

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.



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OF all unsolved problems of history there is none more perplexing, none more seemingly insoluble, than that afforded by the career and character of Mary Queen of Scots. Time has done nothing to detract from the peculiar witchery of her charms, or the romantic interest which attaches to her strange adventures. Her admirers are as enthusiastic three centuries removed from her as were those who fell beneath the peculiar spell of her presence—a spell which few were ever able wholly to resist. The controversy which waged about her while she lived continues as hot, and almost as bitter, over her grave. History can come no nearer a verdict than could her own contempo-

* The numerous portraits ascribed to this princess are as various and dissimilar as the circumstances of her life, and have excited almost as much doubt and controversy as the disputed points of her history, agreeing only in representing her as eminently beautiful.

The picture which has furnished the plate before us has been preserved with the greatest care from time immemorial in the mansion of Dalmahoy, the principal seat in Scotland of the Earl of Morton. On the upper part of it is inscribed, "Mary Queen of Scots: said to have been painted during her confinement in Lochleven Castle;" and the earl who at present possesses it states that, according to a tradition in his lordship's family, it was once the property of George Douglas, the liberator of Mary, and that it passed from him to his eminent relation, James, fourth Earl of Morton, with whose posterity it remains to the present day.

raries. Its only answer, like theirs, is, We can not agree.

This controversy is not a purely personal one; if it had been, it would have been neither so bitter nor so prolonged. In the sixteenth century the Reformation was a battle, sometimes theological, sometimes diplomatic, sometimes military; but, under Luther, Coligni, and Walsingham, always a battle. The era of Mary's life was the March month of the world's history, in which summer and winter contended for the mastery. In England the reformed religion, despite the check it received from Bloody Mary, had become the dominant religion of the state; but Rome still held the allegiance of a large minority of Queen Elizabeth's subjects, and did not give over the hope of recovering the lost "jewel of the seas" till the destruction of the Spanish Armada in 1588. In France Rome controlled the court, but not the nation; nor did Protestants abandon all hope of redeeming the birthplace of Calvin and Farel until the massacre of St. Bartholomew

in 1572. Scotland, midway between these two contending kingdoms, was their battleground. French and English, Catholic and Protestant, struggled in a bitter war of extermination to possess her—a war which only ceased with the death of both Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth, and the accession of James to the throne of the united kingdom.

Mary was at once French and Catholic. Her most intimate advisers were always French; French literature afforded her favorite recreation; French habits were, as far as possible, domesticated in her Scotch court; and the French language was almost uniformly employed by her in her confidential correspondence. And with all her fickleness, her attachment to her Church never wavered. Strive hard as she might to imitate the example of her unconscionable mother-in-law, Catherine de' Medici, and hold an even balance between the contending religions till the time came to strike for victory, she never could be otherwise than a partisan—always a devoted, though never a blind one. Thus while she lived it was the interest of one faction to destroy and of the other to defend her. Since her death it has been equally the interest of Roman Catholics to canonize her as a martyred saint, and of Protestants to justify the sentence which condemned her to the block.

Thus the difficulties which beset any attempt to tell correctly the story of her career, or analyze aright her character, are very great. The student of history finds no impartial witnesses; few in her own time who are not ready to tell and to believe about her the most barefaced lies which will promote their own party. During her life she was calumniated and eulogized with equal audacity. Since her death the same curiously contradictory estimates of her character have been vigorously maintained—by those, too, who have not their judgment impaired by the prejudices which environed her. On the one hand, we are assured that she was “the most amiable of women;” “the upright queen, the noble and true woman, the faithful spouse, and affectionate mother;” “the poor martyred queen;” “the helpless victim of fraud and force;” an “illustrious victim of state-craft,” whose “kindly spirit in prosperity and matchless heroism in misfortune” award her “the most prominent place in the annals of her sex.” On the other, we are assured, by men equally competent to judge, that she was “a spoiled beauty;” “the heroine of an adulterous melodrama;” “the victim of a blind, imperious passion;” an “apt scholar” in “the profound dissimulation of that school of which Catherine de’ Medici was the chief instructor;” “a bad woman, disguised in the livery of a martyr,” having “a proud heart, a crafty wit, and indurate mind against God and His truth;” “a bold, unscrupulous, ambitious woman,” with “the panther’s nature—graceful, beautiful, malignant, untamable.”

Endeavoring to keep clear of the dust of this famous controversy, we propose in this article to give the reader—as far as may be done in the compass of a few pages—the benefit of that light which modern research among old manuscripts and court records and long-buried correspondence has thrown upon this never-to-be-settled problem of history.*

* Mr. Froude, in his *History of England*, writes almost as a public prosecutor of the Scottish queen, and sometimes sacrifices historical accuracy to dramatic effect. Mr. James Melne, in his *Mary Queen of Scots and her latest English Historian*, assails Froude very bitterly, and shows him to be inaccurate in some minor details; but his own intense partisanship unfits him for the office of a critic, and he entirely fails in his endeavor to neutralize the general effect of Froude’s narrative. Mr. Hosack is an Edinburgh barrister, and in his *Mary Queen of Scots and her Accusers* writes in such a vein as would befit him were he indeed earning a lawyer’s fee by a lawyer’s service. For a brief, but it must be confessed somewhat partisan, account of Mary and her times the reader can find nothing better than MacKenzie’s *History of Scotland*, which is a model compendium of history, as graphic as it is concise; and for a full and painstaking, but somewhat heavy narrative, covering the same ground, he will find nothing so reliable and so impartial as Burton’s *History of Scotland*, which even Hosack praises. It is perhaps proper to add that our statements in this article are not taken at second hand from any of these historians; but that we have verified

August 19, 1561. A fog such as might have served the purpose of a portrait for Dickens’s famous opening chapter in *Bleak House*. “The thickest mist and most drenching rain men remembered ever to have seen.” A fog so thick that the very cannon in the harbor boom with a muffled sound, and the peal of bells from the Edinburgh churches sounds ominously, as if it rang out the funeral knell of the young queen. Such is the day that greets French Mary when she lands on Scottish shores. Better far for her had not this fog hid her squadron from the watchful eyes of her royal cousin. Better that she had fallen then into the hands of Queen Elizabeth than to have become her wretched prisoner seven years later, shorn of that good name which is woman’s chief protection—always and every where her best “safe-conduct.”

French Mary we have called her—for French she really was, though Scotch in birth. She had made her bed on deck when she embarked at Calais, and had lain there all night, watching the receding shore till the darkness wholly veiled it, and rising with the morning dawn to get a farewell glimpse of her beloved France before separating from it forever. French she was in heart and sympathy, and by her mother’s blood, and, with all her disguises, never disguised that from herself or others. If she were, indeed, a saintly queen, she did not come of a family which was prolific in saints. Her paternal grandmother was that English Margaret whose unwomanly lust was not even hid beneath a womanly reserve—“an ignorant, deceitful, low-minded, odious woman;” drying her widow’s tears in three months to marry the handsome Earl of Angus; divorcing him after two years to marry her paramour, Stewart of Avondale; and in nine or ten years later seeking a new divorce that she might return to her first love; as treacherous to her nation as to her husbands; selling information and herself to the English government, and for poor wages too; and at the last paying the penalty all traitors pay in universal neglect and contempt. This Margaret’s son, James V., was Mary’s father, of whom we can say nothing worse than that he was a genuine

them—as far as our American libraries permit—by an examination of the original sources. Neither Buchanan nor Knox is of the slightest value in the investigation of this historical problem, and Hume is little better. Miss Strickland sees the whole story through the atmosphere of a tender and charitable woman’s sympathies. Tytler and Robertson both contain valuable documents. The chief authorities, however, for an original investigation are, Keith, who gives the original documents in extenso—whose history is, indeed, little else than a running commentary on them; *Mary Stuart’s Letters*, of which there are one or two editions, both in French and English; and *Honell’s State Trials*, which contain in full the depositions and confessions of those who, under the direction of Bothwell, actually perpetrated the murder of Darnley.

Stuart, and nothing better than that he was perhaps the best of them. Vigorous in execution, but vacillating in purpose; brave, but both false and fickle; condescending to the people, yet as one who has contempt for them; of good understanding, but of degenerate morals; rebelling against the control of the Scottish nobility, only to resign himself into the hands of the Roman Catholic churchmen—he died at the last broken-hearted, because on the eve of battle deserted by his rebellious army.

Mary Queen of Scots, his only legitimate child, inherited from him the throne, and with it a sorry idea of the sacredness of the marriage tie. It is significant of the credibility of contemporaneous history that this man, who maintained a Scotch harem with four noble wives, and left half a dozen illegitimate children of rank, besides no man knows how many unknown bastards, should be written down as the most exemplary and virtuous of monarchs.

By her father Mary was a Stuart; on her mother's side she belonged to the Lorraines of France—a family as unscrupulous as it was daring. It was her uncle, the chivalrous Duke of Guise, who, coming one day upon a congregation of Protestants, met for worship, and opening fire upon them, when the poor, unarmed martyrs broke through the roof, ordered his soldiers to bring them down with their shot, "as one brings down pigeons," his lady looking on and hugely enjoying the exciting sport. It was her other uncle, the Cardinal of Lorraine, whom Pius V. nicknamed the "Ultramontane Pope," and who signalized his devotion to the Church by holding at one time no less than fourteen sees, bishoprics, and abbeys, and managing with great economy to live very comfortably on the paltry income of 300,000 francs which they annually brought him. "He is not much beloved," says a contemporary; "he is far from truthful, naturally deceitful and covetous, but *full of religion.*" The sister of these Lorraines, Mary of Guise, the mother of Mary Queen of Scots, has been scarcely less bitterly condemned and no less highly eulogized than her daughter. On the whole, there is perhaps no better estimate of her character than that of Robertson: "Mary of Guise possessed the same bold and aspiring spirit which distinguished her family; but in her it was softened by the female character, and accompanied with great temper and address."

This was the "martyred queen's" lineage. Her education was even less adapted to develop saintly qualities. Probably about the last person in the world who would be chosen to educate a saint would be Catherine de' Medici of infamous memory. And Catherine de' Medici was Mary's custodian. This woman, who deliberately debauched her own sons that she might better manage

them, was not, we may imagine, overscrupulous in her counsels to the young girl who was her most dreaded and hated rival. Probably the last school where one would choose to send a susceptible maiden to learn lessons of purity would be the court of France in the sixteenth century. And it was in the court of France Mary spent the most susceptible years of her life—from six to nineteen. Certainly the last custodians of the conscience which a modern would choose would be those Jesuit fathers—Vasquez, Escobar, Mendoza, for example—who did not hesitate to defend by their casuistry, and under color of religion, fraud, forgery, falsehood, murder; and whose teachings, before they were counteracted by the protests of such believers as Pascal, and such heretics as Luther, brought forth their fruit in the assassination of William of Orange and of Coligni, and in the wholesale massacre of St. Bartholomew. And it was these fathers, and their apt disciple the Cardinal of Lorraine, who were the keepers of Mary's conscience.

A virtuous queen she may have been—ingenuous she certainly was not. An apt scholar in this school of Jesuitism she early proved herself to be, not unworthy her birth and costly education. Landing at Leith in the year 1561, she is a charming young widow of nineteen. Three years before she had married Francis II. of France. And never a blush of secret shame mantled her maiden cheek when she signed the treaty which the Scotch commissioners brought her for the purpose of guarding the independence of the nation, jealous of foreign interference; never a hint from which shrewd diplomats could guess that fifteen days before she had signed away the kingdom to the crown of France, annulling beforehand whatever solemn promise to the contrary she might make to her own most beloved and trusting subjects. So young, so fair, and yet so false!

It is a turbulent kingdom that greets fair Mary with its rude but nevertheless cordial welcome. It has had enough of regencies, and hopes for incoming peace with the coming of the sovereign to her throne—peace that no sovereign could give the distracted nation. Diplomacy has secured the court to the French and Catholic faction. The wooing of Henry VIII. has been more like an attempt at rape than like a courtship, and has neither inspired affection nor awakened fear. But the Reformation has secured already the suffrages of the people, and the era when kings and courts really reign has already passed for the Anglo-Saxon race—a fact the Stuarts will never comprehend. Between court and people stand a "turbulent and treacherous nobility," not troubled overmuch with religion of any sort, but so far Protestant as this, that they will never suffer the estates and the political power with

which the Reformation has endowed them to pass into the hands of the ecclesiastics again. To hold an even balance between these conflicting interests requires rare statesmanship, and a rare statesman is happily at Mary's side to do it.

In all the controversies in which James Stuart, Earl of Murray, was subsequently involved, with all the accusations heaped upon him by those who could defend the sister only by defaming the half-brother, it is noticeable that his chastity never was impugned, and his ability never denied. He was either a great statesman or a consummate politician. Which, we shall leave the course of this narrative to indicate. Under his administration three years pass, on the whole, happily and peacefully away. Even sturdy and surly old John Knox relents a little in Mary's presence, and half retracts his *Blast of the Trumpet against the monstrous Regiment of Women*. The attempt to prohibit her private mass proves a failure. The old Scotch divines rebuke the French fashions—masquerades, dancing satyrs, unseemly coquetries, wherein the queen and her ladies robe themselves in male attire, leading now and then to some public scandals; but the people are, for the most part, as deaf as the court to their exhortations. The court has promised sacredly to preserve unimpaired Protestant faith and worship, and no Protestant can ask more. Persecutions cease. There are no more "black lists," or French invasions, or hideous human bonfires. No one imbued with the spirit of modern liberalism can complain that Mary demands for herself the same privilege which she accords to her subjects—"that of worshipping God according to her own creed." One would like to think sincere all her protestations that she has no thought of introducing again the religion of Rome, and relighting the fires of persecution which so lately illumined the streets of Edinburgh with their hideous glare. But her Protestant subjects put not overmuch faith in them. Was it strange? James's legacy to his kingdom was a "black list" of between three and four hundred heretics, persons of property and wealth, who had been singled out to be cut off by a sort of Bartholomew massacre at a blow. No wonder they were suspicious of the daughter. John Knox, surrendering to Mary of Guise twenty years before, on pledge of no other penalty than expatriation, had paid for his untimely confidence by two years in the French galleys. It would have been strange had he not learned at the oars the meaning at least of one text—"Put not your trust in princes." Let charity believe that Mary Queen of Scots was honest in her liberalism: let it not wonder that the Protestant leaders were suspicious of it. "No faith is to be kept with heretics," had already passed into a Jesuit proverb.

So long, at all events, as James, Earl of Murray, is at the head of the government there is no danger, for he is a staunch Protestant, and not a Bothwell nor an Earl of Arran to be used by men more cunning than himself. So the nation rests in tolerable peace, trusting in Murray rather than in Mary, and suffering her mass, though always under protest, so long as she suffers herself to be guided by his counsels. But of this kind of compromise the Holy Mother Church is always impatient. And though there is no papal legate at the court of Edinburgh, Rome does not lack for envoys—shrewd ones, too. Of these the chief is an Italian, David Rizzio.* He enters her service as a musician soon after she goes to Scotland; is promoted to the office of valet de chambre; becomes her private secretary; conducts all her private and secret correspondence; becomes eventually the power behind the throne greater than the throne itself, usurping the very government. Chief we have called him, yet is he not alone. The court of Scotland has her representatives in foreign courts, as befits her dignity; but her true representatives are unknown to courtly fame—Chesein in France, Yaxley in the Netherlands, Ranlet in the Low Countries. So there is an outer and inner court. My lord James, Earl of Murray, is, indeed, the queen's Prime Minister; but this unknown adventurer from Piedmont—unknown because he succeeds best while he hides his office, as his designs—is virtually her secretary for the foreign affairs, and is her most confidential adviser.

The Earl of Murray must be dismissed. No easy task, surely, but one that art can accomplish. Who so fitting to come between sister and brother as a husband? Queen Mary shall be married. It is time she laid off her widow's weeds. And who so fitting a spouse as my lord Darnley—the only one who, when Elizabeth dies, can compete with Mary for the throne of England?

So my lord Darnley and Mary Queen of Scots are brought together. They meet in Wemyss Castle, by the Firth of Forth. It is a clear case of "love at first sight." Royal husbands not a few have been proposed for Mary's hand; but nothing more is heard of them. "He is the handsomest and best-proportioned long man," says Mary, "I have ever seen." Every thing goes as Rizzio and the papal court would have it. The Prot-

* "There is now no doubt whatever," says Mr. MacKenzie, "that he was a papal agent in the pay and confidence of the Vatican, and in constant correspondence with his employers on the banks of the Tiber." Mr. MacKenzie does not give his authority, and we are not able to find any documentary confirmation of his statement. Papal envoys of this sort, however, are not accustomed to leave their commissions on file, or their correspondence in the national archives. The evidence of his character is chiefly if not wholly circumstantial.



QUEEN ELIZABETH.

stant interest takes fire, for Darnley is a Catholic. It is not less furious in England than in Scotland; for the nation has little hope now that Queen Elizabeth will ever take a husband, and in absence of her heirs the throne of the united kingdom will fall into the hands of this Catholic couple. The French faction are only less furious; for this marriage will unite, as it does forever, the crowns of England and of Scotland, and forever dispel the dream of French and Scottish alliance. Mary's Paris friends "are in a marvelous agony for the news of the marriage of the Scottish queen with Lord Darnley," and, if report be true, when they hear of it, spend the night in vain weeping.

Queen Elizabeth, who has been playing fast and loose, with fair promises and fickle performance, finds herself no match for the cunning Italian. Her own kingdom is threatened with faction, and rumors of Catholic rebellion, to unseat her and place her rival and cousin on the empty throne, fill the court and the nation with perplexity. She indignantly summons Darnley back

again, and gets for answer that "he has no mind to return." "I find myself," he says, shortly and almost contemptuously, "very well where I am, and so I purpose to keep me." My lord Murray sees the end of all this from the beginning. Neither Mary's tears nor Mary's threats, and she uses both with a woman's consummate skill, can wring from him an approval of the marriage.

But all his affectionately earnest protests are powerless to hinder it. Opposition is only fuel to the flame. Marry she will, though all the world opposes. Love, blind as it always is said to be, for the ignoble Darnley, revenge on Elizabeth, whom Mary cordially hates, and who hates her as cordially, and ambition—the ambition to make good her claim to the English throne, which since she was a girl eighteen years old she has never ceased to nourish—all push her on to this destructive marriage. And Mephistopheles is at her side to remove every obstacle and clear the way. It is Rizzio who arranges for the first meeting between Mary and Darnley. It is Rizzio who affects



LORD DARNLEY.

such liking for the young lord that he shares his bed with him. It is Rizzio who promises to secure the pope's dispensation—for Mary and Darnley are cousins. It is Rizzio who, while negotiations are still pending, and the envoy is yet on his way to the court of Rome, fits up a private room in the palace, where the marriage ceremony, which the Church pronounces void, is clandestinely performed. For the papal benediction is needed, it appears, not to hallow the marriage tie, but only to give it respectability before the public. Elizabeth might as well spare her diplomacy, since all is virtually settled. Rizzio has not exceeded his instructions. There are no delays at the court of Rome. Fast as wind and wave can carry him comes back the messenger with the promised dispensation. The marriage, already performed in secret, is repeated in public. It takes place on the 29th of July, 1565. Queen Mary, as though some secret consciousness hung over her of the sorrows on which she is entering, wears at the marriage altar her mourning dress of black velvet. It is a gloomy ceremony. When the herald proclaims in the streets of Edinburgh that Henry, Earl of Ross and Albany, is hereafter King of Scotland, the crowd receive the proclamation in sullen silence. Even the money distributed in profusion among them awakens no enthusiasm. Only one voice cries, "God save his Grace." It is the voice of Darnley's father.

My lord the Earl of Murray has tried dis-

suasion. It has failed. He has tried wife against wife, has planned to abduct Lord Darnley and send him back to the Queen of England. But the rough Scotchman is no match in craft for the cunning Italian. This fruitless conspiracy has only incensed the queen against him. His honest portraiture of the poor fool with whom Queen Mary is so infatuated has awakened all her womanly indignation. The court is no longer safe. Rumors are rife of plans for his assassination. True or false, they are probable enough to make him avoid Rizzio and Darnley. The queen summons him to court, and offers him a safe-conduct. But Protestants have learned to look with suspicion on safe-conducts proffered by Roman Catholic princes. Murray is conveniently sick, and can not come. Sentence of outlawry is pronounced against him. All the hate of a hot woman's heart is aroused; "hatred the more malignant because it was unnatural." Revenge is sweeter than ambition. "I would rather lose my crown than not be revenged upon him," she is heard to say.

He calls to arms. The interest of the Protestant religion is his battle-cry. But there are few responses. He dispatches messengers to Queen Elizabeth for the help she has long since promised. She hesitates, delays, falters. Mary knows no delay. She takes the field in person. Lord Darnley rides at her side. He is clad in gilt armor, she in steel bonnet and corslet, with pistols at her saddle-bow and pistols in her hand. In August the standard of rebellion was raised. In October Murray and his few retainers are flying across the border into England.*

Mephistopheles no longer conceals his purpose. Mass is no longer confined to the queen's private chapel. The retainers of Darnley's father go openly to the Catholic service. The General Assembly have passed a resolution that the sovereign is not exempt from the law of the land, and that the reformed service take the place of the mass in the royal chapel. This is Rizzio's answer to their demand. Negotiations are opened with Pope Pius V. and Philip of Spain. One promises soldiers, twelve thousand men; the other sends money, twenty thousand crowns.

* How far Murray's rebellion was in the interest of Protestantism, and how far instigated by a selfish ambition, it is difficult to tell. It is a significant fact that Castelnau, the French ambassador, interceded with Mary for the rebels, telling her that they only sought what was conceded to the Huguenots of France, permission to follow in peace their own religious observance. Burton, iv. 256. And this is but seven years before the massacre of St. Bartholomew.

The Catholic powers of Europe have at length settled their political controversies, and joined in a secret league for the extirpation of heresy by fire and sword; a league of which that Alva was the founder whose estimate of Protestantism was summed up in the epigrammatic saying, "One salmon is worth a multitude of frogs;" a league of which the outcome was the Inquisition in Holland, and the massacre of St. Bartholomew in France. That Mary was in hearty sympathy with this league is undoubted; that she was actually a party to it is both asserted and denied by men behind the scenes who had every opportunity to know. That a vigorous attempt was to be made to re-establish the Catholic faith and worship is certain. Her Most Catholic Majesty assures her subjects that in any event the religion of the realm shall not be interfered with. At the same time she writes to Pius V. to congratulate him on the victories already gained, and to inspire him with hopes of victories yet to come: "With the help of God and his Holiness," she says, "she will yet leap over the wall." The reformed clergy are in daily dread. "The preachers look daily to have their lives taken from them," writes Randolph to Cecil. He who reads the history of the bloody reign of Catholic Mary of England, just preceding, can not pronounce the fears unfounded.

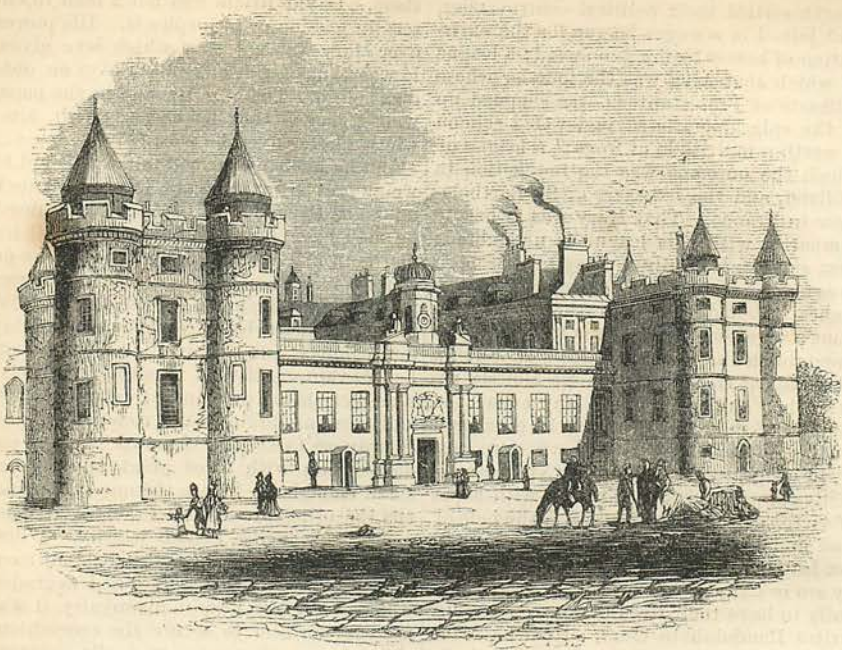
The Italian singer is no longer a power behind the throne. He sits upon it. The public papers and the public coins are first issued in the name of Henry and Mary; then in the name of Mary and Henry; then the public seal is given to Rizzio, and with his own hand he signs and stamps the official papers for the king. There is no access to Mary but through Rizzio: he who would gain the ear of the one must buy the favor of the other. Honor after honor is heaped upon him. The poor strolling minstrel out-views in wealth the richest noble of hereditary rank and hereditary estates. It is no secret that Murray is to be attained, and his lands given to this Italian adventurer. He who cringed in his poverty bears his prosperity with intolerable haughtiness. He rebukes the queen herself with sharp insolence. She bears it with greater patience than do her nobles. Wise advisers counsel him to be cautious. Secure in his royal mistress's favor, he makes little of the advice. He is frequently closeted with her late at night. The king himself finds the door barred—David admitted, himself shut out. Whispers such as no true woman can afford to suffer circulate freely, and Mary suffers them; ugly stories, aptly illustrated by the saying of a later day, that "King James the Sixth's title to be called the modern Solomon was, doubtless, that he was the son of David, who performed upon the harp."

History does not justify these scandals.

Neither can it justify the queen who suffered them. David Rizzio was not a man to entertain passion or to inspire it. His power over Mary was not that which love gives. It was that of a Jesuit father over an obedient child. To Mary, Rizzio was the pope, whose benediction he carried with him, whose secret envoy he was.

But no husband in such an issue is apt to weigh *pros* and *cons* nicely, least of all such a man as Darnley. "Handsome long man" he may have been; but he carried all his merits in his face and figure. Stop! we do him an injustice: he was a dextrous horseman, fond of the hunt, a good shot, skillful in the somewhat boisterous sports of his day and country, but that is all. For the rest, he was vain, egotistical, insolent, imperious; a man of strong passions, of unbridled lust, and of weak brains—"a vicious and presumptuous fool." As if nature had not endowed him with vices great and virtues small enough, he incites the one and weakens the other by copious draughts of *acqua composita*—*Anglice*, Scotch whisky. Worst of all in Mary's eyes, he is the constant companion of the most dissolute and degraded women. In fact, despite his royalty, it was not easy for him to secure the companionship of any other. So gradually coldness springs up between Mary and her handsome husband—coldness growing into estrangement, estrangement growing into open and bitter quarrels. She abides him with difficulty; speaks of him, if the diplomatic correspondence of the day can be trusted, in terms such that "it can not for modesty, nor with the honor of a queen, be reported what she said of him." Say what she might, she could not say worse than the truth. Brute that he is, he stops just short of actual violence in his treatment of her. His insolence grows so intolerable that his very father grows weary of it, and leaves the court. Intriguing nobles easily play the part of Iago to one who was in heart any thing but an Othello. A jealous husband and an unscrupulous nobility make a dangerous foe; and yet David sleeps secure.

It is Saturday night, March 9, 1566. Queen Mary is in her boudoir in the Holyrood Palace. Supper is laid upon the table. Two or three friends, among them Murray's loose sister, the Countess of Argyle, are with her. Rizzio is there, of course. The company are in high glee, and Rizzio most gleeful of them all. The Parliament has been convened. The Catholic bishops and abbots have taken their seats in it once more. Mary has promised to do some good "anent the auld religion," and the first day's work promises well. By her personal presence she has carried, on this eventful Saturday, the bill for the attainder of Murray, despite "great reasoning and opposition." Murray's large estates are ripe to drop into David's



HOLYROOD PALACE.

outstretched pain. All goes well, and no one dreams of the mine prepared and ready for explosion.

Suddenly Darnley enters through a secret door which leads from his own room below, an unexpected and unwelcome visitor. He throws himself by Mary's side, and salutes her with a kiss. At the same moment the tapestry is thrown back. It discloses the gaunt and ghostly visage of Lord Ruthven. He has risen from a sick-bed to consummate this cruel crime, and looks more like a ghost than like a man. The queen demands the meaning of the intrusion. Darnley, awed by her mien, mutters beneath his breath, "Ce n'est rien"—"it is nothing." Ruthven, unawed, cries for Rizzio to come forth. The meaning of his words is unmistakable. The queen, brave but defenseless, springs to her feet and instinctively throws herself before the Italian. The craven Italian as instinctively casts himself behind her. Her companions, recovering from their astonishment, make at Ruthven to thrust him out. In that instant his confederates appear. The room is filled with armed men. One holds a pistol to Mary's breast. A second seizes the wretched Italian. He clings convulsively to Mary's dress. Faldonside bends back his little finger till he shrieks with pain and lets go his hold. Darnley, with a coward's courage, only looks on. A rope is flung about Rizzio's body—the rope that had been provided to hang him with. He is dragged

from the room, catching hopelessly at Mary's bed as he passes it. His last words are a cry for help borne back from the anteroom.

"Madame, madame! save me, save me! Justice! I am a dead man!" Then a cry for mercy—"Spare my life!"

It was meant to keep him till morning, try him, and hang him with at least some forms of law. But a disturbance is heard in the court-yard below.

There is a fear of rescue. In the *mélée* George Douglas has snatched the king's dagger from Darnley's scabbard. He plunges it into the unhappy Italian's side, with the words, "This is from the king." "A moment more and the whole fierce crew were on him, like hounds upon a mangled wolf." The next morning fifty-six wounds were counted on his person.

The assassins have the grace to spill no blood in the queen's presence. She is slow to believe what her own heart tells her. She is not the woman to sit and repine when hope is left; and if Rizzio be living she has hope of rescue. She sends a maid to ascertain what has become of him. The maid brings back the dreadful tidings—he is dead. "I have seen him myself," she says. It was afterward remembered against the unhappy queen that with strange fortitude she dried her eyes, saying, with marvelous calmness, "No more tears—I will think upon a revenge." It was remembered, too, that in the fever of that terrible moment she ut-

tered ominous words to her brutal but coward husband.

"You have taken your last of me, and your farewell," she said. "I shall never rest till I give you as sorrowful heart as I have at this present."*

If this be only a meaningless burst of passion, it soon subsides. If it is a deliberate resolve, it is quickly covered. This woman is either the most forgiving of Christians, or the most consummate of actors. Her resentment has apparently faded before the day has dawned. Her palace is guarded. There is neither access nor egress except by permission of the conspirators. The provost guard of Edinburgh comes once to her relief. Darnley shouts from the window that all is done by his order, and the guard goes home again. Murray suddenly makes his appearance—the Murray whom, on that fatal Saturday, Mary was striving to attain. She throws herself into his arms, almost with the words of Mary of old to Jesus, "If thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." The Murray whom her subsequent defenders have accused of participating in this murder lay not under her suspicion of it, that is certain. No contemporary charged him with it. If guilty, he had the consummate statecraft to reap all the advantage and shun all the odium of the crime. But he came of a family of adepts in state-craft.

Sunday and Monday the queen gives all her energies to regaining her lost crown and sceptre. She is all smiles. Few men are able to resist her blandishments. Darnley is not one of them. He would fain make her believe that he had nothing to do with the assassination. She succeeds in making him believe that she believes him. Cozened into the unnatural league by jealousy of Rizzio, he is coaxed out of it by the assurances of Mary, and by some pity left for the wife so soon to be a mother. At the same time she promises the assassins a free pardon. They are suspicious of her promise; but they can not well refuse to receive it. A bond is drawn up for her to sign. Darnley gives it to her Monday evening. He reports that it is satisfactory, and that it will be returned with her signature in the morning.

But in the morning the palace is empty. In the dead of night the king and queen have crept out together through the wine-vaults to the broken tombs and demolished sepulchres in the ruined Abbey of Holyrood; and so, with a twenty-mile mad gallop across the country through the bright moonlight, have fled to the gates of Dunbar.

* Melne calls in question another threat reported by Froude to have been uttered at the same time, yet, by his own quotation, sustains Froude's interpretation. But this more significant threat even Melne does not call in question, except in the general way in which he accounts as questionable whatever makes against his client.

The confederates send post-haste for the pardon—a bootless errand. Instead there comes the news that the queen has summoned an army to her standard; that it has answered the royal messengers; that it is marching on Edinburgh. The murder of Rizzio has shocked the moral sense of the nation—the act less than the brutal doing of it. Knox, indeed, declares it "a just act, and most worthy of all praise;" but not even Knox can breast the universal storm of execration. In a week's time the queen is back in Holyrood again, and the whole crew of murderers is flying across the border into hospitable England—hospitable in every such juncture to Scottish traitors.

In flying to Dunbar Castle Mary fled to the dangerous protection of the Earl of Bothwell. Bold to audacity, with the grossness but the chivalry of a border ruffian, with the vices but the graces bred of a Continental education, a man of notorious gallantry—a "glorious, rash, and hazardous young man"—the Earl of Bothwell affords a fair historical illustration of the sort of character which was born of ancient feudalism, and died with it—a character invested by song and story with a romance which ruthless history refuses to accord. To Mary, the devout Catholic, his one pre-eminent vice was a fierce hatred of all ecclesiastics, which gave the name of Protestant to one who, indifferent to all religion, feared neither God, man, nor the devil. To Mary, the Stuart and the Lorraine, he possessed one pre-eminent virtue, a loyal devotion to his queen, which stood him in the stead of religious faith—a loyalty from which neither fear of foes nor blandishments of friends could ever swerve him. The Earl of Bothwell had been the first to attempt, in vain, his queen's rescue from Holyrood on the night of Rizzio's murder. He was the first to fly with his retainers to Dunbar Castle to avenge her wrong. And he rode triumphantly at her side when she entered again the city from which a week before she had been a fugitive.

The Earl of Bothwell and the family of which Darnley came were old foes. Mary's favor to the earl boded but ill to the husband, and he knew it. Vainly by new treachery he sought to retain the royal favor which treachery had purchased. He publicly declared before the council "that he had never counseled, commanded, consented to, assisted, or approved the murder of Rizzio." His words were taken down in writing, and published at the market crosses of every town in Scotland. He denounced accomplice after accomplice, four at least being high-born gentlemen whose complicity never would have been suspected but for his treachery. The conspirators replied by producing a bond which he had signed in common with the rest for this cruel business, and proclaimed him a common liar throughout both

kingdoms. At the first the queen seems really to have forgiven Darnley. In a will made just after Rizzio's death she bequeathed him many jewels, and, last of all, their marriage ring. But this revelation of his double treachery filled her with loathing, as well it might. With all her faults, Mary Stuart was never treacherous to her friends; and this double traitor she first despised, then hated—hated the more because he was her husband. Cast off by the court, there were none left to do him reverence. He wandered about the country with the mark of Cain upon him; execrated alike by Catholic and Protestant; unrecognized by any nobleman; despised by the common people; shorn of even the semblance of royalty; unconsulted on any public business; finding but sorry recreation in his old-time sport, the hunt; exiled from all reputable society, but without the poor privilege of exiling himself from the land whose malediction rested so heavily upon him. He might, indeed, have returned to England: but just across the border his co-conspirators were watching with deadly hate for an opportunity of revenge.

It begins to be hinted that Mary is very weary of her "handsome long man," as well she may be, and would fain be rid of him. A mysterious messenger is sent, no one knows certainly whither, but it is rumored to Rome, to confer with the pope on the possibility of procuring a separation. A letter to Elizabeth speaks of some secret service in which her assistance is wanted. The possibility of a divorce is openly discussed between the queen and Bothwell. But only consanguinity is good Catholic ground of separation, and Mary will do nothing to affect the rights of her infant son just born. Plans for Darnley's assassination are even hinted at in her presence, to which the queen responds in a mild remonstrance that may mean yes or no, as the hearer pleases to take it.*

Rumors no less prejudicial to the queen's honor follow close on the heels of these. Bothwell is thought to be more than mere minister of state to her. More she certainly is than queen to him.

It is the misfortune of Mary's life that stories against which a fair reputation should be a sufficient defense stick to her like burs to a shaggy coat; stories of unwomanly intimacy first with Chastelar, then with Rizzio,

now with Bothwell. She is certainly careless, if she be not criminal. Of her affection for her new lieutenant-general she makes no concealment. Once he is wounded in a skirmish. She rides twenty miles across the country, comparatively unattended, to sit by his sick-bed, and then gallops as madly back again—an unqueenly if not an unwomanly act. At least so thinks John Knox and the straiter sect of the Covenanters.

The gulf between Darnley and the queen grows daily wider. The young prince is christened. His father is not at the christening; whether for want of welcome or for want of inclination no one very well knows. One after another the murderers of Rizzio are forgiven, their offense forgotten; but Darnley's punishment grows greater as theirs grows less. Pardon is besought by Huntly, by Maitland, by Bothwell for Morton. The significant promise is made to the queen that "if she will consent to pardon Morton and his companions in exile, means may be found to obtain a divorce between her and her husband."* There is but one divorce possible that shall preserve the legitimacy of the son—the husband's death. No explanation is offered or asked for. None is needed. On the 24th of December Morton's pardon is signed. On the same day Darnley disappears from Stirling Castle.

Mr. Hosack wonders why. And yet Mr. Hosack himself gives the deed drawn on that same month by the "active tool of Bothwell," signed by both master and man, as well as by Huntly, Argyle, and Maitland, for the assassination of the "young fool and tyrant." Fool, indeed, the wretched Darnley was; but not so great a fool as to be quite ignorant of the meaning of Morton's pardon. The same kingdom could not safely hold the betrayer and the betrayed.

Almost at the same time the queen restores the consistorial jurisdiction of the Roman Catholic Archbishop of St. Andrew's, which had been abolished by the Convention of the States in 1560. The General Assembly of the Kirk protest in vain against this stretch of imperial authority. A complaisant court is needed by Bothwell, a Catholic court too, and Mary creates it. The Countess of Bothwell is a Catholic, and she and her husband are within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity. In less than six months this court has decreed a divorce between them.

Meanwhile Darnley is taken sick. Poison, says Madam Rumor. But Madam Rumor brings forth no evidence to sustain her charge. Small-pox, says the queen. Small-pox let us believe it. He lies at Glasgow at the point of death. So long as he is at the point of death the queen suffers him to lie. It is unfortunate for her reputation that she,

* Burton, iv. 161. Meline, p. 124, quotes the queen's reply to the suggestion of assassination as follows: "I will that you do nothing through which any spot may be laid on my honor or conscience; and therefore I pray you rather let the matter be in the state that it is, abiding till God of his goodness put remedy thereto." The reader may judge for himself whether this answer is the indignant response of a pure woman who vehemently spurns the dark suggestion of her husband's murder, or the non-committal reply of a shrewd woman willing to wink at the crime so long as she is not made responsible for it.

* Hosack, 160.

who can ride twenty miles across the country to visit the wounded Earl of Bothwell, can find no time to nurse her husband in what men think to be his death-hour. At length the news of his convalescence comes to her ears. Then she hastens to his side.

Two years, two short years, it is since this couple stood up in Holyrood chapel and were pronounced, by the solemn rites of the Church, of twain one flesh. These two short years have wrought a great change in the "young fool." Remorse, shame, suffering of soul and suffering of body, have been his teachers. He is thoroughly humbled; for the first time in his life contrite. He throws himself into his wife's arms with unsuspecting confidence.

"I have done wrong; I confess it," he cries; "but others besides me have done wrong, and you have forgiven them, and I am but young. You have forgiven me often, you may say; but may not a man of my age, for want of counsel, of which I am very destitute, fall twice or thrice, and yet repent and learn from experience? Whatever I have done wrong, forgive me; I will do so no more."

With all the love of which such a nature is capable poor Darnley loved his wife; a love that, purified by suffering, might have been redeemed and made worthy of a better woman.

"Take me back to you," he cries; "let me be your husband again, or may I never rise from this bed. Say that it shall be so. God knows I am punished for making my God of you—for having no thought but of you."

It shall be so. The dead shall bury their dead. There shall be no separation. For the very purpose of this reconciliation Mary has come to Glasgow.

"She will love him and use him as her husband;" to this she pledges anew her troth, and gives him her hand upon it. And he is content. All that he has heard of the conspiracy against him he reveals to her. His confidence is absolute.

The first plan is to go to Craigmillar. But it is a lonely spot; Darnley objects; the queen yields; Edinburgh is substituted. On the 30th of January the royal couple reach the capital together.

They do not go to the palace, but stop in the suburbs of the city, close to the city walls. Here a little house has been prepared for them. It belongs to Robert Balfour, brother of the man who drew the deed for Darnley's destruction. Darnley remonstrates. The queen easily overcomes his protests, if not his fears. "It is not safe to take him to Holyrood," she says: "there is danger of contagion." He acquiesces. Yet some shadow of the dreadful future rests upon him. He suspects greatly, and yet he trusts. His resolution has been taken, and, come what may, he will adhere to it.

"I will trust myself to her," he says, "though she cut my throat."

It must be confessed that the accommodations were not royal. The house was small, old, inconvenient, half dismantled. Some tapestries were brought from Holyrood for its decoration, but they served only to set off the intrinsic wretchedness of the abode which had been chosen for the royal pair. One door was taken from its hinges to cover the king's bath-tub. Another, which led through the city walls, could not be locked. The key was gone. It had to be nailed up. The house was two stories in height, with two rooms in each story. A hallway separated them. On one side of this hallway was the kitchen, on the other Mary's room. The servants' quarters were over the first; Darnley's chamber was over the second.

Sunday night, February 9, Bastiat, one of the queen's favorite servants, was to be married. There was to be a masquerade at the palace. The queen had promised to be there. Apparently she had quite forgotten her engagement, for she also promised to spend that night with Darnley. In fact, she did not leave his bedside till after midnight.

While she was engaged with him in conversation, terrible preparations were going on in the room beneath her feet.* Gunpowder was brought in bags to the garden in the rear of the house. It was then carried through the hall into Mary's room. A cask had been provided to contain it; but the cask was too large to pass through the door, so the conspirators carried it in the original bags and poured it upon the floor. Bothwell was in the room above keeping guard. The men blundered in the darkness. He was afraid they would be heard. Excusing himself, he stole down stairs, and in a fierce whisper bade them work more quietly.

It was past midnight ere the preparations were completed; then Bothwell's servant came up into the king's room on some pretense. The queen suddenly remembered her engagement at the palace, kissed her husband, bade him good-night, and departed. As she left the room she said, as if by accident, "It was just this time last year that Rizzio was slain."†

* The actual perpetrators of this crime (not the principals, who were never punished—*i. e.*, by human law—but their servants) were afterward examined. Their depositions and confessions have all been preserved, and substantially agree. It is from a careful examination of these depositions this story is taken. Mr. Hosack endeavors to make out, from current rumors at the time, and from stories of the appearance of the house after the explosion, that the powder was placed in the cellar, and perhaps in mines under the walls. It is not very material, except that it indicates how hard it is to defend Mary from the crime, since it is necessary, for that purpose, to call in the rumors of the street to countervail the solemn testimony uttered under oath, and on the very eve of death, by those who *knew*, and who had no motive to conceal or to falsify.

† So Froude, on the authority of Calderwood. Me-

Every incident was remembered and recalled in after-examinations. The queen's bed had stood just where the powder heap was laid. Mary chid the servant sharply for placing it there, and had its position changed. The hangings of the king's bed were of handsome black velvet. The queen feared lest they be injured by the splashing of the royal bath, and had them taken down. She had a fine fur wrapper—a "coverture of marten skins"—with her in the house. She gave particular directions to her servants to have it taken away—according to one account, on the day before the murder; according to another, she sent a servant back for it after she had given Darnley good-night. If she had chanced to glance in at her room she might have seen the black powder heap waiting for the match. But she did not pause. The conspirators watched the gleaming of her attendants' lanterns till they disappeared in the darkness. Then all was ready.

The shadow that had rested darkly on Darnley's spirit seemed to grow heavier. He was in no mood for sleep. His English prayer-book lay open before him. The last that was known of Henry Darnley he was reading the 55th Psalm:

"Hear my prayer, O God, and hide not thyself from my petition...."

"My heart is disquieted within me, and the fear of death is fallen upon me.

"Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and an horrible dread hath overwhelmed me...."

"It is not an open enemy that hath done me this dishonor; for then I could have borne it...."

"It was even thou, my companion, my guide, and mine own familiar friend."

How he came to his death was never certainly known—only this much: a heavy "thud," a lighting up of the heavens with a horrible glare, then a running to and fro of watchmen in the quiet streets, then the ringing of alarm-bells, then all the city roused with the horrible story of the king's assassination. All Edinburgh is awake—all save the two who have least right to sleep, the two who have "murdered sleep." Bothwell, roused from seeming slumber by a messenger with a frightened face who brings him word of the king's assassination, springs from his bed, crying, "Treason! treason!" and starts out to investigate the crime. The queen, awakened from heavy slumber, receives the news with composure. Men afterward observe that it does not impair her appetite, and that she eats her breakfast as quietly as though nothing had happened. It is difficult to believe, as her friends would have us do, that "the self-possession which is found so remarkable was simply the prostration of despair." The citizens of Edin-

burgh, hastening to the scene of the terrible tragedy, find the house in the Kirk of Fields a ruin, the bodies of four of the servants buried in it, and the corpses of Darnley and his page forty yards from the scene of the explosion, unsinged by fire and unmarked by bruise. Certain women who lived near the spot declared that they overheard cries for mercy, as of one struggling for his life, before the explosion. It was believed at the time that Darnley's suspicions were aroused, perhaps by the queen's manner, perhaps by noise in the room below; that, with his attendant, he attempted to make his escape; that he fled down the outer staircase, was pursued, overtaken, strangled; that the train was already lighted, and that there was no time to carry back the bodies to the house which was to have been his grave; and that it was left to be surmised that he had perished in the explosion which ensued. Later investigations wrung from the perpetrators of this crime the story of its commission. If their stories are to be believed, the plan was carried out without hinderance or suspicion, and the victim of a misplaced confidence died from the violence of the fall to the ground from the height to which he had been blown in the air.

In the sixteenth century assassinations were sufficiently common to excite no remark. But the deep damnation of poor Darnley's taking off thrilled all Europe with horror. Letters from the court of England and from that of Spain were dispatched to Mary, urging her to take instant measures to bring the criminals to justice. All Scotland was in a blaze of feverish excitement. Darnley's vices were forgotten. His virtues were magnified, and imaginary ones were imputed to him. From an object of pity he became one of adoration. From a martyr the transition is always easy to a saint.

And yet the government did nothing. Bothwell was sheriff of the county, Huntly was chancellor, Argyle was the lord justice, Maitland was secretary: and these were all parties to the assassination. Indeed, there was scarcely a nobleman in the land who had not received some intimation of Darnley's approaching doom; and not one of them had cared to shelter him. Even Murray is not free from suspicion of a guilty foreknowledge of the horrid deed. The very fountains of justice were impure. The very men whose function it was to investigate and to punish were themselves the criminals. No wonder nothing was done! Mary herself was well-nigh powerless. If she had been a woman of a different make, her helpless inaction would have surprised no one; but men could not but contrast her apathy now with her energetic measures when poor Rizzio was slain.

There were other strange and suspicious circumstances—some really significant, oth-

ers less so, but of which the populace made equally great account.

Whoever fell under most grievous suspicion of the murder seemed surest of the royal favor. Archibald Beton, who kept the keys of the Kirk-of-Field house, got the rents of the vicarage of Dunlop. Durham, Darnley's porter, received a pension. Mary's first private interview after the dreadful murder was with Bothwell. He took charge of the bodies of the murdered men. They were buried privately. Even foreign ambassadors were not permitted to see them, and curiosity balked increased suspicion. The clothes of Darnley were given to Bothwell. The tailor to whom they were sent to be altered said, significantly, that it was as it should be. "The clothes of the dead were always the right of the hangman," he said.

The suspicions which were at first muttered in secret began to be more loudly hinted. Anonymous placards, posted in the night, proclaimed Bothwell the murderer, and "the queen an accessory." Voices in the street repeated the accusation, though always under cover of the darkness. Rough portraits of the queen and Bothwell were nailed by night upon the door of the halls of justice. The government seemed far more anxious to discover the authors of these secret charges than the perpetrators of the murder. Every one who could draw and all who could write fair were examined. A reward had been offered on Tuesday morning of £2000 for the discovery of the murderers. This much public opinion forced from the reluctant assassins. An anonymous accuser offered, if the money were deposited in some indifferent hands, and the queen's servants, Joseph Rizzio and Bastiat, were arrested, to make good his accusation against them. But nothing came of it. The Earl of Bothwell rode through the streets armed to the teeth, and always guarded. It did not allay the public indignation that he rode on Darnley's horse. The rumors which circulated so freely among the populace gained a higher currency. De Silva, the Spanish ambassador in London, was convinced of Mary's guilt. Melville, her best friend, was able to offer but a sorry defense. The Archbishop of Glasgow wrote her from Paris that "she herself was greatly and wrongly calumniated to be the motive principal of the whole, and all done by her order."

At length the pressure at home became too strong to be resisted. The trial of Bothwell was ordered. But the circumstances of the trial added fuel to the flame instead of extinguishing it. It was driven through with indecent haste. The shortest time the law allowed was suffered to intervene between the summoning of the court and the fore-ordained acquittal. Queen Elizabeth herself sent, but in vain, to supplicate delay

and a more decent regard to public opinion. The streets of Edinburgh were full of the armed retainers of Bothwell. The queen, lest there be public disturbance, forbade Darnley's father from bringing more than six servants with him, and he durst not appear to prosecute. The principal witness—the author of the anonymous placards—was made to understand that if he made his appearance he would be arrested for treason. The indictment was irregular. It charged the murder as perpetrated on the night of the 9th. The explosion had not taken place till the morning of the 10th. The prisoner was acquitted—by the verdict of part of the court, by the silence of the rest. The effect of this acquittance on the public mind received illustration in a rude caricature found posted on the city walls just after the trial. It represented Bothwell as a frightened hare surrounded by a ring of hounds. Mary Stuart, as a mermaid crowned, was lashing off the pursuing hounds with a huntsman's thong. The very boys played the drama in their sports. The murder and the trial were both performed, but with a different issue. The boy Bothwell was convicted, and hanged in such good earnest that if it had not been for the interference of the by-standers he would have been killed.

A new scandal began to be bruited about, that Mary and the Earl of Bothwell were to be married—married while the stain of her husband's blood was still upon him. The friends of the queen treated it as a shameful calumny. Even the enemies of the queen were slow to believe it. Elizabeth heard the rumor with a scornful incredulity. But it gained constantly in strength. Mary's favor for Bothwell was no secret. Twelve days after the murder she was reported to be feasting and gaming with him at Seton. One, two, three castles she gave to him. He was her most confidential adviser—her constant, her inseparable companion. She was not suffered to remain in ignorance of the popular feeling. Lord Herries, it was said, on his bended knees, besought her not to think of this disastrous match. Murray said little; but neither the threats of Bothwell nor the blandishments of the queen could win him over to it. Sir James Melville, bringing with him a letter from representatives of the English Catholics, added his dissuasions.

The public sentiment was too strong to be audaciously breasted. Sorry was the abortive attempt to evade it.

It is less than a fortnight after the murderer's trial. The queen is returning to Edinburgh from a visit to her infant son. She has a guard of some three hundred horsemen under Lord Huntly. The Earl of Bothwell meets her on the road with more than double the number. Lord Huntly has had some intimation of what is intended,

and has declared that he will die rather than suffer the dishonor of having seemed to betray his queen. Swords are drawn, and a stout resistance prepared for. But Mary will have no bloodshed. Bothwell takes her bridle-rein, and leads her without "obstacle, impediment, clamor, or resistance" to Dunbar Castle. Was ever rape so gently wrought? Did ever a chaste queen sacrifice so much so cheerfully to save the blood of her loving subjects?

For upward of a week Queen Mary shares Dunbar Castle with Bothwell. Meanwhile, through the court which she has created, the divorce of Bothwell is passed with unseemly haste. It takes just eight days for the Catholic court to part asunder those whom God hath joined together. On the 7th of May the decree of divorce is declared. On the 8th it is publicly proclaimed that Mary is to be married to the divorced husband. Even Mr. Hosack admits that "it can not be denied that the conduct of the Queen of Scots at this period of her history is open to grave suspicion." We should think not. Few widows dispense with their weeds in less than a twelvemonth's time. Mary gives her hand in marriage to the murderer of her husband in a little over three months after the fearful tragedy of his death. Surely this is carrying quite too far the "indulgent temper" for which her eulogist praises her so highly.

Mary seems to have thought so herself. Her chief occupation in Dunbar Castle would appear to have been the composition of a letter to the French court—a letter in which she vainly strives to answer the indictment of her own conscience.

The Earl of Bothwell—so the letter runs—had been of all the Scottish nobles most faithful in his loyalty and most abundant in his services both to her mother and herself. At first she was, indeed, filled with indignation at the abduction, and reproached him for his audacity. In reply he implored her to attribute his conduct to the ardor of his affection. He at the same time, and to her amazement, laid before her a bond signed by the chief nobility, commending his claims to her hand, and promising to sustain them. In vain she waited for succor. No one came to her deliverance. Her audacious lover assumed a bolder tone, and pressed his courtship with more vigorous importunities. She reflected on his services, his devotion, the unwillingness of "our people" to receive a foreigner, their equal reluctance to suffer their queen to remain unmarried; she reflected that the realm was divided by factions, and needed a master; she was wearied and almost broken; could not rule subjects so fierce and fractious; and so, since she must marry, at some time, some one in the realm, and since—(but let her state the reasons of her course in her own quaint words)

—"of our awin subjects thair was nane, either for the reputation of hes hous or for the worthiness of himself, alsweill in wisdom, valyeantness, as in all other gude qualities, to be preferrit or zit comparit to him quhome we have takin, we wer content to accomode ourself, with the consent oure haille estattes, quha, as is befor said, had alreddie declarit thair contentationis."*

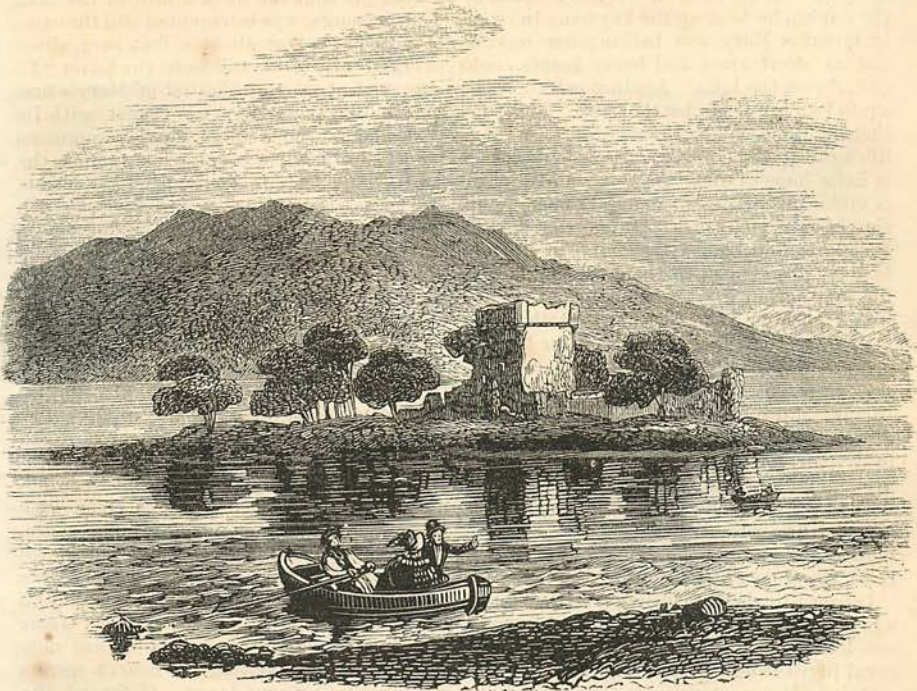
As to the haste of the marriage, what is to be done had best be quickly done; and as to the Earl of Bothwell's previous marriage, he has been already divorced for "lawful causes of consanguinitie, and others relevant."

This is Mary's answer to the indictment of her own times and of subsequent history. Let her have the full benefit of her defense.

If Mary really thinks "our people" demand this marriage, she is quickly disabused. The flagrant iniquity of this triple crime blows the smouldering indignation of the Scotch—always sensitive on points of national honor—into a hot flame. The kingdom beats to arms. My lord has need of all his energies, and my lady of all her arts. If Mary ever wished to escape from her guilty paramour, she has no desire to escape from her guilty husband. They are surrounded at Borthwick Castle. Bothwell flees under cover of the night. Mary follows him in male attire. It is slow work gathering recruits about a cause so shameful. However, a few retainers are at length got together. Bothwell and the queen advance on Edinburgh. The lords come out to meet them. As to the bond they signed for this shameful marriage, it is but waste paper. On the 15th of June—just one month after the marriage—the opposing forces meet on Carberry Hill, six miles from the Scottish capital.

But not to fight. There must be a cause, or there can be no true courage; and the retainers of this guilty couple have no appetite for fighting. Not the spear-heads of their foes, but the indignation of Christendom, and their own consciences, they fear to meet. All day long the two armies stand eyeing one another; my lord and lady afraid to venture a battle, the nobles in no haste to do so. Some vain attempts at negotiation consume the time. Bothwell repeats his offer to refute all accusation against him by single combat. His challenge is quickly accepted, but the queen will not hear of it. Meanwhile her soldiers get about some casks of wine, and attack them right valiantly—the only attack they have any fancy for. The queen in vain endeavors to spur up their courage. At first in couples, then in little companies, they stroll away, and are

* Keith, ii. 598. This sentence is a conclusive answer to the suggestion—which even Hosack dares not press—that the queen was induced by actual violence to become the wife of Bothwell. It is not thus a woman writes of one who has violated her person.



LOCHLEVEN CASTLE.

gone. By nightfall only a little body-guard is left. The negotiations still continue, the lords nothing loath to conquer without bloodshed. At last it comes to this: that the Earl of Bothwell shall be permitted to depart in peace. Five minutes of parting conference are permitted to them. What was said no one knows; the contradictory gossip of the day is but poor material for authentic history. They are seen to shake hands; they are believed to exchange pledges of eternal fidelity. Then he mounts horse and gallops away. She never sees him again.

Two years of pirate life on the high seas, eight years of prison life in the castle of Malmo, completed the career of the "glorious, rash, and hazardous young man." He died at the last, on the coast of Denmark, of hard drinking. In the little parish church of Faareveile the sacristan still points out to the curious tourist the spot where the bones of Bothwell are interred.

Mary was escorted by the nobles to Edinburgh, in name a queen, in fact a prisoner; past the blackened ruins of Kirk-of-Field, with the confederate banner borne before her—the figure of a dead man lying under a tree, with a child upon its knees at the corpse's side, crying out, "Judge and revenge my cause, O Lord!" So, through the incoming twilight, surrounded by a howling mob, who greet her with fierce cries of "Burn the whore!" "Burn the murderess of

her husband!" she enters for the last time the streets of the city which, in the fog of that August morning six years before, welcomed her with the booming of cannon, the peal of merry bells, and the glad shouts of an exultant multitude.

A royal captive is always a perplexity. The lords are perplexed what to do with Mary. "She would be content to be turned adrift with Bothwell in a boat upon the ocean, to go where the fates might carry them." So, at least, Madam Rumor reported. To some there seemed no better solution of the difficulty than just this turning adrift of the wretched queen. Others demanded her swift execution. Scotch Presbyterianism is more strong for justice than tender for mercy; and Scotch Presbyterianism demanded blood for blood. Yet others proposed her deposition and the coronation of her infant son; and others her release and restoration to a titular sovereignty, with adequate securities—if any securities could be adequate—for the future. While the discussion was still hot, and no settlement seemed near at hand, Mary suddenly solved the problem herself. She had been confined a prisoner in Lochleven Castle. She won over the attendant, a lad of seventeen. The keeper of the castle, for greater security, kept the key always with him. At supper it lay upon the table by his side. One night the page in waiting dropped a napkin, seem-

ingly by chance, upon it. When he took up the napkin he took up the key too. In twenty minutes Mary was making her way, as fast as stout arms and brave hearts could row, across the lake. Again a call to arms; again two armies in battle array. This time there shall be, can be, no negotiations. It is life against life. For Mary, if defeated, there is little hope of mercy; for the lords, if she is victorious, there is absolutely none. But she is not victorious. From the day of Darnley's murder, as the Duke of Norfolk bitterly declared upon the scaffold, whither his infatuation for the enchantress carried him, "nothing that any body goeth about for her, or that she goeth about for herself, prospereth." There is a short, sharp, decisive engagement. Murray leads the lords' troops; Mary in person watches her own. She sees the rout in a dismay that changes to despair. Her own courage, never before broken, fails at last, and the Scottish queen flees like a frightened hare, knowing no rest till she has actually crossed the Scottish border, and entered the domain of her royal rival, the Queen of England.

Queen Elizabeth readily gave Mary a refuge from her pursuers. Whether she would not lend men and money to reinstate the royal fugitive upon her throne was long uncertain. Her most intimate advisers did not know her mind. Probably Elizabeth did not know it herself.

On one point, however, she was resolute: she would have no fellowship with Mary so long as the dreadful suspicion of complicity in her husband's murder rested on her. She would not even see her face. At length, after an immense amount of deceptive diplomacy, a commission was appointed, nominally to investigate the charges of Mary against her rebellious lords, really to investigate the charges of the lords against their queen.

Before this commission Murray represented the Scottish government. At first he laid the guilt of the murder on Bothwell alone, and defended the insurrection only as one against the infamous, ambitious, and tyrannical earl. But as the trial proceeded he changed his ground. He hesitated, procrastinated, faltered. At length he openly charged his sister with the murder of her husband. And he produced, in confirmation of this charge, the since famous "casket letters." Of their discovery he told this story:

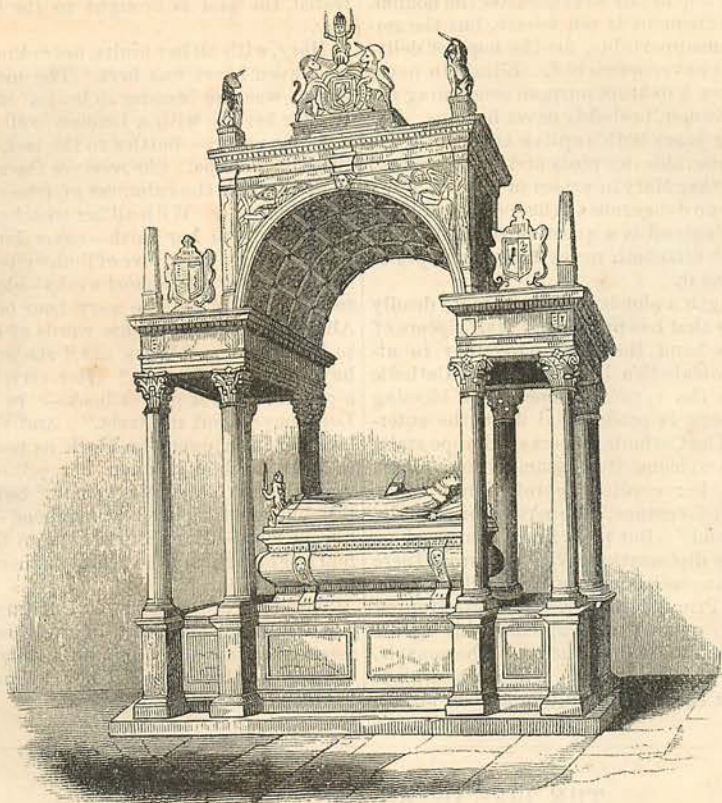
The Earl of Bothwell—so said Lord Murray, and so said the lords he represented—fleeing from Edinburgh, sent back a confidential messenger to the castle to bring hence a silver casket from a certain drawer. James Balfour—that Balfour who drew the deed for Darnley's murder—had received the captaincy of the castle as the price of his crime. He delivered the casket; he at the

same time sent the lords a hint of the fact. The messenger was intercepted and the casket seized. It was about a foot long, silver overlaid with gold, and bore the letter "F" engraved upon it, the initial of Mary's first husband, Francis II. This casket, with its contents, is the witness Murray summons before the English commission against the Scottish queen. It contains eight letters and twelve sonnets. They are in the French language. They appear to be in Mary's handwriting. Among the commissioners are more than one of Mary's friends, one of them that Duke of Norfolk who subsequently attests the strength of his attachment by the sacrifice of his life. If there is a forgery, their utmost scrutiny is unable to detect it.* Of these letters one gives a full account of Mary's interview with Darnley at Glasgow; of his unsuspecting confidence; of her own mournful sense of shame and guilt. Another advises the earl when and where to abduct her, and cautions him to come with force sufficient to overcome all resistance. All breathe the language of passionate devotion, with here and there a flash of fierce jealousy. They are true to nature, but to a lost, though not a shameless one. Their language is that of a once noble but now ruined woman unveiling her heart's secrets in unsuspecting confidence. If forged, the forger was a consummate master of his art. True or false, they are equally remarkable as contributions to the language of passion.

Mary denounced them as forgeries. She demanded to see the originals. Elizabeth granted the reasonableness of the demand, but never complied with it. She demanded to face her accusers. Elizabeth half promised that she should do so, but never fulfilled the pledge. The commission broke up without a verdict. Elizabeth had no interest to press for either acquittal or conviction. Murray was glad to return to his regency. Mary alone had any reason to demand the completion of the investigation; and Mary seemed content to let the accusation and the denial go forth to the world together.

So the matter ended. The casket letters disappeared as mysteriously as they came. For an investigation of their genuineness we have only "translations, or translations of translations." Rumor says that James VI. subsequently destroyed them out of regard to his mother's memory. Whether they were the work of Mary's pen, or whether they were the production of some astute and cunning forger whom the lords employed to complete the imperfect victory of Carberry Hill and Langside, must remain among the unsolved problems of the past, until that

* Even Mr. Hosack admits the genuineness of three of these letters; but surmises that they were originally addressed by Mary to Darnley, and mixed with the others to lend color to them.



TOMB OF QUEEN MARY.

day when God shall bring "every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil."

The authenticity of the casket letters is a matter of historical interest, but not of grave historical importance. The question of Mary's guilt does not depend upon them. Evidence which her own day deemed clear, history deems uncertain. Circumstances which, isolated, only created a wide-spread suspicion in her own times, put together by history, form a net-work of evidence clear and conclusive.

A wife learns to loathe her husband; utters her passionate hate in terms that are unmistakable; is reconciled to him for a purpose; casts him off when that purpose is accomplished; makes no secret of her desire for a divorce; listens with but cold rebuke to intimations of his assassination; dallies while he languishes upon a sick-bed so long as death is near; hastens to him only when he is convalescent; becomes, in seeming, reconciled to him; by her blandishments allays his terror and arrests his flight, which nothing else could arrest; brings him with her to the house chosen by the assassins for his tomb—a house which has absolutely nothing else to recommend it but its singular adapta-

tion to the deed of cruelty to be wrought there; remains with him till within two hours of his murder; hears with unconcern the story of his tragic end, which thrills all other hearts with horror; makes no effort to bring the perpetrators of the crime to punishment; rewards the suspected with places and pensions, and the chief criminal with her hand in marriage while the blood is still wet on his.* That the world should be asked to believe her the innocent victim of a diabolical conspiracy affords a singular illustration of the effrontery of the Church which claims her for a martyr. That half the world should have acquiesced in the claim affords an illustration no less singular of the credulity of mankind when sentiments and sympathies are called on to render the judgment which the reason alone is qualified to render.

For nineteen years Mary Stuart remains a prisoner under guard, wearing away the weary hours with "needle-work, with dogs, with turtle-doves, and Barbary fowls." She cools her feverish impatience to the last by

* These are the *indisputable* facts—the facts as they may be gathered from even the pages of Hosack and Meline, and the unquestioned correspondence of Mary herself.

a mad gallop in fair weather after the hounds. The confinement is not severe, but the torture is insupportable, for the hope of deliverance is never quenched. Elizabeth never announces a definite purpose concerning her royal prisoner, probably never has one. For nineteen years both captive and captor are made miserable by plots and counterplots; and whether Mary in prison or Mary at large is the more dangerous to the security of Protestant England is a question so hard to decide that Elizabeth never fairly attempts to determine it.

At length a plot is uncovered more deadly than any that has preceded. Half a score of assassins band themselves together to attempt Elizabeth's life, and to put Catholic Mary on the vacant throne. The blessing of the pope is pronounced upon the enterprise. The Catholic powers of Europe stand ready to welcome its consummation. Mary gives it her cordial approbation. "The hour of deliverance," she writes, exultingly, "is at hand." But plots breed counterplots. In all the diplomatic service of Europe there is no so ingenious spy as Walsingham, Elizabeth's Prime Minister. Every letter of Mary's is opened and copied by his agents before sent to its destination. The conspiracy is allowed to ripen. Then, when all is ready for consummation, the leaders are ar-

rested, the plot is brought to the light of day.

Mary, with all her faults, never knew fear; no craven heart was hers. The more dangerous was she because so brave. She battles for her life with a heroism well worthy a nobler nature—battles to the last, though there be no hope. She receives the sentence of death with the calmness of true courage, not of despair. With all her treachery, never recreant to her faith—never but once, when her infatuated love of Bothwell swerved her from it for a few short weeks—she clings to her crucifix till the very hour of death. Almost her last words are words of courage to her friends. "Weep not," she says; "I have promised for you." Her very last are a psalm from her prayer-book—"In thee, O Lord, have I put my trust." And then she lays her head upon the block as peacefully as ever she laid it upon her pillow. No "grizzled, wrinkled old woman," but in the full bloom of ripened womanhood—forty-five, no more—Mary Stuart pays on the scaffold at Fotheringay the penalty of her treachery at Edinburgh.

The spirit of the stern old Puritans is satisfied, and the prophecy of the Good Book receives a new and pregnant illustration—"Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."

THE LIFE OF AN EASTERN WOMAN.*

EVER since the days when the witty and racy letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu lifted a corner of the curtain which shrouds the harem from profane and masculine eyes there has been a strong desire on the part of the reading public to penetrate deeper into its mysteries. Numerous as have been the contributions intended for the gratification of this curiosity, until very recently little real information on the subject has been imparted, those who professed to give the information having themselves only obtained glimpses of its inmates, and never having enjoyed opportunities of studying that shrouded life in its privacy and daily round of cares and duties. The Eastern woman has been as little understood as the life she habitually leads, and old errors in regard to her and to it have been perpetuated, which a more thorough insight would have corrected or removed.

Two of the most striking books on this theme have been contributed through the English press within a short period—Miss Emmeline Lott's *Harem Life*, and this last contribution from the personal experiences

and romantic history of an Eastern woman, the wife of Kibrizli-Mehemet Pasha, late Grand Vizier of Turkey. The recollections of this Turkish lady, under the title of *Thirty Years in the Harem*, give a more perfect insight into that life, and to the domestic system of the Orient, than any previous contribution ever has done, and bear the stamp of truthfulness upon them. It is indeed a strange, eventful history which she recounts, one having all the romantic interest of fiction, and tinged with the glowing colors of that clime

"Where the virgins are soft as the roses they twine,
And all, save the spirit of man, is divine."

Her revelations are characterized by a candor which conceals nothing, and in many instances she states facts in relation to herself which no Western woman would venture to proclaim, under the very different system of morals and manners which trains her up to fulfill the functions of wife and mother. Miss Lott's book (which made quite a sensation at the period of its publication) is of a totally different character, and calculated to convey erroneous impressions of the Eastern woman and of Eastern domestic life, for it is written in bad temper and in a hostile spirit by an under-bred and evidently disappoint-

* *Thirty Years in the Harem; or, the Autobiography of Melek-Hanum, Wife of H. H. Kibrizli-Mehemet Pasha.* New York: Harper and Brothers.