I will, if possible, see none of those who were once my friends," said Ingulph, mournfully; and Stonehenge, laughing lowly as it were to himself, spurred his nag, and dashed past his nephew. In a moment he had reached the summit of the eminence, where he paused, waved his hand courteously, and disappeared. The tramp of his horse was long audible, mingled with a sound which in the distance resembled a wild Satanic peal of laughter.

Ingulph stood in mute amazement, until the last echo died away; and then, half-apprehensive lest the rider should return, he crossed the ford, and put his horse to speed in a contrary direction.

If Stonehenge was mad, there was still so much method in his madness, that, considering his secret means of intelligence,

Ingulph doubted not at all the certainty of his revelation. Some lingering feeling of concern for the king might have restrained him still; but the magnitude of the interest engaged—the ingratitude of suffering his beneficent commander to fall into a snare—determined him to the task.

Cromwell had indeed ordered him to remain in the cantonments, but he had now an ample excuse for disobedience. Yet Stonehenge's jealousy so evidently continued, that he resolved to arrive as late, and stay as short a time as possible in the metropolis. He therefore contrived it so that he did not enter London till late in the afternoon of the following day.

Arriving at Cromwell's house, he learned that he had a large party of officers and parliament men, who had dined with him, and were now engaged in some important discussions. Ingulph's zeal quickened, for he feared that he was arranging some agreement in the king's favour. He sent up a message by the gigantic porter, with his name, purporting that he had news of immediate concern.

Cromwell came to him in the little back chamber, with an appearance of anxiety, which Ingulph hastened as rapidly as possible to relieve, by communicating his errand.

"Foolish lad!—it is impossible; the king has no correspondence but what passes through my hands!" he said, in a vexed tone. "'Tis but a pretext of thine to come to this wicked city, and see how mad we are all going in our several ways."

"Sir, did this letter pass through your hands?" replied Ingulph, handing that which he received from his uncle; the seal of which he had loyally respected. But Cromwell broke it open instantly, and after glancing down the contents, said musingly, "No.—His majesty is pleased to mention you in it," he added, after a pause, pocketing the epistle. "But we will not make you angry now. We will meet this messenger to-night; but meanwhile come with me, and behold how many heads this hydra hath, which you imagine I can smother in a grasp."

The general led the way into an apartment in which his company was assembled, which Ingulph perceived to be nearly filled with a party of soberly-garbed gentlemen. He found himself an object of general attention, and many looked surprised to behold him introduced with apparent favour by the general, against whom he had so lately been in almost open mutiny.

“Be there any news from the army which it is not unlawful for a plain parliament man to know?” said Sir Harry Vane, with a penetrating glance.

“Nought—but that they are as well-disposed as ever to the general weal, Sir Harry,” replied Cromwell, carelessly. “But to resume the discussion we were upon, which methinks is of a mighty concern, and not to be lightly treated;—I would have every man speak to the general enlightenment;—and meanwhile, Master Dethewarre, the claret is as near to you as to me, or I would be your cupbearer.”

“You shall have a better office—when I am king, said Vane, laughingly.

“But to proceed,” continued Cromwell; “I do feel a great enlargement of the heart, and a desire as it were to know what my brethren think on matters, being all, I am free to confess, more illumined by the Spirit than I can pretend to be, so mixed in carnal operations.”

“Let us have your own judgment first, Master Cromwell,” said Vane, with a keen glance.

“As to whether a monarchical, an aristocratical, or a democratical government be the best;—’tis a knotty question,” said Cromwell, cloudily. “But I am apt indeed to conclude—the rather as none of you do object the contrary—that any of them might be good in themselves, or for us, according as Providence should direct us.”

“I have sought the Lord very earnestly and with tears on this point,” said Harrison, breaking the short silence which followed this speech. “But when I look abroad, and understand how wonderfully things have been wrought in these latter times, I do almost feel as if the time of the fulfilment were at hand, and that it is treason against the Celestial Majesty to attempt to set up a carnal throne again; for indeed I cannot but think, that if ever the saints are to possess the earth, and the fatness thereof, surely this is the time.”

A hum of applause from a small section of the company announced the satisfaction with which the dictum was received; and several began quoting passages of scripture which apparently supported it.

“But still we have not the visible presence; and till it comes, must act as simple men,” said Cromwell.

“That monarchy is not desirable in itself is proved, in a spiritual sense, by the eighth verse of the eighth chapter of the first book of Samuel,” said Ireton. “And that it is nowise conducing to the interest of the people of this nation,

may be proved by the infinite mischiefs and oppressions we have suffered under it, and by it."

"A commonwealth were then our only refuge," said one whom Ingulph recognised as Colonel Ludlow.

"Saving always Christ's right to the throne of these realms!" said Harrison, vehemently.

"Then, Master Harrison, you would have us erect a republic, and keep the throne standing in it—but vacant—as expecting a comer?" said Cromwell, with an anxious glance around.

"I do opine that it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to settle the government of this country without something of monarchy in it," said another speaker; "inasmuch as all our laws and institutions are so closely interwoven with the name and practice of a king, that to dispense with it must indeed breed strange confusions."

"You are a lawyer, Master Whitelock," said Cromwell, coldly. "A king is but a word; put another in its stead, and what does it matter?—The nation for the king—a Tudor for a Stuart—what change did we find but from one tyranny to another?"

"Then there is nothing for it, but to hug our old chains, and let the Presbyterians bind us up again, soul and body!" said Sir Harry Vane.

"You are fast, Sir Harry, you are fast!" said Cromwell, with a smile. "We are not come to that yet!—Not only are we now to consider what is desirable, but what is feasible: but let every man deliver his opinion in order, and we shall see how far the Lord is pleased to make our judgment of a piece."

This was the signal for a general confidence, or at least disclosure; every man was eager to enforce his own views on the momentous topic; and to all Cromwell seemed to listen with an attention approaching to reverence, although he once or twice glanced at Ingulph with a quiet derision which he felt. Ingulph had thought he understood the times, but he stared amazed at the infinite diversity of opinions, wishes, and projects, developed, or rather betrayed, by the eager speakers. Still the predominant feeling was evidently against the king. But time wore on, and Ingulph remarking the increasing darkness, ventured a hint to Cromwell that the affair he knew of required his attention.

"'Tis very true," said Cromwell. "Son Ireton, come with me; we have to settle a matter of discipline, gentlemen, and

will return anon. Meanwhile I would remind you that we have more difficulties to deal with than the royal dignity ;—there is the royal person.”

“ Bring him to justice the first ! ” said Ireton, sternly.

“ To justice !—as how ? ” said Cromwell.

“ Brutus never wore a brighter dagger than this ! ” said Harrison, unsheathing his weapon.

“ The English people is too great to follow example,” said Cromwell, calmly. “ Let us set one which the earth may follow—if any—but not an ancient repetition. See you how Master Dethewarre’s visage kindles ?—Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings,—I pray you, sir, speak ; if there be an oracle in you too, let us hear it.”

“ Bring the tyrant—if tyrant he be—to an open, just, and legal doom ! ” exclaimed Ingulph, fired with the mighty thought.

“ I do fear me, this youth speaks a greater meaning than his own ! ” said Cromwell, starting. “ For often when I would have besought in the tyrant’s favour, my tongue clove to the roof of my mouth, and I had not words to pray for him.”

“ If it come to acceptability above, methinks the lieutenant-general hath a better claim than any king of them all ! ” said Ludlow, jestingly ; and Cromwell, laughing like a gleeful schoolboy, snatched up a cushion, threw it at Ludlow, and ran down the stairs. Ludlow immediately caught it, and ran after him with it, throwing it at hazard in the dark ; but it apparently missed, by the general’s continued laugh of triumph. The party now broke up, and Ingulph and Ireton joined Cromwell in the hall.

CHAPTER XLIX.

“ PORDAGE,” said Cromwell to his huge porter, “ leave muttering defiances to the devil that haunts thee, and get to the mews to borrow three troopers’ cloaks and murrions. Say not who needs them, and they will take it ’tis for the guard.”

The porter obeyed without uttering a word of acquiescence.

“ These fellows are well met,” said Cromwell, in a discontented tone, as they left the house. “ Hear ye how they rave ! If we could discover whether the king is sincere or

not, it were a marvellous mercy! So let us to this messenger."

Ireton inquired the meaning of the question, and Ingulph briefly explained it.

"By the endorsement of this letter," said Cromwell, again examining the one received, "it appears that a messenger will come to Taylor's for a saddle, in the skirts of which its comrades are sewed. A ribald rogue, that I hear hath put me in some of his impudent pasquils."

Pordage returned bearing the required disguises, which the three immediately donned, giving their hats to the porter's care. As they accomplished this transmutation, the clock of St. Margaret's struck the quarter to the appointed time; and after some preliminaries, they hastened to Taylor's house.

It was agreed that the two commanders should wait in the hostelry for a signal from Ingulph, who was to remain outside and watch for the arrival of the messenger. It was a dark night, and the only light was niggardly bestowed from an oil-paper lamp burning over a little wicket which admitted into the stables of the inn. On each side of this was a bench running along the stone wall, for the accommodation of carriers and stablemen; and at the further end Ingulph ensconced himself, completely in the shade. He had shortly after occasion to laud himself on his precautions, for Taylor came to the door, and peered anxiously up and down the street. He began singing some of his usual snatches of ancient ballads, in which he delighted as much as in his own ribaldry,—

"God shield us all, but I must tell
What to a holy friar befel,
Gathering herbs by a haunted well!
Up from the fountain bubbled a sprite"—

He then paused for an instant, and continued—

"And say you this shoe,
Quoth the good man true
To his wife the shrew,
Belongs to you?
If not, says she, to the wandering Jew!"

He paused again, and finding no notice taken of his minstrelsy, whistled, and an ostler made his appearance.

"Get Jezabel rubbed down, and give her a hoop of ale for a smart trot," said the Water-Poet. "And tell Huncks, when he comes, to make no noise, for there are two suspicious-looking roundheads within, that are drinking small beer, as suits them."

He then returned into the inn, humming some words which Ingulph distinguished to be—

“Nine worthy women once there were;
So many together may well make you stare,
But so it was told me—I was not there.”

Ingulph was satisfied that the messenger was expected, and it gave him a gratification which was not unalloyed by a sentiment almost of remorse, as he ruminated over the vast consequences of the event. So balanced, or rather harassed, was his mind, that he felt almost rejoiced when the hour passed, and the messenger did not appear. Then again he reflected on the discredit into which a failure would bring him with the two chieftains, and a fit of impatience succeeded. He had worked himself pretty high in this, when the welcome tramp of a horse sounded on his wearied sense; and in a few instants, a horseman riding on a very besplashed jade, came trotting up to the inn.

Taylor seemed anxiously on the watch, for he instantly darted out and caught the rein.

“Get at once into the stable,” he said; “I’ll send thee a heart-warmer while they strap the saddle on the right horse; some day it will be worth to thee a hundred jacobuses.”

“Are there rogues about?” said a grating voice in reply, which Ingulph instantly recognised as that of his old friend, the provost-marshal.

“I’ll warrant where thou and I are,” replied mine host, who was not the man to lose his joke on any occasion. “Welsh roundheads—cheese-toasters;—get thee to the stables.”

Huncks complied by giving his nag a brutal kick, while the Water-Poet held the wicket open for him to pass. It closed, and each disappeared in a contrary direction. Ingulph instantly darted out of his concealment, and tapped at the window of the parlour; a signal which he had no occasion to repeat, for his companions almost simultaneously made their appearance.

“Where is he?” said Ireton. “The rogue of a poet is busy burning wine—make haste.”

“Follow,” replied Ingulph, opening the wicket, which he secured inside when his friends had entered. Then crossing to the stables, the object of their perquisitions appeared unsaddling his nag, while the ostler stood by, holding the fresh horse by the mane with one hand, while with the other he lazily extended a lamp.

"Hillo, my masters, what are ye doing here?" said Cromwell, stepping forward and drawing his sword,—an action imitated by his two coadjutors.

"What the foul fiend is that to your mother's son?" retorted the messenger, but evidently much startled.

"Thou shalt learn, friend Huncks," said Ingulph, clutching him by the collar of the doublet, and after a violent shake, sending him reeling backward.

"We are to search all that go in and out here," said Cromwell, taking the lamp from the ostler; and throwing the light full on the provost's face, he added, with a laugh, "but as you look as like an honest man as thy Tyburn face will let thee, we will only search the saddle, and then ride to the devil at thy pleasure."

Ireton meanwhile lifted off the saddle, and the three coadjutors turned into the stable, followed by the provost, loudly protesting his innocence. "I am a parliament servant," he exclaimed, "and have an office under them for a great treason I did the king at Oxford!"

"The liker to do us another in our turn," replied Cromwell; and Ingulph slit open the skirts of the saddle with his dagger, letting only bran out of one, but from the other the expected packet. The provost instantly fell on his knees, and called lustily for mercy.

"'Tis not needed, if you knew not your saddle was a post-bag," said Cromwell, hastily breaking the royal seal on the only letter which bore it. "Take it, and begone!—Nay, 'tis to no great purport!" he continued, glancing down the epistle with increasing darkness of visage. "Court gibes—jests—news of the latest cut in doublets—and the French mode to wear the sleeves double slashed."

He handed the paper over to Ireton, who held it that Ingulph might peruse at the same time. After reading it, Ireton handed over the letter with a sardonic smile, which was met with one full of bitterness and trouble from Cromwell.

"Go on thy way, as I said before; thou art an honest fellow, and thy saddle the lighter," said Cromwell. "Come, brothers, our work is done."

All three quitted the yard, and hastened back to Whitehall.

"Weak and perfidious tyrant! But he has sealed his own destruction," said Cromwell, after a short silence. "Forsooth, he is courted alike by both factions, but thinks rather to close with the Presbyterians! And the French madam reproaches him with making too large concessions to 'those

villains!' But, 'dear heart! rest thou assured that I shall know in due time what to do with the rogues, who instead of a silken garter shall be fitted with a hempen cord!' Look to it, Charles! thine own head is not so firm on thy shoulders as it was an hour hence!"

"But it may be he speaks thus out of his inordinate fondness for that lady, to pacify her," said Ingulph, with some lingering feeling which would not be utterly stifled.

"And so would hang us some fine morning by way of gallantry to his spouse!" said Ireton, with a laugh. "Master Cromwell, an' it likes you, you may play Wallenstein to this royal cheat; but henceforth the king's game is played out with me."

"There is no longer a king in England!" said Cromwell, stamping on the threshold of his dwelling, which they had now reached; "the monarchy of England died within this hour—sixteen hundred years though it be aged!"

CHAPTER L.

THE result of the discovery of the king's secret intentions, coupled with his conviction of the republican fury of the army, at length decided Cromwell on his terrible course. Ingulph returned to the host, commissioned to rekindle the stifled flames into full blaze, and to restore the confidence of the army in its leaders, by assurances that they had abandoned all intentions in favour of the king. Meanwhile Cromwell and Ireton pushed matters to extremity, and forced the parliament to propose to the king conditions which they knew it was impossible for him even to feign to accept. On his obstinate refusal, the vote of non-addresses was passed, and Charles was in fact, though not in words, dethroned.

But the game, though deepening in complexity, was neither lost nor won on either side. The now avowed designs against monarchy and the person of the king roused the royalists to fury, excited compassion in the great mass of the people, and stirred the Presbyterians to resistance, whose beloved covenant stipulated in a solemn manner for the safety of both. The Scots were exasperated with the obloquy they had acquired by the surrender of their monarch, and with the triumph of their hated rivals, the Independents. All parties increased in animosity and desperation, until the second civil

war broke out with all the gangrenous humours engendered by the first.

When all parties were fairly set down to the game, it seemed as if Cromwell and his coadjutors held a desperate hand. The majority in parliament, with London itself against them, was only kept down by military awe; and the insurrections which burst out in every direction, and the approaching invasion from Scotland, must speedily remove the shadow of their standards. Blow after blow fell on the Independents. The fleet revolted; divisions among themselves heightened the perplexity; Fairfax, either governed by his wife, or by the rigidity of the Presbyterian principles, refused to lead against the Scots. But the master genius of the times had arisen, and alone sufficed against all.

Leaving Ireton to govern Fairfax, and the latter to suppress the insurrection in the south, Cromwell rushed into Wales, and subdued the revolt there, ere it had assumed a formidable consistency. Thence he marched with such promptitude to repel the invasion of the Scots, that they scarcely thought he could have reached their Welsh brethren, ere he fell upon them at Preston, and utterly routed them. Pursuing his triumph, he proceeded to Edinburgh, and the divided capital of the enemy received the English general half as conqueror and half as deliverer.

In the south, the arbitration was not so rapid. Fairfax and Ireton repulsed the royalists in their intended march to London, but they seized in their retreat on the town of Colchester, and defended themselves with such vigour, that the assailants were obliged to form a regular siege. The revolted fleet rode at the mouth of the Thames, and under its countenance a rising in London was daily expected. Many officers commanded in the fleet known to be of great connection and interest with the city, among whom was the active and intriguing De la Pole.

The army being thus engaged, and the pressure of terror removed, the Presbyterian faction revived in all its energy. The object with its statesmen was to avail themselves of their regained power to form an alliance with the king, by which they hoped wholly to discomfit their opponents. The treaty of Newport was set on foot, and the king, at last aware of his danger, showed every inclination to accept the hard conditions offered him.

These news reached Scotland the day of Cromwell's solemn entry into Edinburgh, which was celebrated with all the pomp of a royal reception, the parliament and dignitaries of the

city meeting him in their robes of estate. He was lodged in Holyrood; and Ingulph, who had displayed the most reckless valour throughout the campaign, and was now in greater favour than ever, received instructions to be in attendance when the general retired to rest.

Ingulph found him in a narrow and very gloomy little chamber, which he had himself selected; and he dismissed the attendant who was unarming him, as soon as Ingulph made his appearance.

“I will not keep you long from your pillow, if the Scots have provided so marvellous a luxury,” said the general, smiling; “and for the reason that I intend you to be in the saddle at daybreak, on your way to a Christian land, where the trees are green, not black.”

“I am ready to-night, if it be to your excellency’s service,” said Ingulph.

“Nay, I am not excellency yet,” said Cromwell with a smile; and he added, after a moment’s pause, with great abruptness, “They tell me that David Rizzio—the paramour of Mary of Scots—was murdered in this chamber.”

“An unpleasing recollection, truly, for a sleeping chamber!” replied Ingulph, surveying the chamber with more attention.

“Nay, I mislike it not for that!” said Cromwell, thoughtfully. “Who knows?—after all, this great king, whose blood is so sacred, forsooth, may be but the grandson of an Italian fiddler. But concerning thy journey, and these late advices. Know you what Ireton privily writes me from Colchester siege?”

“I have heard none but the public news,” replied Ingulph.

“The cavaliers and presbyters are hastening their agreement, and then we are lost!” said Cromwell in a low tone. “So Ireton writes to me, that sooner than suffer it to be, he will march his army at once on London, and expel by force these traitorous parliament fellows, that are for giving us up to the Philistines, bound hand and foot.”

“And I am to go to him—to bid him do it at once?” exclaimed Ingulph, eagerly.

“Nay, but in a more humble and sweet manner—such as to present a gentle remonstrance, the skeleton whereof I will furnish you, in all love and reverence to the House,” said Cromwell, blandly. “If the army desires meekly to be its own messenger—but I see thou understandest me—in part. But there is more to be done. I must have the poor king’s

person put in safety. My cousin Hammond is a worthy man, a godly man—but he is foolishly sugared over by the man's sweet words, and is besides a blinded Presbyterian. Ireton has sent a little army to the island;—but—I would have him in a safer place.”

“If it is in the hands of the army, surely he is safe enough in the Isle of Wight?” said Ingulph, much surprised.

“I will have him in my own!” replied Cromwell, hastily; but observing Ingulph's look of inquiry, he continued—“I would not have our cause blackened by a privy assassination, or any such dark matter—and there are among us some who have embraced the accursed Antinomian doctrine of the lawfulness of all things to the chosen ones. I can trust in no man but thee; and thou shalt have ample powers until I return to be his custodian myself.”

Aware as Ingulph was of the fervid hatred entertained by many of the sectaries against the person of the king, this reasoning struck him in a vivid light,—but it was some time ere Cromwell prevailed upon him to accept the painful and dangerous office he proposed. He received his instructions, and the following morning's sunrise beheld him on the road to England.

Dethewarre arrived at Colchester on the very eve of its surrender, and communicated his instructions to Ireton. Meanwhile the parliament and king, aware of their increasing danger, hurried on their treaty. No time was to be lost; all the ancient springs were set to work; the famous Remonstrance was framed; and partly by the persuasions of his officers, partly by the open sedition of the troops, Fairfax consented to lead them to London to deliver it with their armed hands.

The Remonstrance was the first document which openly avowed an intention of altering the form of government, and of bringing the king to a personal judgment. The seizure of his person was now to be accomplished; and, as a preliminary, a large body of troops was dispatched to the Isle of Wight, to overawe both the governor and the people of the island, who were suspected of strong leanings to the king.

As if fate were bent on making him a chief instrument in the sovereign's ruin, Ingulph's reluctance to the part assigned him was overcome by intelligence that De la Pole had attempted Charles's rescue, and though foiled, was supposed to be still hovering, in a light ship which he commanded, about the island, to renew his attempt on any opportunity.

Ingulph hesitated no longer; and with a small but determined body of volunteers, started on his ill-omened enterprise.

A vessel of war, well armed, awaited him at Southampton; and embarking, they sailed, but were for some time baffled by an adverse wind. It became favourable, however, though still very violent, on turning into the Solent. Ingulph determined to land at Cowes, and to send the vessel round to Yarmouth, whence the transit to their destination was short, as well to spare the king the fatigue of a sea voyage as to avoid any danger of rescue.

Seated amid the shrouds at the prow of the vessel, the winds whistling, roaring and flapping among rigging and sails, the waves mountainously rolling and foaming to their summits, the sky black, riven, and distracted, Ingulph felt a strange satisfaction, as if his soul found sympathy in those blind and violent operations of nature, as if she too yielded to some irresistible and unreasoning destiny.

Yet milder and more relenting fancies would assail him; he remembered his childhood's awe at the very name of king,—the glory of majesty and power in which he first beheld the sovereign whom he was about to lead away a captive—perhaps to death—dethroned and helpless in the midst of three great kingdoms, once his own. Sometimes he could almost have imagined that he had fallen asleep in some of his old visions in the castle of De la Pole; and would awake anon to the old familiar summons of Adam Rising. But the dream of childhood cannot forestal the sufferings which only manhood can feel, and when Ingulph passed through all he had endured, in the intensity of his recollections, the milder feeling faded away.

The beautiful shores of the Isle of Wight shortly came in view, and they rushed into Cowes with their impelling wind. Here Ingulph learned the important news, that, driven by their fears, the Presbyterians had determined to conclude their bargain with the king. He hastened on to Newport.

Charles had been suffered to resume something of the state and service of a court, and Newport was crowded with his attendants and those of several great lords, his adherents, who had been allowed to wait on him. But the only fear of resistance to Ingulph's mission was from the governor, who had, however, he found, very judiciously retired to Carisbrook.

The king lodged at a gentleman's house in the market-place, and thither Ingulph instantly repaired with his dragoons.

The agitators of the great force assembled around Carisbrook at the same time received notice of what was to be done. Ingulph posted his troops all round the house and gardens, to the astonishment of the few persons who beheld him; and then proceeded alone to the gates. There he was met by the duke of Richmond, sent from the king to know his purpose.

Ingulph replied that he would only communicate it to the king himself; and after several messages were interchanged without result, an order came to admit the military visitant.

Ingulph's countenance remained unchanged as he mounted the stairs; yet something of the antique awe which the presence of sovereignty was wont to inspire in all men came over him, mingled with a multitude of contending emotions. But when the door opened, and he beheld the king standing in the midst of his few attendants; when he noted the change in his appearance, his long fair hair grizzled over, the natural melancholy of his countenance deepened into an expression of broken-heartedness; his neglected and even sordid dress; Ingulph's heart died away in his breast.

"Well, sir, you see the king," said Charles, gazing at the visitor with keen anxiety. "What is your business with him, or—office perchance? Are you so new a grandee as to be surprised to see a king without a crown on his head, like one in Bartlemy gingerbread?"

"I have orders—to convey your majesty forthwith from Newport," replied Ingulph, uncovering—a homage which the king acknowledged with a slight bend, and a look of extreme surprise.

"Whither, I pray you? To Carisbrook?" he said, with a troubled glance among his attendants, who stared in dumb amazement.

"Sire, no," replied Ingulph.

"Whither then?" returned Charles, hastily.

"Out of the Isle of Wight; but whither I am not to communicate," replied Ingulph, remembering the dreary fame and locality of Hurst Castle, to which he was to convey the king.

"I pray, sir, by your favour, let me see your orders," returned Charles. "Or do you bring them like Master Joyce, in your pistols?"

"Your majesty will be pleased to excuse me," said Ingulph, respectfully but firmly.

"You speak not with that fierceness king-catchers should have," said Charles. "Come forth, I pray you, to the light,

for the dusk shadow gives you the aspect of a crape-masked assassin !”

“I am no assassin, sire,” replied Ingulph, stepping reluctantly forward ; and throwing back the dark masses of his hair, his pale and quivering countenance was very visible.

“The times are changed since I first saw that face of yours, Master Dethewarre !” said Charles, mournfully. “Howbeit, let it go with the rest ; I say it not to reproach you, for you at least have not had benefits only to revenge on me. But I would fain know whether your orders or instructions are from parliament or the general of the army ?”

“From neither,” replied Ingulph.

“I guess well, you are deputy from the new Venetian council of darkness, then !” said the king, with asperity. “But surely one who has eaten of my bread—one whose features are stamped with those lineaments—cannot lend himself to the foul, secret, and sacrilegious murder of his native prince ?”

“Your majesty need not fear it, while in my custody,—my life answers for the king’s,” replied Ingulph.

“Except in that way, I know not what I should fear,” said Charles, more cheerfully ; “and since I must needs obey your masters, I am glad they have sent me no worse jailer.”

Ingulph bowed, and the duke of Richmond, in a voice broken by sobs, demanded permission to accompany the king. But Ingulph’s instructions were positive ; none but the king’s personal servants were to be allowed to follow him. Then hastily retiring, he left the afflicted courtiers to their lamentations and farewells, while he made the necessary preparations for the journey.

In a few hours the cavalcade reached the place of embarkation, and Charles went on board with his attendants and capturers. Ingulph purposely kept himself at a distance ; but once on board, it was not possible, for the king was now exceedingly anxious to know whither he was going. As it could no longer answer any purpose to withhold the information, Ingulph informed him.

“To Hurst Castle !” exclaimed the unhappy king with a visible shudder. “’Tis the worst in England ! and perchance for that reason the fittest for what is to be done in it.”

“If those who sent me needed a butcher or a bravo, I know not what in me should have prompted them to their choice,” said Ingulph, moved with the dismal ideas which he saw possessed the king’s mind.

“That they have chosen you is perchance but argument that they have darker means at work, which must be varnished with fair show,” said Charles, sternly. “Who can assure me what nooks and crannies may be in the antique ruin we go to; the deaf sea only to listen, the blind waves only to see! Perchance, like my ancestor, Richard the Second, my doom is planned of so subtle a horror that humanity cannot suspect it. But in thy hands, my God! do I put my life, and all that is mine; and do not hope, young man, to cement a durable edifice of fortune with your sovereign’s blood!”

“Do I look like an assassin, sire?” exclaimed Ingulph, suddenly turning from the respectful side-glance which he was keeping on the sea; and Charles looked at him so long and intently that he grew somewhat confused, though unwilling to betray the feeling by shunning his observation.

“Certes, no,” replied Charles, in a softened tone; “though a soldier, you may hear it without offence; you are like a lady who, in my father’s court, was not held the least fair—one, too, of your blood, if in truth you do not disavow that loyal De la Pole lineage which you have been even too eager to claim.”

Ingulph bit his lip, and coloured darkly, but was silent, and there was a long pause.

“Poor De la Pole!” said the king at last. “Be not troubled that I love him, and for his sake would cheerfully welcome back his brother to duty. Has your vessel a consort?” he concluded abruptly.

The king was looking to the west as he spoke, where the waves were running with the most gorgeous hues against the line of the setting sun; and in the distance a barque with all its canvass spread was visible crossing the light. Ingulph knew that no vessel of the parliament was in that narrow sea; but discerning that the galleon, to whomever it belonged, could not pretend to cope in force with his own, he replied in the negative.

The continued anxiety with which the king and his attendants watched the vessel convinced Ingulph that they either suspected or recognised it to be De la Pole’s. But the galleon itself seemed to take alarm at the apparition of the powerful vessel which carried the prisoner, and tacked away from them, against the wind, with most suspicious diligence. Still it continued during the whole transit visible, like a swallow on the waves, and so intently was it observed by the king, that

he took little notice of their approach to Hurst, until the distant rumble of a signal gun was heard, and the castle appeared looming out of the white sea-mist.

It was a dark granite pile, occupying the extremity of a narrow peninsula which reached to the mainland; and, indeed, well fitted for a deed of darkness and horror it seemed. Even Ingulph was alarmed when he surveyed the dismal aspect of the fortress, with its narrow loop-windows, and high battlements set with culverins and sakers. The sea rolled with a continual roar up the steep and shingly beach, which it strewed with black weeds; and the winds seemed howling in contention with it as they rushed over the towers, whirling the white fog around in fantastic and spectral forms.

CHAPTER LI.

THE captain of the place came out to meet them, with a surly and brutal air, which matched well with his abode, coarsely garbed, and wielding a partizan as if he expected to encounter an enemy. Ingulph's surprise was great when he recognized in this bravo, Huncks, the provost.

"So, your majesty has come at last, now that we have well-nigh strained our eyes out looking for you seaward," said the worthy captain, with great insolence of manner, and keeping his hat on.

"Stand you covered in this presence?" said Ingulph, with a sudden kindling of disgust; and seizing the captain's hat by its rusty feather, he tossed it off on the sands, and the violent wind instantly rushed on with it into the surge.

"I thank you, Master Dethewarre," said Charles, with unusual warmth; the captain glared fiercely, but probably recollecting the intercepted letter, only muttered: "I beg his majesty's mighty pardon, but methinks the weather is too cold to stand on nice ceremonies," and he plunged after his hat into the tide. Shaking his watery plume, and with his boots foamy to the knees, the provost returned, and sullenly led the way to his keep.

Entering at a narrow gateway, they ascended to the apartments prepared for the king. It was a range of low, dark chambers, very scantily illuminated by narrow apertures in the walls, the boom of the sea sounding immediately below.

There was little furniture, and of a coarse description, and a charcoal fire burned low on the bare hearth.

"This is not Whitehall," said Charles, after a long and dismal survey. "Yet a man may die here as well as elsewhere. But how is this, captain? Have your masters so far consulted my tastes as to hang these prison vaults with pictures?"

"There is one; it came from London with the other garniture, an't please," replied Huncks, sullenly, tossing the light of the pitch torch which he carried towards a large canvass in an ebony frame. Charles glanced up, and suddenly grew very pale.

"'Tis the damp air masters me," said he, seating himself faintly in a chair which one of his attendants hastened to bring. "And yet, I do marvel wherefore they have sent this portrait hither!"

Ingulph glanced at the picture with some interest, and as Huncks pertinaciously held the torch up to it, though with little of the expression of a connoisseur, he was startled to recognise the portrait of the Lady Editha De la Pole, which he had formerly noticed in the king's gallery at Whitehall.

"Do you know why it has been brought hither?" said the king, with a piercing glance at Ingulph. "And now, indeed, you look very like her!—'Tis the lady of whom I spoke erewhile—a famous beauty—in my father's court."

"To my knowledge, I have seen it but once before," said Ingulph, mournfully, for the events of that night rushed back upon his memory. "But I have not the vanity to think I do any way favour so fair a lady."

"I have ever thought so; from the first moment I saw you—a boy—at De la Pole Castle," said Charles, in a very troubled tone. "But I do need rest; I pray you, leave me."

Ingulph thankfully complied, and withdrew, relieving both himself and his prisoner by his departure.

His first business was to examine on what degree of security he could rely in the custody of his royal prisoner. The castle, he found, was more formidable in appearance than in reality. Most of the guns were useless, with rust and sea-damp, but he caused several new pieces to be landed from the ship, which remained in the offing, as an additional security. The garrison consisted only of some dozen ruffianly fellows, probably at the governor's devotion, and in whom he therefore resolved to place no confidence. In all the points of

trust he forthwith placed his own troops, a proceeding which seemed to be very disagreeable to the official, but he troubled himself little on that score. Whether he considered this man in his old light of royalist, or in his new one of renegade, he seemed only doubtfully dangerous; and when he remembered the hatred against the king's person cherished by many leaders of the army,—the fanatic fury which possessed the lower ranks, the mercenary character of the captain, the seclusion of the place,—dark fancies glided irresistibly into his mind.

The issue of the military advance on London was unknown and very doubtful; even if entirely successful, was it probable that the leaders of the army would dare to entertain the stupendous project of bringing the king to an open trial in the midst of three nations, against whose declared masses they formed so small an aggregate? If not,—to be rid of the king was so naturally a part of their policy,—that although Ingulph would not imagine that either Cromwell or Ireton would join in so atrocious a proceeding, a vague but profound dread seized him that some project of the kind might be entertained.

Several days, however, passed without any disturbance, and during that period Ingulph awaited news from London, and devoted himself as much as possible to lightening the king's dejection. He permitted him to walk when he pleased, along the little peninsula, of course well guarded, and accompanied by himself. The natural reserve and austerity of Charles's manners had returned, increased by the irritation of his sufferings, and the intense anxiety under which he obviously laboured. He rarely spoke to Ingulph, and when he did speak, it was on subjects probably as remote as possible from the dominant thoughts in both their minds.

The beauty of the sea views, with the bold Hampshire coast stretching in one direction, that of the Isle of Wight in another, the broad sea expanding in the sunshine as far as the eye could reach in a third, formed panoramas of great magnificence and interest. Ingulph noticed that the king often paused and gazed earnestly whenever a sail appeared in sight, with what thoughts he could readily conjecture, and which the king's efforts to conceal rendered more affecting.

Returning from one of these excursions, Ingulph learned some news which increased his growing impatience and apprehensions in his charge. He usually left Joyce to command in the castle during his absence, to the great wrath of

the castellan, who yet knew not how to resist. But Joyce now mentioned that the governor had been out at sea for several hours, in his boat, daily, under pretext of procuring some fish for the king's dinner; and always returned without any, and vociferously cursing his ill luck. Without some more definite cause of suspicion, however, Ingulph felt that to take any open step would be needlessly to arouse fears or hopes which were likely to be equally futile.

On pretence of his former rudeness to the king, Ingulph had forbidden the captain to enter the royal presence; but on some pretext or another he frequently slighted this prohibition. Meanwhile news arrived from London. The parliament had at first preserved an attitude of bold defiance, voted for peace with the king, and that the seizure of his person was against their will, and an act of high treason. But Pride's purge was administered, and the army were now absolute masters. The council of officers sent word to Ingulph to redouble his precautions, in the guard of his royal prisoner.

At the same time Ingulph's suspicions that some false play was intended revived. Joyce informed his commander that the fishermen who frequented the castle, almost invariably came when he was absent, in attendance on the king's morning walks. To ascertain the good faith of these visitants became at length a matter of anxiety with Ingulph, and he determined to test it by a manœuvre. One day when he had proceeded some distance with the royal party, he feigned to recollect some order which he ought to have given, made his excuses, and rapidly returned to the castle. Joyce met him by preconcert, and with news that the usual fishermen had arrived, and that Huncks was on the shore with them, apparently engaged in chaffering for their scaly merchandize.

Ingulph hastened to the beach, but from its exposed situation he was seen before he could arrive: and the fishermen took to their boat with a precipitation which bore no evidence to the innocence of their intentions. The figure of one of these, even the glimpse of his features which he caught in the distance, persuaded Ingulph that it was Lord De la Pole. He advanced rapidly on the captain, and found him apparently trying the weight of a great cod in his hand, whistling, but very confusedly.

Ingulph made no secret of his suspicions; and he accosted the captain so roughly and abruptly that for some moments he could not shape an answer. With great dexterity Ingulph accused him so flatly of a conspiracy with De la Pole, that

imagining all was discovered, the provost confessed that he had promised him to aid in attempting the king's liberation. De la Pole was to be in waiting, if he could obtain Charles's consent, with his boat under the tower in which the king was confined. By means of a ladder of rope Charles was to descend from his window; but Huncks swore with many oaths that he had intended to be in ambush, and shoot the king as he descended, having been assured of a large reward to effect his destruction.

Disbelieving this story as he did in great measure, Ingulph thought it was an opportunity to put the king on his guard against the treacherous lures which more than any direct attempts he dreaded. He ordered Huncks to be taken to his presence, under a guard, and there compelled him to repeat his confession. Huncks, in terror of his life, dared not retract, but he positively refused to divulge who were the instigators of his treacherous plot, only declaring that the council of officers knew nothing about it.

The probability of his falling into such a snare immediately struck the king, and convinced him at all events of Ingulph's good faith, though his suspicions increased of the ultimate measures resolved by the grandees of the army against him. He thanked the young commander with as much warmth as his stately and reserved nature permitted; and demanded that Huncks should be sent to London, with a complaint of his nefarious conduct.

As a means of warning the council, if they entertained such perfidious and cruel projects, that he would not suffer their execution, Ingulph consented, and the provost took his departure in chains. To guard against any worse attempts, he then removed his lodgings to a suite of apartments below the king's, extremely desolate and damp, but which commanded all the means of access to him from the interior.

One night, shortly after this occurrence, Ingulph retired to rest, or rather to another kind of restlessness, his anxieties being always prolonged and often fearfully exaggerated in dreams. His chamber was over the drawbridge by which the castle was entered from the mainland, but the sea beat incessantly against one of the walls. It was perhaps the murmur of the water which influenced his imagination in a singular dream, shortly after he had retired to rest. He thought that his chamber was full of persons engaged in a muttering consultation how to effect the king's murder. All the fears with which his waking fancy was haunted, took the voices of

various speakers, and among the rest was Stonehenge busily urging that they should throw the king from the battlements into the sea.

While this point was discussing, recollections of the scene in the gallery at Whitehall glided in. The lady of the picture seemed to kneel at Ingulph's couch, and in passionate silence to abjure his interposition. He thought that he sprang up to seize his sword, while the murderers rushed with hideous uproar to the king's chamber!—And in truth he found himself sitting upright in bed bathed in a cold dew; but the sound which had disturbed him had a real existence. He heard the drawbridge go creaking down, and the clatter of horses' hoofs on it was distinctly audible.

Although the faithful Joyce was left on guard, Ingulph's immediate idea was that the castle was betrayed, and that instead of the prisoner's murderers, his own were approaching. Resolving to sell his life as dearly as might be, he grasped both sword and pistols, and rushed to the door. But ere he could arrive, Joyce's cheerly voice met his ear, the door flew open, and he appeared demurely lighting in a weather-stained traveller, whom Ingulph instantly recognised as Colonel Harrison.

"I marvel you sleep not in armour in such a charge!" said Harrison, entering. "But I am come to relieve you of it, for all I did earnestly ask of the Lord that he would rather set me on any other work to his glory; but beggars cannot be choosers, and here I am, dog-weary."

Ingulph's countenance exhibited no sign of welcome, but Harrison troubled himself in no degree on that score. He proceeded to take off his riding habiliments and boots, with all the air of a master returned from a short absence; a process in which Joyce assisted, though with manifest sulkiness, and many a querent glance at his young commander. But Ingulph's thoughts were occupied in considering on what errand this gloomiest and most relentless of the fanatics had arrived to supersede him. He also apprehended in what light the midnight disturbance would appear to the king, if he noticed it; and altogether was too much troubled on greater matters to heed the assumption of his visitor.

"I have been wanting in no diligence that might become an honest man in mine office, Master Harrison," he said, after a pause. "But your coming is a satisfaction so out of hope, that I would fain know what cause has brought you?"

"The cause of the Lord, verily, since He hath owned it

against all enemies, backsliders, and lookers back on Sodom!" replied Harrison, with a suspicious glance. "But pray you, give me to eat, for until the day-spring comes, man cannot altogether subsist on the spiritual manna."

Ingulph desired Joyce to send up the contents of his larder, but his further questioning was interrupted by the colonel falling on his knees, and uttering a long prayer of thanksgiving on his safe arrival. Even the entry of the viands did not cut short this effusion, until the fountain itself ran dry.

"You have ridden far assuredly to get so good an appetite," said Ingulph, as soon as the rage of hunger was somewhat appeased in his guest. "But you have yet to tell me the wherefore of your hasty travel, and what are the news with us in London."

"With *us!*" repeated Harrison, with a somewhat sarcastic emphasis. "'Tis like,—yet I know not if such be of pleasant savour in thy nostrils, to prove the utter confounding of the Hittite, the Amorite, and the Perizzite! All have been equally astounded, and the Philistines have lost all hope in the sword and chariot and steed that snuffs the battle from afar, and says Aha!—Yea, even the weakness of some vessels has proved a strength, and the reluctancy of others to advance has only pushed them on the farther and faster."

"But what is your errand from Israel into Canaan?—our grapes are of no unusual size, at least," said Ingulph, looking round the bare walls and thence at the military saint. •

"The blood of the saints splashes up to the heavens for vengeance!" said Harrison, enthusiastically. "The destruction of this monstrous criminal is determined, were it from this hand alone!"

"By your leave, I am answerable for the king's safety," said Ingulph; "and no man shall endanger it, but with his own."

"By your leave, you are discharged from the trust, and ordered instantly to betake yourself to head-quarters in London!" retorted Harrison, producing a letter from Cromwell, requiring him to resign the custody of the king to the bearer, and hasten to him at Whitehall.

"'Tis so written here!" said Ingulph, much agitated. "But, Colonel Harrison, I am put in this office by resolution of the army, not by the lieutenant-general."

"You are then won over by the man's cajoleries, as Master Huncks feelingly advertises us!" said Harrison, bitterly. "Else wherefore do you wrestle in the dark with angels, yea,

stand in the chariot-way of his coming whose wheels are clothed in thunder?"

The tinkle of the little silver bell with which the king usually summoned his attendant, was now heard.

"Some such visible manifestation—nay, scarcely that—shall convince me of the righteousness of any secret plot against my prisoner's life!" said Ingulph, searching what effect this intimation might have on the millenarian.

Harrison laughed in a loud discordant manner, as he replied, "Deem you we dare not bring the crowned malefactor to an open justice? I will tell you that I am here to no other purpose but to bring this brazen idol into the heart of his kingdoms, there to answer the charge of the good but despoiled people of England."

This communication was some relief to Ingulph's anxiety; but by this time the colonel was tired of answering questions, and betook himself to his host's bed as naturally as if it had been made for him. He was soon fast asleep, but Ingulph, not at all tempted by the prospect of such a bedfellow, sat down by the fire, and spent the time in melancholy rumination. The continued howl and whistle of the winds, with the surfy murmur of the sea, bore dismal burden to his meditations, until a timid tap at the door which communicated with the king's suite startled him from his reverie. He opened the door, which was bolted, and admitted Master Herbert, one of the king's attendants.

The face of this gentleman exhibited evident signs of consternation; and he informed Ingulph, that his majesty having been much disturbed by the noise in the night, desired to know the cause. Aware that he must soon learn, Ingulph replied with feigned indifference, that it was Colonel Harrison, on some business from the army. Herbert retired with this answer, and in a short time made his re-appearance with the king's request to see Master Dethewarre at breakfast.

Ingulph complied, and found his royal prisoner pallid and exhausted, as if after a sleepless night, with his repast untasted before him. His eyes were instantly fixed on his custodian, with an expression of piercing anxiety.

"We had late visitors last night?" said Charles, with forced composure. "As I imagine they are not without some intention of paying their respects to us in our state, we would fain know who they are, and what is their business?"

"Colonel Harrison, to relieve me of my charge, sire," said Ingulph.

“Did he come on his pale horse, like Death in Revelations?” said Charles, with a ghastly smile. “No, Master Dethewarre, you cannot pretend to be ignorant of it; this is the man who intended to assassinate me during the late treaty, and is now sent hither to execute his fell heart’s cruelty; but think not that heaven or man will ever acquit you of this sacrilegious murder, for that you do but give the door-key to the murderer!”

“Your majesty wholly mistakes,” said Ingulph, with great emotion; “the colonel brings orders to escort you to Windsor Castle.”

“To Windsor Castle!—mine own pleasant and right royal home!—It is impossible,” replied Charles, with a momentary flash of joy. “No, no, they dare not, they dare not, show to my people their sovereign in chains!—Tell me the worst, good youth!—I trust in God, but I would not be surprised.”

“Undoubtedly, sire, you are to go to Windsor; which may be believed, for ’tis in contemplation to bring you to the bar as a common criminal,” said Ingulph, aware that no future evil could be of so much terror as the present one which the king apprehended.

“’Tis enough; the falsehood is apparent; I am to be murdered here, and you have but amused me until the knife was sharpened!” said Charles, rising and hurriedly pacing the chamber. “Ha, a poet, and devise no fable more probable than that the king of England, the descendant of a hundred kings, beloved by the majority of his people, in the very centre and heart of his empire, should be brought to the bar like a common pickpocket!—Go to!—Who shall judge the king? Where are my peers assembled, with my only superior, the Eternal Majesty itself, for assessor? Go to! ’Tis thou art my murderer! And, therefore, do I now perceive why that mask, thy visage, resembles so nearly the hapless lady whom my youth loved—whom the crimes of others and my folly betrayed!”

Ingulph was powerfully affected during this indignant burst; but the last words, which seemed to reproach him with his illegitimate birth, restored him to composure. He answered coldly, that the king wronged him, and was about to retire, when Charles suddenly darted forward and caught him by the hilt of his sword.

“Stay! I do not mean to draw it,” he said, hurriedly. “All I ask of you is that you will obtain it shall be done without any unnecessary cruelty, and not as when they thrust

the red-hot irons into Edward's bowels; but it deceived no one, and brought down a curse for ages on the land!"

Ingulph stood for a moment in silent horror, while Herbert wept aloud.

"That was royal vengeance,—you have only to dread a people's justice," he said at last, faintly.

"Have you forgotten Hunck's plot?" returned Charles. "And dare you say there is aught of treachery and cruelty not to be dreaded from those who planned it?"

"I cannot—I do not!" said Ingulph, after a long pause of profound rumination. "And in proof, I will not relinquish the custody of your royal person—not leave you—until you are safe at Windsor."

"Do you swear it, Ingulph?" returned the king.

"Yes, by all my wrongs!—'tis the Styx I swear by," replied Ingulph, gloomily, and Charles embraced him with a warmth approaching to tenderness. Renewing his protestation with a fervour which his young heart could not but feel at this extraordinary effusion on the part of the usually austere monarch, Ingulph withdrew to announce his determination, promising to return with the result.

CHAPTER LII.

DETHEWARRE found Colonel Harrison still asleep, and patiently waited during several mortal hours, until he was at last pleased to awake. His first measures opened a way to the explanation, for he began giving orders to Joyce and the soldiers as if he were lord paramount.

"Your pardon, colonel, but I have already given directions in all matters relating to the garrison," he said, demurely. "Therefore, Joyce, you need not trouble yourself to set sentinels on the weathercock, which, I presume, Master Harrison will next ordain."

"You have been closeted with the man up-stairs to some purpose!" said Harrison, with a sneer. "But mean you to say, that you disobey the orders sent you by your commanding officer?"

"I mean to say, colonel, that having received my instructions from another authority, I will surrender the king's person to none but it," replied Ingulph.

“Prithee, what authority?” said the millenarian, with sudden attention, but very fiercely.

“What I denied to his majesty’s request, I shall scarcely grant to your command,” returned Ingulph, calmly.

“Have a care, Master Dethewarre, I have my own and Pierrepoint’s regiment on the other side of yon strip of land!” returned Harrison.

“But you are yourself on this side,” said Ingulph; and Joyce, who stood by, joyously snapped his fingers.

“Verily, I wish I had brought them with me when I came,” said Harrison, much amazed.

“Verily, I doubted to let in those few who came with you, Master Colonel,” said Joyce. “The old gate will stand a bang or two, and we have two good culverins over it; and the strip of land is dangerous travelling for ordnance, when only four thin fellows can come abreast on it.”

“You are, then, resolved to betray the Lord and all his saints, and turn cavalier?” exclaimed Harrison. “You openly and mutinously refuse to obey your orders?”

“Not so; but no other man shall obey them in my stead,” replied Ingulph. “I will bring the king to Windsor, peacefully, if I am allowed; but sooner than any shall take him from my care, I will make this castle good to the last stone; and then embark with him, and take him to London by the waters.”

In vain did Harrison attempt to move him from this determination with alternate threats and entreaties. Ingulph’s suspicions were only strengthened by his obstinate efforts, and at last Harrison desisted in pure despair. He remained two days in the castle, under pretence of resting from his fatigue; but finding himself closely watched, he departed in high dudgeon, promising that he would send him orders from London which he would not despise.

The confidence and even affection which the king conceived for Dethewarre on this triumphant result were great, though his habitual caution or reserve allowed him but few expressions of either. Believing that the real intention was to murder him, and that it was thus foiled, he seemed to apprehend no open danger, and earnestly pressed Ingulph to take advantage of the feigned desire for his transmission to Windsor, to escort him thither, ere Harrison could return armed with ampler powers. Ingulph himself, with something of the divine sentiment which moves us to cherish what we have benefited, imagined it the sole extrication from his many con-

tending passions and perplexities. The influence which he felt the fallen sovereign's presence had produced in himself, made him almost share his confidence in the powerlessness of his enemies to proceed in the manner they had declared to intend.

The abstract notion, sublime in itself, of bringing a sovereign who had misused his power to the same justice as a meaner criminal, took another aspect when the individual man, on whom the punishment was to fall, stood before him. His patience, dignity, and sufferings, under so vast a load of misfortune, affected Ingulph more than he dared avow to himself. Vague thoughts that his beloved republic might be established by removing the crown from the head, not the head from the crown, began to float in his visions. They set forward to London, but the very circumstances which seemed to encourage the king's hopes were perhaps the most fatal to them. The miserable circumstances in which their sovereign was now placed, had mollified the hearts of the people towards him; which, with the general dislike of the military usurpation, and curiosity, collected great masses to see the king on his progress. The mayors and corporations of the great towns ventured to receive him with royal honours, and the king's cheerfulness and hopes hourly increased.

The first chill awaited the monarch on the road to Farnham, where they were met by Harrison with a little army. Contrary to his general custom, Harrison was in a very showy dress, insomuch that he attracted the king's attention. He inquired of Dethewarre who he was, and seemed surprised when he heard; and continued looking so earnestly at Harrison, that he retired among his troopers in some confusion.

To ascertain his sentiments with regard to himself, Ingulph rode up to him, and saluting him with an air of gaiety, congratulated him on his handsome appearance.

"The servants of the bridegroom should be ready to receive him," was the colonel's sullen reply, and he abruptly handed a paper to Ingulph. Harrison could scarcely have known the whole contents, for although the rescript contained a positive command for Ingulph to hasten instantly to London, it was only to take the command of a regiment, to which he was appointed by Fairfax and Cromwell.

Nevertheless, he would not leave his attendance on the king until he was safely lodged in Windsor, where he was received apparently with the respect due to his former rather than his present state. Charles was in such excellent spirits,

that when Ingulph came before him to take his leave, and according to the state which was now observed to him, knelt to kiss the sovereign's hand, he suddenly drew the young man's sword and knighted him before he had the opportunity to decline the honour.

"This is but an earnest of my favour; I trust I shall yet prove it in a way as far beyond your hopes as you can dream," said the king, with peculiar amenity. "And with that intent, I hope to see you soon again among the negotiators of a blessed and lasting peace."

CHAPTER LIII.

ON arriving, London presented, to Ingulph, much the aspect of a city held by foreign invaders. The entrances were strictly guarded, and defended by cannon; wherever the eye turned, it encountered the glitter of casque or partizan. In fact, London was now the central point of the armies dispersed so lately in victory all over the kingdom, and which were now collected around the capital to consummate the last act of the prodigious drama.

Doubting that he had greatly offended the grandees of the army and Cromwell, by his refusal to obey their commands, the latter consideration pressed heavily on Ingulph's heart. But he was too proud to attempt recovering his place in favour by any mean submission, and he determined to wait on Fairfax alone, though he well knew him to be only general in name.

Fairfax had taken up his quarters in a part of the modern palace of Whitehall, separated by the gardens from Stonehenge's gloomy keep. On arriving, Ingulph found the gates guarded by men whose principles he knew so well that he could not doubt that they were literally guards on the general.

Escorted by one of these grim pages, Ingulph proceeded to the general's presence. Approaching a large gilded door which stood ajar, a female voice was audible in a raised and excited tone, which, but that it was naturally melodious, might have been called scolding.

"And if you *do* consent!" the voice exclaimed, "you are a traitor and a dastard, and have betrayed all your oaths! and the sign of the covenant is truly but a rainbow, gilding for a while the black devices of these fanatic villains!"

Fairfax began to reply in a calm and somewhat submissive tone, when the soldier threw open the door, and Ingulph entered. Beside the lord-general and his wife, whose voice was that he had overheard, the earl of Northumberland and two ladies were present. Both the latter wore vizards, but one had removed hers and was coquettishly playing with it. It was Lady Carlisle; but the still masked figure! Ingulph cast but one glance at her, and never dared to look again.

The earl looked profoundly grave; Fairfax puzzled and vexed; his wife flushed, and her eyelids reddened with the frequent and disdainful stanching she was obliged to administer to her tears. But all glanced at Ingulph in great surprise.

“Some new command for your excellency from the council of war!” said Lady Fairfax, curtsying with scornful depth. Ingulph bowed still more profoundly, and replied, steadying his voice with difficulty,—“My name is Dethewarre, madam; I have seen none of the council of war, and am here humbly to thank your excellency for your kind censure of my proceedings, and to know your commands in my new service.”

“Prithee what new service?” said Fairfax, haughtily.

Ingulph, in a low tone, named the regiment to the command of which he had been raised.

“Truly, the lieutenant asked it of me for a deserving officer—a friend of his!” said the lord-general, with a dubious stare. “But I thought that he—that the council of war—to refuse obedience to a superior strikes at the root of all military rule; and chieftiest, at my power, who am, carnally speaking, the supreme leader and general of these forces, under God.”

“Shame on you, Fairfax, if this be the noble gentleman who brought the king from Hurst Castle!” said Lady Fairfax, warmly. “If you know not what to say, I’ll give you words, and tell you, sir, you have discharged your duty like a true man and a gallant soldier. Would I could say the like of all, and we should have tinkers botching old saucepans—not the state.”

“Women have tongues, women have tongues, you wot, Master Dethewarre,” said the general, with laboured pleasantness. “But surely you have seen the lieutenant?—No!—and knighted, too, or folks lie!—But truly I am glad his majesty’s sacred person is lodged in safety.”

“And yet you will suffer him to be led, like our blessed

Lord himself, to the bar of the persecutors?" exclaimed the vehement lady.

"Foundlings, draymen, low born, nameless rogues!" muttered Northumberland.

"What is this you talk?" exclaimed the general, pettishly, "I am but the first of a running mob; whoso halts, stayeth them not, and is himself trampled."

"Nay, but as poor Waller might have said—you are the rudder which turns the whole barque," said Lady Carlisle, with a smile like those of the olden time, but somewhat dimmed, on Ingulph.

"Which striving to turn the vessel in a stormy sea, is itself reft and rent away!" said the young republican, hastily.

"My Lady De la Pole is not well," exclaimed Lady Carlisle, suddenly rising. "Take mine arm love; we will get into the air."

The lady in the vizard arose feebly, and walked swimmingly over the floor, leaning on the countess's arm; but although Ingulph was near the door, he made not the least attempt, which in common politeness he ought, to open it.

"Poor child!" murmured Fairfax, mournfully. "The vengeance of Heaven is indeed poured from full vials on this nation, when so innocent and beauteous a soul escapes not the general plague."

"Alack, she faints!" exclaimed Lady Carlisle, snatching the vizard from her companion's face as she went tottering back; and she must have fallen, had not Ingulph darted forward, and caught her in his arms.

But she did not become insensible. Her face indeed was pale, as if sculptured in marble, but the expression of agony yielded not to the calm of forgetfulness. She murmured something indistinctly, which sounded like thanks, and sunk with a deep sigh into a chair, where Lady Carlisle continued fanning her with the vizard.

The sight of the beautiful victim of aristocratical prejudices rekindled all the republican in Ingulph's soul. He turned to the general, and in an altered tone requested to know if his excellency had any further commands.

"I have given none that I wot of," said Fairfax, perplexedly. "What we do we all do of one mind.—But your regiment being quartered in the hall of this mutinous city, and therefore a place of great notability and some danger—I would you should go before the council of officers, who meet shortly in the banqueting-hall, to know their will."

“And I would, that now Master Dethewarre knows his general’s, he troubles himself in no respect about the matter,” said Lady Fairfax, passionately.

“Then even do as ye will—all of ye!” exclaimed the general, rising angrily. “For on my faith, the meanest soldier in my army is less commanded than I am.”

Symptoms of altercation now became visible, and Ingulph hastened to take his departure, which he accomplished with one—but one—glance, where once he could have fixed his gaze for ever without weariness.

Stung by the recollections which this vision conjured up in his soul, like sleeping snakes awakened by the chance gleam of some traveller’s fire, Ingulph wandered along so absently, that it was with a start he found himself opposite Holbein’s Gate. And at the same time a figure which had long followed him, but of which he had hitherto only taken a dreamy cognizance, came up to him. It was the mulatto. Even this man was much changed, and his thick black hair was grizzled over in a way which contrasted curiously with his dark visage.

Carefully shunning to meet his eye, the mulatto informed Ingulph that Master Stonehenge desired to see him; and without waiting for question, moved on as if to guide to the place where he might be found. It was not without a moment’s intense hesitation that Ingulph resolved to follow.

With a heart swelling full of anguish he crossed the well-known gardens, which lay now utterly neglected and desolate. But when they reached the entrance of the old palace, Lolo muttered that he would find his master in the laboratory in the tower, and disappeared so suddenly that Ingulph wondered whither.

Satisfied by the wish expressed for his presence, but inwardly marvelling for what purpose he was needed, Ingulph pursued his way through the long ranges of passages and winding stairs which led to the ancient tower.

Still, so doubtful was he of the state of mind or intentions of Stonehenge, that he mounted the stairs to his apartment very softly, intending first to reconnoitre the ground. The murmur of several voices as he approached the laboratory, admonished him to increase his caution; and mounting with breathless softness he reached the door, and gently pushed it ajar in such a manner that he could see what was going on in the chamber, without being himself immediately noticed. And certes the sight was sufficiently mysterious.

In addition to the usual strange and sinister-looking furniture of the laboratory, on opposite sides of the room were now two short pillars or pedestals of brass, engraven with inscriptions in hieroglyphics, on each of which, in silver vases, flamed fires of naphtha and eastern drugs in pyramidal shapes. Between these two pedestals was a table, on each side of which stood an iron chair, of singular construction, as if to gratify some peculiar notions of convenience.

The red glow of the flames mingled with an inexpressibly gloomy effect with the melancholy shades of sunset through the lozenge-shaped glass of the lattices. Around these pedestals where seven or eight ecclesiastics, in the precision garb, attentively surveying divers quaintly carved toys and figures handed to them by a personage whom Ingulph recognised as Hopkins the witch-finder. The air of conceit and infallibility in this man's visage contrasted with the doubting, fearful looks of the persons whom he addressed, very singularly. They all looked pale and strongly excited, and not without a cause, since all had been fasting for many hours to obtain a blessing on their arduous task.

"God's life! (saving your reverences,) I fear there can be but little doubt in the matter!" Hopkins was saying, as he curiously surveyed a little carving which he held in his hand. "'Tis of pure gold, and is either the image of some demon which she worships (for you know, Master Calamy—none better!" that witchcraft, popery, and idolatry, go together); or 'tis the means whereby she tortures that excellent and unhappy gentleman, her husband—though I see no pins stuck in it, and in general they are of wax;—but, poor man, who that sees the taking he is in, but must conclude concerning what hellish devices are practised against him!—Well, well, 'tis a rare case, but I hope to bring it to a good conclusion."

"I do trust, Master Hopkins, that you will," replied the divine thus addressed. "And to that intent, let us on our knees beseech the Lord to grant us some special grace and mercy, to know whether this women be innocent or guilty, that we may not unwittingly bring on ourselves the curse of blood!"

"Alack, she gives no sign of repentance, nor of confession!" said Hopkins; "although they have trotted her up and down between two (on account of the two thieves, as your reverences may remember) these eight hours, without breath or pause."

“ I would it had pleased my brethren, and my Lord Fairfax, not to put me on this task,” said Calamy, mournfully. “ For on the one hand to be guilty of innocent blood, on the other to let loose a manifest and hateful enemy of God, wrestle even as two strong enemies in my soul.”

“ We’ll find a way, your reverence, we’ll find a way,” said Hopkins, encouragingly. “ I have not been at my trade these three years to botch it now ; as many shirts as the devil hath shifts have I—I’ll warrant him !”

Ingulph had heard enough to excite a very painful feeling of curiosity ; and he was about to enter to ascertain the meaning of the assembly, when his eye suddenly encountered that of Stonehenge, who had apparently been watching him for some time, but in so deep a convolution of thought that he seemed to have forgotten his person and his own summons.

Ingulph broke the spell by advancing into the chamber, and staring with unaffected amazement around.

“ You see—here he is—he could not resist the spell !” said Stonehenge, springing forward, clasping his hands over his head, and laughing outright, so that the roof echoed to the unnatural and dissonant mirth.

“ What is your business here, sir ?” said Calamy, in a mild and soothing tone.

“ To see—Master Stonehenge,” replied Ingulph, after a slight pause of surprise.

“ Ere she come, it were not amiss to shackle and fetter him,” said Hopkins ; “ such is the power of the evil one (for though I am familiar enough with him, I like not to call names before your reverences), that at times only bonds of steel can keep parties asunder under the circumstances.”

“ Nay, sirs, let our honoured guest be seated—that is enough,” said Stonehenge ; “ take one of these seats—it matters not which, they are equally pleasant.”

There was something indescribably sinister and cunning in the expression of Stonehenge’s eye ; but as he ushered Ingulph towards a chair with great demonstrations of civility, to avoid irritating him, and with the hope of obtaining some explanation, Ingulph sat down. In an instant a fellow who was concealed behind, probably for the purpose, seized him from behind across the breast ; Stonehenge snatched his sword from the sheath ; and before Ingulph could understand, much less resist their purpose, they had linked him to a series of chains and hooks of iron, which seemed contrived with that intent, to the chair ; and so powerfully, that when he made an effort

to spring from their clutches, he found himself unable to stir.

“Heaven knows whether iron will keep him!—’tis a rank witch,” said Hopkins, with an air of supreme conceit; and at the moment observing his worthy comrade, Sterne, enter, “Why, John, John,” he continued, “how is this?—have you left her,—man?—why, it needs but a few moments’ rest, and the devil comes to them, and hearteneth the witch, and then our trouble’s for our pains!”

“The witch is senseless, master; I want to know whether we may give her a taste of water,” replied the confederate, smiling and scratching his greasy locks.

“Well!—but you must mind there be nothing in it that may seem to you like a dead fly,” replied Hopkins, emphatically. “And now bring her hither!—Oft times the imps take cunninger forms than any dead fly to get at them!” he concluded, with a masterly twisting of the mouth.

“Surely, reverend men, this infernal wretch hath not your sanctions to his cruelties?” exclaimed Ingulph.

“Ay, the fit increases as she draws nigh,” said Hopkins, taking no more notice of this observation than if it had been the raving of one in a fever. “They tell me she hath a marvellous skill in the viol!—Dozens and dozens have I known who have sold their redemptions for less; yea, for matters so inconsiderable, that sometimes I myself do marvel at the cheapness in which human souls are held, that they should be sold and bought at a poorer rate than old songs in pedlars’ packs.”

“And therefore, sirs, is it not reasonable to conclude that these charges are as false as they are absurd?” exclaimed Ingulph, who felt that he was in the power of these besotted bigots.

“Deem you that it is by natural means that I am thus tortured?—that my heart glows in my bosom as in a dish of perpetual fire?” said Stonehenge, ravingly. “Whence are those riches she brought me, that but a few years ago was a savage dweller in the golden forests of Mexico?—And is not yonder bird her familiar spirit?”

Ingulph glanced in the direction indicated, and perceived, indeed, Ramona’s macaw; but all its cheer was gone. It was chained closely to a stool, and seemed partly blind, from the moping unconscious manner in which it sat in the little sunset-glow of the window. The sight affected him so much, remembering the past in vivid contrast, that tears stood in his eyes.

" 'Tis an abominably bad sign," said Hopkins, gazing at the bird. " 'Tis impossible to imagine what strange forms the imps of darkness will take to be near their feeders; for as long as the compact lasts they sweetly suck them every four-and-twenty hours. I knew one that had her imp in the likeness of a tame frog; another keeps them chirping like crickets behind the fire. At Yarmouth we brought sixteen to justice, and never a one of them but had her imp; sometimes in the likeness of a feeble sickly changeling of a child, or a lark in a wooden cage, or some such country matter. Nay, I have known one that was like a small worm, in a witch's flower-pot, that stood harmless enough, as some thought, in a window-sill, and flowered every day in the year excepting Christmas."

" To observe that superstition proves the devil himself a papist," observed one of the presbyters.

" I'll warrant him he is near being one as any Laudean prelate of them all," said Hopkins, much gratified.

" I do beseech you, gentlemen, for your good wits' sake, listen not to these monstrous fables," exclaimed Ingulph.

" You see, sirs, how strongly it works in him," said Hopkins, compassionately. " Keep a good look out on him; I have known some not to be restrained, but when they have seen the witch, fly at her as joyfully as hawks at red meat."

" Courage, sir, we will not let you go," said two of the presbyters, kindly hastening up to Ingulph, and adding their strength to that of the iron shackles. Neither did they seem likely to fail in their promise, for they were both very strong men.

" I do hear," continued Hopkins, " that there are no worse malefactors in this sort, than in New England and our other plantations."

" Villain, if you speak of Mistress Stonehenge, she comes not thence, but from Mexico," shouted Ingulph.

" Worse and worse! Body o' me, I thought so," replied the witch-finder, imperturbably. " But here she comes! Some of us should now attentively watch the possessed person, and I think I'll show I know my trade as well as any man in Christendom, I care not who's the other."

A door at the extremity of the chamber suddenly flew open, and Ramona entered.

CHAPTER LIV.

THE unhappy victim of the madness of the times appeared, dragged along between Sterne and another assistant, or rather accomplice, of the witch-finder. She had a lost, vacant, exhausted, quite unresisting look and manner; her beautiful black hair hung dishevelled upon her shoulders; her dress was in tatters; her white and exquisitely sculptured feet bare and bleeding; her eye flashed distractedly over the groups, but it was doubtful whether she really noted who were there.

“Walk on—up and down—not a moment’s rest, or ’tis all to begin again,” said Hopkins, folding his arms, and leisurely surveying the victim as they walked her rapidly past. “Ay, methinks I see something like a blue bat, with fiery eyes, flapping over her head. I doubt now if any of you see it. But every man to his trade. How is it with you, Master Dethewarre? That’s a main question now. How do you feel?”

“If I were loose, villain, I would make a meal of you for dogs!” shouted the exasperated prisoner.

“Alack, poor gentleman!” said Hopkins; “the witch has given him a philtre, perchance, with a live child boiled in it, and I know well what eastern drugs and spices,—but ’tis not good to be given out. Do you remember, sir, to have partaken of any mess of her cooking?”

“Villain!” was all that Ingulph replied, endeavouring in vain to catch the eye of Ramona as they hurried her up and down the chamber.

“I do hope, Master Hopkins, you do all this in mercifulness, and not in malice?” said Calamy, in a very troubled tone.

“Does your reverence think that for a beggarly twenty shillings (that’s my fee, with board, lodging, and travelling expenses in the country parts), or say ’tis doubled by any liberal employer’s gratitude,” said Hopkins. “Do you think the committee would not only allow, but with thanks, all my means of discovery?”

“Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live,” said one of the divines, striving to harden his heart.

“Nay, the translation of that word is something doubtful, brother,” said Calamy. “I would the point were more

clearly ascertained, for 'tis a fearful penalty to hang on a doubtful point of scholarship."

A number of voices instantly arose in favour of the interpretation of the Hebrew word into witch, and a warm dispute ensued, in which great treasures of erudition were displayed.

"'Tis no business of mine; I am no scholar; but what I stand on is the law of the land," said Hopkins, resolutely. "And let me tell your reverences, that whereas certain hag-advocates have gainsayed my doings, the committee have caused them to recant from their own pulpits!"

"But there are other men in power now who are men, and will not suffer this inhuman cruelty!" exclaimed Ingulph, furiously.

It seemed for the first time as if his voice reached the senses of Ramona; she started, and despite all efforts of her guard, suddenly tore away from them, and rushed to Ingulph, shrieking, "Save me, save me!"

He could only stretch his powerless arms, indifferent to what interpretation might be put on the act; but Stonehenge rushed upon her, and with the two assistants, tore her away.

"Bring her hither; bring her hither; we must try other means," said Hopkins, pompously. Sterne instantly dragged her up to his master, and all but the sage himself looked at her with some degree of pity.

"Now, my fine madam! have you the impudence to brazen it out to me—to *me*, mark you!—that you are not a witch?" said Hopkins, in a fierce bullying tone. "Hark you, Satan, do you hear me, for thou and I are old acquaintances?"

"Answer him, damsel, truly, for your unhappy soul's sake," said Calamy, in a gentle tone.

Ramona looked at him with a wild mixture of scorn and terror for a moment, muttered some indistinct and broken sounds, and then laughed.

"It is the foul one laughs within her; I appeal to you, gentlemen, if I have said aught to move a Christian soul to mirth?" said Hopkins.

"I laugh but to think how the false old man hath broken faith with me, promising me vengeance ever and ever and ever, and it hath come to this!" she said, sinking with a deep sigh of exhaustion on the floor.

"Be merciful, Stonehenge!" said Ingulph, tears gushing from his eyes in torrents. "Remember how you loved her once, how you have brought her to this land, from every other human aid or pity."

"I remember," replied Stonehenge, in a calm relentless tone. "Let her confess, then, that she is in alliance with the Power of Evil, and muttered my secrets to you at Hurst Castle!"

Ingulph started. "Master Calamy," he exclaimed, "you are not mad too, to suffer this unhappy girl to be tortured for an impossible crime, to gratify a madman's revenge!"

"Impossible!—the cloven foot of the Sadducee pokes out there plainly enough," said one of the aghast fanatics.

"Confess, unhappy wretch! confess thine abominations," said Calamy, with pathetic zeal. "Oh, if thou knew the ease and solace of soul which will thereupon visit thee, and the redemption which may yet be hoped!"

"Confess nothing, Ramona!—they want but a pretext to burn thee alive!" said Ingulph, wildly.

"Leave him alone; the fit will pass when I have burned a lock of her hair," said Hopkins, drawing a pair of scissors from his pouch of instruments; and partly cutting, partly tearing off a lock of her plenteous hair, he threw it into the fire.

"And now we must strip and examine her for the devil's marks," he continued, as the light blaze expired. "I'll wager any man a testoon we find half-a-dozen in as many minutes."

"No, no!" groaned Stonehenge, panting as if his heart would burst.

"I must do my duty, an't please your honour," said Hopkins, deliberately.

"Nay, we must neglect no human means to come at the truth," said a presbyter, demurely. "I trust no man will suspect any in this presence of an indecent prying or carnal-minded curiosity; therefore, Master Hopkins, do as you Christianly and fitly aver—namely, your duty."

But it seemed as if this last outrage roused Ramona to despair; she leaped up, and snatching some burning charcoal from the brazier, threw it, with wild shrieks, among her tormentors, as they rushed to secure her. Ingulph, meanwhile, struggled in the iron chair, and with the two presbyters, but in vain. Ramona was of course soon overpowered, and Hopkins bound her hands and feet together with his rope. He then deliberately proceeded to examine her neck and arms, from which the assistants had torn the covering.

"What's here?—a mole, no doubt, as some will call it,"

said the master, curiously examining a small excrescence of the kind on a bosom else of perfect beauty. "Give me my needle, and let us try whether it be insensible or not."

Sterne handed his worthy master a long keen bodkin, the point of which Hopkins nicely tested, as if it were a surgical operation, and suddenly plunged it into the mole, and much below it, for a spout of blood instantly followed. Ingulph now yelled aloud with cries of murder, till the sound seemed as if it would reach the sky.

"They cannot hear the unhappy energumene below," said a presbyter, calmly; "for I note the vessels on the river are of a marvellous small size from this window."

"She bleeds!—which is strange enough," said Hopkins, somewhat surprisedly. "Yet, for all that, I'll stake my credit, that if we keep her in sight during four-and-twenty hours longer, we shall see her imp come in, and suck at it."

"Then, for Heaven's sake, let us try that experiment, for I may no more endure this!" said Calamy, rising in agony; and the brutal ruffian glanced inquiringly among the presbyters. Observing, perhaps, that the general expression was not altogether encouraging—"Nay, at all your honours' pleasures, I would but do my duty," he said, coolly sheathing his bodkin. "But where is this cacodæmon or parroquet, or whatever it is called?—Let us see if it will feed at the mark."

The mulatto advanced with officious zeal from a remote part of the chamber, where he had stood for some time unnoticed, with the bird on his wrist. Affrighted by the glare and strange visages on its purblind gaze, the bird uttered shrill discordant cries, which roused Ramona to consciousness. She murmured a feeble call to her ancient comrade, and it flew with another cry to her, perched on her shoulder, and stood jabbering and flapping its wings in terror.

"There is only one chance for it now—to wring its neck off; but who will bell the cat?" said Hopkins, retreating to a reasonable distance, an example which was followed by most of his coadjutors.

Ramona meanwhile babbled something to her bird in Spanish, which seemed then to recognise her, and lovingly put its bill to her mouth, a girlish trick which she had taught it, as it were to kiss her.

"Ye all see that?" said Hopkins, turning with a look of horror to the rest.

"Monsters! if it loved human blood as ye do, would it not sip at the wound?" shouted Ingulph.

“Do not kill it; indeed it is honestly mine; my father gave it me,” said Ramona, with a pathetic bewilderment which, but that men’s hearts were steeled by prejudice, must have melted them to pity.

“But I had rather, much rather, we tried the experiment you spoke of, Hopkins!” said Calamy, mournfully.

“Of the ducking-stool?—ay, the river is convenient enow, if we had two boats,” said the witch-finder.

“Nay!—the four-and-twenty hours!” gasped Ingulph. “Meanwhile, release me! by what right do you keep me here? Monsters, I will demand every drop of that blood ye have shed to your own hearts’ drainings, if hearts ye have!”

“Poor demoniac!—’tis well he is secured,” said Hopkins. “But let us also look after the cacodæmon!” And he made a dart at the bird, which, however, flew startled into the air, and disappeared at the open window. “Whither is it gone?” he said, staring blankly. “But it will return within the four-and-twenty hours; it must return. ’Tis but to keep her waking for that time, and ten to one she confesses enough to make a broil of her, and to set all our hair on end. But we must secure her well, for I have known them reared up in the air, by the devil’s power, so that a dozen strong men could not keep ’em down.”

In pursuance of this new and comparatively humane experiment, by Hopkins’s directions they set the supposed sorceress, bound as she was, on the table, to which they farther secured her by light thongs. Ingulph could merely look on in silent horror, but he observed with some satisfaction that Ramona had relapsed into a state of dreamy insensibility.

The skilful witch-finder continued his operations without the least compunction. He directed the door to be opened to allow free adit to the imps, and ordered his assistants to keep on the alert, lest they should approach disguised as spiders, flies, or other small insects, which in his experience he had frequently detected. Seats were then procured for the commissioners, and in solemn silence they awaited the result of the experiment.

The wintry twilight had now darkened in, and at Hopkins’s command his fellow-torturer lighted two blazing pitch-torches, with which they stood on each side of the ordeal.

The silence was unbroken for some time, save by the faint moans of the ill-starred Mexican, whose head drooping on her breast, allowed the masses of dark hair to fall over her figure with a singularly fearful effect, as if the form lacked a

visage. At last, Calamy, who, with all the aid of superstition and fanaticism, could not quite stifle every feeling of humanity, proposed that they should kneel and pray that the culprit might have grace to confess, and so be released from her sufferings.

"You pray on your side, and I will balance on the other!" said Stonehenge, with a wild smile, and prostrating himself on the ground.

"Do you believe that heaven, too, will be your accomplice in this foul murder?" said Ingulph, who was now fearfully excited.

"For this unhappy youth in especial, let us wrestle in prayer!" said Calamy, throwing himself on his knees, an action imitated by all present. The prayer lasted for some time, and would have lasted longer, but that it was interrupted by a shriek from Ramona, who raised her head, and glared wildly round. What vision her delirious fancy shaped in the dusky phantoms around her might readily be guessed from what she gasped forth.

"So, you have caught him at last!" she said, in a tone of heart-broken anguish. "You may kill me now; I care not; but do not gnaw his beautiful head; lay it on my heart, and bury us together."

"Hear ye that? This is the most in the bull's-eye of aught we have yet heard!" said Hopkins, triumphantly. "This is the true spectral evidence, concerning which his late majesty King James (though kings be no great authorities in spiritual matters, I own) declareth that no man, but who hath made a compact with the fiend, can ever see! Just as water will not drown any one who hath renounced his baptism, since our Lord was baptized in the Red Sea; nay, the Jordan, but I thought of the blessed Israelites passing it."

"Thou lying bedlamite!" raved Ingulph. "Is it so special an advantage to be drowned, that it can only be conceded to the just?"

"Atheist!" muttered Hopkins; but the blaze in Ingulph's eye, shackled though he was, checked any farther eloquence of the sort. Ingulph now furiously renewed his demands to be set at liberty, but he was only answered by compassionate glances, and shakings of the head.

Meanwhile Ramona again sunk into a low deep moaning, which gradually died away, until there was again deep silence.

"Stir her, stir her! she must not sleep!" exclaimed Hop-

kins. " 'Twere a strange dispensation for a witch to sleep sweetly on, while the poor possessed person keeps his eyes stark open, like the unhappy gentleman's here!—But so it is!—I remember a case of a husbandman in Norfolk, that was bewitched by an old hag for denying her but three turnips for a sick grandchild's broth! There's a ballad made about it, on purpose to be sung in towns and villages, to the great startling and warning of such cattle. How was it, Jack? Thou hast it at thy tongue's end."

" It goes to the tune of

" ' A doleful brew my goodwife made, ' "

replied the worthy thus interpellated.

" ' To see the devil making hay,
A rare sight were on any day;
On a Sabbath eve, in the month of May,
Rowantree saw it done ! ' "

" ' For Sibbald Sympson, a witch she was. ' "

But at this point of the interesting ballad Sterne was interrupted by the exquisitely sweet voice of Ramona trilling out a very lively melody. Never, even in her brightest hours of enjoyment, had she sung with a voice more purely mellifluous, tender, and expressive of the sunniness of spirit preserved from her far southern land. Rude as was the rhythm of Sterne's ballad, it had, doubtless, struck some chord of association in her bewildered brain.

Ingulph remembered that she generally accompanied the burden of the air, the very words of which seemed to dance, with a graceful movement of her feet and hands. It seemed that she attempted this usual accompaniment, for singing the

" ' O ! que bien que bayle Gil,
Con las ninas de Barajas ! ' "

she stirred her shackled frame, and instantly her shrieks of agony rent the air.

" Mercy ! mercy ! if ye are not merely men in form ! " exclaimed Ingulph.

" Mercy ! why 'tis the very time now to keep it up, seeing the devil's power is spent, for I doubt he will not get her to sing again," said Hopkins, joyfully. " Indeed, it were now an excellent thing to apply the torches to her arm-pits—they can seldom hold out against that ! "

" No, no, let me speak to her ! She shall confess," said Ingulph imploringly. " Ramona, do you remember me ? "

" I loved you well at first, but you did not love me ; and

indeed I needed something to love me," said the victim, pausing from her shrieks, and gazing at him with startled earnestness. "Ingulph! Ingulph! go and bring my father! Tell him they are burning me at a slow fire, and Stonehenge, whom he loved so well, has set me to it. Did he give him all his wealth to murder me? He is in his grave, over the dark, dark sea, but he will come to me when you tell him this."

"Ay, I warrant me, her father! We should have the devil among us soon, in some grave disguise, with spectacles on his nose, and an ink-horn at his girdle, as befel when we kept watch on the witch in Hungerford steeple," said Hopkins, facetiously.

"Ramona! in heaven's name look around, and remember where you are!" said Ingulph.

"Oh, yes, now I remember; we are in the forests again; the glorious fresh, green ocean of leaves around us," said Ramona, in a voice of delight. "Are they going to sacrifice some one, that they dance around the flames hand in hand, and laugh and hoot? Where is the bound one, then?"

"She speaks now of the devil's sabbath, which she has no doubt attended oft and oft again," said Hopkins, eagerly. "Come now, girl, make a clean breast of it, and tell us how you went there—on a cat, a dog, a broomstick, or what?"

"On the sunset—the sun sets over my father's grave," said Ramona, imitating the motion of waves with her head. "So and so—I am going thither, and let De la Pole come with me, and we will never trouble you any more."

"De la Pole, saith she? What, another sheep in the marsh?" said Hopkins, significantly nodding his head. "We shall hear fine things now she is once in train; in what form did the devil appear at those meetings, child? Did you renounce your baptism, and sign the compact with your own blood, or did another witch prick her finger for the purpose?"

"Lolo led me there," replied Ramona, vacantly.

"Ay, indeed! I thought all was not right in that quarter," said Hopkins, significantly, and the mulatto glided like an eel out of his sight. "Well, and prithee, whom else did you see there?"

"We were all sitting under the vines that are on the hill-top," said Ramona, with a placid smile. "You may see the sun shining over thousands of miles, and the blue mountains, and the sea like a line of silver along the sky. My father

was there, and Stonehenge—but he loved me then, and if the way were rough would bear me in his arms.”

“I see the devil speaks falsely in her, to accuse as good and liberal and honest a citizen as ever I knew,” said Hopkins, angrily. “There is nothing for it but to duck her. Let anybody ask what he will, for I have done.”

The presbyters now began putting unnumbered questions to poor Ramona, each anxious to display his own sagacity; and while all were thus absorbed, Ingulph felt his shoulder touched; starting round he beheld the mulatto with his finger pressed on his lips.

“Make way quietly out, and bring assistance—you can do nought alone,” he said, in a loud whisper.

“I cannot,” replied Ingulph, in the same tone.

“You are free now,” returned the mulatto, and cutting some ropes at the back of the chair, Ingulph started up from his confinement. His first idea was to rush upon the assembly and rescue Ramona, but the certainty of being overpowered by numbers restrained him; and seeing no better could be done, he complied with the shadowy motions of the mulatto, and glided out unperceived.

CHAPTER LV.

To hasten for assistance—but whither? None could be hoped from Fairfax, or from the Presbyterian populace, whose belief in witches was only equalled by their exceeding horror of them. Ingulph suddenly recollected that the council of officers was to meet at this time, and forgetting all other considerations, he hastened before them.

He was but just in time; the council was breaking up, and among the first persons whom he encountered was Cromwell. The lieutenant was much altered, and his usually robust complexion was tinged with an unhealthy saffron hue.

Scarcely returning, or even noticing, the cordial reception he received, Ingulph gave a brief recital of the scene he had witnessed, and demanded the aid of a guard to rescue Ramona.

Fairfax, to whom he addressed himself, answered drily that he had no jurisdiction in matters ecclesiastic, or he would have exerted himself to remove the excommunication under which the youth himself laboured. But Cromwell, after watching

for a moment the expression of fury and disappointment in Ingulph's face, said quietly, "Nay, my lord, the whole power of the state is in our hands, and we are responsible to the nation for its use; therefore I am of opinion, that although the presbyters may, for ought I know, have the right to discover witches, they have none to put to such grievous tortures freeborn English subjects—or if she be a foreigner, a human being; so, Colonel Dethewarre, come with me."

No one offered any contradiction; and with a strong picquet of the guard, Cromwell hastened with his young officer to the old palace, uttering not a single word on the way.

The Independents, besides being the only sect which admitted and practised the most religious of all dogmas—toleration—were freed from many of the degrading superstitions of their fanatic brethren. Among the rest, the belief in witchcraft had much declined among them; and seeing their general anxious to set the witch in question free, they hastened on with great zeal to the work.

But entering the gardens of the old palace, they suddenly encountered disordered groups of the presbyters, flying in great consternation. From their affrighted statements, it appeared, that on Hopkins intending to remove the witch to duck her, Stonehenge had suddenly protested that she was innocent, that they were vile impostors, released his unhappy wife, and drove them all out with frantic violence. Almost immediately after, Hopkins appeared with his satellite, calling to some of the reverend men to return, and exorcise the fiend out of his worthy employer.

The opportunity of inflicting retributive justice was instantly taken by Ingulph. Hopkins carried a ducking-stool, and the necessary ropes, in his own hands, and Ingulph ordered him to be seized, assuring the soldiers that from all he had seen of the marvellous skill of the man in detecting witches, he was convinced that he was himself a wizard. At all events, he could not object to pass through an ordeal to which he had subjected so many others, on less appearances, which he should therefore undergo. In spite of all the witchfinder's abject entreaties, the sentence was executed; and Cromwell, laughing heartily, encouraged the soldiers to their task.

The joke was in itself irresistible to the soldiery, and Ingulph, aware that his vengeance was now in very good hands, directed them to take him to the river, and duck him until he

confessed. He then hurried on with his commander to the old palace, and at its entrance encountered the mulatto. On finding that Ingulph had effected his escape, he said, and not being able to find out by what means, Stonehenge had suddenly accepted it as a proof of Ramona's innocence! She was now conveyed to her own apartment in the palace, and attended by her servants, and by Stonehenge himself, with every mark of tenderness and repentance.

But Ingulph would not be satisfied by any but ocular evidence of this happy change; and the lieutenant deigned to honour his impetuosity so far as to accompany him on his search. The mulatto led the way to the apartment in which Ramona had formerly resided; and there, stretched on a couch, with several women aiding in various ways to revive her, and Stonehenge himself kneeling beside her, and weeping like a child, lay the victim of fanatic madness.

Ingulph approached softly, and Cromwell himself stood at the end of the couch, gazing in sorrow and astonishment at the woful spectacle.

“Wake her! wake her! and I will forgive you all!” said Stonehenge, clasping his hands deliriously as Ingulph approached. He made no reply, and bending over her, was surprised to see that her eyes were open, but unmeaning, and as it were, insensible or regardless to all around. He gazed at her in silence, and his hot tears distilled on her face; she looked at him for some time fixedly, and the gradual return of thought and recollection was apparent in the wonderful brightening up of her eyes.

“Ingulph!” she said, at last, in a tone scarcely more than a sigh; and his tears only replied. “Will you assist me to rise?” she continued, after a slight pause. “I am going on a journey—you will be easily rid of me.”

“Whither, Ramona?” said Dethewarre, in a mournful voice.

“To my husband—to Stonehenge,” she replied, with a ghastly smile.

“To Stonehenge!—to your husband!” repeated Ingulph.

“Yes, for he will avenge me; I tell you he will avenge me; when he knows all, he will avenge me!” she said, with rising vehemence. “He is a sorcerer; he will avenge me!”

“Yea, my Ramona! yea, my lamb! I will avenge thee on all the earth,” said Stonehenge, with a cry resembling that of a famished panther, and perhaps imitated from recollections of his forest wanderings.

“But you must not, you shall not forgive me, sir!” she said, turning with affecting implicitness to Stonehenge. “I have so utterly betrayed you, that you must—I know you must—murder me; but do not weep, for I pity you more than myself!—Oh, that we were once again, Stonehenge, in the free woods, with the golden heavens over our heads, and that you would smile again as you did then, when I brought you the flowers to ask their names.”

The memories thus conjured up, of that innocent bygone, seemed to convulse Stonehenge with grief; and he staggered out of the chamber. One of the women had been busy preparing a soothing drink of some kind, and she now approached with it.

“Is it poison?” said Ramona, draining it without the least hesitation. “But let me die in the sunlight; ’tis my only kindred in this far foreign land,” she added, with a profound sigh. “Why do you all look sorrowfully at me?—I pray you, do not; I can bear anything but pity!—But remember, Ingulph, whenever I die, that my last breath blessed you—and you alone on all the earth—for you only have I found human on it.”

She turned away with a placid smile, and after a few moments’ languor, sunk into a kind of slumber akin to insensibility.

The lieutenant now intimated to Ingulph that it would be proper for him to retire; and perceiving, indeed, that his presence could no longer be of use, he consented, announcing to the women that he would endeavour to prevail on Tribulation to return to her long-abdicated trust; and making the mulatto promise to send him constant intelligence how matters went, he departed.

In any other age no man could have doubted that Stonehenge’s proceedings were those of an insane person; but so rooted and general were the prejudices on witchcraft, and against the unfortunate Ramona, that her very women, who had constantly attended on her, could scarcely overcome their fears, even after her accuser’s direct admission of her innocence.

Ingulph was now in the proper mood for any desperate purpose, and the sagacious lieutenant seemed to be well aware of it. He accompanied him to the city, chatting familiarly on the aspect of political affairs. The influence of the victorious leader over his young follower returned with all the added force which recent services could give.

“So you paid your respects to the lord general first, and truly he ought to have all deference shown him,” said Cromwell, smiling. “But what says his excellency to your dispute with daft Harrison, as they call men in Scotland with thrice his wit.”

In attempting to answer this question, Ingulph found that he had no very distinct idea on the subject himself; and after watching his puzzled countenance for a moment, the lieutenant laughed aloud.

“I thought not,” he said; “but you shall know my judgment more clearly, which is, that if I had not known of what metal you were made, I had never consented to let the millenium apostle be sent to supersede you.”

“The blood of an assassinated king would have done small service to our cause,” said Ingulph.

“Assassinated!—Harrison is a mad enthusiastic, but I know not that his zeal would have transported him to such an atrocity,” said Cromwell, gravely; “but what is this about Huncks? He speaks strange matters concerning you, and it appears you are the last knight from his majesty’s sword.”

Ingulph related the whole story, suppressing only his suspicions concerning Stonehenge.

“The rogue shall hang to-night!” said Cromwell, vehemently. “But if thou wert cajoled with Charles’s fair words, I blame thee not, seeing that I myself, with all my years and experience, was nigh won over to him; but truly I esteem Machiavel was unlearned in many of his depths. Natheless your actions have not swerved from the right. The Lord who breaketh the cedars of Lebanon cannot spare this crowned criminal.”

“What is to be done with him?” said Ingulph, eagerly.

“The council of war have this evening determinedly resolved to bring him to trial,” said Cromwell, enthusiastically. “Certainly this judgment is of the Lord! I might have doubted had the notion sprung from any other source than it did. Offuscations of passion might have clouded our reasons, and the resolution might be adjudged the turbid lightning natural to such disordered spheres. But when thou, whose generous soul is a fitting tabernacle of the holiest oracles—when thou spoke out those famous words, I did feel a sudden illumination through all my ways, even as a heavenly sunburst through the darkness of night.”

“But I spoke of a trial, fair, open, just!” said Ingulph, not insensible to this sublime compliment.

“ Let all the world witness, if it is not !” replied Cromwell. “ Read this list of those who are appointed to the judgment ; —is there one of them who would hesitate to pronounce as his conscience dictates, in the teeth of hell itself ? Nay, who would not feel a secret joy to encounter martyrdom in the cause—in any cause ? Thou and Algernon Sydney are both of the list—what needs other assurance ?”

“ We are, as it were, parties to the cause—an appeal to the whole nation is a fitter way,” said Ingulph, dubiously.

“ We are the people appointed to do the work of the Lord !” returned Cromwell. “ An appeal to the nation !—know you not that we stand one to ten against royalists and Presbyterians ?—and are you prepared to set up in all his power the perfidious tyrant who crushed your youth, and deprived you of the woman you love ?—Or the merciless bigots who have this day slaughtered the woman for whom you have been so falsely persecuted ?”

The balance, which had perhaps but little wavered, was now struck ; and Ingulph acquiesced in all the measures which his commander pointed out to him to secure the safety of the city. The quarters of his regiment were at Guildhall, and his business, it appeared, was to watch the movements of the Londoners, who were known to be in the highest degree disaffected to the contemplated policy.

At Ludgate, Cromwell left his young ally, observing, with a sarcastic smile, that he cared not to face the citizens after the wreck of their beloved covenant. Ingulph proceeded alone to Bulstocke’s house.

Approaching the armourer’s well-known abode, Ingulph was surprised to hear sounds of uproarious merriment ; and entering the worthy citizen’s abode, he found his kitchen occupied by a riotous band of soldiers, who were all so nearly drunk that they had forgotten their usual sanctity of demeanour. Bulstocke himself, for the first time an unwilling spectator of a feast, two of them were holding in his chair, swelling nigh to burst with indignation, while they swallowed his wines before his face, and ironically pledged his health. Tribulation stood behind, scolding frantically at the pitch of her voice, while Mistress Bulstocke sat drying her tears in a clean white apron.

Ingulph instantly observed that his favourite, Joyce, was of the number of the rioters, and from the uniforms which the soldiers wore, he perceived they belonged to the regiment to which he was appointed.

“Soh, my masters, is this your discipline?—is this demeanour for Christian and godly men?” exclaimed Ingulph.

“I thought—your honour’s own friends—to protect them,” muttered Joyce.

“Trimmers, papists, cavaliers, prelatists, devils, are all better than ye, schismatic dogs!” yelled on Tribulation. “And thou, their commander, art fit to be so, and nothing else; and for this purpose, and the damnation of many, wert thou born!”

“Out of my house, and fellow with murderers like yourself!” shouted Bulstocke, “Wife, this is one of the villains who will kill the king!”

“Ay, ay, strut in thy borrowed plumes as thou wilt,” continued the enraged sibyl. “But I that have made can unmake thee!—I will, I will!—What cause had I to peril my soul for thee, in whose veins flowed her blood for whom I was scorned and betrayed!”

“I have heard indeed that you—that we—are of nearer kin than you admit in your conventicle,” said Ingulph, exceedingly enraged. “But if you deny the relationship, I plead not for it.”

“And Cromwell is your father, doubtless—and you are bringing Charles to the scaffold at the traitor’s will!” said Tribulation, wildly. “This horror must not be—yet how to prevent it!”

“If you have any remains of humanity, hasten to display it by the death-bed of your betrayed charge, Ramona!” exclaimed Ingulph. “She is dying—tortured to death—your presence may yet save her whose absence once ruined her!”

“Were she my own daughter, I will never enter that house again from which I have been dismissed with contumely!” said Tribulation, in increasing passion. “Have then enough of my son in you to take the hint, when I bid you avoid this house, regicide, and never dare to enter it again!”

“To arms, rogues, and follow me on the instant!” said Ingulph, scornfully turning on his heel; and with a bitter heart he left the house, resolving indeed that it should be for ever.

CHAPTER LVI.

THE preliminaries of the stupendous event on which the whole civilized world gazed with mingled terror and amazement were rapidly consummated; and yet the wishes of all parties, save those of the planners, seemed opposed; foreign powers implored, the Scots protested, the people murmured,—but inexorably as destiny they proceeded.

In the fiery atmosphere which he now breathed, even the pure diamond of Ingulph's intellect grew heated to madness. The dreadful charges now brought against the king, the details of cruelty and oppression ransacked from the annals of his past despotism, heightened by contrast the beauty and glory of that sublime and poetical dream which was his meaning of the word Republic.

And now, for the first time since the beginning of the world, was promulgated that famous dogma, which, like Demogorgon, threatens to dethrone all the Gods—the sovereignty of the people. The House of Lords was virtually abolished by the resolution of the Commons, on their refusal to proceed without them in the charge; the High Court of Justice was formed, and the royal state and homage with which the hopes and pride of the monarch had been flattered were ordered to be discontinued.

Ingulph imagined he had screwed his courage to the sticking point, but as the day approached when the proceedings were to open, the anguish and disorder of his mind increased. Meanwhile he continued at his post, or engaged in the business of preparation with the council of officers. But he heard daily of Ramona, without going to see her, at her own express desire, lest Stonehenge's irritation should revive; and she continued hovering on the verge of life and death.

The dreaded day came at last—the 20th of January. In the morning the commissioners met in the Painted Chamber, to prepare for the king's solemn arraignment at noonday.

At the head of the board sat the lord president, Bradshaw, in his black robes and ermine; and on each side sat the rest of the judges, to the number of fifty-six. Two or three who were aldermen wore their robes, the others were dressed chiefly in sad-coloured garments, the military only distinguished by wearing orange scarfs. Several divines were present, among whom was Peters; the lawyers of the prose-

cution, Cook, Aske, and Dorislaus; and several strangers, admitted by favour or interest. Among these was Stonehenge, who, with a face pale and livid as a leaden statue, but perfectly calm in appearance, stood retired between the deep Gothic windows.

The gloomy effect of the apartment was increased by the waving of the arras on the walls, representing in rusty fragments the wars of Troy; and uniting all things together, Ingulph almost imagined he was one of a supernatural assemblage.

“Methinks it shows but small respect to the augustness of this court,” Bradshaw was saying with great pomp, “that my lord general so seldom honours us with his company; and specially on this great occasion of our needing it.”

“He hath a heavy charge on his hands; I pray your lordship, excuse it, but his love and goodwill are none the less,” said Cromwell, with as much humility as if he were not speaking to a creature of his own making. “But as to urging matters so far back, it will be in your wisdom to decide whether we can find any reasonable proofs.”

“Regarding the tyrannies and very barbarous dealings with the heir of the great family of De la Pole?” said Bradshaw. “Master Stonehenge averreth that the sister of that wronged gentleman was cajoled by Charles into a false marriage, with circumstances of hideous perfidy.”

“And, truly, seeing how besotted this people is, it were not ill to let them know all that can be known of him,” said Harrison.

“Master Peters witnesseth to the false marriage,” said Stonehenge, reverently bending.

“I married a pair of folks in masks, whom I afterwards learned were the now marquis of Montacute and Lady Editha De la Pole,” said Peters; “and by this token, that Laud persecuted me to death’s door and utter exile for it.”

“We will not rake up dead men’s ashes,” said Cromwell. “You speak, I conclude, of the knight of De la Pole, beheaded in James’s time for high treason?”

“He was attainted—not beheaded,” replied Dorislaus. “And surely his rebellion, if such it was, had as eminent justification as—but the major swallows the minor! If the people’s accusation be made, all are included: there is no distinction.”

“Neither needs it to rake the grave for the ashes of the

knight of De la Pole—the earl that should now be,” said Stonehenge, stepping forward. “I am he.”

“The gentleman is troubled with the lunes, ’tis known,” said Cromwell, with a glance at the petrified Ingulph. “Be calm, sir, or you must leave the chamber.”

“Nay, sirs, my person is well remembered—although too many of my old friends have gone—various ways,” said Stonehenge, with melancholy composure. “Pym and Essex are dead!—Buckingham, Laud, and Strafford sleep in their bloody graves!—But many live who will testify.”

“We trouble not at the particular wrongs of nobles,” said Ireton, sternly. “We are here to judge in the people’s cause; if the nobles are of it, ’tis well; but one head must serve all our turns.”

“And now to our business,” said Cromwell. “Yet I think we may safely leave the form and method of our proceedings to my lord president.”

Bradshaw nodded authoritatively, and Cromwell gave a slight curling smile.

“But suppose his majesty should have the impudence to keep his hat on before us?” said Marten, with a lurking grimace.

“O’ God’s name, let him keep it on,” replied Cromwell; “and our president doing the same, we shall abate no breath of our greatness; and for any other uncivil or presumptuous behaviour, Master Bradshaw will act his part without study.”

“I trow me!” said Bradshaw, haughtily.

“And now, master solicitor, to read the indictment,” began Cromwell, when Harrison interrupted him—

“Let us first seek a blessing on the work!” he said, in an ecstatic tone. “For verily I never felt my soul so full of light—nor received such comforting assurances—for now methinks the heavens are opening, and the glory of the Lord of Hosts, and the multitude of his angels with their golden harps, and the myriad myriads of his holy martyrs, are processioning down on earth to reign over his saints for ever.”

This summons was instantly responded to, and the whole company knelt, and prayed for some time in rapturous silence, until Harrison burst forth into one of his usual rhapsodies. This threatened to last for some time, when suddenly three distinct blasts of signal trumpets, the first very remote, were heard in succession. “He is come, he is come!” exclaimed

Cromwell, darting up, and rushing to the window alone; but he returned in a few minutes, looking of a deadly ashy tint.

"The people do greet him in silence, and stand uncovered!" he said, hurriedly.

"Oh, these citizens for half thirty pieces would sell the Lord again and again!" said Peters.

"My masters, now we are closing on this great work the nation will soon be full of," said Cromwell, recovering his firmness; "I desire ye to resolve what answer we shall give the king when he comes before us; for the first question he will ask us will be, by what authority and commission do we try him?"

There was a deep silence, which lasted for several minutes.

"In the name of the commons and parliament assembled, and all the good people of England!" said Marten.

"Then let us to the hall, and get it over," said Cromwell, rising, an example which was followed by the whole confabulation.

The guard immediately formed and preceded the court; but so engrossed were all men's minds, that none observed that Ingulph remained, as if in a state of stupefaction. The commissioners followed one another in order, and in a few moments the last of them disappeared in the descent.

The silence which followed seemed to startle Ingulph from his meditations; he arose, and advanced staggeringly towards Stonehenge, who had never stirred, but continued gazing at him with the cold glittering fascination of a serpent.

"Tell me, monster! tell me, devil!" he said, frantically; "are all your stories of my birth a fable of yourself and your iniquitous partner, Tribulation, or is—is"—

"Here is your father's portrait," interrupted Stonehenge, calmly. "Press the spring of this ruby heart, and you behold him," he continued, drawing a ring from his finger.

Ingulph snatched it—pressed the spring—it flew open—and the features of a very young and handsome man appeared, exquisitely painted on enamel, scarcely the size of a pea.

"It is the king!" gasped Ingulph.

"It is your father!" returned Stonehenge. "This ring was the signal which obtained your mother's consent to the marriage in masks; she was my sister—Editha De la Pole!"

And ere the darkness which gathered over Ingulph's sight had cleared away, the miserable avenger disappeared.

His recollection returned in a few moments, like sensibility

to a fractured limb ; but not until probably the silence and lapse of time made a person who was concealed behind the arras imagine that he was gone. A figure in a long cloak and a slouched hat, which concealed his features in great measure, stepped out, and whether it was a reality or a vision of Ingulph's fevered senses, it appeared like the form of De la Pole. He sprung forward in a concentrated madness of passion which would in all probability have rendered the meeting fatal, but that at the moment Marten came running in, and the stranger either glided out, or disappeared.

"Come, come, Master Cromwell is looking fore and aft for you ! What ails you, sir ?" exclaimed Marten.

"Nothing," replied Ingulph, with supernatural firmness. "Since I am the destined avenger—since fate will have no other—sir, I follow you !"

CHAPTER LVII.

STUNNING or attempting to stun his anguish with the recollection of his wrongs, and with the delusion of fatalism which had hitherto, of all the fantasies of that troubled age, been the most alien to his spirit, Ingulph found himself, he knew not how, in Westminster Hall.

The commissioners had already taken their seats on a series of raised benches, covered with scarlet cloth, which ascended nearly to the level of the great west window. Bradshaw sat foremost, on an elevated dais, in state, with two assistants on either hand, placed one degree lower. Beyond them was a space occupied only by a table with desks for two scribes, who sat solemnly pen in hand. On the table were a sword and a mace surmounted by a crown lying crosswise—not unemblematical of the event about to take place. Beyond the table was an inclosed space, in the centre of which was a chair of crimson velvet for the king. On the right of this chair stood the counsel for the commonwealth. On the left was a flight of stairs by which the king was to arrive, which was lined with soldiers.

Beyond the inclosure was another clear space, railed in, which finished the platform, which was raised several feet above the lower part of the hall. The people were to be admitted here without restraint, for the military dominators con-

fided in the terror they had diffused, and desired to give the trial the appearance of a free and popular act. The more select spectators sat in galleries and scaffoldings erected round the court; and among these were numerous ladies, apparently of high rank from their dresses, but who all wore black vizards.

Directly opposite the king's chair, crowning the benches of the judges, shone a bright new shield, richly emblazoned with arms as yet unknown to heraldry—the arms of the commonwealth—not the least significant of signs. Cromwell and Marten sat on each side below the shield, the former apparently for the purpose of sitting as remote as possible from the observation of the king. He smiled with an expression of intense anxiety at Ingulph, and made him a place between himself and Marten.

There was a kind of murmured conversation for some minutes among the commissioners, and then Bradshaw, in a loud voice, commanded the doors to be opened, and the people to be admitted, whoever pleased, without exception. "'Tis most fit the people should see how their servants do the work they have put them to," said Cromwell.

"Are we eye-servants, then?" whispered Marten, but Cromwell turned disdainfully away.

In a moment the lower hall was flooded with a tumultuous crowd, pushing, struggling, fighting, and tumbling a way up to the bars, so that for some time the uproar and yells were deafening. Among these came Bulstocke and Lilly, stoutly battling their way to a foremost place. A great number of women intermingled, contributed their shrieks to the general hubbub; and Bradshaw had thrice thundered for silence, ere he was once heard. The application of the butt-ends of pikes stilled the more unruly, and the mob gradually calmed into something like order. But by far the greater part of the immense mass were obliged to content themselves with a remote view of the scene from the palace-yard, for the portals were left wide open.

"O, Lord, what a mercy is it to see this great city fall down before us!" said Peters, in an ecstasy of joy. "And what a stir is there to bring this great man to trial, without whose blood he will turn us all to blood, if he reign again!"

Silence was now obtained as well as commanded, and the Act constituting the court was read amidst profound attention. But if indeed established by the will of the people, it was strange to hear the deep hollow melancholy murmur which

ran over the living masses like winds curling the sea in muttering waves.

The court was then called over, each commissioner rising in his place as he was named. But an unlooked-for interruption occurred, even at this earliest stage of the proceedings. Lord Fairfax's name was the next after the president's, and when it was called, a female voice in the galleries shrilly answered, "He has more wit than to be here!"

No notice beyond a general glance up was taken. Ingulph looked mechanically in the same direction, and saw a lady leaning resolutely forward in her seat, while the tremulous hand of another, and apparently a younger one, was laid on her arm as if to restrain her. Both were masked, but Ingulph knew so well the exact contour of that lovely form, that he saw—and saw without emotion!—that it was Lady De la Pole with Lady Fairfax.

The ceremony of calling over the court concluded, Bradshaw, in a lofty and authoritative manner, perhaps exaggerated to hide some inward faltering, commanded the serjeant-at-arms to bring the prisoner to the bar.

A short pause of deep silence followed, and then the renewed murmur of the multitude announced the king's approach. Preceded by a numerous guard, Charles descended the stairs into the hall, and was led by the serjeant-at-arms, with his mace, to the seat prepared for him. He gazed sternly at the court and galleries, and Ingulph thought that his eye dwelt for a moment upon him—and then seated himself, keeping his hat on, and paying no respect whatever to the court.

But after a moment's pause, he again rose, and turned round to the mass of spectators in the hall. The sight of their long-absent sovereign, whom almost all present remembered to have seen in the height of his grandeur and prime of manhood, contrasted with his fallen condition, his worn and melancholy aspect, seemed to touch the hearts of the people. Sighs and broken exclamations of pity burst forth, in the midst of which Bulstocke loudly exclaimed, "God preserve your majesty!" and burst into tears.

"Even as we are all bound by a despised and trampled covenant!" groaned Tribulation, who stood not far behind.

The benignant smile which hovered on the king's lips was instantly checked; but he bowed courteously, and turned again to the court, a crier meantime yelling for silence.

In as calm and imperturbable a voice as if he had been in the

habit of judging kings for years, Bradshaw opened the proceedings.

“Sir,” he said, looking sternly at the monarch, “you are to know that the Commons of England assembled in Parliament, being deeply sensible of the calamities brought upon this nation, and of the innocent blood spilt in it, have resolved to make inquisition for this blood; and according to the debt they owe to God, to justice, the kingdom, and themselves, and according to the fundamental power and trust reposed in them by the people, other means failing through your default, have resolved to bring you to trial and judgment, and have therefore constituted this court of justice before which you now are, where you are to hear your charge, on which the court will proceed according to justice.”

Cook now stepped forward with the charge in his hand, when the king touched him gently on the shoulder with his staff; and as he did not seem to observe him, slightly pushed him with it. Cook turned testily round, and the golden head of the staff, which was a crown, fell suddenly off.

All present looked with visible interest, regarding the accident as ominous; and Charles, long accustomed to such deference, seemed to wait for some one to pick it up; but finding that no one did, he stooped for it himself, with an audible sigh.

Observing then that Cook hesitated whether to notice the king's interruption or not, Bradshaw sedately commanded him to proceed,

“My lord president,” said Cook, continuing his advance—“I do hereby exhibit a charge of high treason and other crimes against Charles Stuart, king of England, in the name and presence of the people of England!”

The charge was now read, the king smiling contemptuously at various points, and laughing outright at the titles of traitor and murderer, upon which justice was demanded against him.

“Sir, you have heard your charge,” said Bradshaw, at the conclusion, “and find, in the close of it, the court prayed, in behalf of the Commons of England, that you may answer: the court expects your answer.”

“I would know by what power I am called hither,” said the king. “I was not long since in the Isle of Wight; how I came there is a longer story than I think fit now to speak of; but there I entered into a treaty with both Houses, on as much public faith as is possible to be had of any people in the

world. I treated there with a number of honourable lords and gentlemen, and treated honestly and uprightly : I cannot say but they did very nobly with me ; we were on a conclusion of the treaty. Now, I would know by what authority (I mean lawful ; there are many unlawful authorities, thieves and robbers, &c.) I was brought thence, and carried from place to place ; and when I know this, I shall answer. Remember, I am your king, your lawful king ; and what sins you bring on your heads, and the judgment of God on this land ; think well on it, I say, think well on it, before you go further from one sin to a greater. Therefore, let me know by what *lawful* authority I am seated here, and I shall not be unwilling to answer. Meantime I shall not betray my trust ; I have a trust committed to me by God, by old and lawful descent ; I will not betray it in answering a new unlawful authority : therefore, resolve me that, and you shall hear more of me."

"If you had been pleased to observe what was hinted by the court at your first coming," said Bradshaw, with austere composure, "you would have known by what authority ; which authority requires you, in the name of the people of England, whereof you are elected king, to answer."

"No, sir, I deny that !" said the king, with warmth, at the word *elected*.

"If you acknowledge not the authority of the court—they must proceed !" said the president, emphatically.

"I tell them this !" said Charles, vehemently. "England was never an elective kingdom, but an hereditary one, for near one thousand years ; therefore, let me know by what authority I am called hither. I stand more for the liberty of my people than any here, who come to be my pretended judges ; therefore, let me know by what lawful authority I am seated here, and I will answer it ; otherwise, I *will not*."

"How royally you have managed your trust, is known !" said Bradshaw, sternly. "Your way of answer is to interrogate the court, which beseems you not in this condition ; you have been told it twice or thrice."

"Here's a gentleman—Sir Ingulph Dethewarre," said the king, searching out Ingulph, and smiling as he recognised him what justly might be called a dagger, although full of kindness and pleased remembrance. "Ask him if he did not bring me from the Isle of Wight by force. I come not here as submitting to the court. I'll stand as much for the privilege of the House of Commons, rightly understood, as any one : I see no House of Lords here to constitute a parliament, which

includes the king also. Is this bringing the king to his parliament? Is this bringing an end to the treaty in the public faith of the world? Let me see a legal authority, warranted by the scriptures, or the constitution of the kingdom, and I will answer."

"Sir, you have propounded a question, and have been answered," said Bradshaw, calmly. "Seeing you will not answer, the court will consider how to proceed. Meantime, those who brought you hither are to take charge of you back again; the court desires to know whether this is all the answer you will give?"

"Sir, I desire you would give me and all the world satisfaction in this," said Charles, very eagerly. "Let me tell you, 'tis not a slight thing you are about. I am sworn to keep the peace, by that duty I owe to God and my country, and I'll do it to the last breath in my body! Therefore, you will do well to satisfy first God, and then the country, by what authority ye do it! If you do it by an usurped authority, you cannot answer it! There is a God in heaven, who will call you and all who give you power to account! Satisfy me in that, and I will answer; otherwise I betray my trust, and the liberty of the people; therefore think of that, and then I shall be willing, for I avow it as great a sin to withstand lawful authority, as to submit to a tyrannical or other unlawful authority; and therefore satisfy God, me, and all the world of that, and you shall receive my answer. I am not afraid of yonder bill!"

"The court expects a final answer," replied Bradshaw. "They purpose to adjourn till Monday next. If you satisfy not yourself, though we tell you our authority, we are satisfied with our authority, which is on God's authority and the kingdom's: and the peace you speak of will be kept in doing justice, and that's our present work."

"For answer, let me tell you," said Charles, austerely, "you have shown no lawful authority to satisfy any reasonable man."

"That's in your apprehension; we are satisfied, who are your judges!" retorted Bradshaw.

"'Tis neither my apprehension, nor yours neither, which ought to decide it!" returned Charles, haughtily.

"The court has heard, and you are to be disposed of as they have commanded," said Bradshaw, with supreme stateliness. "Guard, remove your prisoner!"

"Well, sir!" said the king, rising to obey—for the first

time in his life!—and with a heart that swelled too full to admit of further reply, the dethroned monarch moved towards the stairs. But pausing and turning quickly round, he said, pointing to the sword on the table, “I do not fear that!” and retired amidst a great and contending uproar, the people shouting “God save the King!” and the soldiery crying “Justice! Justice!”

All this time Ingulph sat immoveably fixed; and even the general bustle and pressure of the dissolving assembly seemed not at all to disturb him. A familiar slap on the shoulder roused him from his trance, and looking up he dreamily discerned Master Peters.

“Here’s a glorious beginning of the work!” he exclaimed, holding up his hands in ecstasy. “I cannot but look on this court with great reverence, for it doth resemble in some measure the trial that shall be at the end of the world by the saints.”

Ingulph turned from him in silent loathing, and pushed his way recklessly into the crowd hurrying out at the portals.

CHAPTER LVIII.

FOR hours did Ingulph perambulate the streets without purpose, business, or interest of any sort; and yet afraid to trust himself with a moment’s pause, lest the grim thought from which he fled should overwhelm him.

But he was mistaken. The immense masses that passed and repassed made no impression on his vision; he saw nothing, heard nothing, felt nothing. The one black idea darkened all others, and yet it lay shrouded in generality; he dared not look into it, dared not understand the full horror of his position. He blunted his mind—he would not allow it to pry—but still, still, the direful presence was there.

This then was the vengeance of Stonehenge—of the implacable madman—the seven times distilled essence of civil war—paricide! In vain Ingulph tried to awaken himself from the hideous dream.

But when memory, when consciousness, would return at last, he took refuge in desperate attempts to reckon up all the wrongs he had suffered, the direful process by which he had been compelled to his task. He called up a thousand circumstances to prove to himself that Charles had always known of

his relationship to himself, and had willingly sacrificed him all along to his pride and monstrous want of mere human feeling. All the wrongs he had received from the Montacutes, were therefore to be counted against him. He remembered with a strange satisfaction the apparently bitter wrongs of his mother—the stupendous injuries which had overthrown the noble mind of Stonehenge. Was he to blame that destiny had blindly selected him to work out her ends?

Laying these anodynes perpetually to his burning soul, exasperating his own wounds by every artifice, he baffled for a while the clutches of despair. But he felt that he must finally yield, and become—perhaps, a madman,

The day after the arraignment was Sunday, and Ingulph spent it roaming about the city, seeking for some strengthening to his only supporting thoughts, the justice of the king's punishment, and on the contrary, for hopes that it could not be executed, in defiance of the popular will. But every man seemed wrapped in a mist of his own terrors, and refused all communion with his fellows, fearing even to trust his eyes with the secrets of his soul. The very toppers in the alehouses, usually so vociferous and absolute, sat drinking in silence.

Consolation awaited Ingulph nowhere. In the churches, which were mostly occupied by the Presbyterians, some preachers only hurried over a few unmeaning prayers, as if they did not even dare to beseech heaven intelligibly. The sighs and fearful murmurs of the auditory only filled the space. Others more daring and conscientious declaimed furiously on the covenant, and in favour of the king's inviolability; and to incline the people in the cause, represented the king in the most affecting lights, betrayed, fallen, repentant; until Ingulph rushed from them to the conventicles, where he was certain to hear nought but raging invectives against the monarch, and fearful pictures of his tyrannies, and loud demands for his blood in satisfaction for the torrents poured over the nation.

Yet he went apparently through his duties—in fact, made them the pretext of his non-appearance with the court on the king's second appearance before it, alleging the dangerous excitement of the citizens, and the necessity of keeping a continual watch over their movements. Charles again appeared at the bar of the high Court—and again solemnly denied its jurisdiction. The ferment and violence of the opposing parties increased; the royalists openly raged, the Presbyterians began

to take courage; the Independents loudly announced their determination not to rest content with any sacrifice less than that of the great delinquent. Meanwhile the intentions of the leaders of the army could only be guessed at; but very few really dreamed that they projected the tremendous result.

Returning from visiting some of his posts, Ingulph found, on the evening after this second appearance, that a soldier of Fairfax's had arrived, with what he concluded to be orders from head-quarters. But to his surprise, and undoubtedly unknown to the messenger himself, it was a letter without a signature, but the handwriting of which was perfectly familiar to him. The note contained these words:—

“If you would save your soul from the guilt of murder and parricide, be at the Painted Chamber, to-morrow, on the king's third appearance, and a messenger will guide you to the presence of one who may have lost all claim on your tenderness, but not on your humanity.”

The sight of the fair, tremulous character awakened pangs in Ingulph's heart which he had hoped were silenced for ever. But he resolved hurriedly to take no notice of the epistle. A parricide!—a parricide!—he, whose only experience of the relationship necessary to make such a criminal was an undeviating course of oppression or neglect! Was it in humanity not to rebel against an order of things which had crushed all the noblest feelings of his nature—all its most generous impulses—all its purest, warmest, holiest principles?

He flung the letter on the ground—he even trampled on it in his fury—but he picked it up again. The image of that fair and melancholy face, its expression of unutterable grief, the lowliness of the claims urged on his consideration, sunk mournfully as a distant strain of funereal music on his soul. A parricide—and what was she to labour thus earnestly in the cause of the man by whose word, not uttered, her father bled on the scaffold! He would at least see her to tell her that!—to reproach her with all her former attempts to ensnare him, to upbraid her with the marvellous cruelty that had coldly sacrificed a heart which had been so blindly devoted to her, to the loss of all but honour!

Whatever was the mental process by which it was accomplished, on the third day of the arraignment Ingulph joined the court, which was sitting when he arrived. Cromwell remarked his haggard look, but he inquired not the reason, for his own bore testimony to severe mental suffering.

The court was more numerous on this occasion than on any former one, and the king was brought in with the usual state and solemnity. But this time Ingulph was convinced it was not the work of his imagination. The king gazed at him with a mournful intensity which nearly vanquished his acquired stoicism ; but observing that Ingulph refused to meet his eye, the austere melancholy of his countenance returned, and he withdrew it.

“ May it please your lordship,” said the determined Cook, immediately after silence was obtained ; “ ’tis now the third time that, by the great favour of this high court, the prisoner has been brought to the bar without joining issue. At the first, I exhibited a charge against him of the highest treason ever acted on the theatre of England ; that a king, trusted and sworn to keep the law, and who had tribute paid for that end, should be guilty of a wicked design to subvert our laws, and introduce a tyrannical government, in defiance of the parliament ; set up his standard for war against parliament and people : and I humbly prayed, in behalf of the people of England, that he might speedily be required to answer this charge : but, my lord, instead of answering, he disputed the authority of this high court. Your lordship was pleased to give him a further day, which being yesterday, I humbly moved he might be required to give a direct answer, either by denying or confessing it, when he was pleased to demur to the jurisdiction of the court, which being overruled, he was commanded to give a positive answer : I, therefore, now humbly move for speedy judgment against him. I might press your lordship on the whole, that, according to the known rules of law, if a prisoner stand contumacious in contempt, and put not in an issuable plea, guilty or not guilty, it may be taken *pro confesso*, as it has been done to those who deserved more favour than the prisoner at the bar. But, besides, I shall humbly press your lordship on the whole fact ; the House of Commons, the supreme authority of the kingdom, have declared it notorious that the matter of the charge is true, as ’tis in truth as clear as crystal, and as the sun which shines at noonday ; which if your lordship and the court be not satisfied in, I have, on the people of England’s behalf, several witnesses to produce. I, therefore, humbly pray (or rather the innocent blood shed cries!) that speedy judgment be pronounced against the prisoner at the bar.”

“ Sir, you have heard what has been moved by the counsel on behalf of the kingdom against you,” said Bradshaw ; “ you

may well remember, and if you do not, the court cannot forget what dilatory dealings they have found at your hands. You were pleased to propound some questions; you had our resolutions on them. You were told over and over, that the court affirmed their own jurisdiction; that 'twas not for you, nor any other, to dispute the jurisdiction of the highest authority of England, from which there is no appeal, and touching which there must be no dispute; yet you persisted in such carriage, as you gave no manner of obedience, nor did you acknowledge any authority in them, nor the high court which constituted this court of justice.

“Sir, I must let you know from the court that they are sensible of these delays, and that they ought not, being authorized by the supreme court of England, to be thus trifled withal; and that they might, if they pleased, according to the rules of justice, take advantage of these delays, and proceed to pronounce judgment against you: yet they are pleased to give direction, and on their behalf I require you, to make a positive answer to this charge against you, sir, in plain terms, for justice knows no respect of persons: you are to give your positive and final answer, in plain English, whether you be guilty or not guilty of these treasons laid to your charge.”

There was a slight pause, during which the king seemed lost in a perplexed meditation, for the determined and inveterate tone of the president struck all present.

“When I was here yesterday,” he said at last, “I desired to speak for the liberties of the people of England; I was interrupted; I desire to know yet whether I may speak freely or no?”

“Sir, you have had the resolution of the court, on the like question,” said Bradshaw, with lofty composure. “The court have determined that you ought to answer the charge.”

“I will answer the charge when I know by what authority you do this,” returned the king.

“If that be all you will say, then, gentlemen, you who brought the prisoner hither, take charge of him back again!” replied the unshaken president.

“I require that I may give my reasons why I do not answer, and give me time for that,” said Charles, somewhat perplexedly.

“Sir, 'tis not for prisoners to require!” said Bradshaw, haughtily.

“Prisoners!” exclaimed Charles, with sudden vivacity. “Sir, I am not an ordinary prisoner.”

“The court has considered of their jurisdiction,” replied the president, “and they have already affirmed their jurisdiction; if you will not answer, we will give order to record your default.”

“You never heard my reasons yet!” said the king, with a degree of melancholy in his tone which sounded like the farewell to some secret hope in his bosom.

“Sir, your reasons are not to be heard against the highest jurisdiction!” returned the unalterable Bradshaw.

“Show me that jurisdiction where reason is not to be heard!” retorted the monarch, and a general murmur of approbation, pointing the sarcasm, filled the hall.

“Sir, we show it you here, the Commons of England,” replied Bradshaw, hushing the clamour with an imperious wave of the hand.

“For the charge, I value it not a rush!” said Charles, contemptuously imitating the gesture. “’Tis the liberty of the people I stand for. For me to acknowledge a new court, which I never heard of before—I that am your king, who should be an example to all the people of England, to uphold justice, to maintain the old laws—indeed I do not know how to do it! You spoke very well the first day I came here, of the obligations laid on me by God, to maintain the liberties of my people; the same obligation you spoke of I acknowledge I owe to God, and my people, viz., to defend as much as in me lies the ancient laws of the kingdom: therefore, till I may know that this is not against the fundamental laws of the kingdom, by your favour, I can put in no particular answer. If you will give me time, I will show my reasons why I cannot do it; and thus”—

“Sir,” interrupted Bradshaw, with asperity.

“By your favour, you ought not to interrupt me,” continued the king, very eagerly—what a change from the times when no man dared! “How I came here, I know not; there is no law for it, to make your king your prisoner. I was in a treaty on the public faith of the kingdom, that was the known two houses of parliament, that was the representative of the kingdom; and when I had almost made an end of the treaty, then I was hurried away and brought hither, and therefore”—

“Sir, you must know the pleasure of the court!” said Bradshaw, again breaking impatiently in.

“By your favour, sir!” exclaimed the king.

“Nay, sir, by your favour, you may not be permitted to fall into these discourses!” said the lord president. “You appear as a delinquent—you have not acknowledged the authority of the court; the court craves it not of you; but once more they command you to give your positive answer. Clerk, do your duty.”

The clerk in a wavering voice read the paper, calling upon the king to return a direct answer to his accusation.

“Sir, I say again to you,” replied Charles, with calm resolution; “so that I might give satisfaction to the people of England of the clearness of my proceedings, not by way of answer, not in this way, but to satisfy them that I have done nothing against the trust committed to me, I would do it; but to acknowledge a new court against their privilege, to alter the fundamental laws of the kingdom—sir, you must excuse me.”

“Sir,” returned the lord president, “this is the third time you have publicly disowned this court, and put an affront on it; how far you have preserved the privileges of the people, your actions have spoken; and truly, sir, men’s intentions ought to be known by their actions; you have written your meaning in bloody characters throughout the whole kingdom; but, sir, you understand the pleasure of the court—clerk, record the default—and, gentlemen, you who took charge of the prisoner, take him back again.”

“I will say this one word more to you,” said Charles, vehemently. “If ’twere my own particular, I would say no more, nor interrupt you.”

“Sir, you have heard the pleasure of the court!” returned Bradshaw. “And though you will not understand it, you are to find that you are before a court of justice! The next time you are brought, you will know more of the pleasure of the court, and it may be their final determination.”

“Show me wherever the House of Commons were a court of judicature of that kind!” exclaimed Charles, with passionate warmth.

“Serjeant, take away the prisoner,” said Bradshaw, without deigning a reply.

The king looked at him earnestly for a moment, while his heart swelled full of the bitter sentiment of his degraded majesty. Those who were near heard him sigh, and murmur, “Poor Strafford!” in a deep under-tone. “Well, sir,” he continued, turning away with melancholy submission, “re-

member that the king is not suffered to give in his reasons for the liberty and freedom of all his subjects."

"Sir, you are not to have liberty to use this language," said Bradshaw, with great austerity. "How great a friend you have been to the laws and liberties of the people, let all England and the world judge!"

"Sir, under favour!" said the king, turning suddenly among his guards, who were assembling with their tasselled partizans around him. "'Twas the liberty, freedom, and laws of the subject which I undertook to defend with arms! I never took arms against the people—but for the laws!"

This direct affirmation of the contrary of even the principle of the Presbyterian treaty of Newport would at one time have offended the people; but now compassion had blinded them to everything but the sovereign's miseries. No dissent followed among the multitude, and after waiting for an instant in expectation of some, the president arose, and coldly observed, "The command of the court must be obeyed—no answer will be given to the charge."

The king merely observed, "Well, sir," and withdrew amidst his guards and the mournful silence of the people.

CHAPTER LIX.

Lost in a kind of waking dream, Ingulph accompanied his fellow commissioners into the Painted Chamber, to consult on what was to follow this continued recusancy.

"You see he refuses to answer; he denies our authority, and it will be the same to the end of the chapter!" said Ireton.

"And the end of the chapter—what is that?" said Cromwell, gloomily. "Let such of you speak as have resolved minds; for my part, I am betossed on a sea of perplexities."

"On his continued recusancy, and declining of the authority of the court, sentence of course," said Bradshaw, seemingly surprised at the question.

"Ay, sentence; but what sentence?" said Cromwell, with a start.

"What sentence can be passed when the king refuses to plead to our authority?" said Ingulph, in a low voice, as if ashamed of his own infirmity.

"And compares it to that of banditti and robbers!" said

Cromwell, sharply. "But if to deny the authority at whose bar we stand be sufficient excuse, the atheist is safer than any of us, and all the holiest saints of the Lord!—But in truth, 'tis sad to see a man so fallen, and to think of what we may all come to!—Yet there is great consolation in the army's letters to us, from all parts, commending our humble walking in slippery places, and inciting us to finish the work! To finish, ay,—to finish!"

"We must affirm our authority, or abandon it; and then what a shameful Italian stage-play buffoonery have we enacted before the world!" said Bradshaw. "A farce that will only be tragical in the conclusion, for all our heads are in it."

"Which puts me in mind," said Harrison, abruptly, "that we should take order concerning the ungodly papistries in Drury Lane and Blackfriars! I do hear how last night they must needs play Master William Shakspeare's play of Henry VI., or some such mad trumpery; and abundance of people went weeping away, the less for the king that was than the king that is."

"Hast thou never a word to say for the poor players, that wert once so like to take a rantipole life among them?" said Cromwell, looking over at Ingulph with a quaint smile. "Well, let them turn the ribald rogues adrift, that will not leave nature to her own pravity, but must needs teach her worse tricks than she takes to of her own bent. But what doth this fellow here?" he continued, observing with surprise the figure of the astrologer, Lilly, who was listening with infinite curiosity, and an awkward affectation of distant respect.

"I do seek but Master Dethewarre, on a matter he wots of, please your honourable honours," said Lilly, with an anxious look of intelligence at Ingulph.

"With me?" repeated Ingulph; but the recollection suddenly flashed upon him of the mysterious billet, and he added, "Ay, truly, I have some business with him."

"Master Lilly," said Cromwell, turning abruptly to the astrologer, "what is that stuff you prate in your last 'Starry Messenger?' Hath it a meaning?"

"Concerning the fiery trygon, or that dismal sign of the dragon's tail in the tenth?" replied the astrologer.

"What man is that you speak of," said Cromwell, with an inquisitive gaze, "whereof you say that he is not far from attaining an excess in dominion and sovereignty? Surely you must now acknowledge that your stars have lied?"

“If so, let them bear the shame, for I have not belied them,” replied the astrologer, with a keen glance at the renowned general. “But where have I said—what man—or when he comes? Perchance to-morrow, perchance not for centuries of years! The good man, if he be born (have I said), sleeps quietly, until that angel appointed for his guardian excite him in a moment to rouse on his meditating thoughts, and to convert consultation into action!”

“The dragon?” said Harrison, who had been musing ever since that word was pronounced. “There is one mentioned, 12th Revelations, that gave unto the beast his power, and throne, and authority; but truly this is a prophecy which I hope not to see fulfilled in my time.

“Our times are not of our own appointment, brother Harrison, nor measuring,” said Cromwell, sharply. “But meanwhile how hard is this gentle yoke on these uncurbed necks! What divinity is there in this man, that men should shake and tremble in his presence; that the children of light should stand as it were rebuked before the children of darkness? Yet verily he speaks not ill for a king, and I did not hear him stammer once.”

“His father was a wise man,” said Ireton, bitterly. “Were they not wont to call him Solomon? And truly men said he was the son of David—Rizzio.”

“He says he rules us by hereditary descent from the Norman kings,” said Cromwell, without apparently noticing this gibe, though nearly all the grave personages present smiled. “If so, they won the throne by conquest—and what conquest gave—conquest can take away.”

“I trow, for the most part, our names here are Saxon as the laws of Alfred!” said Ireton. “Well, we Saxons then have conquered back our liberties, and now ’tis time to pay off our oppressors for six hundred years of slavery.”

“Strip him, the king, of the royal majesty,” said Ingulph, hurriedly, “and he will be of no more account in the people’s eyes than a glow-worm when the daylight makes it a slimy worm that was a gem in darkness.”

“It is impossible!” said Cromwell, hastily. “Jests will not strip from him the glory of his renowned ancestry—the antique kings whose crowned heads vanish in the mist of the past, beyond the ken of history.”

“Tut, there are Welshmen who remember his ancestors stewards and butlers!” said Ireton, laughing at this imaginative view. “But if it be so, the more reason for us to make

altogether a new order of things—a new sovereignty of a dynasty the oldest in the world—the people.”

“The people! mean you of those in the city?” said Cromwell, hastily. “How speak they, Master Dethewarre?”

“Even with silence!” replied Ingulph.

“And deem you there will be much chattering and gossiping and shaking of hands at the latter day?” said Harrison. “Or shall not terror sit palely on all men’s cheeks as the shadow of the presence of death, when they press multitudinously, as the waves and sands of the sea, to the judgment-seat?”

“Why should we make this distinction? Is God a respecter of persons?” said Cook. “If any other prisoner refused to plead, my lords the judges would send him to the press; but, indeed, to stand mute is a confession in law.”

“And in universal equity,” said Dorislaus.

“Master Lilly, you may retire,” said Ireton, emphatically.

“I do but wait to know Colonel Dethewarre’s pleasure,” said Lilly, with a sly look at Ingulph. “Whether he will be pleased to have his question in the mathematics resolved at my house, at eight o’clock this evening, when there is a conjunction of Saturn and Venus—or wait for another opportunity—which may never come!”

“I will visit you then, Lilly,” replied the young colonel, with an intelligent nod; and the astrologer, bending to the roses on his shoes, made his exit.

“Is it your pleasures then we proceed at once to sentence?” said Bradshaw.

“No, no, not at once; we will pause, we will reflect!” said Cromwell, hastily. “We will not be hurried in this weighty matter! Let us wait on the Lord to know his will!—and hear what the people say, and the army, and the world! ’Tis, I say, a mighty matter! Never before—never again—for future times can but imitate—will men have so vast an enterprise on hand!”

“And, meanwhile, we shall have a new rebellion—or a cavalier sword running swift and deep over our throats by night!” said Ireton. “And what will the soldiers say?—Ha, Master Dethewarre! what will the agitators say, whom you have taught so well what to ask?”

“But a sentence—you speak of a sentence!” said Cromwell, after looking in vain at Ingulph for a reply. “Yes, yes, I know what the soldier would have!—But the sen-

tence!—what sentence?—I speak as a blunt soldier, unlearned in laws—should amount at least to . . . deposition?”

He glanced anxiously around the table, and the expression of disappointment was predominant on almost every countenance but Ingulph's, which lighted up.

“What for have we bound the bull to the altar, and poured oil and frankincense on his horns, if we are not to sacrifice him?” said Harrison.

“Let us not become a mockery and a by-word,” said Ireton, passionately. “Let us either set up the throne again on our necks, or make it so slippery with blood that no man shall ever dare to mount it again!”

“Tut!—what fear will ever scare a man from mounting a throne, if he can but get a foot on it?” said Cromwell, hastily. “This man hath a son ready to snatch his crown, as it rolls from the scaffold!—And remember, remember, the Valley of Salt, where Amaziah, being restored in Judah, slew ten thousand of his father's slayers!”

“Fear ye not!—no king of the line of Stuart shall ever again sit on the throne of this chosen land!” said Harrison, in a tone of prophetic solemnity.

“Why then the sentence—if we sentence at all—must needs be—death!” said Cromwell. “But,” he added hastily, “we must convince all the world of our justice; we must hear the evidence, and that will give time to think more ripely on this matter.”

No one objected to this reasonable proposition, and the assembly arose with one accord.

CHAPTER LX.

To describe the emotions with which, as the hour assigned him drew nigh, Ingulph hastened to keep his appointment, would be a vain task, so rapid and contending were they. He was at Lilly's house some minutes before the time. It was in the Strand, a corner house on the bridge; a large but somewhat decayed building, although the learned proprietor was at the period—during a short interval—for he rarely suffered the place in his affections to be long unoccupied—a widower.

Knocking at the door, Lilly himself opened it very quick and stealthily, apologising for assuming the office of porter by casually mentioning that two of his maid-servants were dead

of the plague. Ingulph scarcely noticed what he said, but followed him along a passage in which were ranged a number of odoriferous plants in red flower-pots, of fantastic shapes, and entered the sanctum in which the sage usually received his visitors. These deluded individuals, who were of all ranks and politics, and from whose babblings, much more than from the stars, Lilly gathered his knowledge, were of course unwilling to be recognised. Darkness also suited many of the sage's operations, and consequently the windows of the chamber were bricked up.

A pale blue light burned in a crocodile's mouth suspended from the ceiling, and diffused a ghastly radiance below, on various objects well calculated to inspire awe and credulity in the beholder. Astrolabes, globes, and other mathematical instruments were scattered about, apparently under the guardianship of two Egyptian mummies, whose red glass eyes sparkled very strangely, while fragments of their winding-sheets and papyri were studiously unrolled, as if for the philosopher's perusal. A large mirror, with a black crape veil over it, filled one circular panel in the wall; and the whole ceiling was painted, or rather emblazoned, with the fantastic configuration of the stars on the celestial globe.

Lilly, who perhaps did not desire to enter into conversation with a scholar on the mystic adornments of his chamber, retired instantly to await, as he said, the arrival of the lady. He mentioned no name, and Ingulph was left to his own meditations. But not for long; he heard the street-door open, and a voice, whose every tone made his heart leap, answered in a low hurried manner to some observation of Lilly's—"I do not fear the plague, nor aught else!—Is he here?"

Ingulph distinguished not the reply, but the door opened, and Lilly entered, ceremoniously escorting a lady in a mantle and hood which completely enveloped her person.

"Were you musing on the strange conjunction of Mars and Saturn, you could hardly be more profoundly at it, Master Dethewarre," said Lilly, facetiously, remarking the motionless attitude and agitated countenance of Ingulph.

"Leave us for—for a few moments," said the lady, who was the first to recover her self-possession. "We must confer—this gentleman and I—alone—ere we tax your skill. Meanwhile see if there be aught worthy your notice in this net."

"You may confide in me, madam," said Lilly, pocketing the purse with his characteristic affectation of indifference.

"In truth, I never wished his majesty ill, although the court hounded George Wharton on against me; but my stars spoke the truth, whereas his on the court side were the liars time has proved him."

Marie smiled with a perturbed and absent expression, and an impatient movement of the hand, which Lilly took as a hint, and withdrew, with a long, prying gaze at Ingulph.

"Colonel Dethewarre!—pardon me, you must needs hate me—but at this distance—he may have some listening-place!" and she advanced a few steps towards him; but observing that he stood rooted to the spot, with his arms folded, and with a stern and apparently unmoved look, she threw herself into a chair, and tossed her hood hastily back as if for air, revealing that once richly-tinted, and still exquisitely beautiful face, but now pale as snow, and full of anguish in the expression.

There was a moment's silence.

"You have then forgotten me?" she said, with extreme mournfulness, and covering her face with her hands she sank in a passion of grief and tears on the table before her. All the pride and wrath of Ingulph's heart died away at the sight, and the next instant he was kneeling at her feet—had snatched her hand, and covered it with ravening kisses.

"Thou dost not hate me then, I that have so cruelly betrayed thee?" she said, still weeping. "But do not, do not believe that ever my heart has been for one moment false to its first—its last—affection. Say that you do not hate me, Ingulph!"

"Hate you, Marie! You are the wife of another," said Ingulph, suddenly springing up; and clenching his hands, he pressed them against his brow in agony.

"Truly, truly, I have not forgotten!" she muttered distractedly. "But, Ingulph, even that tie—oh! is there any so sacred as that between parent and child,—the first of all? You know what I would say—the king too knows all. You will not slay your father, Ingulph! You will not put the fiendish climax on this unnatural war, by making its last act parricide? for then, indeed, the heavens will be weary of us, and bid the sea, which rages around our island, gulf us below the mariner's sounding!"

"I am the slave and instrument of destiny; my will matters nothing," said Ingulph, with the gloomy stubbornness of despair.

"Do not feign to believe it, Ingulph!" returned Marie, with passionate earnestness. "Let not this false illusion of

necessity make you a sharer in the solemn murder of your king and father. Oh, though we do not punish parricide as I have heard them say the old world did, by putting the wretch into a roomy chest, and throwing him into the sea, that he might stifle gradually—know this, that the whole universe shall be your prison-chest and all the air between sky and earth shall not be sufficient to prevent your suffocation, for your own heart will do it!”

“He betrayed my mother—he has bathed my country in her own blood—he has banished Stonehenge—he reared me in scorn and disownment—his nobles have trampled me—his minions added dishonour and madness to my name—he has forced you into the arms of the wretch who heaped the ignominy of his own crimes on me;—if he lives, the liberty for which we have bled is gone for ever—the illustrious republic we project is but a splendid dream! And would you have me now turn royalist?” said Ingulph, with torrent-like impetuosity.

“Alas! and is the king answerable for all these evil works of men whom his misfortunes compel him to trust?” said Marie; “but for these private injuries of your own which you allege—read this paper—and know, too, that the king acknowledges you—that Montacute and his son surrender to you the earldom and lands which were your mother’s right on her brother’s attainder.”

Ingulph mechanically took a paper which the lady drew from her mantle, but observing that he glanced at it as if unable or unwilling to peruse it, she read it aloud for him as he held it.

The first part was in the handwriting of the marquis of Montacute, and signed by him. It was addressed to the king, and after many humble entreaties for pardon, and assurances that only the excessive desire which he had of contributing to his majesty’s safety made him resolve to divulge a matter in which the writer was so highly to blame, he proceeded in a document which from its style and matter might well be called a confession.

It began by reminding the king of his early friendship with the knight of De la Pole, and his youthful passion for the lady Editha, which his generosity and honour had always kept within the limits of discretion, notwithstanding the corrupt example and exhortations of the duke of Buckingham, and the persons whom he placed around him after the duke’s accession to his royal favour, among whom the marquis—the impoverished cadet of a noble house—was compelled to be a

principal instrument. The depth and purity of the prince's attachment inspired the confederacy with great alarm, lest it should be the means of riveting the ascendancy of the severe reformer and puritan, the knight of De la Pole. At the instigation of these profligate courtiers, and induced by revenge for injuries which he had received from the knight, in consequence of an intrigue into which he had unfortunately been led with a distant relative of the knight's low-born mother—the marquis confessed he had been prevailed on to breathe those injurious suspicions on the lady's honour, which induced the prince to imagine he did no great wrong in redoubling his attentions, on ideas differing from that which the ambitious knight and his innocent sister had long cherished.

In continuation, the marquis declared that he was touched with remorse at the progress in this nefarious plan ; moreover, entertaining a passionate attachment to the lady herself—and being the next heir, failing her brother and herself, to the De la Pole possessions, and it was very improbable that, absorbed as he was in grand political projects, the knight would ever marry—he pleaded guilty to a double deceit in having persuaded the prince that he could prevail on the lady Editha to visit him privately at Whitehall, and with having used the ring which he gave him as a token, to persuade her that he was commissioned to propose a private marriage between them—by night—in masks—to be performed by a priest who was not to know the rank of either party. Resembling the prince in stature, and befriended by the darkness and his disguise, the marquis personated the prince, and as such married the unhappy lady, hoping that as he had only darkened her reputation with relation to himself, when she found the knot was irrevocably tied, she would submit to her destiny.

But he was mistaken, for when, after the ceremony, he revealed himself, and all he had done, imagining that she would thus perceive herself to be absolutely in his power, revenge and despair took possession of her soul. After the first paroxysm, she feigned resignation, desired only time to recover from the shock, and to reconcile her brother, who detested and despised her surreptitious bridegroom, to the match—and then secretly fled to the prince. He was then very young, surrounded by a profligate household, tutored by the voluptuous Buckingham,—and she altogether concealed her forced marriage.

The marquis with infinite sorrow and repentance confessed,

that after this elopement was known, he himself became animated by a spirit of revenge which resembled madness. Else what could have prevailed upon him but delirium, to inform the knight of De la Pole—as if in repentance and remorse—that the sham marriage was a preconcerted affair between himself and the prince? He should ever deplore the wild excesses into which this news hurried the knight of De la Pole, and which ended in his attainder. He should ever thankfully acknowledge the prince's piety and integrity, that the moment he discovered what had happened, and received the injunctions of the late archbishop, Laud, to that effect, he submitted to the laws, and the commands of his father, and separated from the society of the unhappy wife. His highness shortly after going abroad on his Spanish expedition, the marquis obtained the custody of his lady's person, and with gratitude acknowledged that her claim to the title of De la Pole, and his own as her husband, were graciously merged in the more exalted title conferred by a marquisate.

Nevertheless, so extreme was the dislike which the lady unhappily cherished to her husband, that she would never be in the same apartment with him, nor endure his presence even at her table, without paroxysms of grief and rage which threatened her life. In hope that time and gentle treatment might overcome this aversion, the marquis had her carefully lodged and attended in the castle of De la Pole. And now, the confessionist acknowledged with extreme sorrow, he came to the most blameable part of his conduct. The marchioness perished, giving birth to a son to the prince; but aware that, under the circumstances, the laws would adjudge the succession of the marquis to it, and thus deprive his own offspring of a great inheritance, he had wickedly and wrongfully concealed the boy's real birth, and brought it up remotely as the child of Tribulation Dethewarre. But now, stung in conscience, and in the hope to contribute to his majesty's preservation, he threw himself on his royal pity in this full avowal, and resigned into his hands the earldom and lands of De la Pole.

This extraordinary confession was followed by a sorrowful postscript in the king's own hand, acknowledging belief in the general truth of the facts alleged, and restoring Ingulph to his mother's title and possessions.

“Well, well, well!—'tis very well!” said Ingulph, wildly, at the conclusion. “But what avails all this?—Say you have cheated me of the foundation of all my wrongs! What do I owe?—Nothing but life!—A dagger's point can rid me of

that debt!—Are you not the forced wife of the worthy imitator of this monstrous father—of De la Pole!”

“No, no—I consented, I consented!—I that kneel to you now for forgiveness and pity!” said Marie, throwing herself at his feet. “The queen’s importunities—the prince’s foolish passion for me—the villanous light in which you were made to appear—the king’s anxiety to preserve me as he thought from an unequal marriage—his love for the memory of my father—your furious zeal against him;—put yourself in his place—and be merciful, be human!”

“Ay, there it speaks, even in your voice, the hideous tyranny which we have overthrown, and will crush!” said Ingulph. “I pray you, what reality is there in these accursed distinctions of blood, when he himself regarded his own as base, because it had not the slimy gild of rank on the surface!”

“But blame not the king for wedding me to De la Pole!” said Marie, eagerly. “It was my own deed!—I thought you were the falsest of men—a seducer under the holiest guise! And you remember—you remember,” she added, with a wavering blush;—“when I did all but—but throw myself—when I avowed to you—yes, yes, cost what it will, I must needs say it—you did virtually reject me, when you rejected my conditions.”

“All matters nothing now—you are the wife of De la Pole,” replied Ingulph, in a tone of exceeding bitterness.

“Ah, if you knew *all!*” said Marie, passionately, and flushing between snow and crimson in rapid alternations. “It was the king—it was the king—who, on the discovery in Oxford, supported me in my resolution—obtained for me—that I might—retire to France with the queen! Ingulph, by all that is sacred, I am only De la Pole’s wife in name!—I never will be! It is my fixed resolve, were the good king but saved from his merciless enemies, to enter the convent of the blessed sisters of Carmel in which I have long sojourned—for ever!”

“But De la Pole’s wife in name!” exclaimed Ingulph, gazing in an agony of doubt and joy at the youthful woman whose eye met his unblenchingly, although her cheek, neck, and bosom seemed to glow with fire.

“I swear it!” she repeated. “On the day of the marriage I accompanied the queen to Bristol, thence to France, and I have never spoken to De la Pole since but in the presence of many.”

But her words were broken short, for as she spoke, she was

clasped in Ingulph's embrace, and covered with his burning kisses, while tears and sighs choked all utterance between them. A slight knock was heard at the minute, and both listened for a brief pause, as if expecting the entrance of the astrologer. No one appeared.

"But, Ingulph—dearest Ingulph! I *am* his wife, in name!" she said at last, gently disengaging herself from his arms, with a smile of mingled anguish and supplication. "But, now! have you any injuries left which only parricide can fitly avenge?"

"How know you, Marie, that we—they intend the king's death?" said Ingulph, in a bewildered tone.

"The king knows but too well their intention," said Marie. "A letter from him formerly fell into their hands, which—they will not trust him—they will butcher him! His crown will not content them; they must have his gracious head with it."

"They will not—they dare not—they shall not touch his head!" exclaimed the conscience-stricken republican.

"Then aid us in our attempt to rescue him from their murderous clutches!" said Marie; "else his doom is determined, for all their fair words to keep the bloodhounds in hand, until the deer is brought to bay."

"What attempt?—Thank God! I can die ere they shall harm one hair of his head!" said Ingulph, distractedly pacing the chamber.

"Hear me, then, dear Ingulph, hear me patiently," returned the beautiful royalist. "Under pretext of yielding to the parliament, De la Pole's loyal crew have brought his vessel to Gravesend; but Montacute is on board, and secretly commands it. The king is lodged at Sir Robert Cotton's house; the distance is very short between it and Whitehall. If you could obtain command of the guard, but for one night, which surely as 'tis changed so frequently you might—the king's evasion might easily be contrived, with the assistance of De la Pole and some other faithful gentlemen. It were not then difficult to reach the vessel, and sail for France, with such start as your silence would afford."

Hazardous to the last degree as this complot undoubtedly was, the point which least struck Ingulph was the danger.

"I understand you!" he said, bitterly. "The glory and renown of saving the king are to be De la Pole's, and for his reward you—yes, I understand you!"

"And for his reward—I leave it to his grateful and gene-

rous sovereign!" said Marie. "But you speak of none for yourself!—If it be any that I should stay with you and be your slave—since I cannot be your wife—such is my intent, if you will it, and welcome all shame, poverty and woe, rather than all the pomps and glories of the world remote from you!"

Ingulph was too much moved for a moment to reply; but forcing himself to some outward composure, he said, tremulously, "No, my beloved Marie! rather will I die many times than calumny should ever breathe on thy sweet name! I need no motive to urge to the king's deliverance; most happy if I find my own destruction in it! But yours is a desperate plan, only to be tried at worst. Cromwell is, perchance, not resolved on the king's *death*—his deposition! At all events, I will ascertain his real sentiments first."

"You may readily do so—I will send you the prince of Wales's *carte-blanche* ratified by the States of Holland," said Marie. "But if he refuses all compromise—what then?"

"I accede to your plan," replied Ingulph.

"But dare you trust yourself—will you meet De la Pole, with Cromwell's answer, or your own?" said Marie, with obvious hesitation.

"Where is he to be found?" was Ingulph's reply.

"At the Water-Poet's—at Taylor's—a faithful man to the king," returned Marie.

"To-morrow, before sunset, I will be there," said Ingulph, hurriedly. "But if I have any tidings of importance for you to hear, Marie, where am I to seek for you?"

"Where was I the night you sought me to save my life at the hazard of your own?" said the lady, with an eloquent smile. Almost simultaneously a tap was heard at the door, and Lilly entered.

"If it might please you," he said, with a leer, which displeasing as it was, convinced Ingulph that he had not overheard the conversation, about which they had not always been sufficiently guarded; "if it might please you, the buriers are come for my two dead folks, and mayhap you would not care to be seen of them."

"Farewell, then!" said Marie, faintly. "Do not follow!—Lady Carlisle awaits me at hand."

Ingulph felt the necessity of obedience, and murmuring a passionate echo to that "farewell," awaited a few moments after her retreat—followed, met Lilly, gave him a handsome gratuity, and left the house.

“Ha, ha, the buriers!” said Lilly, chuckling with delight. “Nothing else would have parted them, I suppose, to-night, but it was not quite so pleasant for me, momentarily expecting bloodshed.”

The astrologer then hastened back to his sanctum, but before he arrived, the magic mirror, as it was doubtless considered by many of his visitors, glided open, and a small inner chamber, filled with various machines, appeared, out of which stepped the Lord De la Pole.

“Truly, my lord, I feared every moment you would have been bolt out among us!” said Lilly, with something between a smile and a sneer.

“They say that listeners hear no good of themselves,—and it is true!” said the young lord, in a tone very different from his usual one of careless vivacity. “But I have only played my common cards as yet, and come now to the trumps. Keep secret what you have known, Lilly, and henceforth depend on friends more certain than those you have above.”

Contributing an additional and much larger sum than the astrologer had yet received for his day’s work, De la Pole also retired.

CHAPTER LXI.

As if relieved by magic from an enormous weight of anguish on his heart, Ingulph seemed as if his existence were suddenly renewed, and that all the dried-up fountains of hope in his soul resumed their brilliant play.

According to agreement, the *carte-blanche* was transmitted to him on the following morning, by the discreet hands of Taylor. Despite the king’s refusal to plead, the High Court had determined to proceed in the examination of witnesses against him; and hoping to find Cromwell there, and so to speak to him with less suspicion, Ingulph hastened to Westminster.

On arriving, he learned that the lieutenant was expected; but he sat for some time listening without hearing the evidence brought to substantiate the king’s presence at various battles, which were to be the proofs of his high treason. At last Cromwell came in, arm-in-arm with Fairfax, who had a very unwilling aspect, yet nevertheless took his

seat at the head of the board. But he had not been there many minutes, before a page entered with a note; and after perusing it, he muttered that his wife was ill, and withdrew.

"Alack! poor woman! she hath the qualms!" said Ireton, with an ironical smile. "And troth, I fear she will infect the good man himself with this shivering ague of fear!"

"Peace, Ireton, peace!—who knows what hearts may fail in the sore heat and glow of the furnace?" said Cromwell, sharply. "But let us on with the witnessing; for indeed we cannot too much strengthen wavering souls, and the blood of so many cannot be stifled. Dethewarre, thou wilt bear witness to Naseby field, for there thou wert, and saw the king to thy cost."

"I would speak on that point with your honour in private," replied Ingulph, anxiously availing himself of the opening.

"Is it for satisfaction on particulars, or for some clinch of thought, for indeed I know full well what it is to have a heart fretting against the Lord!" said Cromwell, pathetically. "Come into the Court of Wards—there is no man there."

Ingulph followed his commander into the apartment named, and carefully closed the doors after him. Cromwell looked back with some surprise, and then walked up to the window at the farther end of the apartment.

"What is the matter?—Is aught wrong in the city?" he said, in a tone of no slight alarm.

"An exceeding great dislike of all our proceedings,—no worse that I wot of," replied Ingulph; "and a passionate desire that we should conclude on some bargain with the king, and compose the distractions of this miserable land."

"It cannot be—the man is utterly faithless," said Cromwell, after a moment's pause. "None know that better than thou—wherefore I marvel to hear thee speak so earnestly, as if thou too wert of this judgment."

"I discern no other means to 'scape endless broils, and miseries, and bloodshed!" said Ingulph, avoiding his commander's searching eye. "Under terror of the coming punishment, the king might probably be prevailed on to abdicate."

"You do not know King Charles the—*last*—if you think so!" said Cromwell, hastily.

"There is only the choice between his deposition and his blood; are you really resolved to shed it?" said Ingulph. "It is an act unparalleled since the beginning of the world."

"Therefore it is the more certain that it is of God!" said

Cromwell, enthusiastically. "For who but He can have inspired a thought which has no archetype in earthly things, and is therefore His own demonstration to man! Is the blood of the saints which Charles hath poured but water? What the army do positively intend, I know not; but we must keep with the wave, if we would not it should overwhelm us; and truly—most truly—the army seems now to be bent on his death! If so, we must of necessity obey!—*Necessity!*—It is an iron word, and yet the Lord speaks chiefly that way to men; for when circumstances become irresistible, free-will is a sound, and we are no longer but passionless tools and instruments."

"I would fain believe it!" said Ingulph, with a deep sigh, "But there are many who deem, were the king thus slaughtered, there is no hope ever to settle the nations in peace."

"Their faith is weak,—verily 'tis our only way of peace; the blood of the king alone can unite us all—and for ever—in excluding his tyrannous race from the throne! Depose the king!—you but proclaim his son! But what panic is this hath seized you too, that you lay down your sickle, at the ninth hour, when the husbandman cometh to reward his labourers? Is not your day-dream dawning, when this noble land of England shall become the oasis of the earth's desert—freedom, equality, glory, religion, and happiness flourishing throughout her length and breadth; no royalty or nobility battenning like greedy vultures on her liver; merit the only claimant of reward; commerce free and unshackled as the winds that fill her sails; mercy, humility, and godliness the lictors of her magistrates; peace, plenty, and the unutterable enjoyment of the Lord to all men, in their own way; the office of government being merely as of the rudder to the vessel, to guide it cheerfully to harbours of rest and riches."

"It was my youth's dream!" said Ingulph, warming with his old poetic fancies. "But can it ever be more? The royalists grow furious; and hear we not the churning of the mad sea of fanaticism ready to overwhelm all? Were it not sufficient if the king be solemnly deposed and deprived for breach of trust?"

"Who can foretel whither the waters will go now they are let out?" said Cromwell, in a displeased tone. "And is not the Lord sufficient to establish his kingdom, He who laid the foundation of the heavens, and said to the sea—Thus far and

no farther! It is the army—not I—that do it! Am I their master?”

“Wherefore then obey them against your will, when you can go with it, and become the master of all?” said Ingulph.

“What means the boy?” returned Cromwell, looking sternly at him. Ingulph thought the time had now arrived to present his paper, which he handed over to Cromwell, with a brief intimation that it had been presented to him by one who imagined that he had some little favour with him to embolden the present action.

Cromwell hesitated for an instant to take the papers, but the extreme anxiety of Ingulph’s expression overcame his reluctance. He opened the letter—a blank—signed by the prince and queen and attested by the States of Holland, declaring that whoever would save the king’s life might therein write his own conditions.

Cromwell examined the seals for some moments without suffering any signs of opinion to escape him. At last he muttered to himself—“I marvel if my Lord Jermyn held her majesty’s taper while she dropped the wax, ’tis so niggardly bestowed!” and he walked up and down for some moments thoughtfully, with his hands behind him.

“No, no!” he said at length, pausing. “We cannot trust the king, and this is but waste paper and wax—easily torn, easily melted. Moreover, seeing how this mad and unreasonable tide of popular favour hath flowed back to him, unless it reach a fall soon, it will roar down this poor godly army and ourselves! What to do with him?—Shut him in the Tower?—Marry, he will escape on the air!—In some obscure fortress?—He will be assassinated, or rebellions continual will weary out the bravest of us all!”

“You are then resolved on the king’s destruction?” said Ingulph, wildly.

“Listen, boy! Alack, you know how well I love you, to trust you thus far, but not for what cause!” said Cromwell, shedding tears as he spoke. “I was once in earnest to save this obstinate man; but from all that has happened, ’tis plain the Lord has rejected him, and chosen another. I have fasted and prayed in his behalf, but have received no answer; and now ’tis altogether too late, for the army is bent on it; and indeed his tyranny—eleven years without a parliament—the land drenched in gore—this last struggle which he raised while affecting only to seek peace—he must die!”

“You will find, general, that many will desert you in so bloody a consequence!” said Ingulph, hastily.

“Let me at least find thee faithful, who have chiefly led me to it,” said Cromwell. “Do not desert me, Ingulph! thou art my youth, my better nature; do not desert me!—but be the staff of mine age as thou hast been my sword in battle, and when I am gone, my mantle descend on thy shoulders!”

“Would you so disinherit your own blood?” said Ingulph, much affected with this effusion of his renowned chief.

“Perchance—you are of it too!” said Cromwell, hurriedly, and colouring deeply, deeply as any country wench before a full bench of justices. Then continuing to pace the room with increasing agitation, he said, “I have some reason to think thou art akin to me! The woman Tribulation;—in the days of my unregeneracy and youth, I was a royster—and one of its chief corrupters was that unhappy but now zealous and converted woman—who did then flourish on the wages of sin here in London. She is your mother—and she says—I am your father.”

Keeping his face averted in some confusion, the lieutenant had not noticed the changes of expression in Ingulph's, but suddenly a peal of wild laughter struck on his ear, and he turned with astonishment and alarm, for it was evidently not of mirth. But the laughter still continued.

“What ails thee, boy?” he said, seizing him by the arm, and shaking him violently.

“Nay, sir, but I did ever hear—the marquis of Montacute!” gasped Ingulph, suppressing with difficulty the hysterical paroxysm which mounted in his breast.

“To procure your better nurriture, Tribulation deceived that man—her first misleader—with a simulated tale, not knowing the time might come when the poor, rollicking student of the laws might become the arbiter (the Lord willing it so, to whom be the glory!) of three great but distracted kingdoms!” said the lieutenant.

“The arbiter!” repeated Ingulph, vacantly.

“It is a comforting word in the Psalms, and in season,” said Cromwell, ecstatically. “‘Wait on the Lord; be of good courage; and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord!’ Deem you that He who raised up Moses and Aaron in captive Israel, will want for a man in this people to do his work? I may confide in thee, my son!—in thee alone. Forasmuch as David was but a poor herdsman, and

yet the Lord chose him in the place of unholy Saul—and he founded a line of kings which but for their own backsliding had remained till this day—I tell thee, Ingulph, I do believe that—I am the man !”

Ingulph stood for some moments astounded at this revelation of mingled ambition and fanaticism.

“ You are amazed, Esau, son of my youth !” said Cromwell, whose usually austere and common-place countenance was singularly illuminated. “ But you now know what heaven has in hand for me to do—shall I miss thy form beside me in the heat of the strife? You owe me some little matter of love and kindness—and what do you owe to the perfidious tyrant? Look here, and behold.”

The lieutenant drew from many, in a little silver case which he carried in his pocket, the letter intercepted by Stonehenge, which led to the discovery of that in Huncks’s saddle. Cromwell had not thought proper to divulge the contents on that occasion ; but now he desired Ingulph to read them. It was from the king to lady De la Pole, commanding her, on pain of his severe displeasure, to reside with her lord, with whom it appeared as if she had quarrelled, and from whom she was living apart. It was intermixed with the monarch’s usually elaborate scholastic divinity in proof of the reasonableness and propriety of his command, and including many sharp inuendoes against a “ pitiful adventurer and traitor,” whose name Dethewarre easily supplied.

It is probable that the perusal of this document produced an effect different from that intended by the wily politician ; but Ingulph dexterously used it to the purpose which he was now obliged to entertain.

“ It is I then who have convinced you of the king’s faithlessness ?” he said, mournfully. “ But I cannot heartily join in his destruction till I am convinced that he is determined not to give this persecuted people rest. Let me offer him this paper to sign, and so ascertain how far he is willing to bend.”

“ He is more obstinate than ever,” said Cromwell. “ His neck is stiffened against reproof ; he imagines the vile breath of the mob will terrify us to kneel to him for mercy. To propose conditions will but render him more obstinate ; but do as you will—I trust in you wholly.”

There was a pang at Ingulph’s heart, but he replied—“ Let me take my turn to guard the king, and I will see him, and learn his resolves.”

“ My life against a dicer’s oath you find him fixed as adamant ! ” said Cromwell, glancing at Ingulph with a slight degree of doubt. “ But you shall have the guard to-night ; you have taught your lads too well their duty for me to distrust either them or you.”

CHAPTER LXII.

As soon after this conversation as he thought it advisable, to avoid suspicion, Ingulph hastened to the Water-Poet’s residence. Taylor received him with great satisfaction, and seemed to understand his business, for he ushered him instantly into a back-parlour ; and in reply to Ingulph’s inquiry for one Master Saveall, said, with a significant smile, “ Ay, ay, you ask for water, but you want wine,” and disappeared.

In a few moments De la Pole’s voice was heard unconcernedly humming an air, and he entered the apartment in a garb so accurately puritanical, that at first even Ingulph did not recognise him. Everything about him was formal, angular, and precise ; his colours sad-brown and black ; his visage composed and gloomy ; the hat high, and only buckled with lead.

“ Here I am, Josiah Saveall, travelling dealer in ointments and pharmacy, sovereign against the cramp, agues, rheumatism, stitches in the side, and all other ills, however caught or kept, and, moreover, an expounder of all things doubtful in heaven or earth ! ” said De la Pole, with apparently as much frankness as if nothing had ever occurred to interrupt the friendship between him and his victim.

“ You are more than all these, my Lord De la Pole ! ” returned Ingulph, inwardly grinding his teeth.

“ I am such no longer—I have resigned the title to the king, who has restored it to one whose right it is ! ” replied De la Pole, mildly.

“ I will tell Master Stonehenge so,” replied Ingulph, with a bitter smile. De la Pole started and coloured.

“ If he be the knight of De la Pole, the best part of his time was madness, and now ’tis worse with him than ever,” he said ; “ but Master Taylor is so faithfully ours that—I will not fail to tell thee all anon, good gossip, if you will leave us awhile by ourselves, for all men are not so childish trustful as I am.”

Taylor laughed knowingly, and withdrew.

“ I have only to say—my part in the contract shall be executed this evening—that is all my business with your lordship,” replied Ingulph. “ The lord general is ailing now with his usual malady of the gout ; send a closed sedan to Cotton House when I have mounted guard ; I will give orders to admit it, as if it contained his excellency ; the safety of the king’s person will then depend on you.”

“ I shall not fail—I have one virtue at least !” said De la Pole, bitterly. “ But this is something sudden. Would you consent we might do more than save the person of your royal father ! There are all the broken ends of my plot in Waller’s time, which I could gather up. The moment the king is out of their clutches, my old friends the citizens will declare for a peace. Fairfax will not move against us, and would your regiment declare for us we could set the king on his throne again ere sunset ; and what a glory, what a rapture were that, to blow up the vessel of treason just entering full sail into the haven !”

“ The moment the king’s person is safe, my regiment shall proclaim a republic,” replied Ingulph.

“ Surely you rave—when you are just named a peer, and with a plenteous estate conferred on you !” exclaimed De la Pole.

“ Let us not debate the point, if it please your lordship !” said Ingulph, with such extreme calmness, that De la Pole haughtily bowed. “ Bring your boat to the Old Palace Stairs—send the sedan—and all is agreed.”

De la Pole assented ; the hour was decided, and the rivals parted, with infinite coldness on the part of Ingulph, and with affected courtesy on that of De la Pole ; but as the former left the hostel, the cavalier arose, and giving vent to his suppressed passions in a furious laugh, he bowed very profoundly to the closed door.

“ Good night, my lord earl !” said he, in a mocking tone ; “ but it shall go hard in the hubbub which is coming if I do not inherit my titles back again, thanking only the point of my dagger !”

Taylor re-entered as he spoke these words, and the cavalier, after musing for some minutes, informed the Water-Poet of the project for the evening.

“ I must trust in you for the boat, the water being your natural element,” he said, with a quaint smile ; “ but whether instantly to proceed to the vessel, the river being commanded

at so many points by ordnance, I scarcely know. Had we some sure place of concealment, more might perhaps be done, for the citizens would fly to arms with the royalists, to defend the king's person—and Fairfax would not interfere to recapture him !”

“ Let us not run our necks into Chaloner's noose, my good lord !” said Taylor, in considerable alarm.

“ Fear not, fear not !” replied the cavalier ; and he remained for a few minutes immersed in thought.

“ This Stonehenge must needs be far gone in idiocy,” he said at last, “ since his wife finds means to write to me so lovingly again.”

“ His wife ! after all she has suffered for you ?” said Taylor, incredulously. “ Marry, I doubt me if any man else's wife would do as much for her lawful spouse.”

“ Hast thou forgotten thine own sec-saw ?” said De la Pole, smilingly.

“ ‘ For a woman, a spaniel, and a walnut-tree,
The more you beat them the better they be.’ ”

“ Yea, she is very earnest to see me once again, and declares her master is now so constantly abroad, that there is scarce any hope—or fear—of meeting him.”

“ I would not run the risk within a thousand miles, were I you !” said Taylor, shrugging his shoulders.

“ I must now procure the sedan, and such stout fellows as will not hesitate to do any bidding of mine !” said De la Pole, apparently not noticing this remark. “ But ere I sally forth, I will array myself something nearer the mark, for my best friends will scarcely know me in this guise. Midnight is the hour ; and I shall be with you again long ere it strikes.”

CHAPTER LXIII.

CROMWELL's regiment of horse at the Mews, Fairfax's of foot, in Whitehall, and several great divisions on various important points, inclosed Westminster in a network of spears. The guard on the king's person usually consisted of fifty in number, picked men, who were frequently changed, to prevent the danger of corruption or of pity. Ingulph selected such soldiers whom he thought most devoted to himself, including Joyce and his men. At ten o'clock he was to relieve the guard, and the interval was spent by him in con-

siderable agitation. The discovery of Marie's constancy had in a manner reseasoned life to his palled taste, and he could not but feel that the enterprise in which he was embarked was fraught with danger. What was to become of himself after the king's escape, in which his complicity must be evident? His intentions were, the moment the discovery became inevitable, to return to the city, to proclaim a commonwealth, and abide the issue. The ingratitude he was thus compelled to show to Cromwell troubled him deeply; but he thought that when his motives were explained, and his intentions developed, the lieutenant could not but pardon him.

Arriving at Cotton House with his troop, he found Axtel, a determined republican, on guard, who informed him of the points at which the lieutenant had desired sentinels to be placed; and to Ingulph's great vexation, he kindly accompanied him in setting them. Most admirably indeed was the guard posted, so as apparently to baffle all hope of escape. Sentinels stood at every outlet, and on the parapets of the house; and three different chains of patrols encircled it in widening rings.

The obliging Axtel at last conducted Ingulph to the chamber which he was to occupy as commander of the guard, and which he informed him was next to the king's. "He complains highly of the poor soldiers' tobacco," he said, in explanation of the disordered appearance of the chamber. "But, poor lambs, they never heed him, but smoke on. I'll warrant you care not to keep lonely watches more than I do; so I always have half-a-dozen of my lads or so about me here."

"But my soldiers are not such good company as yours, perchance," replied Ingulph.

"Nay, then, I'll come back and drink a stoup with you, as soon as I have seen the poor sheep to their quarters," said generous Axtel.

"Not so, for I am weary, and should be but sleepy company to-night," returned Ingulph; and after some farther polite offers and declinings, Axtel at last went sheer off, but not without some mistrust visible in his manner.

Ingulph felt the necessity of making the king aware of the approach of the crisis; but he had a reluctance to present himself before him which only necessity could have subdued. After sundry pauses of hesitation, he at last ventured to tap at the door of the royal chamber.

It was opened by Herbert, very cautiously, and with an

appearance of much surprise and alarm. Ingulph then perceived that the king was engaged in perusing a book by the flickering light of a wax taper set in a silver basin to screen it from the air.

The sound of his voice struck Charles instantly, and he looked forward with an expression of anxiety. Herbert communicated the young commandant's request to speak with his majesty, and returned with an immediate assent. But although his countenance expressed much emotion, the king only extended his hand with grave dignity for Ingulph to kiss, who fell on both knees, and for the moment was overcome, for he melted into tears.

It is probable that Charles felt much internally, but his habitually cold and lofty manner did not desert him; and the stern calmness with which he inquired his business of the commandant, as if addressing a stranger, restored Ingulph to firmness.

"If it might be, I would fain speak with your majesty in private," he said, springing up.

"In private? Master Herbert may be trusted with aught that concerns me," replied Charles, as if he disliked the thought of a *tête-à-tête*, or the explanations it might entail.

Thus commanded, Ingulph briefly, despite his agitation, revealed the project which was on foot for the king's deliverance. To his surprise, Charles looked as troubled as if it had been to a contrary effect.

"'Tis well-nigh impossible!" he said, hurriedly. "The river is well guarded—an immediate pursuit must take place;—perchance this is but another version of the Hurst Castle project, to get me butchered under some pretence of my attempting to escape! For I know they dare not—they dare not—bring their sovereign to death, as they threaten, in the open sun, in the gaze of the people!"

"Sire, they who have dared to think it, dare to do it," said Ingulph, in a tone which seemed to strike Charles painfully.

"You too have been of the number, Master Dethewarre!" he said, with asperity. "But in the school whose apostle you have been with word and deed—even parricide—parricide!—for what is it less for subjects to take away the life of the father of the body politic—even parricide has been nobly esteemed! Fratricide at least, for did not Thrasylulus—ay, and by some it hath been thought that Brutus was beholden to Cæsar for the life which—but no more of that! I cannot think this project feasible save in a captive's dream."

“Your majesty suspects me, then?” replied Ingulph, in a tone which obviously troubled the king, for he replied with emotion—“Not so, not so!—but your soldiers are furious republicans, who would be glad of a pretext to hack me to pieces. I would not be played on as a puppet to mine own destruction! There may be some in great places secretly conniving at this plan, intending its catastrophe to be in my slaughter, which they dare not openly effect.”

“And yet, assuredly as I speak to your majesty with living breath, those who have the work in hand will do it openly, if at all!” said Ingulph, passionately.

“I know thou art much in the confidence of this new Jeroboam,” said Charles, with a suspicious glance. “But I have one with me who was in the confidence of all mankind, who like Pythagoras had surely passed through all the forms of existence—honest Will of Avon:—and what says he?”

“‘There’s such divinity doth hedge a king,
That treason dares but peep to what it would.’”

“But, Jeroboam—as your majesty is pleased to call General Cromwell,” replied Ingulph, “with necessary compliances on your majesty’s part, might yet be won over to accept conditions.”

“Say you so?” replied Charles, suddenly. “Yea, if I would consent to sacrifice my honour and my conscience, my own and my people’s rights, and those of the church of God, to rebels, schismatics, and villains, I might yet regain the pageantry of my power! But I will not give the lie to God and my own soul to obtain the sovereignty of all the realms that Satan tempted our Lord withal!”

“Nay, sire, the conditions were perchance much milder,” said Ingulph. “But they must be unreserved; and would you add your signature to those on this paper, this fearful risk, for such I grant it, need not be incurred.”

“Sign a blank!” said Charles, tossing the paper disdainfully aside. “And find it filled in return with the names of my friends marked for the slaughter, with a Tyburn confession of my misdoings, including doubtless the charge of having poisoned my father, and Montacute’s villainies, and so deprive myself of the faithful friends that yet remain to me, and give myself up to the sacrifice, bound hand and foot! They cannot trust me, they do not trust me, they will not trust me, nor I them! But, Ingulph,” he continued in a milder tone, “I trust in thee—I will trust in thee—although I may well perceive that De la Pole hath not—wholly.”

Ingulph bowed; and the king, after a slight recurrence of hesitation, informed him that De la Pole had formed the project of uniting the Presbyterians and Royalists in a strong effort in his favour, and of thus compelling the army to listen to reasonable terms of accommodation. He had met with great success among the citizens, the town was full of cavaliers, and if Ingulph would join with his troops, the revolt of the city could be easily effected.

Ingulph's countenance betrayed extreme dissatisfaction at this revelation.

"The only result of such an attempt, sire," he replied, "would be, a bloody massacre, and the seizure of the supreme power into the hands of a military dictator."

"What say you? are you mad, young man?" said Charles, much startled.

"Jeroboam would not content him with the sway of ten of the tribes of Israel; he would possess the house and the temple, and seat himself on the throne of David!" replied Ingulph.

"What! the son of a brewster seat himself on the imperial throne of England! swathe his coarse limbs in the purple of sovereignty!" said Charles, haughtily. "Tush, you have infinitely better pretensions to the throne yourself! and I would advise you to assert them."

"I thank your majesty for the hint!" replied Ingulph, in a suffocated tone. "But the moment your royal person is safe, it is my intention, and that of this great army, whose thoughts need but one voice's utterance to burst in thunder, to declare the throne a wooden stool, and the kingdom of England a free republic!"

Charles gazed in mute surprise and displeasure at the young republican. "No, no," he said at last; "put all your strengths together, ye cannot lift the stone of destiny! But I will wait till De la Pole comes, ere I decide; *he* is truly zealous in my cause! meanwhile make all your arrangements without, *he* will not deceive me!"

There was a stress on the pronoun in this latter sentence which stung Ingulph to the heart; and without saying another word he retired.

The time was now approaching when the all-important arrival of De la Pole might be expected. He gave orders at all the posts, that if a personage arrived in a sedan, they were to allow him to pass into the court-yard unquestioned, whither he was to be himself summoned. He hinted at the same

time, that it would be some grandee of the army, on business with the king from the council; and to the sentinels in the court-yard, who well knew that Fairfax was often disabled by the gout, he observed that the visitor, having that disease, would probably choose to be carried in his sedan to the first landing-place.

These orders seemed to excite no suspicion, the soldiers placing implicit faith in their fire-proven commander. Ingulph then returned to his guard-chamber, and seating himself by a low chilly fire, awaited with intense anxiety the approach of the decisive hour.

Time passed, and yet no sign of De la Pole!—Ingulph's cogitations on the infinite choice of evils before him gradually exhausted themselves; and even weariness succeeded—a calm more fretful and comfortless than fear and suspense. But so rapidly does thought consume time, that he started up amazed when he distinctly counted on St. Margaret's bell—twelve o'clock—an hour beyond the appointed one, and so late as to render an arrival suspicious.

Several times he had heard a step in the king's chamber, as if advancing to the door—but it always stopped short. But while he now stood astounded at the number of strokes he had counted, and striving to believe that in his anxiety he had mistaken the number, the door of the chamber opened, and Herbert appeared silently beckoning to him.

He hastened in, and found Charles engaged in winding up one of his watches to the time.

“Something has happened to De la Pole!” he said, with a penetrating look at Ingulph. “I trust in God he is not betrayed!—But it seems the plan is abortive; and I presume I may go to bed?”

“I beseech your majesty to delay a little longer!” said Ingulph, eagerly. “Something may have occurred to detain him.”

“No,” said Charles, with melancholy fixedness; “on such an enterprise, there is only one thing can stop De la Pole! Ingulph, Ingulph! if you have sacrificed him to your jealous fury and revenge, you are also guilty of my murder, and your own destruction; for, with the church's sanction, I did mean to disjoin that ill-starred union, and—but 'tis no matter now!”

“Would there were some asseveration by which devils might be believed, since your majesty is pleased to consider me as one!” said Ingulph, wildly. “But if this occasion is

lost, no other will ever offer itself. Sire, take my cloak and arms!—I will remain in your place. The soldiers are weary—the night is dark—you shall have the word; fly, sire, fly. I conjure you!”

“Do not rave this madness; you are half the head taller,” replied the king.

“There are footsteps in the guard-chamber!” exclaimed Herbert. Hope rushed back on Ingulph’s heart; but on hastily stepping into the antechamber, his fears returned when he perceived the Water-Poet, accompanied by one of his own soldiers.

Taylor’s request to speak to the commandant on an important matter was announced, the soldier dismissed; and at the same moment that Ingulph impatiently demanded the news, the king entered with Herbert. The Water-Poet did not anticipate so august an interview, and fell almost on his face, in the excess of loyal awe.

“Good friend, arise, and tell us the worst the first!” said the king, clutching him up violently by the belt. “Is my lord a prisoner? who has betrayed him?”

It was some time ere Taylor’s perturbation allowed him to shape a rational tale; but by degrees it was collected that De la Pole had, in an inexplicable manner, disappeared. About an hour after Ingulph and he had parted, the young lord dressed himself with his wonted splendour of toilette, in so much that Taylor had remonstrated with him on the danger of exciting notice. De la Pole laughed, and said he was going to make arrangements with a lady whose assistance would be of consequence to their success, and loved not to show himself slovenly before women. However, he accepted the loan of Taylor’s cloak to conceal his habiliments, and promising to return with the sedan that was to be used in the enterprise, left the house.

Taylor, after executing divers commands, including the delivery of certain messages in the city, had been in attendance at Whitehall Stairs with his boat for some hours. But growing alarmed at the long delay, he had left it there with one of his assistants, and hurried home to make inquiries. There he learned that De la Pole had not returned, that no sedan had arrived, and that there were no tidings whatever about him.

“The gallant youth has been betrayed!—and all is over now!” said Charles, with a mournful glance at Ingulph. “Doubtless he was on his way to speak with my Lady Fairfax.”

“No, sire, no; nothing is lost as yet,” said Ingulph, distractedly. “I will feign orders—my soldiers will not suspect me—and will escort you to Taylor’s boat, as if it were to the Tower;—and I will proceed with you at once to Montacute’s vessel.”

“It is undoubtedly seized too, by this time,” said Charles, with an apathetic expression. “I will stay here, and trusting in God, meet my fate, whatever it be.”

It was in vain that, with every argument which reason or passion could suggest, Ingulph besought the king to change this resolution. His suspicions were rooted beyond any effort to remove; and wrapped in the dense mist of prejudices which made him imagine his enemies dared not openly accomplish his destruction, he concluded that this plot was formed to accomplish it with fair appearances of necessity. He believed that Ingulph had delivered up De la Pole, after the interview with Marie, to be rid of a hated rival; and from his zeal still to effect his flight, he concluded that the republicans found his presence an insuperable bar to their projects, and that even if the higher plotters did not project his murder, they hoped to deprive him of all hope of retrieving his crown.

The Water-Poet and Herbert joined vainly in supplications, and at length, wearied with their persevering entreaties, the king returned towards his chamber.

“But at least—at least—sign this paper, that in the event of the worst some hope may remain!” said Ingulph, kneeling in his way in an agony of despair.

“Ay!—is this your object!” returned the monarch, with sudden violence. “But though all else is lost, my honour still remains to me, and you shall not deprive me of that! But, stay,—send my betrayed De la Pole to me with it, and I may yet—but no, I will never do so manifest a wrong to my conscience, my honour, and my cause!”

Leaving Ingulph motionless with grief and indignation, the king passed on into his chamber, followed by Herbert, who closed the door, and bolted it in the interior, apparently at the royal command.

CHAPTER LXIV.

It was, as Taylor reported, nearly nightfall, when Lord De la Pole sallied forth on his ill-omened visit. Hastening to the hermitage in the now utterly desolate gardens of Whitehall, the mulatto suddenly met him—apparently by agreement.

“All is well—Master Stonchenge is at the council of officers,” said the black, whose teeth chattered with terror. “But hasten, my señor—for he is a magician, and may discover us!”

Smiling scornfully, the young cavalier followed his timorous guide to the old palace, and ascended the tower, in an apartment of which, to escape the observation of her attendants, he was taught that Mistress Stonehenge awaited him. Despite of all the injuries he had inflicted on her, and the exceeding cruelty of the manner in which he had given her up to the vengeance of her husband, De la Pole never doubted for an instant that he should readily cajole her into his present purposes. He had learned the nature of woman—inexhaustible in love and forgiveness—as children do that of a watch, by destroying it.

Yet it was not without a moment's hesitation that he reached the little flight of steps which led to the laboratory of the betrayed astrologer. But while he paused, as if in doubt, the mulatto ran up to announce his approach; and shortly after a voice, gay, tender, and vivacious, as in its day of happiness—the voice of Ramona, was heard, singing apparently like the nightingale to lure its mate.

“Oh break not yet my heart, she said,
 Oh break not yet awhile;
 Thy latest tears are surely shed,
 Live on, live on, to smile!
 How can I live, the heart replied,
 When every throb is pain?
 Why should I live if tears nor smiles
 Bring back my love again?”

“I am here—my own dearest love—after all!” said De la Pole, with a degree of vehemence akin to his ancient passion, and springing up two or three stairs at once, he rushed into the laboratory.

It was now night, and from the narrowness of the window, it was usually dark in this chamber long ere, from its height,

one would have thought it probable. But a lamp suspended from the ceiling, and the glare of the mystic fires burning on the pillars, amply lighted up the scene. Considerably to De la Pole's surprise, the table was covered with preparations for a rich banquet, with fruits, with flowers, with wine, and the most delicate confections; and reclining on a couch, dressed with all her characteristic splendour and glitter, lay Ramona. But how changed! Hearing his step, she raised herself on her arm, and seemed gazing and watching the effect of her song with the wild, lurid, deceitful expression of the female hyena, which the poets fable lures travellers to its den with moans and cries like a woman in distress or danger. Even De la Pole's heart was touched to its core by the woe-begone, scarcely living ghastliness of her complexion and look, while his usually iron nerves quivered at the terrific meaning of her attitude and eyes.

De la Pole slowly approached the couch, and she watched him coming with a strange mixture of triumph and unutterable anguish. He stood beside her, and she extended to him her thin white hand with a glance which spoke all the despair, and grief, and rage, and vengeance, accumulated in her long brooding over her unspeakable wrongs and woes.

"You are ill—alas, my sweet Ramona, the old monster's breath must needs be as the fable of the spider's," he said, with a somewhat staggering manner—and broke off, at the low, deep, miserable laugh which the victim uttered.

"I am—what you have made me!" she said, more calmly.

"Nay, my Ramona!"—remember, what could I do, accused as I was—overwhelmed?" replied De la Pole. "But God is my witness! I never dreamed the accursed old man would treat you as he has done; and but that he is mad—but you shall have vengeance, vengeance!—ample vengeance."

"Yes, I shall have vengeance—vengeance—ample vengeance!" repeated Ramona, in a dreamy tone. "I wished to bid you a last farewell—my strength fades fast—I am going home to my land again, I mean,—I know not what I mean,—but you,—I did not know that you had yet that love for me to desire to see me once again—ever again—yet you are here!"

"My own sweet Ramona! I have never loved but you; my accursed fate has indeed separated us, but—all may yet be well again!" he replied, tenderly. "This monstrous madman, who would have murdered you under such foul pretexts

—if you will assist me—we will yet baffle him,—we will yet be all to one another!”

Ramona listened with an incredulous but softened look, and encouraged by the change, De la Pole hinted so much of the plot he had formed for the king's liberation, as was necessary, he thought, to convince her of the necessity of obtaining possession of the tower, as a place in which to conceal the royal person. To effect this, the capture of Stonehenge would be advisable; and he proposed that Ramona should in some manner contrive, with the assistance of the mulatto, to lock him up in his laboratory.

“Yes, he has brought me to the arms of death—and yet he loves me as well—perhaps better than thou dost, or ever did!” she said, mournfully; and kindling up with a wilder expression, she added, “but let me hear what I must do, or ought—raise me—we will eat together—drink together a parting draught once more.”

She made a feeble effort to rise on her couch, failed, and sank down exhaustedly; and De la Pole tenderly raised her with his arm round her waist, taking a seat beside her. She fainted, or at least became in a degree insensible, and De la Pole supported her head on his shoulder, gently chiding and caressing her. She revived, and in a low tremulous tone desired him to pledge her in a goblet of the rare wine, which at the same time she motioned to the mulatto to fill. He hastened to obey, but De la Pole prevented him by gaily filling the golden stoup himself; and kissing the edge, he handed it smilingly to her lips.

“Drink first, drink first!—you remember you were wont to say—love sweetened even wine!” she said, wildly pushing it back, and De la Pole was about to drink, when suddenly, with a wild shriek, she tore it away from him, and dashed it on the ground.

“No, no, I cannot, I cannot!—do not drink it, it is poisoned!” she said, laughing in a distracted manner; “I cannot kill thee, De la Pole!” and she sunk upon his breast in an agony of mingled tears and laughter.

“Poisoned!” repeated De la Pole, aghast.

“And everything on the table—the very flowers are dusted with poison!” she exclaimed. “’Tis Stonehenge's plan,—he is mad,—but—I cannot do it,—fly, fly, let him not find you here, or all is lost!”

“If Stonehenge plotted this—let the old murderer come,

and meet me for death or life!" said De la Pole, with extreme fierceness.

"Nay, for he is mad—and you are mad—surely all men are mad!" exclaimed Ramona, physical weakness yielding to mental excitement. "What, if he should be even now at hand!—Hush, do you hear a step?"

"You shall not stay with this atrocious madman, Ramona!" said De la Pole, after listening for an instant, not without alarm. "Come with me—to love, to liberty!"

"To liberty!" she repeated, with a shudder. "Yes, for I shall soon become a part of the universal nothingness which Stonehenge says is death!—Hark, he is there!"

"Yes, it is he!" replied the cavalier, and starting round, and laying his hand on his sword, he perceived Stonehenge standing as if listening at the door.

There was a long pause of mutual and profound silence.

"Hush!—I think he is in one of his frequent fits of absence, when he remembers nothing—shade your face!" whispered Ramona, absolutely rising without any assistance, and continuing to gaze intently in her husband's calm countenance.

"Let me not keep you standing, sir," said Stonehenge, with an urbane and smiling air. "Wife, will you not do me the honour to introduce me to the gentleman?"

"It is the Lord De la Pole—but he hath not yet tasted the viands!" said Ramona, in a firm tone, and with a slight but intelligible shake of the head to Stonehenge.

"'Tis strange lack of civility, then!" said Stonehenge, suddenly assuming the air of a ceremonious host.

"Surely the mulatto—I will call for assistance!" murmured De la Pole.

"It will but anger him—we are as far from earth as heaven!" replied Ramona, in the same tone. "Perchance I may humour him—deceive him, if it must be—into patience; be calm and silent."

"Be seated, my lord, be seated!" said Stonehenge, with a ghastly smile. "No one shall break my bread, nor drain my cup, standing. I am not the king, and no royal honours shall be paid to my wife, who is only a countess, I tell you."

At a signal from Ramona, the cavalier complied, and seated himself, keeping, however, a watchful eye on the astrologer.

"Enjoy yourselves, enjoy yourselves, there is plenty!" said Stonehenge, apparently pleased with this submission. "Do not think I grudge you anything—the feast here spread

is broad and ample ; all the nations of the earth have eaten it, or shall, and yet enough remain. I pray you eat—meantime I will to my devotions.”

And he knelt down for an instant before one of the flaming pillars.

“ He is adoring the demon now that hath maddened him—whose servants thou and I are, De la Pole ! ” said Ramona, wanderingly. “ But he will leave us now—the paroxysm ever drives him to solitude.”

Accordingly Stonehenge almost immediately sprang up, and with a peculiar strange and very terrible smile, desired Ramona to make her guest welcome, and moved to the door.

“ They say I am jealous—you will pardon, I am an old man, an old man, very old in sorrows,” he said, shoving the mulatto out before him. “ Yet you see—though the cavaliero is young—I dare leave you together for all eternity ! ”

And with one long, earnest, and indescribably mournful gaze at Ramona, he crossed the threshold, and closed the door.

“ Wait but an instant till he is out of hearing, and then—fly, fly ! ” exclaimed Ramona.

They stood together for an instant in perfect silence.

“ I will not fly, Ramona, unless you accompany me ! ” said De la Pole, with a return of all his ancient fondness. “ Come with me, my sweetest love ; I dare not leave you in the power of this barbarous madman ! ”

“ You will betray me again ! ” sighed the unhappy girl, sinking on his neck ; and with a smile of mingled triumph and scorn the cavalier half carried and half led her to the door. He listened for an instant, and hearing no sound without, raised the latch of the door—but it would not open.

“ What is the matter ! What means this ? ” he exclaimed, with a slight start. A loud peal of laughter resounded on the exterior.

“ It means, treacherous villain ! that thou and thy paramour shall never again be put to the bitterness of parting ! ” cried the voice of Stonehenge from the exterior. “ Betrayer of my innocent wife ! son of the betrayer of my broken-hearted sister !—this door is barred and could resist ordnance—the windows are beyond the ken of hearing, almost of sight !—the viands are poisoned !—I am going to lock up every entrance to the tower—farewell for ever ! ”

“ Oh, De la Pole, De la Pole ! burst the door—I see all now—he intends to famish thee ! ” shrieked Ramona.

“ Traitress ! you have betrayed me into this horrible den ! ”

exclaimed the cavalier, turning with frantic violence and fury on Ramona; but as his fierce glare fell on her, he saw that her whole countenance whitened,—she gave him one last look of sorrow and reproach, and he held in his arms only the corpse of the betrayed and most miserable Mexican!

CHAPTER LXV.

ON learning the disappearance of De la Pole, Ingulph certainly apprehended that his plottings had fallen under notice of the grandees; and it was plain that he was either arrested or had found it necessary to conceal himself. Whether even Ingulph's own share in the conspiracy was known seemed doubtful; but as the remainder of the night passed without the least disturbance, and his guard was relieved in the morning by Cromwell's regiment as usual, and no news seemed astir, he took heart of grace.

Desiring Taylor to inform him as soon as he received any tidings of De la Pole, he returned to his quarters in the city. Nought unusual seemed to have occurred; people's thoughts and inquiries were all absorbed in the proceedings of the High Court, and not even a whisper was heard of so extraordinary an event as the seizure of the famous royalist, De la Pole, would have been universally considered.

Unwilling to encounter the keen eye of his commander, and expecting hourly to hear news from De la Pole, Ingulph sent his faithful Joyce to Cromwell, to excuse his own absence by information of the perturbed state of the city, and with the emphatic addition that he had failed in his negotiation of the previous night. Cromwell returned an epistle exhorting him to increased vigilance, and communicating the intelligence that the Lord De la Pole was suspected to be in the city.

Ingulph had now no doubt that the cavalier had conceived suspicions against him, and was at work on some plan of his own in secrecy. His indignation at the treatment he had received increased proportionably, for he imagined the king had only feigned to suspect him, and had preconcerted the failure of the plan for some other of De la Pole's, which he liked better. Hourly did Ingulph expect to hear the news of the king's escape, with the resolution of proclaiming a republic on the instant that he received it.

The High Court, meantime, as if willing to break its own

momentum, proceeded very slowly examining the witnesses ; two days elapsed in the process, and many more seemed likely to be occupied, when suddenly the astounding tidings filled the city with uproar, that the king was finally to be brought up for sentence, and that the sentence was to be death.

Ingulph resolved to ascertain the truth of this intelligence immediately, and hurried to Westminster. The city, indeed, seemed no longer to need his care, for the whole mass of the population that were not bedridden were pouring on the same road with himself.

On arriving at the Hall, he found the court sitting, and all the private entrances of the building so besieged that he was compelled to take his chance with the crowd, and bustle a way in. His strength and resolution prevailed over many of his compeers actuated by feebler motives, and he wedged his way in almost close to the bar. The king was already in his seat, but only the back of his chair and his high-crowned hat were visible to Ingulph. Axtel, who guarded the platform, instantly noticed the glitter of Ingulph's helmet, and smiling grimly, opened the rail to admit him, and he mounted the platform, but kept in the back-ground, among the guard, with his back leaning against the rail.

Bradshaw was standing, as if to speak, and Ingulph noticed that he had assumed the crimson mantle of judgment ; but the great noise in the Hall, and tumult of cries and expostulations, prevented him for some time.

"Sir, since you refuse our jurisdiction, it is not to address you, but the people,"—began Bradshaw, when the king interrupted him.

"I desire to be heard a little," he said, in a voice still firm, but sunken in the tones from its former alacrity ; "and I hope I shall give no occasion of interruption."

"You may answer in your turn ; hear the court first !" said Bradshaw, imperiously.

"If it please you, sir, I desire to be heard !" returned the fallen monarch ; "and I shall not give any occasion of interruption, and 'tis only in a word. A sudden judgment"—

"Sir, you shall be heard in due time, but you are to hear the court first," returned Bradshaw, peremptorily.

"Sir, I desire it ; 'twill be in order to what I believe the court will say—you are in scarlet to day,—and, therefore, sir,—a hasty judgment is not so soon recalled !" said Charles, with extreme earnestness.

"Sir, you shall be heard before the judgment be given ;

meantime you may forbear," replied the president, with somewhat less haughtiness, perhaps moved by the general murmur.

"Well, sir, shall I be heard before the judgment be given?" said Charles, with a kind of satisfaction in his tones, but with a sigh as Bradshaw proceeded without deigning to take any notice of his question.

"Gentlemen," began the president, looking round the court, "'tis well known to all, or most of you, that the prisoner at the bar has been several times brought before this court, to make answer to a charge of high treason, and other high crimes, exhibited against him in the name of the people of England"—

"It is a lie!—not half the people, not a quarter!" interrupted the same female voice which had formerly disturbed the proceedings. "Where are they or their consents?—Oliver Cromwell is a rogue and a traitor!"

"What drab is this disturbs the court?" exclaimed Axtel. "Musketeers, level at the galleries, and give fire if they utter a word more!"

"Keep your muskets for men, soldiers!" exclaimed Ingulph, in so loud a voice that all eyes were turned upon him, and the soldiers involuntarily dropped the muzzles of their weapons.

"To which charge being required to answer," continued Bradshaw, sedately, "he has been so far from obeying the commands of the court, by submitting to their justice, that he began to take on him to offer reasoning and debate on the authority of the court, and of the highest court, which appointed them to try and judge him. But being overruled in that, and required to make answer, he was still pleased to continue contumacious, and refuse to submit to answer. Hereon the court, that they might not be wanting to themselves, nor the trust reposed in them, and that no man's wilfulness might prevent justice, have thought fit to take the matter into consideration; they have considered the charge; they have considered the contumacy, and that confession which in law arises from that contumacy; they have likewise considered the notoriety of the facts charged on the prisoner; and upon the whole are resolved and agreed in a sentence to be pronounced against him. But in respect he desires to be heard before sentence, the court has resolved to hear him. Yet, sir, I must tell you beforehand, what you have been minded of at other courts, that if what you have to say be to offer any debate concern-

ing the jurisdiction, you are not to be heard ; you have offered it formerly, and have struck at the root, that is, the power and supreme authority of the Commons of England, which this court will admit no debate of, and which, indeed, 'tis irrational in them to do, being a court which acts on authority derived from them. But, sir, if you have anything to say in defence of yourself concerning the matter charged, the court has commanded me to let you know they will hear you?"

" Since I see you will hear nothing of debate concerning that which I confess I thought most material for the peace of the kingdom, and the liberty of the subject, I will waive it," replied the king. " But I must tell you that this many a day all things have been taken from me, but what I call dearer to me than my life, namely, my conscience and my honour. And if I had a respect to my life more than the peace of the kingdom, and the liberty of the subject, certainly I should have made a particular defence for myself ; for by that at least I might have delayed an ugly sentence which I believe will pass on me. Therefore, certainly, sir, as a man that hath some understanding, some knowledge of the world, if true zeal to my country had not overborne the care I have for my own preservation, I should have gone another way to work than I have done. Now, sir, I conceive that a hasty sentence once passed, may sooner be repented of than recalled ; and, truly, the same desire I have for the peace of the kingdom, and liberty of the subject, more than my own particular ends, makes me now at last desire—that, having something to say which concerns both, before sentence be given, I may be heard in the Painted Chamber, before the Lords and Commons."

" Sir, you have now spoken ?" said the president.

" Yes, sir."

" And what you have said is a further declining the jurisdiction of the court, which was the thing you were limited in before."

" Pray excuse me, sir, for my interruption, because you mistake me," said Charles, meekly. " 'Tis not declining it. You judge me before you hear me speak. I say, 'twill not, I do not decline it. Though I cannot acknowledge the jurisdiction of the court, yet, sir, in this give me leave to speak ; I would do it, though I did not acknowledge it. In this I protest, 'tis not declining of it, since I say, if I speak anything but what is for the peace of the kingdom, and liberty of the

subject, the shame is mine. Now, I desire that you will take this into consideration: if you will, I will withdraw."

"Hear the king, my lord!" exclaimed Ingulph, in a loud voice; and "Hear the king! hear the king!" was repeated in an affrighted whisper all over the hall, as if men feared to speak, and yet could not altogether forbear.

A member of the court seemed to take courage from this, and arose pale and trembling in his place, but was instantly plucked down by those who sat near him.

By this time, Ingulph had elbowed a way up the passage from the platform to the benches of the judges; and exclaimed in a voice which commanded general attention—"My lord president, I am a member of the court, and I am not satisfied to pronounce the sentence, unless the court may adjourn on this point."

"Are you yourself, man?" said Cromwell, who sat below, looking up with a perturbed and angry countenance, but marking the delirious anguish in Ingulph's, he continued, rising—"Nay, if any of the court are unsatisfied, we must adjourn."

"Sir," said the president, readily taking his cue, "according to what you seem to desire, and because you shall know the farther pleasure of the court on that which you have moved, the court will withdraw for a time."

"Shall I withdraw?" replied the king, eagerly. "If it were but for half-an-hour to consider—unless that be too much for you."

Some consultation took place among the commissioners, and the king was ordered to be removed, while the court retired to consider their resolution.

Ingulph took care to be of the foremost in the procession. The commissioners intended to adjourn as usual to the Painted Chamber, but when they entered the Court of Wards, Cromwell suddenly closed the door with a slam which resounded through the vast building, and cried "Halt!" in exactly the same tone and manner as if addressing his dragoons on parade.

"Well, sir!" he exclaimed, turning with a terrific countenance to Downes, Ingulph's fellow dissentient. "Be now so good as to tell us, for what most excellent reason you have caused this trouble and disturbance in the court?"

"Master Cromwell—my lord!" stammered Downes, confusedly. "My lord president, I should say!—I would be exceeding glad—if the court had been pleased to condescend

to that gracious expression! But it is not too late—I desire not his death but his life—that the nations may be settled in peace. The king is now pleased to offer—that if he may but speak with his parliament—he would offer to them such things as should be satisfactory to us all.”

“He seeks but delay!” said Cromwell. “Perchance to enrage the rabble more against us, by resigning the crown to the prince of Wales. Which of you then would rather be beheaded by Charles the Second, than by Charles the First?”

“Let him but put the crown from that grey head, and we will dash it to pieces!” said Ingulph, vehemently.

“We were to refer to the parliament on any emergency,” said Downes, timidly. “Surely this is an emergency! Are not these emergencies? If not, I know not what emergencies are!”

“There are others that you wot not of, Master Downes!” said Cromwell, bitterly. “He seeks but delay, in order to accomplish our utter destruction, and that of all liberty in this land! We have received sure intelligence of a vast plot in formation, both in town and country—many corruptions in the army—with the intent to restore the king without conditions, and to send all our heads to the block.”

There was a silence of mingled fear and amazement for some moments.

“What has been discovered?—have any been arrested?” said Ingulph, much staggered.

“We have issued secret orders for the arrest of the key of the arch!” said Cromwell, with a mysterious nod at Ingulph. “’Tis an ancient friend of yours—Fairfax’s wife is peevish, too—but we have a good claw on the city—yet before any sentence can be executed we must crush this conspiracy! Meanwhile, ’tis fitting that we show no fear—that we affirm our authority—terror must rule if men will not be governed otherwise. The sentence must be pronounced. Fear may then keep them tranquil—and whatever stops short of the man’s destruction will be a mercy which will reconcile many.”

These words broke with a sort of divine and tranquil light on Ingulph’s imagination, and he so passionately eulogised the conduct which Cromwell seemed inclined to pursue, that the general looked at him in surprise.

“We have a good beagle at work on the arch-conspirator’s steps—but meantime this is an inviolable secret!” said Cromwell, sternly. “And now, my lord president, now we see

what great reason the gentleman had to put such a great trouble and disturbance on us—let us return! He knows not, surely, that we have to do with one of the hardest-hearted men that live on earth; however, 'tis not fit the court should be hindered from doing their duty by one peevish man; therefore, without more ado, let us return, and do our duty!"

And clutching the hilt of his sword—an action which he instantly pretended to have used to raise the weapon from clanking on the pavement—Cromwell set an example which was followed by the whole court, and left the chamber.

Feeling the necessity of the measure, but resolved not to be seen among the unrelenting judges, Ingulph lingered behind. He had now no doubt that De la Pole was at liberty, engaged in some mighty and perilous plot, which being discovered, would probably result in the king's utter ruin, and in his own. To warn the king of the discovery seemed now of immediate consequence; and with some slight hope of effecting it, he hastened by a private passage back to the Hall.

When Ingulph reached the platform, he found that the president was about to pronounce that sentence, the first since the creation of man—but not the last—wherein subjects condemned their sovereign for treason against a majesty which was hitherto but a phantom recollection looming through the visions of ages.

"Of one hundred and nine kings of Scotland, your ancestors," the undaunted Bradshaw was saying, "most were deposed, imprisoned, or proceeded against for misgovernment. Your grandmother, Marie, a papist, for many hideous crimes, was removed, and your father, an infant, crowned!"

"I desire only one word before you give sentence!" interrupted the king, passionately. "That you would hear me concerning these grave imputations you lay to my charge!"

"Sir, you must give me now leave to go on," replied Bradshaw; for I am not far from your sentence, and your time is now past."

"But I shall desire you to hear me a few words!" reiterated the unfortunate king; "for truly, whatever sentence you pass, in respect of these heavy imputations which I see by your speech you have put on me! Sir, it is very true that"——

"Sir, I must put you in mind," interrupted Bradshaw. "Truly, sir, I would not willingly, at this time especially, interrupt you in anything you have to say that's proper for

us to admit of; but, sir, you have not owned us as a court, and you look upon us as a sort of people met together, and we know what language we receive from your party."

"I know nothing of that," said Charles, hastily.

"You disavow us as a court," said Bradshaw, with stately austerity. "And, therefore, for you to address yourself to us, and not acknowledge us as a court to judge of what you say, is not to be permitted. And the truth is, all along from the first, you were pleased to disavow and disown us, the court needed not to have heard you one word; for unless the court be acknowledged, 'tis not proper for you to speak.

"Sir, we have given you too much liberty already, and admitted too much delay, and may admit no more; were it proper for us to do it, we should hear you freely, and should not have declined to hear at large what you could have said or proved on your behalf, whether for excusing totally or in part those great and heinous charges laid upon you. But, sir, I shall trouble you no longer! Your sins are of so large a dimension, that if you do but seriously think of them, they will drive you to a sad consideration, and may improve you to a sad and serious repentance. And the court heartily wishes you may be so penitent for what you have done amiss, that God may have mercy at least on your better part! Truly, sir, for the other, 'tis our part and duty to do what the law prescribes. We are not here *jus dare* but *jus dicere*. We cannot be unmindful of what Scripture says, *That to acquit the guilty is of equal abomination as to condemn the innocent.* We may not acquit the guilty! What sentence the law affirms to a traitor, a murderer, and a public enemy to the country, that you are now to hear read to you, which is the sentence of the court. *Make an O Yes, and command silence while the sentence is read!*"

It was done; the sentence, setting forth at length the charges on which the king was condemned, and finally adjudging him to death, was read.

"Thy broken covenant avenge, O Lord!" shrieked a woman in the crowd, and it appeared as if she fell in convulsions, and was with difficulty borne out.

"The sentence now read and published," said the president, unheeding this accident, "is the act, sentence, judgment, and resolution of the whole court."

The commissioners all stood up in assent, and Charles's eye wandered for some moments with piercing search among them.

“Will you hear me a word, sir?” he said at length, very mournfully.

“Sir, you are not to be heard after sentence?” replied Bradshaw.

“No, sir?”

“No, sir, by your favour. — Guard, withdraw your prisoner.”

“I may speak after sentence?” said Charles, in a troubled and confused manner. “By your favour, sir, I may speak after sentence, ever! By your favour, hold! — The sentence, sir, — I say, sir, I do — I am not suffered to speak; expect what justice other people will have!”

The guard hurried the unhappy monarch away; and during the general bustle and confusion, Ingulph had pushed his way to the stairs up which the king must pass on his return.

“Justice, justice!” shouted the soldiers, as the king appeared.

“Execution, execution! you mean now, rogues!” said Axtel. “Execution, execution, do you hear?” And observing that no man took up the cry, he hit one a smart blow over the face with his cane, and the shout became universal as the king came.

“Silence, bloodhounds!” thundered Ingulph, pushing back the rude soldiery as they pressed insultingly on the king, whiffing their tobacco-smoke in his face. But one, transported by his barbarous zeal, spit in the king’s face.

With a smile of mingled anguish and disdain, Charles wiped his visage and beard; but at the same instant the soldier was felled to the ground by Ingulph’s vigorous arm.

“Poor rogues, for a testoon they would do as much to their commanders!” said Charles, glancing at the young leader; who instantly took the opportunity, and murmured a few brief but significant words of warning on De la Pole’s plot, and its discovery.

“’Tis as I thought! — you have betrayed him and me!” exclaimed the king; and with a look full of indignation and sorrow, he moved on with his guard.

CHAPTER LXVI.

INGULPH stood fixed to the spot until the last partizan vanished, gleaming faintly in the dusky gallery. He started from his reverie on hearing a voice close behind him.

"Is he gone?" said Cromwell, for it was he. "Methought I saw a gleam in the distance like golden spokes of a crown!—yet 'tis folly, he wears none!—truly, a soldier's pike! he is gone."

"Were we to execute this barbarous sentence, never will the crowned phantom leave our sight!" said Ingulph.

"We are not children to be affrighted with bugbears," replied the lieutenant, gloomily. "We all stand on an icy edge—but who may slide off first?—Perchance the king may yet live to laugh with his insolent Frenchwoman at some gorgeous banquet in these halls, while our headless carcasses swing in the poisoned air!"

"You dread this plot, methinks, too much!" said Ingulph.

"Thou shalt be a better judge of that anon," replied Cromwell, producing some papers which he handed to Ingulph.

All these documents were in the handwriting of Lord De la Pole—memoranda, apparently, for his own guidance. A list of citizens favourable to the cause—of the chief cavaliers—the towns in the country parts which were ready, it seemed, to revolt, on a concerted signal—intimations of expected foreign succours—minutes of a correspondence with the Scots—a general plan of the outbreak intended in London—and a list of those to be put instantly, on its success, to death—composed the contents. Among the latter, with the rest of the council of officers, Ingulph found his own name marked with three stars.

"And we can by no means learn any news of the whereabouts of this most dangerous and skilful plotter!" said Cromwell. "Some storm is ready to burst."

"But how did you obtain these papers?" said Ingulph.

"By means of a trusty spy, whose name must be concealed," replied Cromwell.

"I will guess—Taylor, or Lilly?" said Ingulph, with affected carelessness. Cromwell's look reassured him more than the immediate denial which he gave to these suspicions.

"Neither—neither!" said the lieutenant. "But let us

“speak low—we know not who may have his ears poking to these walls! Thou art the only man whom I trust thus unreservedly! Alas! Ireton and Harrison need but some little pretext to set all things over the cataract! I must trust to thee a greater matter than thine years might claim,—yea, trust to thee the silent suppression of this plot in the dark. Thou art acquainted with the citizens—warn them quietly that they do not stir; that their practices are known. For any open violence, thou hast the city keys at thy girdle, posted were thou art.”

“Ingulph eagerly assented to the proposition, more especially as he observed Bulstocke’s name among those of the citizens prepared for the frantic outbreak.

“These papers may be but thrown in our way to alarm us,” said Ingulph. “But if Bulstocke really be one, I have a way to give them all good counsel.”

“Let me see thee, then, to-morrow, at eventide, my honest lad,” said Cromwell, with an affectionateness which troubled Ingulph more than any reproaches could have done, “To-morrow!—true, it is the sabbath; but works of mercy are not prohibited on that day! I will expect thee at eventide.”

“I will do my utmost,” said Ingulph, warmly. “But if this conspiracy be indeed so widely spread, it is only by extending mercy to the king that we can hope to baffle a mad outburst which may engulf us all in ruin!”

“Or—by making so tremendous an example of him, that the terror thereof may endure not only for this age, but for all time!” said Cromwell, laying his hand familiarly on the young man’s shoulder.

“An example! remember that such would provoke to madness the Scots and royalists—excite the horror of the English Presbyterians—the universal indignation of the European monarchies!” exclaimed Ingulph.

“Our swords shall answer all;—in sooth, Mazarin is not angry to see us sheath them in one another’s vitals—but he may live yet to see us in France again!” said Cromwell, kindling with military enthusiasm, which roused an answering glow in the breast of his young follower.

“Yes, let us baptize the banners of the republic in the gore of resisting enemies—not in the blood of the conquered!” exclaimed Ingulph.

“A man may indeed step aside from the work; but the tide will rush on without him!” said Cromwell, with a peculiar glance at Ingulph. “But dost thou too faint at noonday,

and lay thy sickle on the hedge? Nay, sir, we leaders, high as we seem, are but the frothy crest of the strong billow that rolls below! 'Tis impossible to deal with the king—the army are resolved on it! But what is to be done, the Lord only knows! Let us seek him in humility. But now go thy ways, as I must mine, and see me again as soon as may be—for on the least stir I doubt me they will be for a sudden justice. I would not be found gossiping with thee here.”

They moved off in contrary directions, but after a few paces Cromwell suddenly paused and beckoned to Ingulph.

“Take care that none of these tidings reach the king,” he said, gloomily; “else it may beget false hopes, to his soul’s eternal detriment, for I do withal believe—despite of all men’s unwillingness—it will come to pass, for a greater than any of us declares himself very clearly in the matter.”

These words struck Ingulph as ominous and contradictory, but he ventured no comment, and they parted.

Musing deeply on the means to advance his projects of preserving the king, Ingulph returned to his quarters at Guildhall, intending to proceed thence on his visit to Bulstocke. But curiously enough the alderman was there awaiting him; Ingulph found him in the guard-room, seated at the fire, with his hands buried deeply in his pockets, gazing vacantly at the huge mass of red embers in the grate.

Bulstocke’s manner was much altered; it was full of distress and fear and perplexity, and he addressed Ingulph with all the distance and respect due to his office. But when Ingulph wrung his hand with the old kindness, and inquired after his ancient friends in the old tones, the good old citizen burst into tears. It was some moments ere Ingulph extracted that Mistress Tribulation was dangerously ill, having been seized with paralysis on hearing the king’s sentence pronounced—and earnestly desired to see him.

“Some say she is your near relative—heaven only knows—but you cannot refuse to see her!” said Bulstocke. “Poor woman! she doth nought but rave of you and of a broken covenant.”

“I will come to-morrow at noonday,” replied Ingulph, thinking this was not a bad opportunity to introduce his own business with Bulstocke. But when he communicated the suspicions of the council, and as a friendly warning from himself, advised him to inform his fellow-citizens of the discovery that they might keep quiet,—the consternation of Bulstocke convinced him that the story was true. Without pressing

him for any definite admissions, it was well understood, before they parted, that on the following day Ingulph was to receive assurances that the citizens had abandoned their projects.

The following morning Ingulph spent visiting his detachment, and mingling with the populace in the hope to learn their sentiments. The king's fate was the universal topic of speculation, on which no man seemed to dare to form any distinct idea. Early as it was when he sallied forth, Ingulph found a vast number of persons trooping silently along the streets to Westminster. Various intents animated this movement. Some were going to St. James's, whither the king had been removed, in the hope to see him at public devotions; others to attend the solemn fast and prayers appointed by the officers to be held at Whitehall, at which the High Court was to be present; some to gather news; but the great mass were swayed by the vague inquietude which the blackening of a storm spreads over all nature, extending even to inanimate things, crispering the waves or rustling the leaves and grass as it were fearfully.

Wherever Ingulph went, his military garb spread terror and silence; men spoke with "bated breath and whispering humbleness," save now and then when women, venturing on their sex, uttered exclamations of dislike and fear as he passed.

But at last noon came, and on its stroke Ingulph was at Bulstocke's door.

Bulstocke was waiting for him, and opened the door himself; but without replying to his first question as to what success he had found in his political movements, Bulstocke desired him with great agitation to ascend immediately and speak with Mistress Tribulation, who was so ill that she might not perhaps have long the power. The citizen hastened up the stairs to announce the visitor, and after a short pause Ingulph followed. Mistress Bulstocke appeared to meet him, weeping and sobbing profusely.

They entered the sick woman's chamber, and Tribulation was seen extended powerlessly on a couch. Excessive mental agitation acting on a constitution weakened by the excesses of her youth had produced a paralysis of nearly half her frame.

It is not necessary to detail the painful conversation which ensued. Stern, calm, strong-minded as ever, Tribulation seemed as pitiless to herself as she had been to others, and to abate no jot of her resolution in the very presence of death. Much indeed of what she said was interrupted by pain and

difficulty of utterance, but not at all by any other human weakness. She confessed her abetment of Stonehenge, and her deception of Cromwell, without the least expression of remorse; and seemed now to divulge both only as a means to induce Ingulph to aid in the keeping of the covenant unbroken, by preserving the person of the king.

Somewhat surprised at the little effect which her extraordinary tidings produced, Ingulph was obliged in explanation to inform her that he knew all before, and by what means.

“And you still join with Cromwell in his black plot against the life of the king?” exclaimed Tribulation, gazing amazedly. “Cruel as the blood of thy race hath ever been, is it cruel even unto this?”

“Cromwell does not seek the king’s life; he is, perchance, the only one who can or will save him!” returned Ingulph.

“You know him not!” replied Tribulation, with a spasmodic smile. “The king stands on the summit which Cromwell would reach; and were he a god, Cromwell hath ambition and daring to push him from it! But if you dare aid me, I will discover his real intents.”

“What dare I not in such a cause?” said Ingulph, passionately. “But the king has more to fear from the zeal of his friends than the machinations of his enemies.”

“You have effectually baffled that, Ingulph!—you have betrayed De la Pole, in whom we all confided, and who alone secured the co-operation of the royalists with us!” said Tribulation, despairingly.

With an asseveration, the energy of which surprised even himself, Ingulph declared his total ignorance of what had become of the young cavalier.

“Then I am the more convinced that Cromwell is playing double, and trusts you but half!” said Tribulation. “Or else the cavaliers have lost confidence in us, and are plotting some enterprise among themselves. I would have you request Cromwell to visit me for the last time—a dying request—tell him, too, that I have extraordinary disclosures to make! I will tell him all—I will exhort him to spare you the guilt of parricide; and from his replies, will learn what we are to fear!”

Observing that she was exhausted, Ingulph assented to the desire, and would have retired, but she eagerly beckoned him to remain. After a short pause, as if mastering some inward repugnance, she inquired if he had lately seen Stonehenge.

“Not since the first day of the trial,” replied Ingulph.

“Keep out of his way, then; he is surely plotting some dismal fact which will blear the sun to hear it told!” she said, with a dismal glance. “In my delirium—for my mind is not as it should be—how can it when I am three parts stone?—I have seen him riding about the room on a black bull, with two fastened to the horns!—One was Ramona!—Hark you, Ingulph: mayhap she deserves no more pity than myself; but she is not like me in this—that I value not pity—that I need it not,—that I thank no man for it. If it be possible—at some time—I would have you rescue her from that madman’s clutches.”

“Nay, he loves her better now than ever; I hear that he incessantly weeps and wails over her!” said Ingulph, touched with this reluctant and yet evident sign of remorse in one so relentless on almost every other point.

“Go, then, and the blessing of death rest on you—otherwise of no worth, being from so matchless a sinner!” said Tribulation, in a somewhat troubled tone. “But I know that I have been at one time in grace, and the saints cannot relapse.”

“Pray for her, oh, pray for her, Master Dethewarre!” sobbed Bulstocke’s wife. “For your prayers will reach heaven, if any Christian soul’s can!”

“I charge ye, do not such a thing; ’tis an accursed popish doctrine, akin to the misbelief of purgatory!” exclaimed the departing zealot, with a renewal of her ancient controversial fervour.

Ingulph attempted no rejoinder, and left the chamber, followed by Bulstocke. From him he learned that the disappearance of De la Pole had spread so general a consternation among all parties concerned in his plans, that no apprehensions need be entertained of their making the slightest movement.

Ingulph now hastened to Westminster with his intelligence; and learning that Cromwell and his officers were still engaged in their devotions in Whitehall, he hastened thither.

Passing St. James’s, he became for a short period one of a vast, silent, and seemingly unmeaning mob, standing near the palace-gates, under a driving storm of sleet and snow. A faded and battered coach, with the king’s arms on it, stood in the archway, and Ingulph learned that it was Bishop Juxon’s, who was in spiritual attendance on the king. The despair implied in this summons struck a deadly chill into his heart, and he hastened on to Whitehall more rapidly.

Entering the royal chapel, Ingulph elbowed his way to the speaker's chair, near which sat Bradshaw and the members of the High Court, all looking pale and exhausted, but manfully listening on. Cromwell immediately noticed him, but only with a slight nod, and a gesture for him to take a seat on the raised benches occupied by the commissioners.

Five gifted brethren had already succeeded each other, and Peters was ascending the pulpit. The words of his text struck with ominous significance on Ingulph's ear.

“ Psalm cxlix. 6, 7, 8, 9, verses. ‘ Let the high praises of God be in their mouths, and a two-edged sword in their hand, to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishment upon the people, to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron, to execute upon them the judgment written; this honour have all his saints, praise ye the Lord!’

“ Beloved!” exclaimed Peters, whose fanatic eloquence was much admired by the zealots of his persuasion. “ It is the last Psalm but one, and the next Psalm hath six verses, and twelve hallelujahs; praise ye the Lord, praise God in his sanctuary, and so on. For what, for what, shall be praised the Lord now? What hath he done for us, that we exalt his name?

“ Look at my text; there is the reason of it; for our kings are bound in chains, and our nobles in fetters of iron; therefore praise ye the Lord, &c. Blessed be God, we are redeemed from the captivity, brought out of Babylon; we have crossed the Red Sea of this nation's blood dryshod, and have now but to look back, and see Pharoah and his host sinking, struggling, roaring, shrieking in the masterful waves of God's judgments. Glory again, I say, glory again to God, and all his angels; for this is a marvellous work! I have prayed and preached these twenty years, and now I may say with old Simeon, ‘ Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation!’

“ Blessed be God, the House, the Lower House, is purged, and the House of Lords themselves are utterly down in the dust, a scorn, and a pointing of the finger, sunk in the Dead Sea of their own iniquities;—where is Sodom, where is Gomorrah? Yea, verily, and although Lot himself was a good man, there was his wife looked back on the carnal city! The Lord forbid it should come to pass again, for that judgment cannot be forgotten! And, oh, the glories of that sinful court? Are they not even as those apples, fair to sight, that crumbled away at the touch? But the Lord knows how we

are all exercised under a heavy conflict of the spirit in this matter! The day is dark and cloudy to some, who see not God's glory breaking over all; but some are as those on a hill top, in sunshine and in brightness, while the valleys below are full of darkness and tribulation! But why art thou cast down my soul?—why do the knees of the strong man slacken? Was there ever a clearer manifestation than this people have received, even when the Lord spoke in thunder and lightnings on Sinai? What says the text?

“But let us shake hands with that for a moment, and ask what are the news in this Gomorrah of our own? The great inquiry is everywhere, with gaping mouths and pallid faces, what shall become of the king? Should and shall are very different words, but here they are the same; for truly, what the army will do, that they can do; and there is no power but of God, say the cavaliers; and, good truth, who is mighty but the Lord? Who can contend against him? If he has rejected the king, is it for this godly army to hug him to its bosom? Emanuel, Emanuel, is written on the bridles of our soldiers' horses; but of the king's, I have known eighty thousand of them, and not one of them a gracious person!

“But to our text!—Ye shall bind your king in chains; but, soft, I must not talk so here, I am in the king's chapel; nothing but velvet is to be talked here!—court holy-water sprinkled on their pomps and vanities—watering their rank weeds as if they were roses! There is a remarkable passage in Amos. Amos went to preach, and Amaziah would not let him, but Amos would preach! I offered to preach to the king to-day, but the poor wretch would not hear me; but yet I will preach! There is a great company among us like the Jews; they cry out, ‘Let Christ be crucified, and let Barabbas be released!’ It is a very sad thing that this should be a question among us, as among the old Jews, whether our Saviour, Jesus Christ, must be crucified, or that Barabbas should be released, the oppressor of the people, a tyrant, a murdurer! O, Jesus, where are we, that that should be a question among us?

“And because that you should think, my lords and gentlemen, that it is a question, I will tell you that it is a question; I have been in the city, which may very well be compared to Hierusalem in this conjuncture of time; and I profess those foolish citizens for a little trading and profit they will have Christ (*pointing to the soldiers on the pulpit stairs*) crucified, and that great Barabbas at St. James's

—(James's, I should say)—released! But I do not much heed what the rabble say. I hope that my brethren of the clergy will be wiser; the lips of the priests do use to preserve knowledge.

“Yet, truly, I have been with them in the assembly, and now I remember I nothing doubt the presbyters are for crucifying Christ again, too, and for releasing Barabbas! But you, my lords, and you, noble gentlemen of the House of Commons; you are the sanhedrim and the great council of the nation; therefore you must be sure to do justice, and it is from you that we expect it. You must not only be the inheritors of your ancestors, but you must do as they did! They have opposed tyranny and tyrannical kings! they have destroyed them!—it is you chiefly that we look for justice from. Do not prefer the great Barabbas, murderer, tyrant, and traitor, before these poor hearts, and the army, who are our saviours; but bring him at once—bring Charles Stuart—to condign, speedy, and capital punishment!

“And thereupon let me tell you a little story, not much from the matter. There was a bishop's man, at Exeter, was drunk; and a certain major laid him by the heels; the bishop sends to the major to know by what authority he had imprisoned his servant. The major's answer was, there is an act of parliament for it, and neither the bishop nor his man are excepted out of it. Here is a great discourse and talk in the world. What! will ye cut off the king's head, the head of a Protestant prince and king? Turn to your bibles, and you shall find it there—‘Whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed.’ I will even answer them, as the major did the bishop: here is an act of God's!—Whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed!—and I see neither King Charles, nor Prince Charles, nor Prince Rupert, nor Prince Maurice, nor any of that rabble excepted out of it!

“This is the day for which I and many saints of God besides have been praying for these many years. But if truly you do need a direct oracle from God, turn to your lesser bibles, and you shall find—the title is the Tyrant's Fall—Isaiah xiv. 18, 19, 20: ‘All the kings of the nations, even all of them! lie in glory, every one in his own house. But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of those who are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit, as a carcass trodden under foot: because thou hast destroyed thy land,

and slain thy people, the seed of evil-doers shall never be renowned!"

CHAPTER LXVII.

INGULPH'S only comfort during this terrible exhortation was to observe that Cromwell frequently smiled derisively; and laughed nearly outright at Peters including himself among the saints. But all listened on with obdurate patience, and the sermon was succeeded by a long rhapsodical prayer, in the same key. Contrary to any reasonable hope, even the prayer finished at last; and the assembly broke up, every man hurrying half-famished to his home, to procure some more substantial food than that heavenly manna.

Cromwell lingered last of all, either absorbed in prayer, or seeming to be so, perhaps to try Ingulph's patience. But he was rooted to the ground, and awaited his uprising with such perseverance that at last he arose.

"I do think thou art of the mind to starve me outright," he said, good-humouredly. "But 'tis not yet treason to conspire my death, however wilfully and maliciously! But in good truth an empty stomach is a poor prop to such work as we have now in hand; for I do feel my heart as faint within me as a country wench's taking her grandame's night-cap for a ghost. The spirit is willing, but, oh, how weak is the flesh!"

"There was no occasion for any additional terror than you have inflicted by imprisoning De la Pole," said Ingulph, suddenly, hoping to throw the lieutenant off his guard, but he only looked at him in surprise and disappointment.

"We have him not!—'tis false, 'tis utterly false!" said Cromwell, reddening darkly; and until they were fairly out of the stream leaving the chapel, and had turned aside into the park, he said no more.

"They cajole us—they cajole us!" he said then, with agitation. "I am convinced that there is some unknown plot at work which needs but time to ripen to our destruction. De la Pole is not my prisoner! he is not to be found, however diligently sought; 'tis plain he is secreted in London, probably with Fairfax—and they are cooking a broth to scald us all!"

Much alarmed at this apprehension, which circumstances

rendered very probable, Ingulph mentioned such particulars of his interview with Bulstocke as tended to reassure the doubts about De la Pole. But Cromwell listened evidently with incredulity. He concluded his narrative with Tribulation's illness, and her earnest desire to see the lieutenant.

This last intelligence seemed somewhat to disturb the latter ; but after a slight hesitation, he said that he would probably come to the city the following morning early. "And now hasten thither, and if you would keep this man from sudden destruction, let not a cavalier dog wag his tail!" he said, hurriedly. "The first movement of De la Pole and the royalists will compel us to proceed in our work!"

On the steps of Cromwell's house they parted, and Ingulph hastened back to the city. Almost with daybreak he received a command from the council of officers to post large detachments of his regiment on the Southwark shore of the river, and to take up his own quarters with them. Ireton's regiment at the same time arrived at Guildhall, ostensibly to strengthen him, and with directions that he was not to leave the city under any pretence. Imagining that some outbreak was momentarily expected, Ingulph applied himself with the greatest zeal to his task. But he was now much alarmed by intelligence which was brought him by Bulstocke, that on the previous night the lieutenant had arrived and had an interview with Tribulation ; in which she confessed her deception, and the real birth of Ingulph ; but had not been able to extract his intentions with regard to the king. She had taken care, however, to conceal that Ingulph was aware of his real parentage ; and now besought him to remember the covenant.

The news of the day, as it rapidly reached the city, contributed to Ingulph's disquiet and mistrust. At first it was that the parliament had received the Scottish protest, the French entreaties, the queen and prince's letters, without deigning any reply. About noonday, by ordering the substitution of one word for another in the writs and acts of government, they changed the monarchy into a republic. Shortly after, a proclamation appeared declaring the throne vacant, and forbidding, under all the penalties of treason, the naming of any successor. After this immense day's work, the commons separated, and for a time those fearful rumours ceased.

Ingulph had dispatched Joyce to the council with a report of the tranquillity of the city somewhat highly coloured, in his anxiety to diminish the evident alarm of the officers. He

was partaking of a comfortless repast in the room of the Guildhall, when Joyce returned with astounding news. He could not obtain to see Cromwell, because that the High Court was sitting for the purpose of signing the sentence against the king!

At first Ingulph was thunderstruck, and could not believe the intelligence until it was confirmed by the arrival of Ireton's lieutenant, who stated that the court was busied in deliberating on the place and time of the condemned monarch's execution.

Ingulph instantly ordered his horse, and set off for Westminster in a mood which might have probably caused some outburst to his own ruin, but the length of the journey allowed him time to reflect. He saw that his only hope must still be in preserving a hold on Cromwell; and for the first time in his life he formed the deliberate purpose of dissembling his feelings, and even of assuming others opposed to them, if the necessity should arise.

Tranquil in outward appearance, he alighted at his destination and hastened to the Painted Chamber, where he heard the High Court was assembled. The early winter twilight was already deepening into night, and two dim wax tapers burned on the council table. By far the majority of its members were present—even the fearful Downes—and Bradshaw was elaborately affixing his seal to a broad and beautifully engrossed parchment before him.

"The world shall now see whether we are a parcel of schoolboys, affrighted with our own shadows!" said Bradshaw, triumphantly. "Or whether, like a company of barn-players, we have undertaken parts whose grandeur doth more plainly show our meanness and insufficiency. I have signed it."

"Truly, and as fairly as I did ever see your hand set to a common judgment, my lord," said Cook, who stood behind. Cromwell stretched out his hand to take the parchment, but Bradshaw methodically handed it to his next man—the Lord Grey. At this moment Ingulph approached the table, and Cromwell started as his eye fell upon him.

"What news from the city, Master Dethewarre?" he said, after an instant's pause.

"All is as tranquil as a good man's conscience," replied he, calmly. "But what are the news here, for men are marvelling in the city."

"To-morrow, Ingulph, your long-sought republic is a

thing, and not a name!" said Cromwell, in a low tone. "Give me a pen!—or am I to write with my finger?"

"You have one, master lieutenant!" said Marten, with a smile. "And now for a specimen of thy fairest Roman text-hand, for all time will judge of thy caligraphy by this."

Cromwell paused, as if steadying his mind and hand to the purpose, and Marten leaned curiously over the table, as if to mark how he would go through his task. Cromwell suddenly looked up, and in a sportive manner drew his pen across Marten's forehead, in transverse directions. Then laughing at the success of his trick, he wrote his name rapidly and in a very clear and elegant hand, while Marten smilingly vowed vengeance, and wiped his brows.

Several commissioners signed, and then it came to Ireton's turn. But exchanging a congratulatory look with Dethewarre, he did not sign until he had read the document aloud. From that perusal, Ingulph learned that the execution was to take place on the following day, in the open street, before the king's own palace of Whitehall! a common addition to a criminal's punishment in those days being to execute him at his own residence.

"*Vivat rēpublica!*" exclaimed Ireton, as he signed it. "Let England be a republic but a dozen years, and not a throne in Europe shall remain! Ingulph, sign next to me; we have been as brothers in our labours; and let posterity see our brotherhood in this bracket."

He was about to draw some such enclosure, to contain Ingulph's name with his own, when Cromwell suddenly stopped his hand.

"Dethewarre hath private wrongs to avenge; therefore he shall not sign in a public cause!" said he, austere. "And now, Hutchinson, 'tis your turn, but beware that you do not soil your white fingers in the penmanship."

"Let none of us soil the whiteness of our souls *after*," replied he, sedately.

"What is thy coat of arms to seal with, Pride?" said Cromwell, as it came to that worthy's turn, and he produced a huge seal.

"It is a naked babe in a brewer's arms, who hath just found him in a heap of smoking grain!" said Marten, alluding to Pride's birth, who was a foundling.

"What mean ye, sirs?" said Pride, stopping short and looking sternly up.

"Tell them, good lad, that you wear your coat of arms on your back," said Cromwell; but observing that the soldier still looked gloomily, he added, in a tone of authority—"Write on, write on! What the fiend, there are few of us here that pretend to have grandfathers!"

"There are few of you here to whom any circumstance can add greatness!" said Milton, who stood near Cromwell's chair.

"Well said, master poet," said Cromwell, looking back. "We may perchance need thy goosequill, too, in the cause. Were it not a task meet for thee? Kings the accusers—England the accused—Milton the defender—and all time the judge!"

"Oh, that the light of these orbs would but last me out such a labour; I would sit in darkness contentedly, even to the hour when the grave shall behold the glory of the Lord!" returned the poet.

"Blessed be His name, that I have lived to bear this shining testimony!" exclaimed Harrison. "And for the coming of the Lord of light, perchance it is not so distant as carnal men may hope!"

Shortly after it came to Marten's turn to sign; but by this time Cromwell had sunk into a deep reverie, which gave Marten the opportunity suddenly to return the compliment he had received, by flourishing a letter on the general's musing forehead.

"Thou art a graceless rogue!" said Cromwell, smiling absently. "But go on, go on; let us get it done."

"God knows what we are signing here, and when it may come against us!" said Downes, taking the pen with a trembling hand.

"Do you mislike to sign?—then do not, if it be against your conscience!" said Cromwell, sternly.

"Nay, since the rest have done it, 'tis not for me to prefer my single judgment to so many wiser men's," replied Downes, very submissively.

"Were I not well convinced this deed is more pleasing to angels than to men, I would rather sign my damnation than it!" said Scot, and wrote his name.

"'Tis a necessary clearing of the way!" said Carew, a fifth-monarchist; the signatures continued to be affixed for some moments in silence.

"What! is the work stopped?" "What is it?" said Cromwell, suddenly starting up. "Who will not write?"

"I am the last, and I *will* write," said Miles Corbet.

"Fear ye not; at the great day, I will not disavow this hand of mine."

"Where are St. John and Vane?" said Cromwell, in a musing, discontented manner.

"Oh, they are fearful disciples, that come but in the night!" said Marten.

"Cursed be he who holdeth back his sword from blood!" exclaimed Harrison.

"That word is never off thy lips, methinks," said Cromwell, peevishly.

"It is done, then!" said Bradshaw.

"A word more in season to-morrow night," said Cromwell. "The axe and the scaffold are now all that are needed; and the sun shall behold the grandest act of justice which hath been inflicted since he came shining forth on the formless infinite."

But the perturbed and anxious expression of his countenance seemed somewhat to belie this triumphant speech, and his eye dwelt on Ingulph with an earnest searchingness which the settled calm of his aspect baffled.

"To whom must the warrant be directed? We must have men of tried metal," said Ireton.

"To me then! Let me have some share in the glorious work!" said Ingulph, with wild eagerness.

"To thee?" said Cromwell, glancing at him; and adding, after a long and peculiar pause,— "No, you shall have the guard of the scaffold, and the general care of matters; but Hacker and Phray are fit men to do the vulgar offices."

"And where shall we bury him?" said Ireton. "For we must not leave his carcass to be shown, like Cæsar's, to the mob."

"Anon of that," said Cromwell, springing up. "But now these tidings must be spread, and it behoves us to be at our posts. I'll to the general, for we *must* have his good-will in the matter! You, Dethewarre, to the city, and keep the soft heads there in order, and mark you, instantly!—for I do command you as a soldier under my obedience—and not to stir thence till *I* send for you to attend the execution to-morrow."

Ingulph bowed with an appearance of implicit submission; and the assembly proceeded to determine the time and place of the execution. The latter was suggested by Ingulph. He observed that the Banqueting Hall was at once the most public site, and communicated with the king's apartments, in

which he might be lodged till the execution, as in a more secure spot than St. James's Palace.

"Nay, he is well guarded there—not a mouse creeps in but my ears prick!" said Cromwell, austerely. "Yet, God knows, we have infinite treacheries to apprehend!—De la Pole and the cavaliers are busy—the lord general is in the sulks—and we have bosom-serpents, too, ready to dart their stings! He shall only re-enter his palace for his execution—to-morrow!"

The words sunk like a mountain-weight on Ingulph's heart; but he ventured no farther opposition. The assembly shortly afterwards separated, and Ingulph left Westminster Hall without any unseemly hurry, and even seemed to listen to an enthusiastic outburst from Harrison, lauding the completion of the great work.

Pausing in a real hell of contending thoughts in the Hall, which was now deserted by all but a few sentinels, Ingulph endeavoured to form some clear idea of his own vast but vague project; lost in this meditation, he did not notice the approach of Cromwell until suddenly he stood before him.

"Have you seen your mother—truly called Tribulation—to-day?" he said, with a stern penetrating look.

"She is too ill to see any one. I have not," replied Ingulph, with supernatural firmness, meeting and repelling the suspicions in Cromwell's gaze.

"I saw her last night—but she has gone mad on the covenant, and raved," said Cromwell, hastily. "But wherefore are you not hurrying on my order to the city? The malignants and the citizens are doubtless brewing some plot together, which but for this suddenness of ours—and Fairfax's wife grows hourly more insolent in her hen-pecking—and the Scots muster—and France mutters—why are you still here?"

"I have a dying message from Tribulation to Master Stonehenge, which I will hastily deliver, and then"—

"I misdoubt if he apprehends you, but lose no time!" said Cromwell, ominously. "I shall send one shortly to the city with instructions for you."

Cromwell retired so suddenly, that his absorbed companion started to find that he was gone; and then he hastened on alone to Whitehall.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

Thus then it had terminated—after so many toils and sufferings, when the goal was in reach, the glory nigh achieved, the grand vision an actuality, the youthful republic about to start forth ready armed from the working brain of that prodigious age—the main instrument found himself compelled to put all again at stake, or to become a parricide!

The project which Ingulph's maddened fancy had conceived was not altogether without some feasibility. The recollection of the secret communication between the old and new palaces of Whitehall occurred to him like a supernatural irradiation during the process of signing the sentence. It was therefore he had proposed the Banqueting Hall as a fit place for the execution. It was with no idea of seeing Stonehenge, but another and contrary purpose, that he now hastened to Holbein's Gate.

The towers and central building had remained unoccupied since De la Pole and he resided in it. The very existence of the passage, obscurely alluded to in the trial after Ramona's abduction, was now forgotten, and the communication by its means with the old palace was unknown. To ascertain with certainty what he might trust to, was now Ingulph's object.

His uniform was a sufficient pass with the sentinels, and Ingulph made his way unquestioned into the deserted tower. The tapestry had been securely nailed over the sliding pannel, but it was easily torn away. He entered the corridor, traversed the still untenanted gallery and corridors, and came to the grand staircase which formed the junction between the ancient and modern palaces. Turning, as formerly, to the left, leaving on the right the royal chambers, terminating in the Banqueting Hall, he speedily reached the ruins which intervened to Stonehenge's tower.

But while pausing to survey the possibility of passing over them to the laboratory, his eye suddenly encountered a figure standing on the opposite side of a deep reft, which had once been a gallery, the sight of which produced an effect on Ingulph something akin to the terror of a supernatural presence.

It was Stonehenge. His countenance was perfectly bloodless, or rather of a leaden purple, and all the muscles were

drawn upwards, as if in union with his wild bolt-upright hair ; a peculiar hyena-like expression played in a direful smile all over his visage but the lips. He fixed his eyes on Ingulph, and they seemed gradually to dilate to a prodigious size, rounding continually, and shining with a fearful, mad, laughing expression, as if conscious of the detection he had made of Ingulph's purpose.

Ingulph felt that he could not, without great danger, relax his gaze for an instant, for he seemed as if Stonehenge were meditating a spring at him. He therefore fixed his eyes steadily and unquailingly upon him ; but it lasted so long that his agitation almost overpowered him, when suddenly Stonehenge gathered back all the terrors of his gaze, and he laughed in a low, soft, vacant manner for some moments.

"Be not afraid, since it is so, nephew," he said at last, with a mixture of astonishment and pleasure. "The dark divinity, I find, has not yet vanquished the bright one in you, and I have no power over you ; but I expected you here, and have come to meet you ; but lest we should not agree, have removed all the planks."

"Expected me !—wherefore ?" said Ingulph, with as much calmness as he could muster. "How could you think to find me here now, when I am so busy ?"

"Why, so am I busy—very busy !" said Stonehenge, pettishly, but seeming to listen attentively. "How the wind sighs through these ruins !—did you hear anything like a groan ?"

"Nay—nought," said Ingulph, much alarmed.

"Still I thought I did hear some one moaning !" said Stonehenge. "Methinks 'tis very strange, considering how I glut them with the fat of the land ; and then to tease me for a morsel of bread or a drink of water, with the richest wines and delicatest cates before them !"

"Speak you of your wife ?" said Ingulph.

"And of her friends !" replied Stonehenge. "Think you we would either of us be lacking in hospitality ?"

"Certainly, no," said Ingulph, soothingly.

"Know you to whom you speak ?" continued Stonehenge, with an air of irritation.

"Some men call you Stonehenge—others the Earl De la Pole," said Ingulph, striving to humour him.

"I am both and neither !—but 'tis not yet given me to appear in my proper character, environed by the lightnings and thunder—I am the avenger !" said Stonehenge, drawing

himself up into an attitude which though insane was sublime in its authority and grandeur.

"But as I have not wronged you, you can have no business with me now, in that capacity," returned Ingulph, in a resolute tone; but he paused, observing the sudden eagerness with which Stonehenge looked at him.

"Oh, I know you have not come to see my wife now; I am not busied with the stars as I used to be, for they are now accustomed to my sway," he said. "'Tis easy to govern myriads of worlds, on certain principles which Galileo taught me: only of this be assured, thought has no master but death!"

"But your business with me?" said Ingulph, with melancholy earnestness.

"Speak loudly and roughly; I like not these whining sounds!" said Stonehenge, sharply. "You may imagine how little they please me, when I tell you my only delight is listening to the clank of the gates of hell as they open to receive my victims, and the roar of the flames of the abyss!—But you are not of the illuminati—you are here on an errand of mercy—in the hope to save your father."

These latter words were pronounced in so sedate and reasonable a tone, that it seemed as if the naturally strong mind of Stonehenge had suddenly thrown off the influence of its disease.

"To save my father!—how is that possible, unless I could stay a mountain rolling from the Alps?" said Ingulph, much startled.

"The secret passage—the royal chambers!" replied Stonehenge. "Methinks a son should attempt something to save his sire's life, even if it cost him his own, and like a brood of snakes they stung one another to death."

"How mean you?" said Ingulph, with a troubled glance; and as he spoke, to his infinite surprise, Stonehenge's eyes gushed full of tears, and an expression of intense grief convulsed all his features.

"But it must be—it must be!" he said, after a pause, "or the power of evil will never forgive—never release me from the vultures of memory and consciousness! But if you have forgotten that you are his son—I have not that he was once my friend—my dearest friend!"

"And you would yet—you would aid in an attempt to preserve him?" said Ingulph, with a wild gleam of hope darting in upon him.

“Such as restoring these planks—sleeping hard while you guide the king through my tower to the water-edge, where surely some friend will bring a boat to take him to Montacute’s vessel?” said Stonehenge.

“And you will do this?” said Ingulph, in a tumult of hope.

“On one condition,” replied Stonehenge.

“If it be my heart’s blood, it is yours!”

“Let not the Lord De la Pole have art or part in it!” said Stonehenge, with a strong shudder.

“Now do I believe you are in earnest. He shall not—and I deem he could not, being in all probability a secret prisoner of the council!” replied Ingulph.

Stonehenge smiled, but it was bleakly and dismally as the sun on a sterile mountain, to which it seems to bestow neither light nor warmth.

The brightness of his once clear reason seemed to have returned; he discussed the details of the daring project with a minuteness which convinced Ingulph that he had carefully studied it in all its bearings. He spoke, too, with a mournful tenderness of his old friendship for the king, which bore no traces of his usual bitterness; and encouraged by the mildness of his tone, Ingulph ventured to tell him the particulars which he had learned in extenuation of Charles’s conduct from the confession of the marquis of Montacute.

“If you have invented this—what avails heaping more fire on my head?” said Stonehenge, with a return of his wildness. “But even so—her name blasted—was it for him to inflict that measureless dishonour on me, that my sister—my only sister—but what of that? My wife! We must appease the power which is now in ascendancy; I have made a compact.”

The arrangements were rapidly concerted. The great essential was, that Ingulph should be assured of the command of the immediate guard on the king. Stonehenge intimated his suspicions that Cromwell would withdraw the appointment from Ingulph, whom he knew he doubted, and was besides desirous to preserve from any share in his father’s death. It was therefore necessary to obtain Lady Fairfax’s co-operation, so far as to induce her husband to grant the warrant to Ingulph, to be used in case of necessity, despite of any supercession.

The king would certainly be allowed some time to rest in his chamber, and to prepare himself for his exit, the guard

waiting in the chambers and passages beyond, leading to the Banqueting Hall. The great gallery would probably be occupied; but under pretext of avoiding the influx of strangers, its portals might be secured, and sentinels only posted within. Thence, under Ingulph's guidance, the way to the tower might easily be reached, and Stonehenge would secretly make preparations to facilitate the passage. A boat was to be in waiting for the fugitive; and immediately he reached it, Ingulph was to return to the guards, under pretence to leave the king to his devotions, and thus give them security that he was within. He was to prevent any entry up to the last moment, and when it could no longer be delayed, he was himself to make the discovery of the king's evasion, and misdirect the search. Two objects were to be attained by this artifice—Ingulph's own exoneration, and time to perfect the royal escape.

When this compact was made, the unwonted conspirators separated, Ingulph remembering his agreement with Cromwell, and fearing to awaken suspicion by not being found at his post. So calm and rational was Stonehenge's manner, that Ingulph wondered how he had ever imagined him to be insane, however strange were his fancies in religion. Nevertheless he did not venture once to allude to Ramona, otherwise than in the distant way we have set down at the commencement of the conversation.

Terrible as was the risk of the conspiracy into which he had now so strangely entered, Ingulph hesitated not a moment on that score. Immediately on the king's escape being discovered, it was his resolution to appear on the scaffold—proclaim the republic unstained with blood—and take whatever might ensue. His own soldiers were devoted to him, and were to surround the scaffold. And his chief apprehensions were only lest Stonehenge should fail in some manner in his part of the affair—lest his mind should relapse—for Ingulph never dreamed of treachery. But he thought of a means to provide against this risk too.

Returning with great rapidity to the city, he luckily arrived before Cromwell's messenger; who brought some vague directions for him to bring with him on the following day only so many of his troops as could be safely spared.

Immediately after the messenger had departed, feigning weariness of the weight of his arms, he changed his garb for that of a civilian. He directed Joyce to have his soldiers warned and in readiness for their important office on the

following day; and sent orders to Bulstocke to attend him early in the morning, to consult about the best means of preserving the peace of the city.

The next thoughts were to complete his arrangements for the king's flight; and almost for the first time he grieved at the disappearance of De la Pole. His activity, his courage, and infinite dexterity would have been invaluable. Cromwell's solemn disavowal of any knowledge of his detention made Ingulph revert to his first opinion, that the royalists had concealed him, and could easily produce him if they chose.

The probability that he was concealed at Northumberland House had frequently occurred to him, although the thought to him was full of bitterness, since the victim bride dwelt there too. Hitherto Ingulph had scarcely dared to think of Lady De la Pole, lest he should in some manner involve her in the dangerous plots forming by and with him. But he knew that De la Pole would have no such tenderness; and the probabilities that some wild plot was forming among the cavaliers under his guidance, and the necessity of Montacute's co-operation, obliged him to think of some means of opening a communication with them.

Lady Fairfax's devotion to the king, and correspondence with the De la Poles, suggested her as the readiest and safest; and moreover her concurrence was essential to obtaining from Fairfax the necessary powers. It was true that the lord general's cowed genius could not be expected to take an active part in favour of the king, whom yet in his heart he would have pitied and saved—but covertly his assistance might be expected, and was of eminent necessity.

Considering these arguments, Ingulph returned as privately as possible, and in by-ways, to that part of the palace of Whitehall occupied by Fairfax.

On arriving, he learned that the lord general had gone to attend a council of the officers at the Mews, and that his lady had given strict orders that no one should be admitted to her presence. He interpreted these tidings, that the officers were met to confirm their wavering general in his support of their proceedings, and that the Lady Fairfax thus expressed her disgust and hatred of them.

Not discouraged by the intelligence, he sent in his name, and an earnest request to be allowed to speak with her ladyship on business of the utmost importance. A peremptory denial was instantly returned, with Lady Fairfax's command

to show Colonel Dethewarre to the junto of officers, which she supposed he came to attend. Fearing that no other means would prevail, Ingulph sent in a still more urgent request, adding that his business related to the Lord De la Pole. This hint, he thought, would suit either the lady's knowledge of his concealment by his friends or seizure by his enemies.

Some time elapsed ere the page sent in with the message returned with instructions, as he had anticipated, to admit him. He was led into the apartment we have formerly described, and there he found—not only Lady Fairfax, but Marie and the marquis of Montacute!

The latter was pale, worn, and so altered by time and trouble, that Ingulph at first imagined that his eyes deceived him.

“Ingulph! if there be any human feeling in your heart, forgive me, and tell me—is my son alive or dead?” exclaimed the unhappy nobleman, and the agonized earnestness of his manner convinced Ingulph that he was sincere in his profession of ignorance.

“If I knew, Lord Montacute, I should not now be here to inquire,” said Ingulph, after a moment's pause of surprise, not unmingled with other feelings.

“Ingulph, we have all—I have wronged you—bitterly, inhumanly wronged you!” exclaimed the marquis, distractedly, kneeling and clasping his hands. “But, in the name of the God of mercy, at least tell me what has become of him! Anything is better than what I fear!”

“Ingulph! Ingulph! remember our compact, and be merciful!” said Marie, kneeling too, in her agony of supplication.

“The word be my last, if I speak not truth when I say, I know nought of him!” exclaimed Ingulph, snatching her up, and more temperately aiding the exhausted old man to rise. “Lord Montacute, for the injuries you have done me, I have not, perchance, long to suffer their consequences; and for a few brief hours I may well anticipate the forgiveness of death. I know nothing of your son's disappearance, so may God help me when my hour comes!”

“Who, then, can doubt it?—He has fallen into the hands of the mad fiend, Stonehenge—the knight of De la Pole—whatever he calls himself!” exclaimed the wretched father.

“In that at least I may comfort you,” said Ingulph, “and therewith explain my purpose; but the king's life, and mine,

and all our lives perchance, are in it. Are we assured we have no listeners?"

"None—no more—be brief, sir!" said Lady Fairfax, turning pale. "Does it concern Thomas—my husband, the lord general, speak hastily, for I tremble as if I were on the scaffold to lay down my own life."

Ingulph was not found tedious by his anxious listeners, and as he expounded the particulars of the plot, wonder seemed gradually to become the dominant feeling. Montacute returned with satisfaction to the fear which was probably least terrible to him of many—that his son was secretly confined by the council. Although a devoted royalist, it was easy to perceive that he regarded the king's escape chiefly as a means of effecting the discovery of his son, in the midst of the confusion which must ensue; or, in the probable event of some compromise, securing his preservation.

The marquis eagerly embraced the part assigned to him in the project, to be in waiting secretly with a boat and a few determined followers, at the old palace stairs—and in the event of any change in Stonehenge, assisting to overpower him. If the wind were favourable to a voyage out of the river, they were to take the king on board at Gravesend; if not, to some place on the sea-coast, whither the ship might attend him if his embarkation should continue necessary.

But Montacute evidently imagined that the king's escape would be the signal for an outburst which must either restore him, or bring his enemies to some negotiation. Lady Fairfax's courage seemed, however, rather to sink on the approach of danger. She inquired, with a faltering voice, what part her husband was expected to take, and declared she knew it was impossible to engage him in any direct share in it. Ingulph satisfied her fears on this point, by desiring her only to obtain from her lord an appointment for him to attend the king, and to superintend the guard at the execution, despite any orders from Cromwell or the council of war. For this she needed only to allege the king's personal desire to that effect; but, if possible, Fairfax ought to be on the spot to protect him from any personal violence from the soldiery, in case of a failure.

Lady Fairfax eagerly promised all this, and Montacute declared that as many cavaliers as might without suspicion, should mingle with the mob on the following day, to aid as far as lay in their power. As a means of increasing the con-

fusion, Ingulph was not displeased with the proposal, though for other reasons he disliked it.

There was no hope of giving the king notice of what was going forward—all his attendants being as much imprisoned as himself. The moment of his redemption must also be that in which he first heard of the possibility. This was, indeed, a fearful concussion of events and feelings, but no better could be done.

Marie spoke hardly a word during the discussion, though her tears flowed incessantly. But when Ingulph at last arose to depart, regardless of the presence of her husband's father, she rushed into his arms, pressed her pallid lips to his, and exclaimed aloud: "Be it life—be it death—we will never part again—if ever we meet again! One grave they cannot deny us!"

Ingulph pressed her to his heart, which swelled full to bursting, and without venturing any reply, rushed out.

Shortly after, he found himself, he remembered not how, one of a vast stream of populace flowing towards the banqueting-hall. Barriers of massive timber were erected at intervals along the line of the palace, and a temporary wall of planks before the great window of Whitehall concealed the operations of numerous workmen within, whose blows echoed so loudly that Ingulph could scarcely doubt they must reach the hearing of the devoted sovereign. The grim skeleton of a scaffold was gradually rising before the palace, visible in faint snatches of moonlight, or in the broader glare of torches.

Vast as was the populace, a deep silence reigned, excepting the blows of the hammers, and the tramp of innumerable feet. Terror was the predominant feeling, and appeared legibly in the white visages and haggard eyes with which the boldest regarded each other. Death seemed to threaten each man in particular; a vague awe and expectation swayed men's minds, as if the sky had suddenly become black at noonday, or some unknown and monstrous phenomena threatened universal destruction. Who could believe in the stability of his own existence, when one of the mightiest monarchs of the earth was about to fall beneath the axe of the executioner? Every blow of the hammer—every stroke of the dull mace securing the scaffold—was distinctly audible in the terror-struck silence. Ingulph felt for the first time the full reach of the tremendous policy of Cromwell—the depth of the foundation of terror he was casting—on which the new order

of things was to rise. It troubled him to think how much frailer and meaner a basis he was obliged to substitute.

CHAPTER LXIX.

INGULPH spent nearly all that night in mentally welding the parts of his great plot, and what remained of it in a restless sleep such as condemned men usually take on the eve of their doom. Dreams of infinite horror haunted him, in which, mingling his scholastic recollections with actual impressions, he sometimes fancied himself driven, like Orestes, by the furies, armed with their scorpion whips, and yelling—parricide!—until the universe seemed to take up the shout, and hoot him madly into regions of infinite and icy silence and desolation.

Anon, a city of refuge was before him—in the sky, surrounded by a celestial landscape of the purest fire. But to reach it, he had to climb a mountain of black sand which perpetually sunk beneath his climbing feet, and threatened every moment to smother him in its depths. A silver hand was stretched out to him, and hurried him irresistibly to the summit; but the landscape vanished, and he only saw the palace of Whitehall involved in a vast whirlwind of fire, and Stonehenge appeared on the summit of his tower, laughing and clapping his hands until he sunk in the flames.

Starting from this fearful phantasy, Ingulph beheld the first pale peep of that great day—the 30th of January. It was a cold and sleety dawn, the sky obscured with heavy snow-clouds, whence from time to time the powerless sun appeared like a huge bloody shield.

Ingulph determined to attempt resting no longer; and commenced attiring himself. But although as he donned his armour, the thought occurred to him how probably it was for the last time, his resolution quailed not in the least. Religion was the master-spring of the time; its virtues, its crimes, even its madness, grew from that common root; and Ingulph's sublime fanaticism dreamed now that the Deity had selected him for the task he was upon.

Despite his anxiety, he patiently awaited until the petronel from the Tower announced the commencement of the military day. Very shortly after, Joyce knocked at the door to inform him that a messenger had arrived from Whitehall.

On entering, this personage proved to be the once proud

marquis of Montacute, now in the garb of a common runner. But he brought good news. Lady Fairfax found her husband exceedingly well disposed to save the king, provided it could be effected without risk to himself or his authority. She had not dared to confide the plan concerted to him, but he had readily granted her the order for Ingulph to command in chief in all the arrangements at the king's execution. She would take care that he should be at hand on any emergency, and would herself not be far remote.

Montacute had made all the necessary preparations on his part. His vessel was prepared to sail, and a contrivance which he had used to conceal himself on board was to be used by the king. Half-a-dozen determined men would be in waiting with himself and a boat at the old stairs, where his presence, in the absorbing spectacle on land, would scarcely be noticed, or construed into some government precaution. Northumberland's retainers, and as many of the king's friends as could be warned without danger, would be scattered among the spectators, ready to aid in any manner, and looking to Dethewarre for instructions.

Ingulph assured Montacute that all went well on his part, and they parted coldly and mistrustingly, but with outward civility, as enemies reconciled by the force of circumstances,—not by will.

Joyce, in obedience to instructions, had now assembled all the sergeants of the regiment, and led them into the presence of their young colonel, nearly all the higher officers being with the detachments. Ingulph read them the commission he had received from the lord general, which he declared to be a very great and singular honour to the whole regiment; more especially as it was likely to be a dangerous one, as the malignants, it might naturally be expected, would make an attempt to hinder the just judgment about to be executed. He therefore cautioned them, whatever happened, to support the cause of the republic, to look to him alone for guidance in all exigencies, and to stand faithfully by him in all the measures which circumstances might compel him to adopt.

"If it be to slay the bull of Bashan with mine own partizan, say but the word!" exclaimed one of the agitators; and a deep murmur of assent expressed the general feeling.

Dismissing these military devotees to spread the tidings among the soldiers, and school them with the same lessons, Ingulph now anxiously awaited the arrival of Bulstocke. Nothing could better demonstrate the general panic, than the

circumstance that, knowing all that he knew, still Bulstocke thought proper to read the message in an extensive sense, and came accompanied by nearly all his brother aldermen.

Ingulph took advantage of the circumstance, and impressed upon the civic dignitaries, that, during his absence, the peace of the city was looked to from their vigilance. To effect this purpose, he authorized them to distribute instructions to the trained bands to hold themselves in readiness at a moment's summons—the trained bands which had been violently suppressed by the council of officers! The magistrates received this command with great humility, surprise, and satisfaction; and Bulstocke was huddling out with the rest from the presence of the young dictator, when Ingulph recalled him, and briefly informed him of the project formed for the king's rescue. Such was the joy of the worthy citizen, that he could not forbear dancing about the room in an ecstasy, and declaring that the news would recover Tribulation, although she was sinking fast.

Ingulph could hardly sober him down to understand the part which he desired him to take in the proceedings; which was, to procure that the attendance from the city, which would undoubtedly be very great, should look to him as to one favourable to the king, and support him in the measure of proclaiming a republic, which was the only one which could prevent a concussion between the city and the army. As soon as the king's escape was certain, they were to assemble the train bands under pretext of his present orders, and confer on him the command.

Bulstocke joyfully assented to all that was proposed; and in conclusion produced a bottle and a little hamper which he had concealed under his cloak, full of excellent materials for breakfast, of which he insisted that Ingulph should partake. "My old dame knew you would have nothing worth eating here," he said, with a jolly smile. "And, heaven knows, it may be the last meal we shall eat, so it should be a good one."

Ingulph reminded him that they must not seem too friendly; but the disappointment in honest Bulstocke's visage on the remark moved him, and he poured out a cup of the wine, and pledged him with assumed cheerfulness. Yet at the moment the thought was in his heart, full of regret and bitterness, that, born with a soul so keenly sensitive to every delight, he was about to pass away without having tasted any.

Almost immediately after Bulstocke had taken his departure, to Ingulph's surprise, he received an order from Crom-

well to hasten to Westminster. By this time the soldiers were drawn up in the street before Guildhall, with their naked swords glittering in the frosty air. Ingulph's appearance was the signal for a general outburst of enthusiasm, and cries of "We will live and die with our colonel!" rang along the ranks as he marshalled their lines. Ingulph felt that he could depend on his soldiers, and a glow of better hope warmed his bosom.

Early as it was, great numbers swept continually past the end of the street, along Cheapside; but no one paused, or seemed to notice the military array, usually so attractive to the masses. The hurrying multitudes whom they passed on their way to Whitehall seemed hardly to pay them more attention. Those who glanced at them did so fearfully and by stealth, as if afraid to call the attention of the king-destroyers to themselves. As yet only the poorest classes of the population, or persons disguised as such, were abroad. Mechanics, disbanded soldiers, shivering beggars, who would not on that day exchange their rags for the royal mantle of England, went muttering along, amazedly wondering at the prodigious turn of the wheel which had dashed the mightiest in the land even so low as to need their pity.

Persons of better degree began gradually to chequer the masses. The citizen wrapped in his sober cloak, with his huge pointed hat; the ruined cavalier, still distinguished by an air of jauntiness in his tatters, and by the reckless, desperate expression of his countenance; the presbyter, with his woes begone and puzzled visage; the triumphant fanatic, whose joy was only betrayed by increased sternness and gloom of visage, as if in fear that his exultation should break forth, and seem to arrogate something of the glory of the Lord's work. Every alley, street, and by-path, kept pouring in its quota; women and children, innumerable apprentices with their quarter-staves, all usually so loquacious, now hurried along in utter silence, without laugh or whistle, or jest or quarrel, as if hastening from some common danger. The most bitter animosities of sect and party seemed lulled by the spell of fear; as when an American savannah is on fire, the snake, the buffalo, the panther, and man, the common enemy, speed along together without molestation or notice of each other, in the brotherhood of terror.

At length Whitehall appeared, the vast space before the palace so densely crowded, that Ingulph had some difficulty in making way for his troops without trampling the

multitude. Prepared and resolved as he was, the blood ran coldly through his veins when he first caught sight of the scaffold, which now appeared above the planks around. It was not yet completed; workmen were busy hanging it with black, and in removing the framework used in its erection. The regiment of foot soldiers which already occupied the esplanade seemed unable to keep it, for the mob crowded incessantly over the space intended to be kept clear, in utter disregard of the liberal blows bestowed among them with the blunt ends of pikes.

Ingulph with great difficulty, and by the formidable pressure of his cavalry, succeeded in clearing the space round the scaffold. Curses loud and deep, yells, shrieks, and imprecations, resounded on every side; but the weight of man and horse, and the terror of brandished swords, at length prevailed. The discontented populace were hemmed back in a circle, and began to deal their rage and blows on one another, as the nearest efficient causes of their common sufferings.

Ingulph, observing that the foot regiment was Fairfax's, shewed his commission to the officer commanding, and ordered him to place his men so as to line the whole range of the palace front, and to let no one go out or enter without a pass-word, which he now gave of "God and the Republic." His own troop he planted ten deep around the scaffold, reserving only a small body for another purpose. The whole line of the park between Whitehall and St. James's was already occupied by long gleaming lines of horsemen, and pikes and streamers on lanced poles.

Ingulph galloped along this line, as if to ascertain that it was well kept, and saw, with little satisfaction, that regiments the most devoted to the council of officers lined it. But no suspicions of his own intentions seemed entertained. The commanders saluted him with the usual warmth, for he was a general favourite with all; and on his return to the scaffold, he found the three officers to whom the warrant was directed,—Phayre, Huncks, and Hacker,—awaiting him to receive his instructions.

The scaffold was not yet completed, and together they ascended it, Ingulph affecting great zeal and hurry for its completion. From this elevated point the gathering of the crowd was distinctly visible, and he watched its gradual formation with an anxiety which may be imagined.

Whether it was fancy or reality we know not, but it seemed to Ingulph as if the quality of men's opinions settled them in

distinct circles around the scaffold. The wildest of the fanatics, those who looked upon the king's death as a sublime sacrifice of a sweet savour to the Lord, thronged the nearest, and gazed upward with haggard visages and fiery eyes, as if athirst for the blood that was to be shed. Next to them were the milder shades and hues of doubters and trimmers, including the great majority of the citizens; then again the retainers of great houses, ragged cavaliers, full of desperation and fear. But these distinctions gradually mingled away, and fierce uproar ever and anon arose, as persons or opinions came into angry collision. Over all, the soldiery preserved a sedate and melancholy composure, like men marked out by supreme intelligence to fulfil a great but sorrowful duty.

From the scaffold into the palace was an easy passage, an entire window being removed, and Ingulph found that the banqueting-hall, into which it opened, the galleries and corridors leading to the king's apartments, were lined with soldiers. Without troubling himself on this score, although he remarked that they were all fanatics of the darkest hue, Ingulph proceeded to occupy the apartment which he destined for the king, with dismounted soldiers of his regiment. This was a momentous point, and his heart beat quick when he entered the suite lest some obstruction should arise; but none was offered; and after affecting to search the whole range as far as the grand staircase communicating with the deserted part of the palace, he locked all the doors, and returned.

Ingulph had hoped to avoid seeing Cromwell, and to have an opportunity of sounding Fairfax, by procuring, direct from the lord general, the warrant for the delivery of the king's person. There was no longer time for hesitation. The bulky and resolute Hacker came to him with tidings that the scaffold was nearly completed, and that it was advisable to bring the king from St. James's before the crowd became fixed.

"I will seek the lord general for our warrant then," said Ingulph, hastily; "and in good time here he comes."

As he spoke, Fairfax entered the banqueting-hall, accompanied by two officers of rank, with a severe and troubled countenance. As Ingulph approached, he started, and seemed inclined to avoid him, but he would not allow the manœuvre.

"Is not your commission ample? What more do you want with me, what more!" exclaimed the lord general, in an agitated voice. "Ye have done it all yourselves so far,

and finish it! You have the troops under your order—what more do you want?”

“The warrant for delivering the king’s person into our hands,” said Ingulph, with an earnest look, which Fairfax either did not or would not understand.

“Go to the lieutenant—the whole matter rests with him—I will have nothing to do with it; it is the army’s doings,” replied the general, hurriedly; but he added, in a calmer tone, “He will readily give it you, I doubt not; if *not*, apply to me, I shall be hereabouts—but I will have nothing to do in this bloody business;” and he hastened away, with his attendants.

Thus compelled, Ingulph inquired for the lieutenant, and learned that he had not yet arrived from his lodgings in the Cock-pit. Commissioning Phayre to hasten for him, he now hurried back to the scaffold, but on his way was met by Axtel.

There was a peculiar and gloomily ironical smile on the countenance of this man, as he informed Ingulph that the lieutenant had arrived, and desired his presence instantly.

He obeyed with counterfeit satisfaction, and Axtel led the way to a chamber at the end of a long corridor communicating with the banqueting-hall. In the archiepiscopal times this had been an oratory of a peculiar and beautifully elaborate architecture; but it was now profaned into a bedchamber, and occupied by Ireton. The perfect calmness with which the latter regarded the tremendous event approaching may be judged from the fact that he was still in bed; Harrison, who had spent the night with him, was up and having his armour donned by one of his sergeants.

The dim light of a little oriel window shone on an arm-chair immediately below, in which sat Cromwell, laughing heartily at some observation which had just been made by his grim porter, Pordage, who stood at hand. He was dressed in a plain civic garb, but his doublet was a little open about the breast, and the gleam of armour below was visible.

“Pordage is haunted by seventeen devils by night, he says; but ’tis all for want of one in the shape of a wife,” said Cromwell, scarcely noticing the arrival in his hilarity. “But surely, Harrison, thou dost not mean to be a-bed there all day when such work is in hand?”

“Why not?—let the reaper rest while they bind the sheaves,” said Ireton, yawning. “But whom have we here?”

—Truly, Colonel Dethewarre!—so 'tis time indeed to be up and stirring.”

“I am ready at my post!” exclaimed Harrison, with a dark smile. “The great red dragon standeth ready to devour our child, but it shall not be! The blood of the slaughtered saints is adjudged and avenged! The second seal is opened; the red horse is come in his power to take peace from the earth, when the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondsman, and every freeman, hide themselves in the dens and the rocks of the mountains, from the wrath of the Lamb!”

“Yea, brother,” said Cromwell, gravely; “the day is nigh, when, as in Revelations, it shall be said, the kingdoms of the world are become the Lord’s, and he shall reign for ever and ever!”

“We shall give an example to last for ever to-day,” said Ireton. “Were the king as dear to me as he is hateful, as near as he is distant, my own life bound up with his, I would not grudge him to the scaffold to make the English people free for ever, as we shall to-day!”

A ray of light shone over the features of Ireton, which contrasted strongly with the gloom into which Cromwell’s had now relapsed.

“Where is this hangman of yours, Axtel?—is he experienced in death?—I would not have him put to pain!” he said, hastily, without looking at Ingulph, but conscious of his presence.

“He beheaded Strafford and Laud—both neat jobs,” replied Axtel, smiling. “He has had his own neck twice in the rope, and has the skill by inheritance, for his father was hangman before him.”

“Then there needs nothing but the axe; we should have the broad execution-axe from the Tower,” said Cromwell. “It is of proved steel, and I do hear severed the fair neck of this man’s grandmother, the Scottish Mary. That Elizabeth was a brave spirit—being royal herself—to set so little store on royal blood!”

“We shall soon discern if it be richer crimson—this royal gore—than all that hath been poured over the land to keep it so!” said Ireton.

“Write your own warrant, Master Dethewarre; we will sign it,” said Cromwell, suddenly turning to Ingulph, and then averting his eyes with a deep sigh.

Ingulph deliberately took a pen which stood with other writing materials on a little table at hand, and wrote the order with perfect steadiness. Whilst thus engaged, Ireton made many questions as to how he had posted his soldiers, which he answered with the same preternatural coolness. But while occupied in this task, the party was increased by the arrival of the executioner.

He was a short-set, powerfully-made man, with a parting of the upper lip, which gave him a peculiarly bloodthirsty expression. He wore a blue woollen doublet, and wide leathern hose, very greasy and mended with shapeless patches of various stuffs. For an executioner, his manner was little answerable, for he trembled all over, his knees knocked together, and he was deadly pale.

“What ails the rogue?” said Cromwell, with a contemptuous stare. “In troth, ’tis enough to put ruth out of fashion, when the hangman feels it! How now, fellow, dar’st not earn the best day’s wage thou hast ever yet received?”

“God forgive me, your honour, but I dare not do it!” replied the executioner, tremulously. “Mine arm would fail me when I raised the axe; I should but haggle him! I pray your honours pardon me; the people will not like that I should strike him often.”

“The very hangman infected too!” muttered Cromwell to Ireton. “Well, sirrah, what dost thou fear?—a king’s neck is no broader than a knave’s; nay, the gentle bloods do pride themselves on slender and shapely ones! Didst thou not behead Strafford?”

“Yea, my lord; but he was but an earl, and the people did shout for joy when I did it, and wished me well through my work,” replied the man.

“The people!—that was a work acceptable to men, but this to angels!” exclaimed Harrison.

“Thirty pounds is the fee,” said Ireton.

“Troth, no—more or less—but it shall not be thirty!” said Cromwell, sharply.

“I could not, my lord, for a hundred thousand!—mine arm would stiffen into wood as I raised the axe!” said the executioner, dolefully. “But I have a comrade who will share the pay with me and do the deed, and I will help him as far as I may in holding up the hair, and such like, and I will lend him my tackle, an’ it please you.”

“And who is this bolder comrade of thine?” said Cromwell, looking suspiciously at the man.

“He bade me whisper his name only, my lord,” replied the hangman, creeping up to Cromwell, who repulsed him with a gesture of horror. But after an instant’s thought, he suffered him to approach. The hangman then whispered a word, at which Cromwell seemed surprised.

“Master Stonehenge vouches for his skill!” he said, musingly. “But the main thing is that he have a stout heart; send for him, we will make trial of his art.”

“Prithee on whom, general?” said Ireton, with a strange glance at Ingulph.

“Nay, on a billet of wood, or some such matter!” replied Cromwell, sternly. “And now, ’tis full time the criminal were here. Are you ready, Dethewarre?”

“I am ready,” replied the young colonel, with a start.

“I see thou art, and I am glad of it,” said Cromwell, with another deep sigh. “Verily, we are fallen on wonderful providences, that an army, usually the prop and stay of tyrannical princes, should be the means of bringing this tyrant to justice, against the will of the people he has oppressed! Do not stir your soldiers, Dethewarre: I have seen—they are admirably placed. Axtel will accompany you with a guard of partizans from my own regiment, which I have myself selected on the service.”

Ingulph bowed, but the intelligence was far from pleasing to him.

“To what part of the palace shall we bring him? To your presence here?” said Axtel.

“No, no, I will not see him—nor would the lord general,” said Cromwell, hurriedly; and he added, with a troubled smile, “Dethewarre knows where to stow him—in his own apartments—’tis too cold a day to keep a man standing in the open air.”

“Let us go, then!” exclaimed Ingulph, breathing hard between his teeth.

“But harkye, Axtel!—both!—do ye hear?—suffer no man to have private speech with him!” said Cromwell, his eye dwelling earnestly on Ingulph. “I would not that any man should do his soul that wrong, to give him any earthly hope—for I swear by the living God, that either his head or mine rolls on the block ere sunset, and all the hopes and projects of our enemies are as dust in the desert whirling against the wind!”

Ingulph made no reply, but handed the warrant for the delivery of the king’s person to Cromwell, who rapidly signed it.

CHAPTER LXX.

AXTEL and Colonel Dethewarre left the palace by way of the scaffold, on their important errand. It was an amazing spectacle to behold the immense masses which had now gathered. The whole park seemed paved with faces; and Ingulph's courage, or rather hopes, rekindled, when he remembered that of that vast multitude, only the armed guards desired the consummation of the deed, which he had conspired to prevent.

The guard of partizans was already at St. James's, and the two officers proceeded thither on foot. The exceeding agitation and pressure of the crowd showed that they understood what was taking place, and all eyes watched the progress of Ingulph's stalwart figure along the line with intense interest. The confusion became so great that it was with difficulty the soldiers kept their posts, and great uproar ensued, the mob being so firmly wedged that they could not fall back even when the horsemen urged their steeds almost upright on the haunches against them.

"Master Dethewarre, for old acquaintance sake, let me stand here!" exclaimed a female voice, which Ingulph thought he recollected; and glancing round, he perceived Madam Tomkins, very shabbily attired, whom a soldier was amusing himself in menacing with his drawn sword, to make her descend from a position she had achieved on a hillock of rubbish.

"I'd thank you, at all events, neighbour, to take your elbows out of my ribs!" said another female, against whom she was driven. Ingulph recognised Mistress Chaloner, much fatter, but still handsome, and gaily bedizened.

"Let these widows into the ranks—but none other," he said, passing hastily. "They surely have some right to see the spectacle."

"And surely so have I, for I predicted it last year in my almanac; all of ye remember the figures in my eclipse?" said Lilly, who was near; but the officers took no notice of him, and passed on.

In the inner square of St. James's they found Cromwell's picked troops drawn up and awaiting them.

The commander at the palace examined their warrant, and

immediately signified that he resigned the custody of the king's person to them. To baffle any suspicion, and fearing that his agitation might overcome him, Ingulph sent Hacker to announce their arrival. But he gave him the fatal ring which Stonehenge had bestowed upon him, with orders to deliver it to the king from a faithful person, who desired to present his majesty with a last mark of duty and attachment.

Hoping that the king would perceive a meaning in this message which he did not dare otherwise to communicate, Ingulph and his attendants remained in the court-yard.

After a short pause the condemned monarch appeared. He was dressed with even more than his usual care, and wore the broad blue riband of the Garter, and that ornament itself on his knee, elaborately wrought in diamonds. His countenance was sorrowful, but perfectly composed, and with its habitual expression of hauteur. The venerable Juxon, in full pontificals, Bible in hand, walked beside him, and the faithful Herbert followed, tottering, seeming to be lost in grief.

Charles's eye seemed to seek out Ingulph, and a slight flush visited his pale features when he recognised him. Ingulph, who felt that his presence ought to be an assurance of some good intended, stepped forward with a face whose eager expression did all but utter his thoughts. But the king shook his head, and smiled with exceeding mournfulness. Nevertheless, he bade the officers cheerfully good morrow. With some vague hope to give the king an idea of what was to happen, Ingulph hastened towards him, and dropped on one knee to show the warrant. Charles bent over him, as if to read it, and whispered in a tone inaudible to all but the person addressed: "Be firm—I know all your plot—but so does Cromwell! It is foiled, Stonehenge has betrayed all: speak to Herbert, he will explain!"

Observing, then, that he continued to kneel as if rooted to the ground, the king turned to Herbert, and desired him to bring his silver clock with him, and moved on with Juxon, between Hacker and Axtel.

How he came there, Ingulph scarcely knew, but he found himself walking after the partizans that guarded the king, and arm-in-arm with Herbert, over the park.

Herbert spoke to him securely, for it was impossible to hear any but the closest discourse. The moment the gleam of partizans was discerned, the uproar of drums, trumpets, and confused exclamation of the vast multitude, made a noise resembling the sea and shrouds in a storm.

The terrible truth was soon made known to Ingulph. Stonehenge had merely feigned to join in his plot to hinder him from forming any other, the success of which he might not be able to prevent. He had informed Cromwell of all, and measures were adopted to foil the whole conspiracy. But, out of humanity both to Dethewarre and the king, the plot and its failure had been communicated to the latter, with information that if Ingulph abstained from any farther demonstration, this attempt should not be inquired into. During Ingulph's absence at St. James's, under pretext of some alarm in the city, his regiment was removed from the guard around the scaffold, and dispatched thither. From these circumstances, the king was convinced of his innocence of all knowledge of the detention of De la Pole, and ascribed it to Stonehenge's mad malice, or Cromwell's duplicity.

Meanwhile the procession advanced, and so lost in dreamy horror was Ingulph, that he did not notice that, instead of entering at the great entrance to Whitehall, they crossed a little garden which led to Holbein's tower. Its highest roofs and the windows were black with gazers.

Ingulph's first distinct recollection was hearing the monarch say, as he entered his palace for the last time,—“They promised to bring me home to Whitehall, a glorious king—and here I am!”

“And a glorious king, sire, you are,” replied Juxon, mournfully, “leaving a crown on earth to assume a more glorious and everlasting one in heaven.”

“Master Prynne, 'tis well you have lost your ears, or the noise would stun ye!” said a ragged cavalier soldier to a person who stood near him.

“I did not think to need them on such a day as this, when I lost them!” replied Prynne. “And would I had rather lost my head at the time than lived to see a violated covenant with God himself!”

“Let us hope, neighbour, let us hope!” said Bulstocke, pushing through the crowd, closely attended by a swarm of his stalwart armourers. “Come, my lads, let us get nearer, and have a finger in the pie, whether 'tis served hot or cold.”

Charles and his attendants had now entered the palace, by the gateway under the tower, and Ingulph comprehended how utterly all was lost when he found himself following the dense guard around the king into the picture-gallery, which he had left so snugly barred. Now it was filled with Harrison's soldiers.

Charles paused repeatedly in passing down the gallery, to look at some favourite picture, and sighed once or twice audibly as he passed through the scenes of his former magnificence. But his firmness never for a moment deserted him, though he glanced occasionally with compassion and tenderness at Ingulph's lost expression of horror.

The grand staircase was densely occupied by soldiers; and on reaching the base, a select band, with drawn swords, consisting of the officers of Cromwell's regiment, awaited to accompany the monarch to his apartment. At this point Juxon fell back a little, and, in a whisper, informed Ingulph that the king dreaded to speak with him would disturb him too much, now that it was necessary for him to fix his thoughts altogether on eternity; but he desired to see and embrace him on his way to the scaffold.

Ingulph was tongue-tied, but he nodded vacantly assent; and yet, when the king turned to the right towards his apartments, he wildly darted to the closed door on the left. He threw it open—a detachment of Ireton's regiment occupied it. Amidst these he beheld two persons whom he could not doubt were the executioner and his assistant. Both wore masks, but the chief had a long grizzled beard, and seemed to be leaning in meditation on the large glittering axe which he was to wield.

It was the voice of Stonehenge which spoke to him from that mask, inquiring in a calm, perfectly rational, and composed manner, if his majesty had arrived.

Ingulph had almost forgotten his own purpose and meaning; but the sound of the voice recalled both. He replied with seemingly perfect composure in the affirmative, and inquired of one of the officers, where he might find the lord general with the tidings. The officer immediately replied that he had returned to his own apartments in the palace.

It was at least a quarter of an hour's journey to the lord general's quarters; but Ingulph had his resources. He hastened to the scaffold—found fault with some of the arrangements—and directed workmen to be sent for to alter them. He then quietly observed to Axtel that the execution must be delayed for a short time, and desired him to send to offer the king refreshments. This he thought would be a hint to delay as much as possible; and he hastened on to the lord general's lodgings.

Almost the first person he encountered was Lady Fairfax,

rushing distractedly to the head of the staircase, as soon as she heard his voice.

"All is lost!" she exclaimed. "It is not an hour since Lady De la Pole was seized, and removed a prisoner—no man knows whither!"

"It is nothing!—where is the general?" exclaimed Dethe-warre, madly.

"He is in the great gallery—he promised me to be there after the king had arrived!"

"Villains—and they have sent me here!" exclaimed Ingulph, darting away, and in less time than it seemed possible, he had returned to the palace.

Traversing the intermediate space with the speed of lightning, Ingulph was rushing through the banqueting-hall when some one plucked him by the cloak, and Peters appeared.

"Why, how is this, master colonel?—Deem you that 'tis some suckling lamb about to be offered?" he said. "There ought to be staples in the scaffold, to bind him down if he resists; and there are none!"

"Staples!—truly, I had forgotten it; 'tis a point of great importance," said Ingulph. "Send for the joiners again—I will direct them. But be in no hurry!—I shall return in an instant!"

And he rushed on.

But the lord general was not in the gallery! He inquired with such distraction for him, that the soldiers imagined something had gone wrong, and he was obliged to answer a torrent of questions, ere he learned that Fairfax was in the oriel chamber, near the banqueting-hall.

The thought struck him that there was a formed contrivance to baffle him, but he hurried back, and gave directions to Axtel not to proceed until he himself brought the lord general's command. Crossing the hall, he met a lugubrious company, all in deep mourning, bearing a leaden coffin; and he calmly desired them to set it down, so that the king might not perceive it on his arrival. Then, hastening on, he came to the oriel chamber, entered it with no ceremony—and there, indeed, he found the lord general, but with him also Cromwell and Harrison.

"What news?—where is the king? Is he arrived?" exclaimed Fairfax, starting up with a look which seemed to expect far different tidings from those which Ingulph brought.

"The king is arrived!—the king is in murderous clutches!" he replied.

“Methought, from his amazed manner—the king had escaped!” said Cromwell, with a troubled smile.

“My lord, is not this your commission?—Did you not appoint me to command the king’s guard?” exclaimed Ingulph.

“My commission!—truly, yes, it is mine,—what of that?—You have not dared to let the king escape?” exclaimed Fairfax, exceedingly agitated.

“Then vindicate your authority, which is usurped by officers inferior not only to you, my lord, but to me,” said Ingulph; “Axtel has dared to remove my troops, and to put others in their stead, and utterly to change my arrangements, so that it were dangerous to attempt executing the sentence to-day.”

“Has Axtel—Axtel!—dared to do this?” said Fairfax, with sudden firmness. “I will know by whose authority; some one bring him hither, and meanwhile the execution must be delayed! Heaven knows what plots may be tram-melling!”

“We are not hurried—there is air enough for us all to breathe,” said Cromwell, sedately. “Axtel is not to blame; all that is done was done at my command.”

Fairfax glanced at his formidable lieutenant with mingled fear and surprise.

“We will have him before your excellency, to certify what I am saying,” continued Cromwell, opening the door and speaking to a sentinel. “Go and tell Axtel to hasten hither,—my lord would see him.” And he returned into the chamber, closed the door, and leaned with folded arms against it.

“What ails you, Master Cromwell?—I would know!” said Fairfax, with evident anxiety.

“The Lord knows, we are all of us victims of calumny, and how our whitest and most innocent acts are blackened!” said Cromwell, after a short pause. “He—only—knows whether it is true or false, calumny or verity, an enemy’s lie or a friendly truth, but these are not times when the shadow of danger may be disregarded, as if the substance were afar off. But this it was assured to me, and your excellency will forgive if your own honourable family be named in this monstrous plot and conspiracy, to which we had nigh all of us fallen victims!”

Fairfax grew pale, and Cromwell proceeded, with the infinite tautology and circumlocution for which he was renowned, when he wished to hide or delay his meaning, to relate the

whole circumstances of the plot, which he said were revealed to him by the gold-merchant Stonehenge.

Ingulph listened with a disdainful smile; but he was not dissatisfied with the delay which so long a narrative entailed, for any moment might produce a favourable chance. He even availed himself of the doubt which Cromwell laboured to throw over his own story, from an evident desire to allow him a loophole of evasion.

“Stonehenge is a frantic madman!” he exclaimed. “Was it right or justice to condemn me unheard, on a madman’s accusation?”

At this moment a strange doleful murmur and trampling of numerous feet was heard in the hall below.

“Stonehenge is a madman—we all know it!” said Fairfax, eagerly. “No man will believe such a tale! The army—as if my own wife!—deem you I keep no better order in my house than to let women mingle in such high matters? Colonel Dethewarre, I restore you to your office!—go and see it—see all that is due performed.”

“My lord, no!—it is true, there is such a plot!—it will be at imminent peril of a bloody massacre if you adventure to put this merciless decree in force to day!” exclaimed Ingulph, frantically. “I do confess it—stop the execution, or a direful slaughter must ensue!”

“What is the meaning of this?—You confess it?” said Fairfax, staring amazedly. “Why, why—Master Cromwell, I say—if this plot,—I say, if there is a conspiracy—the streets running in blood—the grand delinquent—his majesty—is it fitting that so much innocent blood should be shed to shed one criminal’s?”

“Let us seek the Lord!” exclaimed Harrison, ecstatically; “He alone can enlighten us; and never did I feel my soul so full of prayer as now; let us seek the Lord!”

“My lord general, ’tis for you to prevent this piteous massacre, or go down to your grave burdened with all the blood of it!” cried Ingulph, distractedly. “Oh, if there be one drop of noble blood in your veins, save the king! if one spark of religion, keep the covenant! If you be a man—if you be a gentleman—you have sworn it, you have sworn it!”

“The king remembered your nobility but little that day he spurned you on the heath near York, kneeling to him though you were in the dust,” said Cromwell, as the general turned imploringly to him. “The man cared less for your

humanity when he devoted your father's head and your own to all the penalties of treason ! ”

There was a pause, during which a confused murmur, very remote, was audible, which instantly died away.

“ Babylon submits !—all is well ! ” exclaimed Harrison, in a delirium of enthusiasm. “ Now let them sing the song ; now let the angel of the sun shout aloud ; the vials of the wrath of God are empty ; the scarlet woman, drunk with the blood of the saints, is fallen ; the kingdom is redeemed from the beast ; let the great voice rend the heavens again, saying : It is done !—Now, O Lord, now let the new Jerusalem descend from heaven on the earth ! Let the walls of jasper, and sapphire, and chalcedony, and emerald, and sardonyx, and sardius, and chrysolite, and beryl, and topaz, and chryso-prasus, and jacinth, and amethyst, blaze out, and the glory of the Lord extinguish the sun, and there be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, neither any more pain ; for the former things are past away ; and I hear the voice shouting—Behold, I make all things new ! ”

Harrison flung himself on his knees, clasping the hands of Fairfax, in an ecstasy of enthusiasm ; and Fairfax, as the readiest means of escaping from his perplexity, knelt too. At the same moment Cromwell's visage seemed to lighten over with delirious excitement, and throwing himself down beside them, he exclaimed—“ Yea, yea, let the lightnings be visible on Sinai, since they will not believe without it. Lord, is it thy will that this whole nation perish, or but one man ? ”

As he spoke the door flew open, and Axtel rushed abruptly in.

“ All is well ! ” he exclaimed. “ He is on the scaffold, and not a breath is heard against it ! ”

“ Our prayer is answered ! ” exclaimed Cromwell, leaping up.

“ They cannot, they dare not, they shall not ! ” shouted Ingulph, desperately ; but as he rushed forward, Axtel, Harrison, and the sentinels at the door darted against him, and seized him in an overpowering grasp. After a vain but furious struggle of some moments, he suddenly yielded.

“ I submit—all is lost ; but let me see him ere he dies ; let me but obtain his forgiveness, or my soul is lost for ever ! ” he exclaimed, distractedly, turning to Cromwell, who gazed at him for a moment in silence.

“ Swear to me that you will attempt no disturbance ;—for

I tell you, the guard around the scaffold have orders to sweep it with their musketry on the least symptom of resistance—and Ireton commands!" said he.

"I swear—I swear!" repeated the agonized victim.

"Give me your pistols." He surrendered them.

"Cock yours, Axtel; your sword!" He unsheathed and threw it away.

"Now, Axtel, walk beside him! On the least return of this madness, use your pistol," said the lieutenant, sternly. "And now go! For me, I will seek the Lord's will only in prayer." And covering his face with his hands, he resumed his kneeling posture, while Ingulph, closely guarded by Axtel, left the chamber—or rather burst out of it.

CHAPTER LXXI.

AN EXECUTION—OR—A MARTYRDOM?

AWARE that all further resistance was sheer madness, in the serenity of utter despair, Ingulph hastened to the banqueting-hall. All the windows were stemmed with gazers, many of them women in vizards; it was crowded with soldiers, whose partizans kept a clear way to the fatal window. Ingulph even afterwards remembered that he looked vacantly up and noticed the ceiling glowing with all the splendours of the pencil of Rubens, and representing the apotheosis of James I.

But the tragedy was not yet consummated—the coffin was still there untenanted. Ingulph hurried on; he reached the scaffold, and stood for a moment in a state of dreamy stupefaction.

The king was on the point of concluding the long and calm harangue with which he vindicated his conduct on the scaffold, appealing thence to posterity.

"I have delivered my conscience," he said. "I pray God that you do take those courses that are best for the good of the kingdom, and your own salvation."

Juxon then spoke. "Though it be very well known what your majesty's affections are to the Protestant religion," he said, "yet it may be expected that you should say something for the world's satisfaction in that particular?"

"I thank you very heartily, my lord, for that; I had almost forgotten it," replied Charles, with a slight smile; and turning to the people, he said, in a raised voice, "In troth, sirs, my conscience in religion I think is very well known to all the world; and therefore I declare before you all, that I die a Christian according to the profession of the Church of England, as I found it left me by my father; and this honest man I think will witness it."

He turned again to the officers in attendance, and his eye fell on Ingulph with an expression of extreme pity and surprise.

"Sirs, excuse me for this same, I have a good cause, and I have a gracious God; I will say no more," he continued, to Hacker. "Take care they do not put me to pain. And, sir," beckoning to Ingulph, "this, an' it please you."

He advanced like a statue in motion, until he was close beside the block.

"Take heed of the axe—it may hurt you!" he said kindly. "I owe this gentleman many kindnesses; I must bid him farewell." He then added in a whisper, inaudible to all but Ingulph—"Farewell, *my son!* I know all your efforts in my behalf—I acquit you of all share in my destruction. Keep this ring for my sake and your own; I have sufficiently recommended the bearer to all who love me." And he restored Stonehenge's ring to Ingulph, who knelt bareheaded, and could only ejaculate—

"Mercy!—forgive your murderer, father!"

"Not so, not so; but promise me never again to serve him that truly is—Cromwell!" returned the unfortunate monarch, in a low tone. But observing that Ingulph was speechless, he stooped, embraced him warmly, and with a gesture recommended him to the care of Axtel, while he himself returned calmly to the executioner.

"I shall say but very short prayers, and when I thrust out my hands . . ."

The masked executioner nodded, with a deep sigh.

The bishop now handed the king a white satin nightcap; but feeling his long grey hair, he inquired of the executioner if it would be in his way. The man made no reply, but laid down his axe, and assisted the bishop in adjusting it under the cap.

"I have a good cause, and a gracious God on my side!" he said to Juxon, smilingly, when this fearful preparation was completed.

“There is but one stage more,” replied Juxon; “which, though turbulent and troublesome, yet it is a very short one; you may consider it will soon carry you a very great way; it will carry you from earth to heaven; and there you will find, to your great joy, the prize you hasten to—a crown of glory!”

“I go from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown, where no disturbance can be, no disturbance in the world,” said Charles, mournfully, as if retracing in his mind the turbulent events of his career.

“You are exchanged from a temporal to an eternal crown. A good exchange!” replied the bishop.

“Is my hair well?” said Charles, turning to the executioner. He nodded.

Taking off his collar and insignia of the Garter, the king then handed it to Juxon, saying the remarkable and ominous word which has ever since puzzled posterity—

“Remember!”

Charles glanced at the block and the loose staples.

“You must set it fast,” he observed.

“It is fast, sir,” replied the executioner. Charles looked at him for a moment, but the impenetrable mask baffled his scrutiny.

“Knight of De la Pole!” he then said, in a low tone, “it might have been a little higher!”

“It can be no higher, sir!” said the assistant executioner, observing that his master made no reply.

By this time, Axtel, surprised at Dethewarre’s making no effort to rise from his kneeling position, shook him violently; and startled him from a kind of insensibility rather of mind than body. He arose—and mechanically obeying the gestures of Axtel—followed him off the scaffold. But as they entered the banqueting-hall, a low deep universal sigh was heard gradually rising among the mob—he glanced back—an axe arose gleaming in the wintry sunbeam, which shone out for an instant—and fell—with the same vast and universal sigh accompanying its fall. The object of so many loves and hates—a moment before instinct with wrongs, and woes, and passions, evil and good, lay there, senseless, thoughtless, silent, bleeding, dead!

Ingulph staggered on, still guided by Axtel—he knew not whither—and almost simultaneously with the descent of the blow, the multitude were dispersed in every direction by a sudden and masterly movement of the encompassing troops.

Axtel hurried him on, apparently with some purpose, but

he himself had none. They entered the great gallery, and the first person whom they met—at least whom Ingulph recognised—was Lord Fairfax.

“How is the king?—where is he?” exclaimed the lord general, in a voice full of horror.

“He is murdered!” replied Ingulph, calmly; and Fairfax hurried out of the chamber.

Axtel now hastened with his prisoner, as he might be called, to the opposite end of the gallery, and there was Cromwell, alone, pacing up and down, but outwardly very calm.

“Dethewarre!” exclaimed he, as the young man approached; but no reply was made.

“Master Dethewarre!” he continued, in a moved tone, “I will be plain with you; I have suffered you to do all that could clear your conscience of this man’s death; but he is gone. Therefore it behoves you now cheerfully to resolve to share your country’s glorious fate with us—or to relinquish it for ever!”

“Are you absolute sultan in England in place of the slaughtered king?” shouted Ingulph, with wild defiance.

“Lady De la Pole is in the conspiracy—would you bring her to the block?” said Cromwell. “She is now in Montacute’s vessel—all of you quit England together, or none.”

“And Lord De la Pole?” gasped Ingulph.

“Again, I tell you, I know nothing of him; but if so plotting a head comes within my grasp!”—said Cromwell; but suddenly breaking off, he continued—“A short exile will soften all your prejudices—your wounds are too green now. Whenever your ancient patriotism returns—whenever you feel inclined to assist me in making this land of England the greatest on the face of the earth—return.”

The lieutenant then folding his arms with a slight sigh, gave a signal to Axtel, who, followed by a guard of partizans, was about to hasten away with his prisoner, who, after an instant’s hesitation, submitted. But as he turned to follow his conductors, Bulstocke and the Water-Poet suddenly appeared pushing a way up to the lieutenant.

Their business was soon explained. Taylor had discovered a letter in the clothes left by De la Pole behind him on his disappearance, which proved to be an invitation from the wife of Stonehenge to the unfortunate nobleman to visit her once more—to take an eternal farewell in the old tower. Her husband, she assured him, was absent, and would not return

until long after their meeting could be over. There was little doubt that De la Pole had accepted the invitation, partly from a lingering feeling of attachment, and partly because he wished to secure a place of concealment for the king. There was consequently almost assurance that he had been murdered, or was unlawfully detained there.

The marquis of Montacute, who had been seized and was detained a prisoner at the old palace, which was found completely desolate, now sent to demand the interference of the lieutenant, for the tower was found so securely locked and barricaded that it was impossible to enter it.

“Master Bulstocke is a magistrate—go and aid with your military, Axtel,” replied the lieutenant, much disturbed by this intelligence. “I trust it will turn out that your suspicions are ill-grounded.”

The recollection that if De la Pole was Stonehenge’s prisoner—that he was about to return to his dwelling with the yet reeking axe in his hand, occurred to Ingulph, and roused him effectually from his stupor. He mentioned the access to the tower by the ruins; but Axtel replied that Master Stonehenge had busied himself the whole of the previous night in destroying all communication.

At the lieutenant’s suggestion, or rather command, Axtel now hurried away with his prisoner, Bulstocke, Taylor, and a file of soldiers, to the old palace, by way of the gardens. They met the marquis in a state of frenzied despair, hurrying along with his capturers to the same point.

Ingulph led the way, as one best acquainted with it; and after some fruitless efforts to obtain an entrance peacefully, the gates of the old tower were forced open by the soldiery. They rushed up the stairs with hearts thickly beating and in silence.

It was drawing to night, and as they passed the crossbow slits in the walls, the dreary winter sun might be seen setting over the melancholy waves of the river, with a dun and sanguinary glow, suiting the close of such a day. Ascending the stairs, the sudden gleam of a torch on their faces made all start back, and not without reason, for Stonehenge appeared, still in the garb he had worn at the execution, still with the bloody axe in his hand, and followed by the mulatto.

“Who, who is this?” exclaimed Montacute, aghast.

“My name is—Vengeance!” replied the madman, with an air of supernatural dignity. “From the beginning of time I was commissioned to my task; it is over now—and eternal

rest is my reward!—Be not afraid!—This is a king's blood; none meaner shall stain it. I have slaughtered the friend of my youth—the son of mine enemy I have not—touched.” And he laughed till all the chambers of the lofty tower re-echoed.

“Monster!—and a monstrous deed have you done!” said Montacute. “Know this to thy perdition, 'twas I that deceived ye both—deceived thy sister in that fatal marriage which drove her to despair—but the friend of thy youth was wholly innocent!”

Stonehenge gazed at him for an instant with evident flashes of sanity lighting up his benighted intellect. The axe fell from his hand.

“Ashtaroth! liar! thou hast deceived me!” he yelled aloud. “Power of evil, where is my rest? Well, let the sacrifice be completed; seek your son, Montacute, he is a prisoner above.”

He threw a bunch of keys, as he spoke, to the marquis, and as they hastened past him he bowed courteously to each with a distracted smile, which seemed as if reason was at last utterly extinguished.

The explorers hastened on; they reached the laboratory. In the madness of his hurry Montacute broke the key in the door. He shouted his son's name—a deep prolonged silence answered, and then they all applied their strength together, and the door was forced open with such violence that it fell down all of a piece.

They rushed in—and what a sight was there!—Seated in the iron chair in which Ingulph had formerly been secured, was the corpse of De la Pole—the handsome, the witty, the daring, the licentious De la Pole—a corpse! There was no wound upon him, nor other mark of violence; it seemed that he had perished of famine; and close beside him—as if she had sunk down in death from a last embrace—lay the dead, but still beautiful, form of Ramona!

While Montacute shrieked aloud, and the rest stood gazing in mute horror, a dense volume of smoke suddenly filled the chamber, and the mulatto burst wildly in, distractedly exclaiming that Stonehenge had set the building on fire; that he had driven him upstairs to perish with them in the flames.

Axtel and his soldiers ran out pell-mell; only Ingulph and Montacute remained, the latter distractedly endeavouring to remove his son's body from the fatal chair. Bright tongues of flame darted in at the door, and Stonehenge appeared ap-

proaching amidst the flames, and flourishing his bright axe. Not a moment was to be lost. Remembering the exit by means of the ruins, Ingulph tore the marquis away with him, and rushed thither, passing Stonehenge. But he offered no obstruction, uttering a loud frantic laugh, for he probably imagined he had destroyed all means of escape in that direction; but a body of soldiers with ladders had been dispatched by the lieutenant to obtain an entry in that way, if the attempt on the opposite failed. Ingulph and the marquis were rescued at imminent peril from a narrow fragment of masonry, and but just in time; for although the massive stonework of the walls resisted the flames, within they raged fiercely as a furnace among the ancient chambers, which were chiefly of wood.

Assistance now thronged in on all sides, but it was found impossible to extinguish the flames until the interior of the tower was utterly consumed, the walls and roof being only blackened by their action. No trace of Stonehenge, nor of either of his unhappy victims, excepting the axe with which he was last seen, was ever discovered. No information beyond the conjectures of the survivors ever explained the dismal catastrophe, for whether the mulatto perished or not in the flames, the most diligent exertions never ascertained what had become of him. In the printed accounts of the day, the conflagration was ascribed to the malice of the cavaliers, who desired to involve their sovereign's palace in his destruction. No mention is made of the living and the dead who found a sepulchre together in the fierce element, probably to conceal a black tragedy, the divulging of which at the time would have done little good, and would have inflicted superfluous anguish on the survivors of the enormous vengeance of the knight of De la Pole.

To the original MS. there is a note added in a different hand, and dated somewhere about the commencement of the 18th century, which, containing all the information relating to the actors in this chronicle whose fates are not recorded by history, which we have been enabled to gather, we have briefly extracted. The writer professes to be a Catholic priest, chaplain in the family of the Earl De la Pole, son of the Ingulph Dethewarre of the narrative, and of the widow of the

son of the most noble the lord marquis of Montacute, who so unhappily perished by a dolorous accident on the day when his most royal and sacred master was decapitated.

It appeared that when abroad (for he never returned to England until that blessed event of the restoration of his late most excellent Majesty, King Charles the Second), the young exile was restored to the forfeited honours of his grandfather, Earl De la Pole, and resided on the estates in France left him by the marquis of Montacute, on his decease in 1652, with the condition only that he should wed the widow of his unfortunate son. Both the earl and his countess, during their long residence abroad, were reconciled to the holy apostolic Catholic faith, and professed it with unabated perseverance during all the subsequent annoyance and persecution suffered by those who professed the ancient religion in England. It is believed that the earl, shortly after the death of his wife, and the revolution of 1688, overwhelmed with disgust of the world, and tormented by the too nice scruples of his conscience, retired to a monastery of Carthusian monks, resigning all his riches and honours to his only son and heir,—“my present most honourable lord and patron,” says the annotator.

Of the Bulstocke family, all that is authentically known is, that on learning the king's destruction, and the consequent utter breaking of the covenant, Tribulation was so strongly affected that she died within a few minutes after the information had reached her; whence the learned Salmasius takes occasion—but the learned Salmasius's book is extant.

THE END.





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