

fore him. But, as he cleared the cart, a score of light-armed horsemen wheeled round the corner of the building, dashed their horses to their speed, and, with tremendous shouts, galloped recklessly in the pursuit. It was a fearful race, the brook pavement of the lane presented no obstacle to their precipitate haste: pursuers and pursued plied spur and scourge with desperate eagerness, and, for a space, a lance's length was hardly clear between the fugitive and the half-frantic soldiery; but gradually the lighter equipments, and the fresher steed of Hamilton, began to tell. He had already gained an hundred yards, and, at every stride, was leaving his enemies yet further in the rear; there was no fire arms among the knot, who pressed most closely on his traces, and he would now have gained the open country, and have escaped without a further struggle; but, as he cleared the straggling buildings of the suburb, a fresh relay of troopers met him in the front, headed by Lindesay, Morton, and Glencairn. Had they been ten yards further in advance, the life of Bothwell would not have been worth a moment's purchase—but he had yet a chance. On the left hand of the road lay a wide range of moorland pastures, stretching downwards to a deep and sluggish brook, beyond which the land extended in waste and forest far away to the demesnes of James of Arran, Duke of Chatelherault and Hamilton. A six foot wall of unhewn limestone, parted the grass land from the highway, and, without a pause, he turned his horses' head straight to the lofty barrier. At the top of his pace, the steed drove on—a steady pull upon the rein, a sharp rattle of the spurs, and with a fearful bound, he got clear over—but, with equal resolution, did the confederate lords pursue.—Lindesay was still the foremost, and three others thundered close behind! Another, and another of these huge fences crossed their line, but not a rider faltered, nor a horse fell. The price of the chase was fearful,—the pace, at which it was maintained, was too exhausting both for man and beast to be supported long, and, obviously, the chances of the fugitive were fast diminishing. Another wall—another successful leap—Lindesay is down, but Morton takes his place,—the bottom of the hill is gained, and the winding streamlet lies before them, deep and unfordable; its rugged banks rising precipitously from the water's edge, and beyond it the tangled shelter of the forest. Already the pursuers considered their success as certain,—already the shout of triumph was bursting from their lips, and the avenging blades unsheathed. Bothwell saw that his case was well nigh hopeless, yet he urged his horse against the yawning brook, but the good steed, jaded by his exertions, and cowed by the brightness of the water, sheered wildly from the leap, and stopped short, trembling in every joint. Calmly the soldier tightened his reign, breathed the exhausted animal ten second's space, and drawing his light hunting sword, rode slowly back, as if to face his enemies. The cry of exultation, which was raised by all who saw him turn to bay, was heard distinctly at Lulithgow, and every one who heard it, deemed the murderer's head secure. Morton and Glencairn strove hard for the striking down the slayer of their friend—but, when within a horse's length, Hamilton turned, once again, pulled hard upon his curb, stood in his stirrups, and as he reached the brink brought down the naked banner edgewise on the courier's croupe. The terrified brute sprang wildly forward, cleared the tremendous chasm, and would have fallen on the other verge but for the powerful hand of the rider. With a startling shout of exultation, he shook his arm aloft, scowled on his baffled enemies, and was lost to their sight amidst the leafless thickets.

A TALE OF THE SPANISH WAR.

It was during the exterminating warfare which characterised the invasion of Spain by the French, that a small body of Cuirassiers, detached from the main division had halted for the night at a village called Piguieras. The appearance of this company was to the poor inhabitants a source of disagreeable anticipations, actuated as they were by natural antipathy to a domineering foe, and by anxiety for the little property acquired by the toil of congregated years.

'What ho!' cried the leader of the soldiery, as he stopped before the gate of the monastery, the only house in the hamlet that appeared capable of rendering any tolerable accommodation; 'Open your doors, or, by my valiant Sovereign all your Aves will not profit you,' and as he spoke he struck the portal with his sword, as if to prove his threats would speedily be enforced, if a ready acquiescence were not accorded to his mandates.

There was silence for a time, as though the inmates were deliberating on what course to pursue; and then the figure of an aged man became apparent, as with trembling hands he loosed the fastenings which secured the dwelling. He bore a torch, whose gleam threw a murky glare upon the men at arms, and served but indistinctly to illumine the gloomy court. 'Save you!

said the French Colonel ironically, at the same time making a lowly obeisance, 'I bear my superior's greetings to your holy body, and expect good fare for my commands: the cellars are well stored, no doubt?' A crimson glow for a moment flushed the pallid cheek of the venerable father, as La Ville (for that was the Colonel's name) concluded his address; but it passed instantly away, and he returned no response save by a gentle inclination of the head.

La Ville regarded not his emotion, but, ordering his soldiers to dismount and place their chargers in the spacious court-yard, entered the solemn pile accompanied by his brother officers. The clang of the spurs as they paced along the vaulted passages escorted by their aged guide, too plainly announced to the monks the propinquity of their enemies,—those wonted scoffers of all the sacred ordinances of religion, for such a character had they acquired; partly true, but principally founded on the misrepresentations of those who were well aware how much such a belief would kindle patriotic zeal against them.

As they entered the refectory, the assembled brethren rose from their seats, and calmly viewed the haughty intruders.

'Excuse me, Fathers!' exclaimed La Ville, awed into respect by their dignified demeanor, 'but my men require repose, and in these troublous times, as little courtesy is needed, I have that plea to warrant this intrusion; my men must be provided with good cheer, or else—' and he touched the hilt of his sabre significantly. 'But,' he continued, 'I hope there will be no occasion for proceeding to extremities, the odds are too much in our favor.'

'Sir,' replied the Abbot, 'your wishes must be obeyed, were even our desire to serve you less.'

'I deem, if I relied on that, my entertainment were but very poor.'

'This is an unkind opinion,' returned the superior; 'deeds will convince you of its fallacy.' So saying, he motioned them to sit down, and commanded the servants to load the table with the best the monastery could afford.

The table soon groaned beneath the weight of delicacies, and cordiality usurped the place where distrust so lately reigned. The Abbot left the apartment for a brief interval, and speedily returned, followed by two attendants bearing immense silver vessels filled with luscious and delicious wine.

'Now, tell me candidly,' exclaimed a young officer but lately arrived from the military college, 'tell me if you have any pretty damsel here—you understand me, a niece or so, to benefit by your pious admonitions?'

The eye of the superior shone with a wrathful glare at the speaker, and then a bitter smile passed across his features.

'Fear not,' he replied, 'for this night's entertainment will be better than you shall hereafter enjoy; but Heaven forbid we should harbor such polluted beings as you allude to!'

'Ay,' retorted La Ville, 'at least for irreligious laymen, who know not how to temper their love-suits with pious sighings for the great iniquity of our frail natures: but a truce with railery, and let us taste the wine; nothing so much promotes good fellowship.'

'But, good father,' he continued, as he filled a goblet with the sparkling wine, 'you must pledge me in a bumper, so fill your glass.'

'The rules of our order forbid us to indulge in wine,' answered the Abbot, 'and therefore you must excuse me and my brethren from tasting of the ruby produce of the vine.'

La Ville smiled ironically, as though he thought it was hypocrisy on the father's part in refusing to drink any thing stronger than the liquid spring of water. He raised the goblet to his lips, but placed it again untasted on the board. The monks looked upon the movement with suspicious eye, as if to seek solution for the Frenchman's act.

'Suspicion strikes me,' cried La Ville sternly, 'and if my surmise prove correct, this shall be the last exploit you will enact. Fellow soldiers! taste not the wine, it may be poisoned: such deeds have been performed before, and by monastic artifice.' As the speaker thus addressed his auditors, every eye was riveted on the superior, whose countenance afforded no credit to the Colonel's surmise. 'Drink of the wine first,' continued La Ville, 'you and your brethren, and then we will follow your example.'

The Abbot raised his eyes to Heaven, and seemed for a moment buried in meditation; then taking the proffered cup, swallowed the contents. The entire confraternity also drank the potion.

'Now, are you satisfied?' he inquired: 'now, are your ungenerous doubts resolved?'

'Yes!' replied the French; 'and here we pledge to you, good fathers.'

Cup succeeded cup, as the elated soldiers, delighted with their superior entertainment, sought to take advantage of their present favorable quarters.

'Believe me,' stammered out a jovial Lieutenant, 'we will ever prove grateful for the kindness we have experienced, and mayhap, I may send in exchange for this Santerne, a lovely girl of mine, the beautiful Louise.'

'A poor exchange,' retorted another, 'nothing so true as wine, nor as fickle as woman.'

'When our royal eagle waves over the entire land,' cried La Ville, 'the brethren of this monastery shall be amply rewarded for their hospitality, and—'

'Stop your kind commendations,' interrupted the Abbot; 'that day you shall never behold: base tools of violence, hear me, and shudder at my words: know that the wine we drank was poisoned! Start not! our country claimed the sacrifice, and willingly we did our duty; and though the pangs of death are fast approaching, yet the thought that you, our enemies, must die with us, is balsam to the tortured body. Does not the venom even now rankle in your veins? Speak! slaves, speak!'

Consternation seized the French as they listened to the dreadful declaration, and even then the agonizing throbs declared how true was the assertion. Madly they rushed on their betrayers, but death was already enacting his part, and stayed their impetuous hands. Soon the smothered groan, the frightful scream, the mingled prayer and curse, rose on the silent ear of night.—The morning came; and of the many who had entered on the previous evening into the monastery, not one remained to quit its gloomy precincts.

THE BLUE HANDKERCHIEF.

Last year, about the end of October, as I was returning on foot from Orleans to the chateau of Bardy, I beheld before me, on the high road, a regiment of Swiss guards. I hastened forward to hear the military music, of which I am extremely fond; but before I had overtaken the regiment the band had ceased playing, and the drum alone continued to mark the measured footsteps of the soldiers.

After marching for about half an hour, the regiment entered a small plain, surrounded by a wood of fir trees. I asked one of the Captains if the regiment was going to perform evolutions.

'No, Sir,' he replied; 'we are going to try, and probably shoot, a soldier belonging to my company, for having robbed the citizens upon whom he was billeted.'

'What! I exclaimed, 'is he to be tried, condemned, and executed all in an instant?'

'Yes,' replied the captain, 'Such are the terms of our capitulations.' This to him was an unanswerable reason; as if all things had been considered in the capitulations; the fault and its penalty,—justice, and even humanity.

'If you have any curiosity to witness the proceedings,' said the Captain, politely, 'I shall be happy to get you a place. They will soon be over.'

I never avoid such scenes; for I imagine that I learn from the countenance of a dying man, what death is. I therefore followed the captain.

The regiment formed into square. Behind the second rank, and on the borders of the wood, some of the soldiers began to dig a grave, under the command of a subaltern; for regimental duty is always performed with regularity, and a certain discipline maintained, even in the digging of a grave.

In the centre of the square, eight officers were seated upon drums; on their right, and a little more in front, a ninth was writing upon his knees, but with apparent negligence, and simply to prevent a man from being put to death without some legal forms.

The accused was called forward. He was a fine, well-grown young fellow, with mild, yet noble features. By his side stood a woman, who was the only witness against him. The moment the colonel began to examine this woman the prisoner interrupted him:

'It is useless, Colonel,' he said; 'I will confess every thing; I stole this woman's handkerchief.'

The Colonel. You, Piter! why you passed for an honorable man and a good soldier.

Piter. It is true Colonel, that I have always endeavored to satisfy my officers. I did not steal for myself: it was for Marie.

The Colonel. And who is Marie?

Piter. Why Marie who lives—there—in our own country—near Arneberg—where the great apple-tree is—I shall then see her no more!

The Colonel. I do not understand you, Piter; explain yourself.

Piter. Well, Colonel, read this letter.

And he handed to the Colonel a letter, every word of which is engraven on my memory.

'My dear friend, Piter,—I seize the opportunity of sending you this letter by Arnold, a recruit who has enlisted in your regiment. I also send a silk purse which I have made for you. I did not let my father see that I was making it, for he always scolds me for loving you so much, and says you will never return. But you surely will come back, won't you? But whe-