



LITERATURE.

"DOWN WITH FOREIGN PRIESTCRAFT."

Christian England! where so long
Freedom's trumpet, clear and strong,
Still has stirred the patriot song—
Down with foreign priestcraft!
England! Truth's own island-seat,
Pure Religion's happy rest,
Never shall thy sons protest,
Down with foreign priestcraft!

What! shall these Italian knaves
Dream again to make us slaves,
From our cradles to our graves,
With their foreign priestcraft!
Out on every false pretence!
Common right and common sense
Shout against such insolence,
Down with foreign priestcraft!

Aye, insidious fawning foe,
Little as you thought it so,
England's wrath is all aglow,
Scorning foreign priestcraft!
Take her Jesuits, if you will,
England's heart rejects their ill,
And her mouth is thundering still,
Down with foreign priestcraft!

Hark! in ancient warmth and worth
East and west and south and north
Flies the loyal spirit forth,
Loathing foreign priestcraft!
Evermore with Rome to cope,
We will hate nor heart nor hope,
But our shout shall stun the Pope,
Down with foreign priestcraft!

BLACK NORRIS,
OR THE WRECKERS.

It was a March morning—dark, yet without a drop of rain, or breath of wind—that kind of marbly-black, compact sky, which is the sure forerunner of a storm. The night had been a raw and cold one—too cold to sleep with comfort in the open air; yet such was the chamber which a peasant girl, a native of a little fishing hamlet on the coast of Cornwall, had chosen for repose. Her couch was a hard and fearful one, the verge of a cliff that rose nearly a hundred feet perpendicular from the seashore, and yet not the softest couch that ever was spread in hamlet, town or city, contained a tenant, in form, for symmetry—in feature, for beauty—the mistress of her who occupied that strange, appalling place of rest. Her slumbers were disturbed, yet deep. Neither the full dawn could break them, nor yet the pressure of a hand that had taken hold of hers, nor the tears that fell upon her face from the eyes of one that was hanging over her—a young man about her own age, or a little older, and who seemed to belong to the profession of the sea.

"And hast thou slept out again all night!" he murmured, his tears still flowing. And does it grow worse with thy poor wits? and shall I never see the day that I can make thee my wife? They will not let me marry thee, because, as they say thou art mad, and knowest not what thou doest; but when thy mind was sound I was loved by thee. Had I married thee then, thou still hadst been my wife; thou still hadst been cherished and loved. Why must I not marry thee now? I could watch thee then at night. My arms would enfold thee then, and prevent thee from stealing from thy bed to sleep in such a place as this!"

The attachment which united this young man to being whom he so pathetically apostrophised, was of that pure and steadfast nature, which can never take root, except in the unsophisticated heart. She had lost her reason in consequence of being witness to a transaction of blood, which made her an orphan. She was to have been married to him; but, in the unfortunate state of her intellects, no clergyman would celebrate the rites. But she did not the less enjoy his protection. Beneath his mother's roof she lived as sacred as a sister—the object of a passion in which frustration, and almost hopelessness, had only produced increase of strength.

"Kate, Kate, he cried, rouse thee. Kate, rouse thee! Don't start, don't be frightened. 'Tis only William. Get up and come home."

He offered to raise her, but she checked him—looked round and fixed her eyes inquiringly upon the sea.

"Where is it?" she exclaimed, her voice tremulous with emotion. Where is the storm? I see the black sky, but I want the thunder and the wind; the white, white sea, and the big ship driving upon the reef; or is it all over?—No, she added, 'tis coming—it will be here; I see it!"

She rose, and passively accompanied her watchful lover to his mother's cottage, where, leaving her under the custody of its mistress, the young man repaired on urgent business to a town at some distance from the hamlet.

That morning the storm came on; three days it con-

tinued—it was now the third day. A lee shore, a boiling sea, and on the coast of Cornwall! A wild and fearful offing! Foam! foam! foam! whichever way you looked—nothing but foam. Black reefs of rocks, that even in the highest spring tides were never covered, discernable now only by a spot here and there, so quick the breakers. The spray flying over the cliffs fifty, sixty, aye, a hundred feet and more, above the level of the sea, and spreading over the land for acres. And all above pitch black, though at noonday. Everything seemed to cower before the spirit of the storm—everything except man.

The shore which consisted partly of huge masses of rocks, partly of shingle, was lined with human beings; some in groups, some alone, promiscuously furnished with boat hooks, gaffs, grapples, hatches and knives ready to dispute with the waves the plunder of the fated ship that might be driven into the jaws of that inhospitable bay. Expectation glistened in their eyes, that kept eagerly prowling backward and forward, far and near, over the waste of waters—they were wreckers. Not a few women, as well as children, were among them, nor were these unprovided against the approach of the wished-for prey—all seemed to have their appropriate places, from which, if they stirred, it was only a step or two to be the next minute retraced. Little was spoken.

At one and the same moment almost every head was turned towards the cliff, at a wild and shrill halloo that rung from it.

"'Tis only Kate," cried one here and there, as the maniac rapidly descended by a crevice, which few of the lookers on would have attempted, and that with wary feet.

"The crazy slut will break her neck," carelessly remarked one to another. But she was safe in her recklessness or unconsciousness of danger, and in a second or two stood among them.

"A lovely day; a fair lovely day!" she exclaimed to the first she came up to.

"Good luck to you. Anything yet? No, no," she continued, replying to herself; white to the north; white to the west; white to the south; all white; not a speck upon the water, but 'tis coming," she reiterated, dropping her voice to its lowest pitch; I saw it here last night—a big black hull! one mast standing out of three; cannons and stores overboard, rising and sinking, rocking and reeling; driving full bump upon the reef where the William and Mary was wrecked seven cursed years ago—I saw it," she repeated, eyeing the bystanders with a look that dared incredulity; then all at once, her voice sinking into a whisper, "Hist, hist," she added 'twill be a handful or two for you—and a load for you—and more than you can carry for you, addressing this person and that successively; casks, cases, chests, gear and gold; but what will it be for Black Norris? It will be a brighter day for him than any of you. When do they say his time is out? "Whose time?" inquired one among the group she was addressing.

"One, two, three," she went on without noticing the question until she had counted seven, his seven years were out last May; he was transported three years before his hopeful son murdered my father."

"Hush, you crazy wench," exclaimed those around her; "if Norris hears you, you may chance to take a swim in the creek where he is standing."

"Crazy!" she echoed. Yes, bless heaven that made me so. It knows best what it does. I saw my father murdered, though his murderer saw not me; they were struggling which should keep possession of the prey.—Old Norris's knife decided it. I was powerless with fright. I could not speak. I could not stir. I became mad, and the Judge would not believe me. I could tell my story better now, but it would be of no use; for they say I would be crazy still. There she is! vociferated she, pointing toward the offing of the southern extremity of the bay.

"Where, where, where?" inquired her auditors.

"No, no!" she resumed, after a minute or two of silence, during which her eyeballs kept straining in the direction towards which she had pointed. "No," she resumed, dropping her hand, but she is coming; and Black Norris will neither want roof nor board, gold nor gear, to welcome back the father that bred him up to his own trade. But where is he? inquired she; where but upon the long reef where I saw him? Saying this she proceeded to the southern extremity of the bay.

A stalwart figure, in advance of the regular line, sat stationed upon the landward end of a huge reef of rocks that gradually dipped into the sea. His hair black and lank, thrown back from a swarthy, ill-favored visage, hung half way down his shoulders; his eye, dark, small, and glistening bright, directed toward the sea, in quick and restless motion, was everywhere at once. A long boat hook, clenched with both his hands, rested across his knees, and in a belt which encircled his waist, were stuck a clasp knife of more than ordinary size, and a hatchet. The waves repeatedly washed more than half way up his lower extremities, but he paid no more heed than if he were a part of the rock that scattered it into mist. "A lovely day, a fair, lovely day!" cried the maniac, approaching him. "How beest thou, Black Norris? Nay, I am good now," continued she in a deprecating tone don't look angry. I'll never say again it was you."

The wrecker moved his hand toward his knife. "Stop, stop, Black Norris," cried she, coaxingly, and hurriedly laying her hand upon his arm, "keep it for other work. You'll want it to-day; before night there'll be a hull ashore. There'll be need of a knife, axe, hull and all—for the storm is lively yet—the sea shows no signs of going down—the breakers keep tumbling upon the shore. Mark how they sweep the shingles up, and back again. By-and-by they will have something else to roll. 'Tis coming, Black Norris, 'tis coming. A huge, black hull, one mast standing out of three, cannons and stores overboard, rising and sinking, rocking and reeling, driving full bump upon the reef where the William and Mary was wrecked, the very reef on which you stand,

Black Norris, aye, and the very spot!"

"Silence, jade," exclaimed the wrecker, looking from beneath his hand, which with the rapidity of lightning, was raised to his brow, and placed there horizontally, and leaning eagerly forward.

"In the south?"

"Yes."

"Just clear of the point?"

"Yes, the looming of something,—a sloop, I see but one mast."

"'Tis a ship, Black Norris. The other two have been cut away."

"Peace, jade; what knowest thou about the matter?" "Tis a ship," she continued. I told you so. There is the huge black hull."

"Tis there indeed, exclaimed the wrecker. Art thou a witch, as well as crazed? 'Tis there indeed, she is driving right into the bay, coming broadside on."

A huge, black hull it was, high out of the water, as if every article of weight that could be spared, had been thrown overboard. Reeling and pitching, she came on, staggering every now and then at the stroke of some wave that broke over her. Fast was she nearing the shore.

"Now, now, now," ever and anon exclaimed the wreckers; but she was floating still, so much had those on board lightened her. At length she was among the breakers. She touched and touched, yet went on—at last she struck, and a long continued crash came undulating upon the ears of the lookers on, accompanied with hallos and shrieks. The shore was now all astir.

"That does for her," exclaimed several voices all at once, as an enormous wave, towering, as if charged with her doom, came foaming towards her. In another minute it broke upon her with a fury that sent the spray to the clouds, and totally hid her from the shore. When she became visible again, the whole of her larboard broadside was stove in. In a moment, men, women and children were up to their middle in the surf. Another billow—she was gone. Planks, pulleys, spars and cordage, now came floating in, and every one went to work—every one but Black Norris.

He kept his station upon the reef—a post which common consent seemed to have yielded up to him. No one ventured to dispute his right to it. In advance of him stood the maniac, constantly looking in one direction, a kind of cove, produced by a forking in the reef. Thence she never took her eye, except to throw a glance at Black Norris whenever he made a movement, as if about to quit the stand which he had chosen.

"'Twill be here," she kept repeating; 'twill be here that which will be worth the hull to thee, were it high and dry, and all thine own; wait for it, 'tis sent to thee; it will be here. Did I not tell you of the huge black hull and came it not? As surely that will come as in that hull was sent to thee. Be ready with thy boat-hook. The minutes are counted. The wave that is to bring it is rolling in. There it is—I know it. Here, take my place and be ready. Here it is—a body—hook it by the clothes, keep it clear of the rocks. Round, round, round here into this nook. Look if it does not lie there as if it was made for it! What think you now of crazy Kate? Softly, softly," she continued, as the wrecker, substituting his hands for the instrument, began to draw the body up to the beach. "Softly, the pockets are full. Softly, lest anything should drop from them. That will do,—that will do!"

Scarcely was the body clear of the surf when the wrecker began to rifle it. The pockets were full; one of them was speedily emptied, when a laugh from the maniac, who, squatting, sat gibbering at the head, arrested Black Norris in the act of examining the contents.

"What laugh'st thou at, jade?" he enquired.

"Go on," she replied, 'tis a fair lovely day, as I told thee; is it not Black Norris?"

"Peace, jade, exclaimed the wrecker. 'Jewels, he ejaculated, closing a small case which he had opened.—The maniac laughed again. 'Wilt thou stop thy cursed mouth,' vociferated the wrecker.

"Go on, murmured the maniac, 'Go on, Black Norris, you should not be angry with me. Did I not tell you it was coming? Go on. 'Tis a fair, lovely day. Isn't it Black Norris?"

"Silence, again," cried the wrecker. "Gold," exclaimed he to himself, as he emptied into his hands a portion of the contents of a purse which he had taken from the other pocket; broad, heavy, yellow pieces!"

Another laugh from the maniac.

"I tell thee what, mad Kate," roared the wrecker, "take to thy heels, or abide the consequence, if thou utterest that sound again."

"Softly, softly," whispered Kate, 'he hears you.'

"Who, jade," cried the wrecker, starting from his knees.

"The owner of the diamonds and the gold. His lips have been moving for the last minute, and now they are wide open!"

The wrecker just glanced at the face of the shipwrecked man.

"Get thee away, good Kate," said he, in a conciliatory tone. "Go, Kate, leave me by myself, and I'll never be angry with thee again. Go, good Kate, go."

The maniac looked at the wrecker for a moment, smiled, nodded her head significantly, and rose.

"I am gone, Black Norris," she cried, "a good day to you, and a good fair day it is; and a lovely day. Isn't it, Black Norris? I'll leave you by yourself. I'll not stay. I am gone!" and starting toward a pathway which led up the cliff, and the commencement of which was sheltered by a screen of rock, she was quickly out of sight.

The wrecker now began to reconnoitre all around him. Every one was engrossed with his own occupation, securing such portions of the wreck, or such articles of property as were brought within his reach. His hand approached his knife—grasped it—half drew the weapon from his belt; but suddenly replaced it, and now fastened on the axe, the counterpoise to the blade of which