

POETRY.

THE SOLITARY.

Wan and weary—waiting, longing
For the shelter of the tomb;
Joys and fears his bosom thronging,
Smiles the realms of sorrow wronging,
Peace in league with settled gloom.

O'er the heath now wildly straying,
Winding thro' the thickset wood,
Hastening now; and now delaying;
Gazing, sighing, quick'ning, staying—
—Staying, rapt in solemn mood.

—Ishmael!—ah! 'tis he rejected,
And by all the world cast off;
Prey to grief, forlorn, afflicted;
Comfortless, distressed, dejected—
Every stranger's scorn and scoff.

World give up the life you borrow—
—For thy transitory doom,
Drooping spirit, cease to sorrow—
See! unveil'd, a brighter morrow,
Clothed in light, beyond the tomb!

SECRETS OF CABALISM.

[Concluded.]

"I am a fool," said Ravenstone to himself, "and worse than a fool, to heed how this wanton giglet may be made fit for a knave's bribe,—and yet that this dull bigot, this surly and selfish drone, should have such glimpses of a poet's paradise, is a wonder worth envying. I have heard and seen men in love with Platonic superstition under the hot skies of Spain, where the air seems as if it was the breathing of kind spirits, and the waters are bright enough for their dwelling; but here!—in this foggy island—in this old man's dark head and iron heart!—I will see what familiar demon stoops to hold converse with such a sorcerer."

And young Ravenstone locked himself in his chamber, not ill pleased that his better purpose would serve a covert and gilding for his secret passion to pry into his patron's mystery. He arrayed his person in the apparel he had provided to equip him as Gardiner's representative; and while he threw it over the close pourpoint and tunic which fitted his comely figure, he smiled in scorn as he remembered the ugliness and decrepitude he meant to counterfeit. At the eleventh hour, when the darkness of the narrow streets, interrupted only by a few lanterns swinging above his head, made his passage safe, he admitted himself into the bishop's house by the private postern, of which he kept a master key. By the same key's help he entered the chamber, and ringing his patron's silver bell, gave notice to the page in waiting that his presence was needful. When this confidential servant entered, he was not surprised to see, as he supposed, the bishop seated behind his leather screen, muffled in his huge rochet, or lawn garment, as if he had privately returned from council according to his custom. "Hast no messenger arrived from the court?" said the counsellor prelate. "None, my lord, for the queen, they say, is sore sick"—"Tarry not an instant if one cometh, and see that the marshal of the compter be waiting here to take my warrant, and execute it at his peril before day break." The page retired; and Ravenstone, now alone, saw the coffer standing on its solitary pedestal near him. It was unlocked, and he found within it only a deep silver bowl with a chain poised exactly in its centre. Ravenstone was no stranger to the mode of divination practised with such instruments.* What could he risk by suspend-

*A follower of Roger Bacon practised this mode, and pretended the ring would give such answers as the celebrated Brazen Head "Time is, time was, time is past." &c.

ing the signet-ring as Gardiner had requested? His curiosity prevailed, and the ring when attached to the silver chain vibrated of itself, and struck the sides of the bowl three times distinctly. He listened eagerly to its clear and deep sound, expecting some response, and when he looked up, Alice of Huntingdon stood by his side.

This woman had a queen-like stature, to which the height of her volupure, or vielled twisted in large white folds like an Asiatic turban, gave increased majesty. Her superlative, of a thick stuff, in those days called stammel, hung from her shoulders with that ample flow which distinguishes the drapery of a Dian in ancient sculpture. "You summoned me," she said, "and I attend you."

Ravenstone though he believed himself sporting with the superstition of Gardiner as with a fool, felt started by her sudden appearance; and a thrill of the same superstitious awe he had mocked in his patron passed through his own blood. But he recollected his purpose and his disguise; and still keeping the cowering attitude which befitted the bishop, he replied, "Where is thy skill in divination if thou knowest not what I need?"

"I have studied thy ruling planet," said Alice of Huntingdon, and as thy wishes are without number, so they are without a place in thy destiny. But I have read the signs of Mary Tudor's, and I know which of her high officers will lose his staff this night."

"Knowest thou the marks of his visage, Alice?" asked the counterfeit bishop, bending down his head, and drawing his hood still farther over it.

"Hear them," replied Alice: "a swarthy colour, hanging look, frowning brows, eyes an inch within his head, hooked nose, wide nostrils, ever snuffing the wind, a sparrow mouth, great hands, long talons rather than nails on his feet, which make him shuffle in his gait as in his actions—these are the marks of his visage and his shape—none can tell his wit, for it has all shapes. Dost thou know this portrait, my lord of Winchester?"

"Full well, woman," answered Ravenstone, "and his trust is in a witch whose blue eyes shame heaven for lending its colour to hypocrisy; and her flattery has made boys think the tree she loved and the fountain she smiled on, became holy. And now she serves two masters, one blinded by his folly, the other by his age."

Ravenstone, as he spoke, dropped the rochet hood from his shoulders, and shaking back his long jet-black hair, stood before her in the firmness and grace of his youthful figure. Alice did not shrink or recede a step. She laughed, but it was a laugh so musical, and aided by a glance of such sweet mirth, that Ravenstone relaxed the stern grasp he had laid upon her mantle. "The warrant, Alice! it is midnight, and the marshal waits—where is the warrant for John Bradford's release?"

"It is in my hand," she said, "and needs only thy sign and seal. Here is the hand-writing of our queen."

Ravenstone snatched the parchment, but did not rashly sign without unfolding it—"Thou art deceived, Alice, or willing to deceive—this is a marriage contract, investing thee with the lands of Giles Rufford as thy dowry."

"And to whom," asked she, smiling, "does my queen-mistress license me to give it by her own manual sign?"

Ravenstone looked again, and saw his own name entered, and himself described as the husband chosen for her maid of honour by queen Mary. "Has she also signed," he said, "the reprieve of John Bradford?"

"It is in my hand, and now in thy sight, Henry Ravenstone; but the seal that will save thy friend may not be placed till thou hast given sign and seal to this contract. Choose!"

The warrant for Bradford's liberation was spread before him, and her other hand held the contract of espousals. He smiled as he met the gaze of her keen blue eyes, and wrote the name of Henry Ravenstone in the blank left for it. She added her own without removing those keen eyes from his; and placing the parchment in her gipsire, suffered him to take the warrant of his friend's release. It was full and clear, but when he turned to seek the chancellor's signet-ring, the coffer had closed upon it. "Blame thyself, Ravenstone!" said Alice of Huntingdon—"thou hast laughed at the tales of imps and fairies, yet thou hadst woman's weakness enough to pry into that coffer and expect a miracle. As if thy master had not wit sufficient to devise a safe place for his ring, which thy curiosity placed there more than thy obedience! Didst thou think I came into this chamber like a sylph or an elfin, without hearing the stroke on the silver bowl which gave notice thou wast here?—Truly, Ravenstone, man's vanity is the only witch that governs him."

"Beautiful demon! when the crafty churchman who tutors thy cunning has no need of it, will thy other master, the great prince of Fire, save thee from the stake?"

"My trust is in myself," she answered; and throwing her cloak and wimple on the ground, she loosened her bright hair till it fell to her feet, waving round her uncovered shoulders, and amongst the thin blue silk that clung to her shape like wreaths of gold. Her eyes, large and brilliant as the wild leopard's, shone with such imperial beauty as almost to create the triumph they demanded. "Be no rebel to my power, Ravenstone, for it is thy safety. Gardiner has ordered Bradford's death without appeal, and feigned his dream of danger to decoy thee here! But I have earned a fair estate by serving him, and thou mayest share it with me." "Thy wages are not yet paid, Alice!" he replied, grinding his teeth—"that fair estate is mine, and that contract can avail thee nothing without my will—Henry Ravenstone is a name as false as thy promise to save Bradford." Alice paused an instant, then laughing shrilly, clapped her hands thrice. In that instant the chamber was filled with armed men, who surrounded and struck down their victim, notwithstanding his desperate defence. "This is not the bishop!" one of the men exclaimed—"this is not Stephen of Winchester—we shall not be paid for this."

"He is Giles Rufford of Huntingdon," answered his companion, the ruffian Coniers—and I am already paid." Alice would have escaped had not the length of her dishevelled hair enabled her treacherous accomplices to seize it. They twined it round her throat to stifle her cries, making her boasted beauty the instrument of her destruction. She was dragged to Newgate on a charge of sorcery, and executed the next morning by John Bradford's side, in male attire, lest her rare loveliness should excite compassion. He knew her, and looking at the laurel stems mingled with the faggots, said, as if conscious of his young friend's death—"Alas! the green tree has perished for my sake!"—It was indeed his favourite laurel, which had been hewn down with cruel malice for this purpose. The people, just even in their superstitions to a good man's memory, still believe the earth remains parched and barren where John

*Coniers and his gang confessed their guilt before the queen's council in November, 1555.

Bradford perished on the first of July 1555; and his heart, which escaped the flames, like his fellow martyr's, Archbishop Cranmer's, was embalmed and wrapt in laurel-leaves. His memory is sanctified by the religion he honoured—while Alice of Huntingdon's sunk amongst dust and ashes, as a worthy emblem of the cabalism she practised.—*European Magazine.*

PARLIAMENTARY SKETCH OF MR. CANNING.

As an orator, Mr. Canning ranks longe intervale the first to either House of Parliament. No man living has the same power to

"Make the words appear
The better reason to perplex and dash
Maturest counsels."

for no man living has the same classical beauty of head and countenance—the same insinuating earnestness of voice—the same carelessly diffused grace of manner—the same simple dignity of style and happiness of expression—the same musical collocation—the same flowing eloquence, and, when necessary, the same overwhelming vehemence of delivery. With these advantages, therefore, it is but little praise to say, that to hear him deliver an animated speech, his recent reply on the invasion of Portugal, for example, is, take it all in all, the most intellectual treat of modern times. He was on that occasion completely "thrown upon his mettle;" every word he uttered was pregnant with the most awful consequences. His countenance expressed the deepest sense of his important situation; the eyes of millions were fixed upon him with the solemn silence that precedes an earthquake; war and peace, the "war of conflicting opinions and conflicting interests," hung upon his breath—he warmed; the opposition animated him—his countenance brightened—his eyes glistened—the pride of glory sat upon his lip—his chest heaved and dilated—the Elysian spring of youth diffused itself over his frame—his stature rose above its ordinary height—his attitude became majestic—and he delivered himself with a firm and vehement earnestness of tone and manner, that to be all appreciated must have been heard; once heard, never can be forgotten. All this time, the awful responsibility of his situation invested his brow with the most unalterable serenity, and crowned the whole man with a sublime elevation of respect, that pointed to the same of acts shedding glory on himself, honour and reputation on his country.—*English paper.*

The following is said to be the origin of nine tailors making one man:—A poor beggar stopped near a tailor's shop, where nine men were at work, and craved charity; each contributed his mite, and presented the beggar with the total. The beggar went upon his knees, thanking them for the sum, and said they had made a man of him.

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