

we will see how this wilful lady bears her captivity. Methinks her face should have found its bloom again before this; lead the way to her chamber. By our fathers' soul we knew not this rebel lord had so fair a wife.

Ralph Flambard took a torch from the wall and walking before his master to light the way conducted him to the very apartment in which Northumberland had parted with his bride only that morning.

Matilda heard their footsteps and, strange as it may seem, her strength returned and she grew calm. Arising to her feet, she stood upon resting one hand upon the pedestal of clouded porphyry which supported the crucifix. The door opened and King Rufus presented himself in the entrance, while Ralph Flambard stood farther down in the passage with his sharp features kindled up by the torch.

Rufus was flushed with wine, his heavy lids, his dark grey eyes and something, even in his gait, proclaimed the deep carouse from which he had just arisen. His royal vestments—for he had cast off his armor—were in disarray, and his hair hung loosely over his shoulders, the longest locks damp with the overflow of a wine tankard. Still there was something in the calm, lofty bearing of the countess that awed him. It was not merely pride but her features bore an expression of lofty self-confidence. Prayer had made her strong. She fixed her large eyes upon the king, as he entered her chamber, and never turned them for an instant from his. Had she cast them down for a moment, had she trembled in the slightest degree, King Rufus might have gained courage; but now, like the lion, his brutal nature was awed by the calm glance of a human eye.

'Wherefore this intrusion, Sir King?' she said, calmly and at once, as he paused near the entrance, awed by her gentle composure. 'If you have aught to say which befits Northumberland's countess to hear, to-morrow will be a more seeming time; I would be alone with this.'

She bent her head reverently before the crucifix and then turned her eyes upon him again.

'And is the sight of your king so hateful, proud dame, that his presence is greeted after this chilling fashion?' said Rufus, in a deprecating tone.

'It is hateful, and will be, while my husband remains a prisoner in his own castle, rendered such by treachery and fraud, cast so base, treachery so deep, that even a Norman king should blush for it. The sight of a monarch so recreant to all knightly faith and kingly honor is hateful to me—I would be relieved of it.'

'Not yet, fair lady; such cutting words become not that winsome face. We must have those lips accustomed to softer speech. What though thy traitor husband is a prisoner in his own dungeon, those sweet eyes have avenged his captivity already. Is not the king more the slave of thy beauty than Northumberland can be made of his power?'

The countess did not speak; her face scarcely changed from its former resolute tranquillity, a faint curl of the beautiful lip, fraught with cutting scorn, became visible, like a shadow, and that was all.

The king gazed upon her and his discomfiture became more evident. He even drew a step toward the door, over which a fold of tapestry had swept. A faint sneering laugh reached his ear. 'Ha! his Norman blood avails little here; the woman jeers at him.'

It was the voice of that mocking fiend, Ralph Flambard; and it had the desired effect. Rufus started, the evil spirit broke once more into his face, and he advanced rudely toward the countess.

'Start not back, fair dame; thou hast nothing to fear. The king loves thee too well for cause of terror.'

'I do not fear,' said the lady, and her hand rose a little upon the porphyry column. 'This is my protection.'

'The crucifix! Ha, ha! It has protected so many Saxon dames!' cried the king, with a coarse laugh. 'Trust to it—trust to it! Nay thou shalt carry it with thee to Malwood-Keep—others of thy race have done so before, even from the sanctuary. Doubt not it will avail thee much.'

And now the rude Norman was close by her side—his wine-laden breath reached her cheek.

She recoiled a step—more with disgust than fear—her hand was still upon the porphyry column. She pressed it just where a golden rivet protruded below the sacred image and the column split apart, revealing a small dagger, sheathed in its cavity. She snatched it, and in the twinkling of an eye, its sharp point was against her throat, just over that large artery which leads directly from the heart.

Another step, Sir King, and you tread upon my corpse.'

With an exclamation of horror and surprise Rufus drew back. He was brave as a lion, and the heroism of this act was of a kind to arouse his full sympathy. A sensation of sublime respect, never felt for woman before took possession of him. His eyes lighted up. His ruddy face lost a portion of its color and, with a burst of intense admiration, he cried,

'Brave dame, beautiful woman! take the poniard from that lily throat! By my father's soul, Rufus molests thee no more till—till—' He checked himself, cast another admiring glance upon her and left the chamber.

'Till when, great king, till when? if your poor chaplain may ask so bold a question,' said Ralph, stealing after the monarch with his torch.

'Till William Rufus can make her queen of England,' said the king, taring proudly upon the favourite, and smiling as he observed

the consternation with which his words were received.

'My liege, you are but jesting,' replied the favorite with a smile.

'By all the saintly bones resting in the golden shrines of our realm, she shall be crowned and anointed queen before two months have passed, exclaimed Rufus with enthusiasm. 'Never before have I seen that woman's brow upon which Rufus could trust his diadem.'

'But her traitor husband is alive,' said Flambard, pale and trembling with consternation.

'And what do we with traitors but send them to the block,' cried Rufus. 'I tell thee, Flambard, this woman shall be the ancestress of a hundred kings. To-morrow, at day-light, she goes with us to Malwood-Keep in our hunting chase of the New Forest. See that litters are prepared and that her women are ready.'

'Ralph Flambard lives but to obey his master,' said the hypocrite, with a bland smile.

'But he likes not to share the royal favor, even with a woman,' rejoined Rufus, laughing. 'Do thy office with this lady gently, good Ralph, and win some hold on her favor. We would have thee on good terms with our queen.'

Ralph bit his lip till the blood started, but his face was in the shadow and he answered, in a soft voice,

'I shall do my best to please any one whom the king loves, but who will be left in charge with the fortress?'

'Thou, good Ralph, for a day or two at least—and, hark ye—the moment our escort is out of sight, bring that rebel earl into the court and behead him before the whole garrison. We would have plenty of witnesses to his death. Then appoint a lieutenant in thy stead, and hasten with the tidings to New Forest.'

With these words King Rufus entered his chamber, leaving the favorite behind in the passage.

For the duration of perhaps three minutes, Ralph Flambard stood motionless, with the torch in his right hand and his eyes bent upon the floor. Many a plotting and wicked thought flitted across his features, as the light streamed over them, and all the while, a fold of his under lip was locked between his sharp teeth.

'Lo, with that little poniard, scarcely larger or sharper, I dare swear, than a bodkin, the fair lady has cut her way to a throne,' he muttered; 'and then where is Ralph Flambard, whom she hates for her lord's death. We shall see—we shall see!'

With these words dropping in fragments from his lip, Ralph passed slowly down the passage to the room which he had selected for himself. A man was sleeping with all his armor on, across a truck bed, near the door. He had evidently been drinking deep and seemed fatigued, but Ralph shook him by the shoulder, ordering him to get up and prepare for a journey.

While the man was fastening on pieces of armor that lay near his couch, Flambard sat down at a table and spreading a piece of parchment before him, began to write.

'The time has arrived when our compact must be put in force if ever—come to Bamboorough in all speed.' This was all the parchment contained; for Ralph was prudent and even withheld his signature. Hastily securing the parchment with a thong of silk, he gave it to a man, accompanied by a purse of gold.

'Ride night and day till you place this in Prince Henry's own hands; tell him all that has been passing here—and that the king goes to new forest in the morning; I will myself pass you at the barican, come.' The two went forth together.

At daylight the draw bridge was again lowered and the king rode forth, followed by a stately retinue of his nobles and about half of the troops that had entered the castle at night fall. Behind came a train of litters, guarded deep by double ranks of pikemen, whose tramp drowned the shrieks of distress that broke, ever and anon, from beneath the silken curtains. Ralph Flambard was left in charge of the castle. And did he obey the last cruel order of the king. Was the noble earl of Northumberland brought forth, for execution as the royal escort swept like a gorgeous cloud, over the distant hill. No, every thing was quiet in the old fortress. The earl paced his dungeon, chafing and anxious, like a lion taking the rounds of his jungle when the hunters have enclosed him. Flambard kept his chamber, or wandered thoughtfully upon the ramparts, and the sentinels paced their rounds, challenging each other in monotonous voices, and in this manner three days went by.

On the fourth day a young man, having the dark hair, keen black eyes and peculiar features of the Norman race, sat with Ralph Flambard alone in the favorite's chamber. His garments were travel-soiled, and he seemed weary with some unusual exertion; still his eye was full of active intelligence and as he listened to what Ralph had to impart, a deep and startling interest seemed to arouse him above all sense of fatigue.

'What, marry her—marry her?' he exclaimed; 'I thought that your pious teaching, Flambard would have saved us from this.' 'What my teachings fail in, my hand shall accomplish,' said Ralph, with a sinister smile. The lady must be a widow before she can be a wife. 'And you have not executed the earl? 'No; the fond dame herself could not be more chary of his life.' 'And think you he would, in sober earnest make this lady his queen? 'I do.' But he will question you—

he will know that the earl is still in existence.'

'He may not live to ask the question,' said Flambard, toying with the end of his silken scarf. 'How?' rejoined the other not in accents of surprise, but even sinking his voice. 'Rufus has gone to the New Forest. It is a place fatal to the descendants of your august sire; remember that brave youth who called Duke Robert father, he fell to rise no more among its glades. When you are king, take the poor chaplain's advice, and avoid the royal chase of New Forest.'

'When I am king,' said Prince Henry, if Rufus marries that will never be.' 'Were I sure that the next king of England would give confidence and favor to Ralph as Rufus has done, he should not marry.'

Slowly Prince Henry lifted his eyes, and slowly rose the keen orbs of Ralph Flambard. Their glances met, and full half a minute these two men gazed upon each other; each reading, as if it had been written there in blood, the murderous thought in his neighbour's soul.

'Is there no other way?' said Henry at length, and his voice sunk low.

'None,' replied Ralph Flambard, and he fell to playing with the fringes of his scarf again.

Prince Henry reached forth his hand and grasped that of Ralph.

'The next king of England shall cherish thee even as Rufus has. Thou shalt have favor, wealth, power, during thy whole life—he swears it.' 'I will meet you at Malwood twenty-four hours after you join the king. You are fond of the chase and he will not refuse to get up a right kingly hunt in honor of your coming.' The prince grasped his companion's hand. Thus the conference ended between Prince Henry and Ralph Flambard.

The king held a revel in Malwood-Keep—high revel in honor of his brother Henry; for there had been dissension between the two and now, when the impulsive monarch was softened by the influence of true and earnest love, he was rejoiced to receive his younger brother in amity again. Deep was the carouse that night; the arched roof was studded with torches; tankards of gold, goblets crusted with jewels, and drinking horns trimmed with precious stones and dripping with wine flashed upon the board. The king and his courtiers were all in revel vestments. Jeweled collars, robes sown thick with pearls, and silken scarfs of every hue, each a gift and token, blended in that barbaric and gorgeous scene. Deep, deep in the night they drank; ripples of red wine flowed from the table to the floor, where it lay flashing to the light in many a ruby pool. The arches rang with songs and choruses shouted from a hundred winestained lips; the very walls seemed to tremble and reel with glee.

Day-light broke. The fresh rosy morning, like a sweet child, beaming with innocence, came softly through the windows and looked upon the scene.

'Now for the hunt?' shouted King Rufus; 'let us see how many of our court can ride steadily like their king and leader after this night's carouse one half hour for the bath, and then ho! for the green wood!'

The revellers went forth, pell-mell, shouting and filling the sweet morning air with the noise of their unweary riot. Rufus went to his chamber to change his robes for a hunting dress. There Ralph was waiting for him.

'Ha, Ralph, my gentle Ralph! what news from Bamboorough?' cried the monarch, embracing his favourite with fierce joy. 'Tell me at once; is she a widow? Speak, that I may feast my eyes upon her face once more!'

'And have you not seen her, my liege?'

'No, by my faith! An empress could not stand more upon state; and I dare not press her—she would put that threat in execution. But now—now that I can make her a queen, she will not receive me with a poniard at her throat. But why speak you not? Is Northumberland dead?' 'How can my liege ask the question? Did he not command the earl's death? and when did Ralph Flambard fail to perform his master's behest?' said Ralph, reproachfully. 'The earl was executed before your last pennon was out of sight.' 'Now, now she will not refuse me! I will go to her at once!' cried the king. 'Were it not better to warn her of your coming, my liege, and visit her after the hunt, which seems to be gathering? A sharp chase will shake off the wine-fever that somewhat impairs the majesty of your royal countenance. Hark! the dogs are gathering!'

'Well, after the chase be it. Ah, I had forgotten. Harry is with us, my brother Harry; and we have caroused to his honor till the walls shook. Go, Flambard, and tell him we shall mount in five minutes.' Flambard obeyed and sought Prince Henry. But in the hunt that followed, these two persons were never seen together.

It was in August and the New Forest was in its richest foliage. The sun light streamed through its glades, and the bright dew lay heavily where the shadows fell. Into its cool depths plunged the royal hunt. Horns sounded cheerily from glade to glade. The dogs clamored, the horsemen broke up into groups galloping at will beneath the mighty oaks. Never had Rufus appeared in such spirits. The wine that he had drunk, the news that Flambard had brought, fired his blood into a sort of delirium. Prince Henry had turned into a cross path with another group and Rufus rode on at full gallop, chasing the hart whose track the dogs were upon. The hart came in sight, foam dropping from his lips, and his great eyes blood-shot. The hounds were upon him close and baying fearfully, so that the creature plunged on headlong into the king's path; but the sun was bright and

struck in the monarch's eyes. He lifted his hand to shade them and to discover the exact position of the deer. That instant several arrows cut through the branches of a neighbouring oak and one struck Rufus beneath the uplifted arm. A single sharp cry and WILLIAM RUFUS, the Red King, fell to the earth.

Henry the first was king, and in his closet at Winchester Castle, Ralph Flambard stood before him. 'My liege,' said the murderer, with audacious effrontery, 'I would claim the castles and manors of Northumberland. They were promised me by your late brother.'

'The manors and castles of Northumberland are not mine to confer. They yet belong to a certain earl of that name,' said King Henry, in a cold tone. 'But my liege, your promise—your oath,' said Flambard, turning pale.

'My oath shall be kept, said Henry.

'So long as you live all favor, power and honor are yours—so long as you live.'

Flambard trembled, his lips grew white, and he sunk to his knees; 'Surely, surely, my liege!' burst from his quivering lips. 'What ho!' cried King Henry starting up. 'Take this man into the court and cut off his head! The soldiers seized upon the cowering wretch. They dragged him forth, struggling and crying piteously for help; and there King Henry sat listening with a half smile to those terrible shrieks. A low sound of mustering feet, a dull blow and the incipient smile spread brightly over the monarch's face. 'There perishes all evidence of the past,' he muttered. 'Poor fool, he cannot say that Henry did not keep his oath.'

The Earl of Northumberland was still a prisoner in his own castle; ignorant of the fate of his countess and spirit-broken with long confinement, his very life became irksome. He stood before a loop hole of his prison-tower. It was narrow and deep but commanded a view of the distant hills. What was it broke this monotonous green? A band of armed men—a litter with the silken curtains half up! His heart beat, his cheek grew red and pale again. The litter and its armed guard drew nearer—nearer yet. It entered the wood; it was visible now and then through the trees. It came out in an open space—nearer yet. The curtains fluttered—a white hand held them back, another waved some joyous signal on the air. He knew her—it was his wife. The stout warrior sank to his knees, trembling like a child. He buried his face between both hands and strove to force back the tears that shamed his manhood. Many confused sounds followed—the sinking draw-bridge—the bolt moving in its socket. Then he started up and sprang toward the door—she was in his arms—upon his bosom, weeping, smiling and sobbing out her joy.

'The king is dead! His brother Henry reigns! He gives you back lands, castles, liberty, and—and—your wife!'

She could say no more, for all the joy that rioted in her fall heart was smothered by his kisses, as it rose to her lips.

## Lecture on Phrenology.

MR. JOHNSON'S LECTURE ON PHRENOLOGY.

Continued from our last.

'Tis urged again, that the organs cannot increase after maturity, when the skull has formed hard above them; and that phrenology would make such persons incapable of moral or intellectual improvement.

Now, even admitting this proposition, and the conclusion drawn from it, to be correct, it would not still be fatalism, or anything unscriptural, because we are expressly told that there is a time when man's day of grace shall be past; and for aught we know to the contrary, this may be the very manner in which a man closes the door of mercy against himself; but it would not therefore follow, that the most hardened sinner may not be converted by a special act of grace, this being an exception to the rule, the design or intention of which we cannot comprehend. Nor can we comprehend the design of the creator in the formation of *Idiots*, whom we hold unaccountable for their acts, and incapable of improvement; but surely ignorance of the design does not cause us to doubt the fact of *Idiocy*, and believing this fact does not make us fatalists. Besides, neither the premises nor the conclusion of the proposition are correct; not the premises, because every atom in the human body changes once in seven years; because old men are frequently found with smaller heads than when young; and because we have many direct instances of very marked changes in the form of living heads, even after maturity; and the conclusion would not necessarily follow, though the premises were admitted, for though cultivation of an organ could not increase its size, it would assuredly increase its activity, and those organs which were controlled or unexercised, would necessarily diminish in power.

One of the leading doctrines of phrenology is, that upon cultivation depends much the activity of the organs, and upon the activity again depends in a great measure their respective power and influence upon character.

It is a plain maxim, that two truths can never clash; they must either stand wholly unconnected, having no leaning upon each other, or they must impart and receive mutual strength by connexion; and therefore we need never shun the investigation of any science, through dread that a conviction of its truth will overturn or oppose that which is the very light and essence of truth. On the contrary, the more we investigate the works of the Creator, the more plainly must we behold him in those works. He who formed, now directs and guides His creatures; and He so guides