

knowing that I detest the man to whom they are about to wed me—knowing all this, I ask you, Norman Mertoun—*you, my dead mother's lover—you, who should have been my father, can you, and will you save me from these detested nuptials?*" "Evelyn, I cannot."

"Remember this, he is not dead. If he return in life and claim me, had I, not one, but twenty living husbands, I will leave all and cleave unto him only. In God's eyes he is my husband—man cannot put us asunder."

"One word, Evelyn. Is he alive?" "As God is my judge, I believe he is." "Can you prove it?" "Now, I cannot." There was a pause—a long, breathless, agonizing pause. It was broken at length, by the young girl asking, again—"Can you save me?" "Alas! he answered, I cannot." "Then I will save myself," she replied, arising to go. "But first tell me, will not a contract, signed and sealed between two parties, and the parents of those parties, suffice it to bar the solemnization of another marriage?" "If both the parties were in life, present and willing, assuredly it would." "And not otherwise?" "I fear not otherwise." "You fear?" "Alas, Evelyn. I am certain." "And were those two parties of the contract present, and willing, would you unite them, in despite of man's forbidding?" "If there was no just impediment, it were my duty to do so—I could not refuse."

"God help me, then, as I will help myself," she added. "And now, Mr. Mertoun, forget that I have visited you this morning; and, now, farewell, and God bless you, and pray for me, I do beseech you, for on the next three hours, and what in them falls out, rests all my hopes and happiness on this side of heaven."

"Farewell, my child, and may God bless you. Most surely will I pray for you, and that with my whole soul, child of my buried love—but oh! for my sake, Evelyn, and for God's sake, do nothing rashly."

"At least, she replied, I will do nothing wrongly," and she pressed her soft warm lips upon the brow of the old priest, and leaving his study without another word, hurried across the churchyard homeward.

Hour after hour passed, and still the merry peals rang gaily out from the old gray tower, and as the day wore onward towards noon, the village girls, with garlands on their heads and posies in their bosoms, might be seen gathering in a gay circle round the old arch of the village church; and the young peasantry, in all their best array, were collecting on the green without, while ever and anon, on horseback or on foot, the yeomanry of the neighbourhood and retainers of the family came thronging in to swell the jovial concourse. At length high noon clanged from the turret, and ere long on the outskirts of the crowd under the huge old oaks, the cry was heard, "they are coming!" and shortly afterwards the roll of wheels and the thick trampling of horse-hoofs announced the bridal company. A train of mounted servants in green coats, with white favours at their button holes, and in their hats, led the van, and then a choice band of the young gentry of the neighbourhood, splendidly horsed and gorgeously attired, rode gallantly along, the escort of the bride. Two of the heavy lumbering carriages of the day followed, the foremost carrying the lovely Evelyn de Lacy, with her attendant maidens, radiant in beauty, and resplendent with many veils and orange wreaths. In the second sat, *leste-a-tele*, the stern old baronet, Walter de Lacy, and the intended husband of his sweet Evelyn, the young Lord Andrew Mildmay.

And men, even the rude peasantry, muttered among themselves that it was a foul shame, and girls shuddered as they thought of the surrender, the sacrifice of a creature so pre-eminently, spiritually lovely, to so mere an animal as the Lord Andrew Mildmay. And one or two of the better classes of yeomanry said it might have been a better day for Henry Fitzosborne, had he been of the living.

"And who says he is not of the living?" cried a loud cherry voice, just as the cavalcade came up to the church gates. "Why all the world says so, Jim Fairfax," replied one of the first speakers.

"Then all the world lies!" answered the other, a fine, stout, well-made young man; "and you'll see as much ere the day be an hour older."

"Hush!—hush!—the bride!—sweet Mistress Evelyn, God bless her!"

Then rose a loud and hearty cheer, to which the fair young girl responded by a low bow of her graceful head, with color flashing crimson to brow, cheek and neck, as she mounted the steps to the church door, where the good vicar awaited her anxiously with a wondering and wistful eye. But though she had become quite pale again, no traces of that strong emotion which had so shaken her in the morning was now visible; she was the calmest, though gravest, the most self-possessed of the party. But Mertoun observed that she cast no glance towards the bridegroom, and none towards her father, as in the midst of her fair bride maidens, she ascended the old chancel overhung by the bannared trophies of her house.

And now the parties were assembled around God's holy altar, and the solemn ceremonial was commenced.

Still Evelyn's eye was calm, and her manner steady and resolute; though, as the service proceeded, the old vicar might perceive that she looked eagerly and often towards the door, round which the village throng had gathered in dense ranks. Impressed with an idea that she desired, he knew not why, to protract the time, the good man read slowly; and wonderfully impressive were the words of that most beautiful and touching ceremonial as recited by the clear and sonorous tones of Norman Mertoun's voice.

Still the ceremony proceeded; and if she had expected an interruption, none came, and Evelyn's features began to assume a wild and terrified expression.

Now he had reached the solemn adjuration, and marvelously powerful and striking was the emphasis of his voice as he pronounced aloud the words—"Let him now speak, or else hereafter forever hold his peace!"

He paused; and there was a deep and breathless silence, and every heart appeared to recoil on itself trembling and expectant.

Ere he had time to resume the ceremonial,—
"The utmost crowd had heard a sound,
Like horse's hoof on hardened ground;"

and instantly a wild and thrice repeated cheer hailed the new comer. The quick step of a clanging boot and spur on the pavement followed, the crowd opened, and in the archway, thinner and darker than he was wont to look of yore, but in full life and strength, Henry Fitzosborne, stood alone, but resolved and dauntless!

The face of Evelyn was crimson, and she clasped both her hands upon her heart, as if to quell its throbbing, but she spake not a word.

Then Norman Mertoun, foreseeing what was about to come, repeated the solemn words he had just uttered; but now with a peculiar emphasis that made every bosom thrill, that was within the reach of any human feeling.

Then, doffing his plumed hat with his left hand, and stepping one full pace forward into the body of the church, Henry Fitzosborne lifted his right hand toward heaven, and exclaimed, solemnly and slowly—

"In the name of the Most High God, I forbid it! She is my wife, before God and before man—as such I claim her!"

There was a moment of strange confusion; voices were raised angrily, and hands laid upon sword hilts, among the youthful partisans of either claimant—for now that Henry stood alive in the centre of his neighbours, he lacked not many and staunch friends—but the loud words of the baronet, commanding the priest to proceed with the service, for that the interruption was of no account and vain, overpowered all the rest.

But at the instant, as silence was restored, shaking off all her maidenly fears, Evelyn stepped a little forward from her bride-maidens, and said clearly, so that all could hear her—

"It needs not—for I say now, that which at all events I should not have said a few minutes later, I will not have Lord Andrew Mildmay for my wedded husband! Witness, all men, my words, for I was given by my father and mother, three years since, to this man, Henry Fitzosborne, as his wife; and if he hold to me, him will I have, and no other."

At the instant, Henry Fitzosborne strode forward from the door, his scabbard broadsword clanging on the pavement, and now, for the first time, all present observed that he wore a foreign uniform; and the Lord Andrew Mildmay bowing deeply to the lady, turned on his heel and moved, as if to leave the Church.

But then Sir Walter de Lacy cried out angrily—"My lord!—my lord! what mean you? Will you do my daughter this dishonour, to leave her standing at the altar?"

"Faith," replied he, not appearing to relish the idea of a contest with Fitzosborne, "I think the lady has left me, and it comports not with my dignity to press a suit on an unwilling maiden."

And, without another word, he departed from the Church followed by his friends, and taking his horse, rode sullenly away to his father's castle.

A long conversation followed in the same study of the small vicarage where Evelyn's morning visit had been paid to the good priest, and by this means it was chiefly, and it must be confessed by the disclosure of strange things which were falling out in England, that the old baronet consented to the celebration of his daughter's nuptials on the same day, with the same bridal train, in the same nuptial garb—with no change, in a word, but of the bridegroom's name to her own true love, brave and good Henry Fitzosborne.

Scarcely had they left the Church, when the Sheriff of the County, escorted by a troop of dutch dragoons, and followed by the flower of the noblemen and gentlemen of Kent, rode upon the village green, and proclaimed—James the Second having abdicated the Throne—William the third, and Mary, by the grace of God, King and Queen of Great Britain!

The same day and the same event gave happiness to Evelyn de Lacy and liberty to merry England. Long may they both enjoy the boon! Such was the prayer of all who loved and they were all who knew the lady.

HIGH, LOW, JACK AND GAME.—A number of well dressed boys were once tormenting a drunken sailor, who was in vain endeavouring to keep them off with a broken spade handle, which he was using for a club, when a gentleman called out to them, "Boys! If Jack is high, it is rather low business for you to be making game of him." Jack, whose wits were as sharp as a diamond—the principal difficulty with him seeming to be, in the lightness of his feet, or the unsteadiness of the ground under them, which made his easiest mode of progression to be on all fours—immediately responded, "Then we are even. I am high Jack to their low game. But if clubs is trumps, the dice is in me if I don't beat 'em yet, to my heart's content."

THE RULING PASSION STRONG IN DEATH.—A German being about to forfeit his life to the laws of his country, begged to be allowed his pipe that he might collect his thoughts together in his last smoke. The favour was granted to the poor fellow, but when the executioner was about to adjust the fatal rope around his neck he was requested to lay aside his pipe; this he refused to do and coolly observed; "Mine goot friend, you mint your piziness, and I will mint mine," so he kept puffing away until the drop fell. The rope broke and poor "Von Dunk" was dumped down rather unceremoniously. He was soon however on his legs again and told the officials "he relieved no pones was spoken." But, "donder and blitzen," said he "mine pipe is most tamnably smashed: get one more till the gentlemen's are rady."

AN EXCELLENT SUBSTITUTE.—An old clergyman was in the habit, as soon as he got into the pulpit, of placing his sermon in a crevice under the cushion, where he left it during the singing of the accustomed psalm. One Sunday he pushed the sermon too far back into the crevice, and lost it. When the psalm was concluded, he called the clerk to bring him a Bible. The clerk, somewhat astonished at this unusual request, brought him a Bible as he was desired. The clergyman opened it, and thus addressed his congregation:—"My brethren, I have lost my sermon; but I will read you a chapter in Job worth ten of it."

ARRIVAL OF THE CAMBRIA. GREAT BRITAIN.

The commercial and manufacturing operations of the week are of an improved and active character. The markets generally were in a healthy aspect. In most articles of produce, prices had an upward tendency. Money continued easy with a slight advance.

In the price of Cotton there is no change. Sales of the week 60,300 bales.

It appears that England has derived this year her largest importations of Wheat, and especially Flour, from France, a country whence but few supplies were anticipated. The quantity from the United States is comparatively small.

In Parliament the piratical attack on the Island of Cuba was the subject of inquiry.

The Marquis of Lansdowne, in reply to a question from Lord Brougham, said the piratical expedition to Cuba had been undertaken not only without the sanction, but against the strict prohibition of the American Government, and he had not the least doubt they had done all in their power to prevent it.

Touching the Greek question we find the following in the European Times:—

The most angry communications, verbal and written, are said to have been interchanged between the Russian embassy and Lord Palmerston this week. The Greek question forms the bone of contention. The possible withdrawal of the Russian ambassador may, although we hope it will not, be the consequence of the misunderstanding.

FOREIGN

France continues to be the great middle of European politics. The Electoral Bill has passed, the *Moniteur* has formally promulgated the new law.

The Assembly has been occupied with the discussions of the Stamp Law, and has reversed its previous decision respecting the imposition of a transfer duty on *Rentes* and Government Securities.

The clause subjecting public Stock to a transfer duty has now been rejected by a majority of 325 to 302. It is said that M. Thiers is about to visit London, with the object of using his influence with the Duchess of Orleans to bring about a reconciliation between the elder and younger branches of the Bourbons.

The Socialists are beginning to quarrel amongst themselves; at any rate their enemies parade all their petty disputes, as indicating the greatest animosity.

The King of Prussia is now rapidly recovering. The assassin has not yet been brought to trial.

The contest of the Germans for free trade and unity still proceeds, but with little success. The most contradictory news reaches us from the Duchies. There is an accumulation of Danish forces on the Schleswig frontier, under the command of General Krogh. The King of Denmark was expected, and that he would issue a proclamation promising a general amnesty to the insurgents, with the exception of the chief leaders. In the meantime, under some frivolous pretence or other, the negotiations at Berlin are completely interrupted.

The King of Saxony has suddenly dissolved his Parliament owing to the differences of opinion respecting the German question, and the refusal of the Parliament to assent to a loan until the King's policy was changed.

It is said that the Emperor of Russia is about to visit the Emperor of Austria at Vienna after the conference at Warsaw is concluded. The Emperor of Austria has left his capital and proceeded to the latter city.

M. Mazzini, with several of his followers, have left Switzerland and have directed their steps to London.

Rome begins once more to challenge attention. In spite of French influence, exercised as at Paris at the bayonet's point, discontent is making rapid progress; and the secret societies are making arrangements to break out at the first favourable occasion. The French are no favourites with the Romans. The Pope has issued his Latin "charge" to the people. He deplores the attacks on the Church made by the new Sarlinian law, and speaks with deep grief of the injury and violence put in practice against the person of the Archbishop of Turin.

The Archbishop of Turin, we see by a letter dated from the citadel of Turin, has been condemned to pay 500*l.* and to suffer a month's imprisonment. From Spain and Portugal there is little news of interest this week.

INDIA.

A mail has arrived from India, bringing dates from Bombay to May 1st, and Calcutta, to April 20th. The Affreeds have submitted, and now sue for terms, but, as some distrust still seems to prevail respecting their designs, the affair has been referred to the Governor General, with a view, doubtless of obtaining securities for their future conduct. Dost Mohammed still continues his annoyances. The hostilities at Oude have terminated successfully. Sir Charles Napier has reached Simla, and the Governor General was expected soon to arrive there. Arrangements are in progress at Bombay, subject to the approbation of the Board of Control, to open schools of industry for the natives. The plan is to open them for all comers, and special teachers are to be dispatched into the cotton districts to instruct the cotton cultivators in cleaning and picking cotton.

ITEMS.

The second reading of the Bishop of London's Bill on Ecclesiastical Appeals in the House of Lords has been lost by a majority against it of 33.

Lord Ashley's motion for an Address to Her Majesty respecting Sabbath Postal Service, (varying somewhat from the original intention) has passed in the House of Commons by a majority of 25 in its favour.

Lord Cottenham will be raised to the rank of Earl of Cottenham, of Cottenham, in the County of Cambridge, and Viscount Crowhurst, of Crowhurst, in the County of Surrey.