

Literature, &c.

NEW WORKS.

From Ainsworth's Tower of London.

EXECUTION OF LADY JANE GREY.

Monday, the 12th of February, 1554, the fatal day destined to terminate Jane's earthly sufferings, at length arrived. Excepting a couple of hours which she allowed to rest, at the urgent entreaty of her companion, she had passed the whole of the night in prayer. Angela kept watch over the lovely sleeper; and the effect produced in the contemplation of her features during this her last slumber was never afterwards effaced. The repose of an infant could not be more calm and holy. A celestial smile irradiated her countenance, her lips moved as if in prayer, and if good angels are ever permitted to visit the dreams of those they love on earth, they hovered that night over the couch of Jane.

Thinking it cruelty to disturb her from such a blissful state, Angela let an hour pass beyond the appointed time. But observing a change come over her countenance—seeing her bosom heave, and tears gather beneath her eyelashes, she touched her, and Jane immediately rose.

'Is it four o'clock?' she inquired.
'It has just struck five, madam,' replied Angela. 'I have disobeyed you for the first and last time. But you seemed so happy that I could not find it in my heart to waken you.'

'I was happy,' replied Jane, 'for I dreamed that all was over—without pain to me—and that my soul was borne to regions of celestial bliss by a troop of angels who had hovered about the scaffold.'

'It will be so, madam,' replied Angela, fervently.—'You will quit this earth immediately for heaven, where you will rejoice your husband in everlasting happiness.'

'I trust so,' replied Jane, in an altered tone, but in that blessed place I searched in vain for him. Angela, you let me sleep too long, or not long enough.'

'Your pardon, dearest madam, cried the other fearfully.

'Nay, you have given me no offence,' returned Jane, kindly. 'What I meant was that I had not time to find my husband.'

'Oh you will find him, dearest madam,' returned Angela, 'doubt it not. Your prayers would wash out his offences, if his own could not.'

'I trust so,' replied Jane. 'And I will now pray for him, and do you pray too.'

Jane then retired to the recess, and in the gloom, for it was yet dark, continued her devotions until the clock struck seven. She then arose, and, assisted by Angela, attired herself with great care.

'I pay more attention to the decoration of my body now I am about to part with it,' she observed, 'than I would do if it was to serve me longer. So joyful is the occasion to me, that were I to consult my own feelings, I would put on my richest apparel to indicate my contentment of heart. I will not, however, so brave my fate, but array myself in these weeds.' And she put on a gown of black velvet without ornament of any kind; tying round her slender throat (so soon, alas! to be severed) a simple white falling collar. Her hair was left purposely unbraided, and was confined by a caul of black velvet. As Angela performed these sad services, she sobbed audibly.

'Nay, cheer thee, child,' observed Jane. 'When I was clothed in the robes of royalty, and had the crown placed upon my brow—nay when arrayed on my wedding day—I felt not half so joyful as now.'

'Ah! madam!' exclaimed Angela, in a paroxysm of grief, 'My condition is more pitiable than yours. You go to certain happiness. But I lose you.'

'Only for a while, dear Angela,' returned Jane. 'Comfort yourself with that thought. Let my fate be a warning to you. Be not dazzled by ambition. Had I not once yielded, I had never thus perished. Discharge your duty strictly to your eternal and temporal rulers, and rest assured we shall meet again—never to part.'

'Your counsel shall be graven on my heart madam,' returned Angela. 'And oh may my end be as happy as yours.'

'Heaven grant it,' ejaculated Jane fervently. 'And now,' she added, as her toilette was ended, 'I am ready to die.'

'Will you take some refreshment madam?' asked Angela.

'No,' replied Jane, 'I have done with the body.'

The morning was damp and dark. A thaw came on a little before daybreak, and a drizzling shower of rain fell. This was succeeded by a thick mist, and the whole of the fortress was for a while enveloped in vapor. It brought to Jane's mind the day on which she was taken to trial. But a moral gloom likewise overspread the fortress. Every one within it, save her few enemies, (and they were few indeed,) lamented Jane's approaching fate. Her youth, her innocence, her piety, touched the sternest heart, and moved the pity even of her persecutors. All felt that morning as if some dire calamity was at hand, and instead of looking forward to the execution as an exciting spectacle, they wished it over. Many a prayer was breathed for the release of the sufferer, many a sigh heaved; many a groan uttered, and

if ever a soul was wafted to heaven by the fervent wishes of those on earth, Jane's was so.

It was late before there were any signs of stir and bustle in the fortress. Even the soldiers gathered together reluctantly—and those who conversed, spoke in whispers. Dudley, who it has been stated was imprisoned in the Beauchamp Tower, had passed the greater part of the night in devotion. But towards morning, he became restless and uneasy, and unable to compose himself, resorted to the customary employment of captives in such cases, and with a nail which he had found, carved his wife's name in two places on the walls of his prison. These inscriptions still remain.

At nine o'clock, the bell began to toll, and an escort of halberdiers, and arquebusiers, drew up before the Beauchamp Tower, while Sir Thomas Brydges and Feckenham entered the chamber of the prisoner, who received them with an unmoved countenance.

'Before you set out upon a journey from which you will never return, my lord,' said Feckenham, 'I would ask you for the last time, if any change has taken place in your religious sentiments—and whether you are yet alive to the welfare of your soul?'

'Why not promise me pardon if I will recant on the scaffold, and silence me as you silenced the duke my father, by the axe?' replied Dudley, sternly. 'No, sir, I will have naught to do with your false and idolatrous creed. I shall die a firm believer in the Gospel, and trust to be saved by it.'

'Then perish, body and soul,' replied Feckenham, harshly. 'Sir Thomas Brydges, I commit him to your hands.'

'Am I to be allowed no parting with my wife?' demanded Dudley, anxiously.

'You have parted with her for ever,—heretic and unbeliever!' rejoined Feckenham.

'That speech will haunt your death-bed, sir,' retorted Dudley, sternly. And he turned to the lieutenant, and signified that he was ready.

The first object that met Dudley's gaze, as he issued from his prison, was the scaffold on the green. He looked at it a moment whistfully.

'It is for Lady Jane,' observed the lieutenant.

'I know it,' replied Dudley, in a voice of intense emotion.—'I thank you for letting me die first.'

'You must thank the queen, my lord,' returned Brydges. 'It was her order.'

'Shall you see my wife, sir?' demanded Dudley anxiously.

The lieutenant answered in the affirmative.

'Tell her I will be with her on the scaffold,' said Dudley.

As he was about to set forward a young man pushed through the lines of halberdiers, and threw himself at his feet. It was Cholmondely. Dudley instantly raised and embraced him. 'At least I see one whom I love,' he cried.

'My lord, this interruption must not be,' observed the lieutenant. 'If you do not retire,' he added, to Cholmondely, 'I shall place you in arrest.'

'Farewell, my dear lord,' cried the weeping esquire.

'Farewell for ever,'—returned Dudley, as Cholmondely was forced back by the halberdiers.

The escort then moved forward, and the lieutenant accompanied the prisoner to the gateway of the Middle Tower, where he delivered him to the sheriffs and their officers, who were waiting there for him with a Franciscan Friar, and then returned to fulfil his more painful duty. A vast crowd was collected on Tower Hill, and the strongest commiseration was expressed for Dudley, as he was led to the scaffold, on which Manger had already taken his station.

On quitting the Beauchamp Tower, Feckenham proceeded to Jane's prison. He found her on her knees, but she immediately arose.

'Is it time?' she asked.

'It is madam—to repent,' replied Feckenham sternly. 'A few minutes are all that now remain to you of life, nay, at this moment, perhaps, your husband is called before his Eternal Judge. There is yet time. Do not perish like him in your sins.'

'Heaven have mercy on him,' cried Jane, falling on her knees.

And notwithstanding the importunities of the confessor, she continued in fervent prayer, until the appearance of Sir Thomas Brydges. She instantly understood why he came, and rising, prepared for departure. Almost blinded by tears, Angela rendered her the last services she required. This done, the lieutenant, who was likewise greatly affected, begged some slight remembrance of her.

'I have nothing to give you but this book of prayers, sir,' she answered—'but you shall have that, when I have done with it, and may it profit you.'

'You will receive it only to cast it into the flames, my son,' remarked Feckenham.

'On the contrary, I shall treasure it like a priceless gem,' replied Brydges.

'You will find a prayer written in my own hand,' said Jane.—'And again I say, may it profit you.'

Brydges then passed through the door, and Jane followed him. A band of halberdiers were without. At the sight of her, a deep and general sympathy was manifested; not an eye was dry; and tears trickled down cheeks unaccustomed to such moisture. The melancholy train proceeded at a slow pace. Jane

fixed her eyes upon the prayer-book, which she read aloud to drown the importunities of the confessor, who walked on her right, while Angela kept near her on the other side. And so they reached the green.

By this time the fog had cleared off, and the rain had ceased; but the atmosphere was humid, and the day lowering and gloomy. Very few spectators were assembled; for it required firm nerves to witness such a tragedy. A flock of carrion crows and ravens attracted by their fearful instinct, wheeled round overhead, or settled on the branches of the bare and leafless trees, and by their croaking added to the dismal character of the scene. The bell continued tolling all the time.

The sole person upon the scaffold was Wolffyt. He was occupied in scattering straw near the block. Among the by-standers was Sorrocolde leaning on his staff; and as Jane for a moment raised her eyes as she passed along, she perceived Roger Ascham. Her old preceptor had obeyed her, and she repaid him with a look of gratitude.

By the lieutenant's directions, she was conducted for a short time to the Beauchamp Tower, and here Feckenham continued his persecutions, until a deep groan arose among those without, and an officer abruptly entered the room.

'Madam,' said Sir John Brydges, after the new comer had delivered his message, 'we must set forth.'

Jane made a motion of assent, and the party issued from the Beauchamp Tower, in front of which a band of halberdiers were drawn up. A wide open space was kept clear around the scaffold. Jane seemed unconscious of all that was passing. Preceded by the lieutenant, who took his way toward the north of the scaffold, and attended on either side by Feckenham and Angela as before, she kept her eyes steadily fixed on her prayer book.

Arrived within a short distance of the fatal spot, she was startled by a scream from Angela, and looking up, beheld four soldiers, carrying a litter covered with a cloth, and advancing toward her. She knew it was the body of her husband, and unprepared for so terrible an encounter, uttered a cry of horror. The bearers of the litter passed, and entered the porch of the chapel.

While this took place, Manger, who had limped back as fast as he could after his bloody work on Tower Hill—only tarrying a moment to change his axe—ascended the steps of the scaffold, and ordered Wolffyt to get down. Sir Thomas Brydges who was greatly shocked at what had just occurred, and would have prevented it if it had been possible and offered her his assistance. But she did not require it. The force of the shock had passed away, and she firmly mounted the scaffold.

When she was seen there, a groan of compassion arose from the spectators, and prayers were audibly uttered. She then advanced to the rail, and in a clear and distinct voice, spoke as follows.

'I pray you all to bear me witness that I die a true christian woman, and that I look to be saved by no other means except the mercy of God, and the merits of the blood of his only Son Jesus Christ. I confess when I knew the word of God I neglected it, and loved myself and the world, and therefore this punishment is a just return for my sins. But I thank God of his goodness that he has given me a time and respite to repent. And now good people while I am alive, I pray you assist me with your prayers.'

Many fervent responses followed, and several of the bystanders imitated Jane's example, as on the conclusion of her speech, she fell upon her knees and recited the *Miserere*.

At its close, Feckenham said in a loud voice, 'I ask you, madam, for the last time, will you repent?'

'I pray you, sir, to desist,' replied Jane, meekly. 'I am now at peace with all the world, and would die so.'

She then arose, and giving the prayer-book to Angela, said—'When all this is over, deliver this to the lieutenant. These,' she added, taking off her gloves and collar, 'I give to you.'

'And to me,' cried Manger, advancing and prostrating himself before her, according to custom, 'you give grace.'

'And also my head,' replied Jane. 'I forgive thee heartily, fellow. Thou art my best friend.'

'What ails you, madam?' remarked the lieutenant, seeing Jane suddenly start and tremble.

'Not much,' she replied, 'but I thought I saw my husband pale and bleeding.'

'Where?' demanded the lieutenant, recalling Dudley's speech.

'There, near the block,' replied Jane. 'I see the figure still. But it must be mere fantasy.'

Whatever his thoughts were, the lieutenant made no reply; and Jane turned to Angela, who now began, with trembling hands, to remove her attire, and was trying to take off her velvet robe, when Manger offered to assist her, but was instantly repulsed.

He then withdrew, and stationing himself by the block, assumed his hideous black mask and shouldered his axe.

Partially disrobed, Jane bowed her head while Angela tied a kerchief over her eyes, and turned her long tresses over her head to be out of the way. Unable to control herself, she then turned aside, and wept aloud. Jane moved forward in search of the block, but fearful of

making a false step, felt for it with her hands, and cried—'What shall I do?—Where is it?—Where is it?'

Sir Thomas Brydges took her hand and guided her to it. At this awful moment, there was a slight movement in the crowd, some of whom pressed near the scaffold, and amongst others Sorrocolde and Wolffyt. The latter caught hold of the boards to obtain a better view. Angela placed her hands before her eyes, and would have suspended her being, if she could, and even Feckenham veiled his countenance with his robe. Sir Thomas Brydges gazed firmly on.

By this time, Jane had placed her head on the block, and her last words were, 'Lord into thy hand I commend my spirit.'

The axe then fell, and one of the wisest heads that ever sat on human shoulders fell likewise.

From Bulwer's Night and Morning.

SCENE IN THE COINERS DEN.

The coiners were at their work. A man, seated on the stool before a desk was entering accounts in a large book. That man was William Gawtreay. While, with the rapid precision of honest mechanics,—the machinery of the Dark Trade, went on in its several departments. Apart—alone—at the foot of a long table, sat Philip Morton. The truth had exceeded his darkest suspicions. He had consented to take the oath not to divulge what was to be given to his survey; and, when led into the vault, the bandage was taken from his eyes, it was some minutes before he could fully comprehend the desperate and criminal occupations of the wild forms amidst which towered the bulky stature of his benefactor. As the truth slowly grew upon him, he shrunk from the side of Gawtreay; but deep compassion for his friend's degradation swallowing up the horror of the trade, he flung himself on one of the rude seats, and felt that the bond between them was indeed broken, and that next morning he should be again alone in the world. Still, as the obscene jests, the fearful oaths, that from time to time rang through the vault came on his ear, he cast his haughty eye in such disdain over the groups, that, Gawtreay observing him, trembled for his safety; and but the sense of his own impotence, and the brave, not timorous, desire not to perish by such hands kept silent the fierce denunciations of a nature, still proud and honest, that quivered on his lips. All present were armed with pistols and cutlasses except Morton, who suffered the weapons presented to him to lie unheeded on the table.

'*Courage, mes amis!*' said Gawtreay, closing his book,—'*Courage!*—a few months more, and we shall have made enough to retire upon, and enjoy ourselves for the rest of our days. Where is Birnie?'

'Did he not tell you?' said one of the artisans looking up. 'He has found out the cleverest hand in France,—the very fellow who helped Bouchard in all his five-france pieces. He has promised to bring him to night.'

'Ay, I remember,' returned Gawtreay, 'he told me this morning,—he is a famous decoy!'

'I think so, indeed!' quoth a coiner; 'for he caught you, the best head to our hands that ever *les industriels* were blessed with—*sacre fichtre!*'

'Flatterer!' said Gawtreay, coming from the desk to the table, and pouring out wine from one of the bottles into a huge flagon—'To your healths!'

Here the door slid back, and Birnie glided in.

'Where is your booty, *mon brave?*' said Gawtreay. 'We only coin money; you coin men, stampt with your own seal; and send them current to the devil!'

The coiners, who liked Birnie's ability (for the *sidevant* engraver was of admirable skill in their craft), but who hated his joyless manners, laughed at this taunt, which Birnie did not seem to heed, except by a malignant gleam of his dead eye.

'If you mean the celebrated coiner, Jacques Giramont, he waits without. You know our rules—I cannot admit him without leave.'

'Bon! we give it,—eh, *messieurs?*' said Gawtreay.

'Ay—ay,' cried several voices. 'He knows the oath, and will hear the penalty.'

'Yes, he knows the oath,' replied Birnie, and glided back.

In a moment more he returned with a small man in a mechanic's blouse. The new comer wore the republican beard and moustache,—of a sandy grey—his hair was the same colour; as a black patch over one eye increased the ill-favoured appearance of his features.

This new comer is a police-spy, to whom Birnie has betrayed his associates. Gawtreay speedily detects him:—

Thus conversing, Monsieur Giramont did not perceive that Mr Gawtreay had been examining him very curiously and minutely. But Birnie had noted their chief's attention, and once attempted to join his new ally, when Gawtreay laid his hand on his shoulder and stopped him.