

"Thanks, master, for what you have told me," I cried. "I will undertake to put the queen on her guard, I will sacrifice, if necessary, my life for her service."

"Before I quitted the painter, I drew aside, by his permission, the cloth that covered the picture. How radiantly beautiful, how like her, was the face! That brow truly regal, seaphic in its intellectual grace, those dark haunting, lustrous eyes! Yet it was not the perfection of feature alone, but the sweet and true majesty, the glorious spirit which shone through, allied to angelic natures, yet touched with the sorrow of humanity, that compelled the worship of my inmost heart. I gazed in rapt silence, till the master covered the picture again, and then, with a deep sigh, I bade him good even."

"Some days after, I saw the king and queen at chapel. Her deportment was grave and dignified and I thought I could perceive that sorrow had paled her young cheek. How, indeed, could it be otherwise, when the whispers now current in the court and the city must have reached her ear?"

"The service was ended, and the queen was leaving the chapel when I noticed a person in the aisle, who seemed intently observing her majesty, whom he followed at a distance. Instantly the words of Holbein recurred to me and resolved to seek the stranger and insist on his departure. Just then he turned his face toward me. He was evidently very young; slender almost to fragility in form, and so pale that he would have been remarked in a crowd for this sign of disease or mental ailment. When to this peculiarity was added the effect of features mobile to a degree of nervous restlessness, and a pair of dark, wild looking eyes, flashing beneath bushy eyebrows—with the expression of eagerness and abandon in his whole face and figure—I could no longer wonder that the pursuit of such a person had suspected my royal mistress to suspicion and scrutiny."

"As I was quitting the pew I had occupied with several other gentlemen, my eyes still fixed on the unknown, one of the king's pages came up, and whispered to me that his majesty commanded my attendance. Most reluctantly I obeyed and saw the man I had been watching disappear in the crowd."

"I found the king alone in his chamber, and started back when I first entered with involuntary terror. He was pacing the room in violent agitation, his face inflamed, his eyes flashing, his hands clenched with passion. When he saw me, he seemed to make an effort of self-control."

"More and more!" he muttered between his teeth, while he took up and let fall repeatedly, as if in unconscious nervousness, several papers that lay on the table. At last, turning to me, he said suddenly—

"Thou art faithful, P——?"

"My liege!" I exclaimed, falling on my knee.

"Well, well!" said the king, impatiently—"up, for there is work to do. Thou couldst not fail to observe the dark stranger who dared watch us but now at the chapel?"

"I saw him your majesty," I answered, mechanically, overwhelmed with alarm at the danger I saw impending over the queen.

"Go after him, lie in wait, search for him, bring him to me," said Henry. "Here is the order, if need be, for his arrest." And he placed a paper in my hands. "Be resolute, speedy and faithful! and princely shall be thy reward. But if thou too darrest play the traitor, remember, thy head is the penalty!"

"With these words the king pushed aside a pile of papers, and taking up one, held it before my eyes as in warning. It was the sentence of condemnation, for high treason, passed on Francis Derham, private secretary of the queen, which had been sent for the royal signature!"

"I know not how my senses were preserved at this awful sight, revealing as it did the whole fatal truth without a shade of doubt. I felt my limbs totter under me; I essayed once or twice in vain to speak; the blood forsok my cheek. The king's eyes were bent on me as if he would read my very soul; they seemed to glow like fire; his brow was fiercely contracted, and wore that dark crimson flush which in him betokened the anger that slew whomsoever it lighted on. After a few moments of silent scrutiny, the gaze of those fearful eyes was removed with a gesture of satisfaction, as if convinced of my fidelity; my master waved his hand, and in his deep hoarse tone, uttering the single word 'Go!' dismissed me on my errand of destruction."

"A determined spirit took possession of me when I departed from that dreaded presence. I sought the stranger every where; I left untried no means of discovery, I questioned every one about the court. Late in the evening of the fourth day, I learned from the landlord of a coffeehouse of much celebrity and a place of constant resort by the young men of the nobility, that the stranger whose appearance I described so minutely was in all likelihood the same who had late been frequently at his house. This was a young jurist and poet, Sir George B——. The host knew not the place of his residence, nor sought else of him. With trembling eagerness I asked at what hour I might expect to find him, and departed, promising to return at the appointed time, and binding the landlord to secrecy."

"From daylight until noon next day I hovered about the house. At length my patience was rewarded. I saw a young man enter, and understood, by a sign from the landlord that this was probably the person I sought. I fol-

lowed him; it was indeed the stranger I had seen at the chapel. He went into the breakfasting room, threw aside his cloak, and sat down to table. It was some time before he seemed aware that my eyes were rivetted upon him; meanwhile he finished his meal in silence, and I had leasure to remark his singular and interesting countenance. A profusion of black hair, arranged differently from the prevailing fashion, hung over his cheeks and neck; his dress shewed a mixture of extravagance and carelessness, for it was the richest and finest materials, worn in such a manner as showed him utterly neglectful of his exterior. His features were pleasing when in repose, though their expression was that of deep melancholy; and I was struck by his apparently extreme youth. What could have happened to consign one of years so few, and of wealth and condition, to hopeless sorrow!

"At length, looking up after a fit of musing, he observed my looks fastened upon him; and starting up, walked to the window. In a few moments, turning round, and meeting the same fixed gaze, he came to me, and said, angrily—

"If you have no better employment, fair sir, than to watch thus rudely one who desires not your company, you have leave to depart!"

"Not till we are better acquainted," was my reply. "I have sought you too long."

"His eyes flashed fire, and he laid his hand on his sword. 'Sought me!' he repeated; 'By St. Mary! but this savors of boldness! And what I pray, is your business?'"

"I would have brief discourse with you."

"Touching what?"

"The queen's majesty."

"If some secret spell had been hidden in the word's I uttered they could not have produced a more instantaneous effect. He grew pale as death and I saw that a shudder passed through his frame. I was confident that in him I beheld one of the queen's most zealous friends. In few words I opened my heart; I communicated my fears; I told all that I knew. When I mentioned that his mysterious pursuit of her majesty had excited the suspicions of the king and court he groaned aloud. I related the substance of my late interview with Henry, showed the royal warrant for his arrest and besought him, as he valued his own safety and that of my hapless mistress, to depart instantly from the realm."

"All I said produced the most lively effect. The young stranger covered his face with his hands; emotion shook his frame; I saw that he wept. After a few moments, lifting up his head, he exclaimed, in anguish; 'Alas, alas! I warned her in vain!'"

"Ha! I cried, 'you know the queen, then! you have spoken with her?'"

"The stranger looked at me earnestly, as if he would penetrate the meaning of my question, and answered: 'I have not spoken with her majesty; I have sought an audience in vain. But you, sir, are her friend who is surrounded by enemies. You shall know all.'"

"In childhood I was the orphan protege of the noble parents of Katherine Howard. In later years I lived in the household of the Duchess of Norfolk; I was the companion of Katherine's studies and sports; the attendant of the young orphan. I loved her when she had none to love, scarcely to protect her. We wrote to each other by means of her governess for a year after my departure to Paris, where I was sent by my uncle, Lord——. Then the letters ceased and I knew not what was become of the maiden till I learned that she was the wedded wife of the sovereign of England."

"I was no mate for the daughter of the illustrious house of the Howards; but in the hour of adversity, the tercel may succor the eagle. From the day she became a queen the shadow of death overhung her."

"Farther discourse of matters touching the queen, which I may not here record and which the stranger required me to communicate only to her highness, under the sanction of an oath on the crucifix, was interrupted by the entrance of other guests. Our conference might seem suspicious at that perilous juncture, and we separated, pledging our word to meet again at ten that night in a retired part of St.——. B. then quitted the house. He had me in his power, but I teared no evil from having entrusted him with any communications, feeling intuitively that he was incapable of treachery."

[To be continued.]

THE ATMOSPHERE.

The atmosphere is one of the most essential appendages to the globe we inhabit, and exhibits a most striking scene of Divine skill and omnipotence. The term atmosphere is applied to the whole mass of fluids, consisting of air, vapour, electric fluid, and other matters which surround the earth to a certain height. This mass of fluid matter gravitates to the earth, revolves with it in diurnal rotation, and is carried along with it in its course round the sun every year. It has been computed to extend about 45 miles above the earth's surface, and it presses on the earth with a force proportioned to its height and density. From experiments made with the barometer, it has been ascertained that it presses with a weight of about fifteen pounds on every square inch of the earth's surface; and therefore its pressure on the body of a middle sized man is equal to about 32,000 pounds, or fourteen tons averdupois, a pressure which would be insupportable and even fatal, were it not equal in every part, and counterbalanced by the spring of the air within us. The pressure of the whole atmosphere upon the earth is computed to be equi-

valent to that of a globe of lead 60 miles in diameter, or about 5,000,000,000,000,000 tons; that is, the whole mass of air which surrounds the globe compasses the earth with a force equal to that of five thousand millions of millions of tons. This most astonishing pressure is, however, essentially necessary for the preservation of the present constitution of our globe, and of the animated beings which dwell on its surface. It prevents the heat of the sun from converting water, and all other fluids on the face of earth into vapour; and preserves the vessels of all organized beings in due tone and vigour. Were the atmospherical pressure entirely removed, the elastic fluid contained in the finer vessels of men and other animals, would inevitably burst them, and life would become extinct; and most of the substances on the face of the earth, particularly fluids would be dissipated into vapour."

—Dick's Christian Philosopher.

The Politician.

The British Press.

From the London Morning Post.

THE LATE LARGE FAILURES.

The failure of the house of Reid, Irving, and Co., may fairly be regarded as a national calamity. In that and in the even more fearful disasters which are yet in store for British commercialists and traders, may be traced the necessary operation of Peel's Money Laws, and of Peel's Free trade schemes. Journalists who uphold the deadly heresies of bullionism and of free trade are not yet, however, disposed to abandon principles dear to Jews and Anti-corn leaguers, as well as to their tool, the great apostate. The Morning Chronicle, for instance, effects to regard the frightful failures which have recently startled the commercial world, as merely 'exceptional cases'—cases which by no means prove trade to be generally in an unsound condition. In the same spirit, the Times declares that 'nothing hath yet occurred to shake the real stability of commercial credit'—that 'all the evils which have yet taken place have either had their origin in direct speculation, or been the natural climax of a long continued state of weakness'—nay, our contemporary ventures even to assure his readers, that the failure of houses like that of Reid, Irving, and Co., ought to be a matter of thankfulness rather than of alarm to the solid trader. Can such wild incoherencies as these be paralleled out of the latitude of Bedlam? What may the Chronicle mean by 'exceptional cases?' In what sense, and to what rule may these frightful disasters be regarded as 'exceptional?' May smaller and weaker establishments hope to be 'excepted' from the action of these deadly influences, which are now crushing some of the mightiest commercial houses in the world? To what rule besides are these disasters an 'exception?' Is prosperity the rule to which the Chronicle alludes? Will our contemporary be graciously pleased to indicate in what quarter of the trading world prosperity is to be discovered? Shall we look for prosperity in the manufacturing districts, where masters and operatives are discussing together the expediency of suspending factory labor for months to come? Shall we look for prosperity in the great coal districts, where it is openly proclaimed, that if Government aid, in the form of credit, be longer withheld, sixty thousand miners must be thrown out of employment? Shall we look for prosperity among the merchants of Liverpool, Glasgow, and London—among men whom Peel's policy has deprived of confidence in their own adventures—among men from whom Peel's policy has compelled bankers to withhold confidence? If the iron trade be prosperous, the prosperity of the iron trade is to be ascribed solely to the influence of railway enterprise—of that form of enterprise— which bullionists and free traders denounce, without intermission, as one of the chief causes of commercial disasters by which each successive day is signalised. What, again may the Times wish to denote by the terms 'excessive speculation?' Speculation in foreign corn may, undoubtedly, have been recently carried to excess; but can we forget that within these six weeks, Times and Chronicle—bullionists and free traders, in all their varieties—were loud in their assertions that speculators in foreign corn were the best friends whom England possessed? Can we forget that 'forestalling' and 'regrating' in all their branches were described as the most valuable of those arts, by which the wants of society are ministered to; and the protectionists who ventured to object to speculations of that sort were denounced as ignorant bigots. And do we, in very truth, bear 'speculations in corn' vehemently condemned by the admirers of 'regrating' and 'forestalling?' We cannot coincide to the Times that the recent failures are to be ascribed to 'excessive speculation,' excepting so far as 'excessive speculation' has been encouraged by influences inherent in Peel's free trade schemes, and in Peel's Money laws. The free trade theory, res, be it remembered, on the assumption that the operations of commerce may safely be left to regulate themselves. How, then, may a supporter of the doctrine of free trade venture to hint that speculation can be 'excessive?' In doing so he tacitly admits that a necessity exists for the regulation of trade—he tacitly admits, in other words the truth of the Protectionist theory. Peel's money laws and Peel's free trade policy have undoubtedly generated 'excessive speculation'—for Peel's Legislation has deprived all commercial operations of the security which at one time belonged to

them. What course of commercial action may now be pronounced safe? Peel's legislation, monetary and fiscal, renders it impossible for any merchant to calculate, with the slightest approach to accuracy, the exchangeable value of the returns, which any given venture may produce. Peel has rendered the Bank of England useless to the commercial community during every commercial crisis. He boasts that his bank Charter Act has secured the bank's solvency. He might on the same principles exult over a policy that should altogether prevent trading operations, on the ground that such a policy prevented failures in trade. How may the solvency of the bank of England benefit the commercial world, if that solvency is to be secured by means, which in their operation destroy the solvency of thousands of traders and merchants? Peel's money laws, are, in fact, measures directed against the ultimate solvency of all the productive and distributing classes in the British empire.

From the London Times.

THE INDIAN ARCHIPELAGO.—MR.

BROOKE'S POLICY

When arrived in Borneo Mr. Brooke did not unduly hurry on results. He waited until he had acquired such influence over the natives as would induce them to look up to him as their protector, and yield a cheerful acquiescence in the measures he might propose for their benefit. It was not until September, 1841, that he received a cession of the territory and government of Sarawak from the Rajah Muda Hassim. When this gift had been ratified by the Sultan, instead of turning the acquisition to his own private ends, and endeavouring to make his profit of the antimony mines in the district, we find Mr. Brooke applying to the Home Government, and only anxious that this country might reap the fruits of his successful enterprise. "How can I be otherwise than happy," he writes from Sarawak, in the latter end of 1841, "when I know that I am of service to a most unhappy race, and that I am giving an impulse to this fine island which must soon approximate it to the rest of the world, instead of leaving it hermetically sealed, with its millions of inhabitants, as it is at present? If, however, we do not take care, the Dutch will have it, and then farewell hope; for Dutch policy with respect to natives is a palsy and death to British manufactures. Is the British lion for ever to crouch beneath the belly of the Dutch frog?" The two motives of philanthropy and patriotism, would perhaps have been the only ones sufficiently strong to have sustained Mr. Brooke in his six years' struggle to carry his purpose into effect. We do not mean to cast any blame on the Administration of Sir Robert Peel or Lord John Russell for having thrown undue delays in the path of the English Rajah of Sarawak. The late and present Premier, Lords Aberdeen, Haddington, Palmerston, and Grey, took the right measure of the man with whom they had to deal. The encouragement given to Mr. Brooke in the prosecution of his enterprise is a singular instance of official sagacity—an exception to the general rule in such cases. It might be wished that a little had been done, and that it had been somewhat quicker done; but Mr. Brooke may congratulate himself on having accomplished more wonderful things in Downing-street than on the Banks of the Sarawak River.

The advantages of such a port as Labuan for the China trade, and the certainty now established of the presence of coal in Borneo in large quantities and of excellent quality, was doubtless the main point that determined the Government in favour of Mr. Brooke's plans, the position of this port is excellent for the purposes of steam navigation in the Chinese seas, being about 700 miles from Singapore, and about 1,000 miles from Hong-Kong. It is situated at a point where British influence is essential to the security from hostile attack, whether by pirate or enemy, of our communication with China and the productive Islands of the Indian Archipelago. Mr. Brooke, we believe, has just been appointed, as he most richly merited, to be the first Governor of Labuan, and to him we look for the future with perfect confidence to watch over the interests of Great Britain in those distant seas. The account we recently published of the attack of the Nemesis on the Malay pirates, and the narrative of the captives, are sufficient to show the fearful nature of the atrocity it has been one of Mr. Brooke's most anxious thoughts to suppress. These ruffians roam about the islands of the Archipelago, and landing here and there, seize upon and make captive whomsoever they can find. Men, women and children are torn from their homes, and consigned to dreadful and perpetual captivity. When they were attacked by the steamer they caused their prisoners to sit on deck during the action, that they might fall the victims to the fire of those who would have been their liberators. It is impossible, of course, to approve the wild justice of the Sultan and the Pangeran Moormein when the pirates were delivered up to them. It is possible however the terror of the example may operate to deter others, and the men richly deserved their fate. When Mr. Brooke is installed in his government at Labuan, if sufficient means be placed at his disposal, it is to be expected that the system of Malay piracy will be thoroughly rooted out from the Archipelago. The general interests of Borneo and of English commerce are not likely to receive any harm from Mr. Brooke's temporary absence. All is quiet at Bruas and Sarawak. He will be back at his post in April or May of next year, and it would not be possible to carry on proceedings at Labuan in the inter-