

THE AMARANTH.

CONDUCTED BY ROBERT SHIVES.

VOL. 3. }

SAINT JOHN, N. B., JUNE, 1843.

{ No. 6.

THE LAST DAYS OF PRINCES.

(Concluded.)

BET where is the brave, the good-natured, the indolent Robert, all this time? When last we took leave of him, he was assuming the cross, and departing for the Holy Land. He has, since then, fought like a good knight, and performed prodigies of valor; nay, weak and unthinking as he had ever proved in his own affairs, he has evinced sagacity and prudence in council as well as valor in the field; and at the juncture at which we have arrived, he is for the first and only time in his eventful life, reposing in the lap of ease, enjoying the clat of his noble deeds, and blessed in the smiles and love of a fair young princess.— Henry had indeed set forth a story that his brother had taken up his abode in Palestine, from which he would no more return, in consequence of the throne of Jerusalem having been bestowed upon him for his valor. A false report, and a glaring one, which the deceitful monarch was aware could not long remain undiscovered; but he trusted in his wiles, and only desired time to strengthen his position.

The truth was, that the heroic leader of the first active crusade, the immortalized Godfrey of Bouillon had been elected King of Jerusalem; and Robert, whose power was little short of that which shed a glory over the name of Godfrey, had begun to return towards his native land, before the death of his brother William. He landed in Southern Italy, where he lingered in the knightly society of many an illustrious brother in arms, who, like himself, had sheathed their swords, and were now reposing under their hard-earned laurels. Here he had the happiness to obtain a bride in the young, the beautiful, the rich, and the good Sybilla, daughter of a powerful Italian prince; their affection was mutual, and now, for a time,

he solaced himself for all his former labours and struggles. It was not until he finally arrived at his own patrimonial dominion of Normandy, that he learnt the death of Rufus, and the treachery of Beau Clerc, when he instantly determined to strike for his claim to the succession.

But the crafty Henry was too well acquainted with his brother's disposition to be greatly moved by his threats. Henry was at least King, *de facto*, powerful, rich, and vigilant; whilst Robert was but Duke of Normandy, with many of his fortresses in pledge in his brother's hands. At this time, also, Robert was vain of his beautiful bride, whom he took from city to city, and whose large fortune he squandered in vain shows. What was the consequence? When he really commenced hostilities, he was without the "sinews" of war, and the nobles, friendly to his cause, who admired his bravery and open disposition, were afraid to trust themselves to the consequences of his indolence. Yet many were true to him, and still more were suspected by Beau Clerc, who, in this campaign, put forth all the tact and discernment for which he was so remarkable. The dispute, this time, therefore, was a bloodless one; for, although the hostile forces met, yet instead of contesting the field, the principals proceeded to negotiations; the easy, indolent Robert, was prevailed on to accept the title and full possession of Normandy, together with an annual allowance of three thousand marks, and to give up all claim on England during the life of Henry; adding, however, the old and unheeded proviso, that, whoever of the two should be the survivor, should inherit both the governments.— There was, however, another clause in the treaty, which was ultimately the source of all Robert's misfortunes, and of the blackest crimes that consequently ensued in the remaining history of the Beau Clerc. It was this,