

shaking his head mysteriously and sadly, "daughter, it is too late."

The duchess, in great despair, flew to the queen. Hitherto she had concealed from her royal daughter the employment she had given to Adam; for Elizabeth, who had herself suffered from the popular belief in Jacquetta's sorceries, had of late earnestly besought her to lay aside all practices that could be called into question. Now, however, when she confessed to the agitated and distracted queen the retaining of Adam Warner, and his fatal predictions, Elizabeth, who, from discretion and pride, had carefully hidden from her mother (too vehement to keep a secret) that offence in the king, the memory of which had made Warner peculiarly obnoxious to him, exclaimed, "Unhappy mother, thou hast employed the very man my fated husband would the most carefully have banished from the palace, the very man who could blast his name."

The duchess was aghast and thunder-stricken.

"If ever I forsake Friar Bungey again!" she muttered; "OH, THE GREAT MAN!"

But events which demand a detailed recital now rapidly pressing on, gave the duchess not even the time to seek further explanation of Elizabeth's words, much less to determine the doubt that rose in her enlightened mind whether Adam's spells might not be yet unravelled by the timely execution of the sorcerer!

CHAPTER IX

THE DELIBERATIONS OF MAYOR AND COUNCIL, WHILE
LORD WARWICK MARCHES UPON LONDON

It was a clear and bright day in the first week of October, 1470, when the various scouts employed by the mayor and council of London came back to the Guild, at which that worshipful corporation were assembled—their steeds blown and jaded, themselves panting and breathless—to announce the rapid march of the Earl of Warwick. The lord mayor of that year, Richard Lee, grocer and citizen, sat in the venerable hall in a huge leather chair, over which a pall of velvet had been thrown in haste, clad in his robes of state, and surrounded by his aldermen and the magnates of the city. To the personal love which the greater part of the body bore to the young and courteous king, was added the terror which the corporation justly entertained of the Lancastrian faction. They remembered the dreadful excesses which Margaret had permitted to her army in the year 1461—what time, to use the expression of the old historian, "the wealth of London looked pale;" and how grudgingly she had been restrained from condemning her revolted metropolis to the horrors of sack and pillage. And the bearing of this august representation of the trade and power of London was not, at the first, unworthy of the high influence it had obtained. The agitation and disorder of the hour had introduced into the assembly several of the more active and accredited citizens, not of right belonging to it; but they sat, in silent discipline and order, on long benches beyond the table crowded by the

corporate officers. Foremost among these, and remarkable by the firmness and intelligence of his countenance, and the earnest self-possession with which he listened to his seniors, was Nicholas Alwyn, summoned to the council from his great influence with the apprentices and younger freemen of the city.

As the last scout announced his news, and was gravely dismissed, the lord mayor rose; and being, perhaps, a better educated man than many of the haughtiest barons, and having more at stake than most of them, his manner and language had a dignity and earnestness which might have reflected honour on the higher court of parliament.

"Brethren and citizens," he said, with the decided brevity of one who felt it no time for many words, "in two hours we shall hear the clarions of Lord Warwick at our gates; in two hours we shall be summoned to give entrance to an army assembled in the name of King Henry. I have done my duty—I have manned the walls—I have marshalled what soldiers we can command. I have sent to the deputy-governor of the Tower—"

"And what answer gives he, my lord mayor?" interrupted Humfrey Heyford.

"None to depend upon. He answers that Edward IV., in abdicating the kingdom, has left him no power to resist; and that between force and force, king and king, might makes right."

A deep breath, like a groan, went through the assembly.

Up rose Master John Stokton, the mercer. He rose, trembling from limb to limb.

"Worshipful my lord mayor," said he, "it seems to me that our first duty is to look to our own selves!"

Despite the gravity of the emergence, a laugh burst forth, and was at once silenced, at this frank avowal.

"Yes," continued the mercer, turning round, and striking the table with his fist, in the action of a nervous man—"yes; for King Edward has set us the example. A stout and a dauntless champion, whose whole youth has been war, King Edward has fled from the kingdom—King Edward takes care of himself—it is our duty to do the same!"

Strange though it may seem, this homely selfishness went at once through the assembly like a flash of conviction. There was a burst of applause, and, as it ceased, the sullen explosion of a bombard (or cannon) from the city wall announced that the warder had caught the first glimpse of the approaching army.

Master Stokton started as if the shot had gone near to himself, and dropped at once into his seat ejaculating, "The Lord have mercy upon us!" There was a pause of a moment, and then several of the corporation rose simultaneously. The mayor, preserving his dignity, fixed on the sheriff.

"Few words, my lord, and I have done," said Richard Gardyner—"there is no fighting without men. The troops at the Tower are not to be counted on. The populace are all with Lord Warwick, even though he brought the devil at his back. If you hold out, look to rape and plunder before sunset to-morrow. If ye yield, go forth in a body, and the earl is not the man to suffer one Englishman to be injured in life or health who once trusts to his good faith. My say is said."

"Worshipful my lord," said a thin, cadaverous alderman, who rose next—"this is a judgment of the Lord and His saints. The Lollards and heretics have been too much suffered to run at large, and the wrath of Heaven is upon us."

An impatient murmuring attested the unwillingness of the larger part of the audience to listen further; but an approving buzz from the elder citizens announced that the fanaticism was not without its favourers. Thus stimulated and encouraged, the orator continued; and concluded an harangue, interrupted more stormily than all that had preceded, by an exhortation to leave the city to its fate, and to march in a body to the New Prison, draw forth five suspected Lollards, and burn them at Smithfield, in order to appease the Almighty and divert the tempest!

This subject of controversy once started, might have delayed the audience till the ragged staves of the Warwickers drove them forth from their hall, but for the sagacity and promptitude of the mayor.

"Brethren," he said, "it matters not to me whether the counsel suggested be good or bad, on the main; but this have I heard,—there is small safety in death-bed repentance. It is too late now to do, through fear of the devil, what we omitted to do through zeal for the church. The sole question is, 'Fight or make terms.' Ye say we lack men—verily, yes, while no leaders are found! Walworth, my predecessor, saved London from Wat Tyler. Men were wanting *then* till the mayor and his fellow-citizens marched forth to Mile End. It may be the same now. Agree to fight, and we'll try it—what say you, Nicholas Alwyn?—you know the temper of our young men."

Thus called upon, Alwyn rose, and such was the good name he had already acquired, that every murmur hushed into eager silence.

"My lord mayor," he said, "there is a proverb in my country which says, 'Fish swim best that's bred in the sea;' which means, I take it, that men do best what

they are trained for! Lord Warwick and his men are trained for fighting. Few of the fish about London Bridge are bred in *that* sea. Cry, 'London to the rescue!'—put on hauberk and helm, and you will have crowns enough to crack around you. What follows?—Master Stokton hath said it: pillage and rape for the city—gibbet and cord for mayor and aldermen. Do I say this, loving the house of Lancaster? No; as Heaven shall judge me, I think that the policy King Edward hath chosen, and which costs him his crown to-day, ought to make the house of York dear to burgess and trader. He hath sought to break up the iron rule of the great barons—and never peace to England till that be done. He has failed; but for a day. He has yielded for the time; so must we. 'There's a time to squint, and a time to look even.' I advise that we march out to the earl—that we make honourable terms for the city—that we take advantage of one faction to gain what we have not gained with the other—that we fight for our profit, not with swords where we shall be worsted, but in council and parliament, by speech and petition. New power is ever gentle and douce. What matters to us, York or Lancaster?—all we want is good laws. Get the best we can from Lancaster—and when King Edward returns, as return he will, let him bid higher than Henry for our love. Worshipful my lords and brethren, while barons and knaves go to loggerheads, honest men get their own. Time grows under us like grass. York and Lancaster may pull down each other—and what is left? Why, three things that thrive in all weather—London, Industry, and the people! We have fallen on a rough time. Well, what says the proverb? 'Boil stones in butter, and you may sup the broth.' I have done."

This characteristic harangue, which was fortunate enough to accord with the selfishness of each one, and yet give the manly excuse of sound sense and wise policy to all, was the more decisive in its effect, inasmuch as the young Alwyn, from his own determined courage, and his avowed distaste to the Lancaster faction, had been expected to favour warlike counsels. The mayor himself, who was faithfully and personally attached to Edward, with a deep sigh, gave way to the feeling of the assembly. And the resolution being once come to, Henry Lee was the first to give it whatever advantage could be derived from prompt and speedy action.

"Go we forth at once," said he—"go, as becomes us, in our robes of state, and with the insignia of the city. Never be it said that the guardians of the city of London could neither defend with spirit, nor make terms with honour. We give entrance to Lord Warwick. Well, then, it must be our own free act. Come! Officers of our court, advance."

"Stay a bit—stay a bit," whispered Stokton, digging sharp claws into Alwyn's arm—"let them go first,—a word with you, cunning Nick—a word."

Master Stokton, despite the tremor of his nerves, was a man of such wealth and substance, that Alwyn might well take the request, thus familiarly made, as a compliment not to be received discourteously; moreover, he had his own reasons for hanging back from a procession which his rank in the city did not require him to join.

While, therefore, the mayor and the other dignitaries left the hall, with as much state and order as if not going to meet an invading army, but to join a holiday festival, Nicholas and Stokton lingered behind.

"Master Alwyn," said Stokton, then, with a sly wink of his eye, "you have this day done yourself great credit; you will rise—I have my eye on you! I have a daughter—I have a daughter! Aha! a lad like you may come to great things!"

"I am much bounden to you, Master Stokton," returned Alwyn, somewhat abstractedly—"but what's your will?"

"My will!—hum, I say, Nicholas, what's your advice? Quite right not to go to blows. Odds costards! that mayor is a very tiger! But don't you think it would be wiser not to join this procession? Edward IV., an he ever come back, has a long memory. He deals at my ware, too—a good customer at a mercer's; and, Lord! how much money he owes the city!—hum—I would not seem ungrateful."

"But, if you go not out with the rest, there be other mercers who will have King *Henry's* countenance and favour; and it is easy to see that a new court will make vast consumption in mercery."

Master Stokton looked puzzled.

"That were a hugeous pity, good Nicholas; and, certes, there is Wat Smith, in Eastgate, who would cheat that good King Henry, poor man! which were a shame to the city; but, on the other hand, the Yorkists mostly pay on the nail (except King Edward, God save him!), and the Lancastrians are as poor as mice. Moreover, King Henry is a meek man, and does not avenge—King Edward, a hot and a stern man, and may call it treason to go with the Red Rose! I wish I knew how to decide! I have a daughter, an only daughter—a buxom lass, and well dowered. I would I had a sharp son-in-law to advise me!"

"Master Stokton, in one word, then, he never goes

far wrong who can run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. Good day to you, I have business elsewhere."

So saying, Nicholas, rather hastily, shook off the mercer's quivering fingers, and hastened out of the hall.

"Verily," murmured the disconsolate Stokton, "run with the hare, quotha!—that is, go with King Edward; but hunt with the hounds—that is, go with King Henry. Odds costards; it's not so easily done by a plain man, not bred in the north. I'd best go—home, and do nothing!"

With that, musing and bewildered, the poor man sneaked out, and was soon lost amidst the murmuring, gathering, and swaying crowds, many amongst which were as much perplexed as himself.

In the meanwhile, with his cloak muffled carefully round his face, and with a long, stealthy, gliding stride, Alwyn made his way through the streets, gained the river, entered a boat in waiting for him, and arrived at last at the palace of the Tower.

CHAPTER X

THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY OF THE EARL—THE ROYAL
CAPTIVE IN THE TOWER—THE MEETING BETWEEN
KING-MAKER AND KING

All in the chambers of the metropolitan fortress exhibited the greatest confusion and dismay. The sentinels, it is true, were still at their posts, men-at-arms at the outworks, the bombards were loaded, the flag of Edward IV. still waved aloft from the battlements; but the officers of the fortress and the captains of its

soldiery were, some assembled in the old hall, pale with fear, and wrangling with each other; some had fled, none knew whither; some had gone avowedly and openly to join the invading army.

Through this tumultuous and feeble force, Nicholas Alwyn was conducted by a single faithful servitor of the queen's (by whom he was expected); and one glance of his quick eye, as he passed along, convinced him of the justice of his counsels. He arrived at last, by a long and winding stair, at one of the loftiest chambers, in one of the loftiest towers, usually appropriated to the subordinate officers of the household.

And there, standing by the open casement, commanding some extended view of the noisy and crowded scene beyond, both on stream and land, he saw the queen of the fugitive monarch. By her side was the Lady Scrope, her most familiar friend and confidant—her three infant children, Elizabeth, Mary, and Cicely—grouped round her knees, playing with each other, and unconscious of the terrors of the times; and apart from the rest stood the Duchess of Bedford, conferring eagerly with Friar Bungey, whom she had summoned in haste, to know if his art could not yet prevail over enemies merely mortal.

The servitor announced Alwyn, and retired; the queen turned—"What news, Master Alwyn? Quick! What tidings from the lord mayor?"

"Gracious my queen and lady," said Alwyn, falling on his knees—"you have but one course to pursue. Below yon casement lies your barge—to the right, see the round grey tower of Westminster Sanctuary; you have time yet, and but time!"

The old Duchess of Bedford turned her sharp, bright, grey eyes from the pale and trembling friar to the

goldsmith, but was silent. The queen stood aghast!—"Mean you," she faltered at last, "that the city of London forsakes the king? Shame on the cravens!"

"Not cravens, my lady and queen," said Alwyn, rising. "He must have iron nails that scratches a bear—and the white bear above all. The king has fled—the barons have fled—the soldiers have fled—the captains have fled—the citizens of London alone fly not; but there is nothing, save life and property, left to guard."

"Is this thy boasted influence with the commons and youths of the city?"

"My humble influence, may it please your grace (I say it now openly, and I will say it a year hence, when King Edward will hold his court in these halls once again), my influence, such as it is, has been used to save lives, which resistance would waste in vain. Alack, alack! 'No gaping against an oven,' gracious lady! Your barge is below. Again I say, there is yet time—when the bell tolls the next hour, that time will be past!"

"Then Jesu defend these children!" said Elizabeth, bending over her infants, and weeping bitterly—"I will go!"

"Hold!" said the Duchess of Bedford, "men desert us—but do the spirits also forsake?—Speak, friar! canst thou yet do aught for us?—and if not, thinkest thou it is the right hour to yield and fly?"

"Daughter," said the friar, whose terror might have moved pity—"as I said before, thank yourself. This Warner, this—in short, the lesser magician, hath been aided and cockered to countervail the greater, as I forewarned. Fly! run! fly! Verily; and indeed, it is the properest of all times to save ourselves; and the stars and the book, and my familiar, all call out—'Off and away!'"

"'Fore heaven!" exclaimed Alwyn, who had hitherto been dumb with astonishment at this singular interlude—"sith he who hath shipped the devil must make the best of him, thou art for once an honest man, and a wise counsellor. Hark! the second gun! The earl is at the gates of the city!"

The queen lingered no longer—she caught her youngest child in her arms; the Lady Scrope followed with the two others—"Come, follow, quick, Master Alwyn," said the duchess, who, now that she was compelled to abandon the world of prediction and soothsaying, became thoroughly the sagacious, plotting, ready woman of this life—"Come, your face and name will be of service to us, an we meet with obstruction."

Before Alwyn could reply, the door was thrown abruptly open, and several of the officers of the household rushed pell-mell into the royal presence.

"Gracious queen!" cried many voices at once, each with a different sentence of fear and warning—"Fly!—We cannot depend on the soldiers—the populace are up—they shout for King Henry—Dr. Godard is preaching against you at St. Paul's Cross—Sir Geoffrey Gates has come out of the sanctuary, and with him all the miscreants and outlaws—the mayor is now with the rebels! Fly!—the sanctuary—the sanctuary!"

"And who amongst you is of highest rank?" asked the duchess, calmly; for Elizabeth, completely overwhelmed, seemed incapable of speech or movement.

"I, Giles de Malvoisin, knight banneret," said an old warrior, armed cap-a-pie, who had fought in France under the hero Talbot.

"Then, sir," said the duchess, with majesty, "to your hands I confide the eldest daughter of your king. Lead on!—we follow you. Elizabeth, lean on me."

With this, supporting Elizabeth, and leading her second grandchild, the duchess left the chamber.

The friar followed amidst the crowd, for well he knew that if the soldiers of Warwick once caught hold of him, he had fared about as happily as the fox amidst the dogs; and Alwyn, forgotten in the general confusion, hastened to Adam's chamber.

The old man, blessing any cause that induced his patroness to dispense with his astrological labours and restored him to the care of his Eureka, was calmly and quietly employed in repairing the mischief effected by the bungling friar. And Sibyll, who at the first alarm had flown to his retreat, joyfully hailed the entrance of the friendly goldsmith.

Alwyn was indeed perplexed what to advise, for the principal sanctuary would, no doubt, be crowded by ruffians of the worst character; and the better lodgments which that place, a little town in itself,* contained, be already preoccupied by the Yorkists of rank; and the smaller sanctuaries were still more liable to the same objection. Moreover, if Adam should be recognised by any of the rabble that would meet them by the way, his fate, by the summary malice of a mob, was certain. After all, the Tower would be free from the populace; and as soon as, by a few rapid questions, Alwyn learned from Sibyll that she had reason to hope her father would find protection with Lord Warwick, and called to mind that Marmaduke Neville was necessarily in the earl's train, he advised them to remain quiet and concealed in their apartments, and promised to see and provide for them the moment the Tower was yielded up to the new government.

The counsel suited both Sibyll and Warner. In-

* The Sanctuary of Westminster was fortified.

deed, the philosopher could not very easily have been induced to separate himself again from the beloved Eureka; and Sibyll was more occupied at that hour with thoughts and prayers for the beloved Hastings,—afar—a wanderer and an exile,—than with the turbulent events amidst which her lot was cast.

In the storms of a revolution which convulsed a kingdom and hurled to the dust a throne, Love saw but a single object—Science but its tranquil toil. Beyond the realm of men lies ever with its joy and sorrow, its vicissitude and change, the domain of the human heart. In the revolution, the toy of the scholar was restored to him; in the revolution, the maiden mourned her lover. In the movement of the mass, each unit hath its separate passion. The blast that rocks the tree, shakes a different world in every leaf!

CHAPTER XI

THE TOWER IN COMMOTION

On quitting the Tower, Alwyn regained the boat, and took his way to the city; and here, whatever credit that worthy and excellent personage may lose in certain eyes, his historian is bound to confess that his anxiety for Sibyll did not entirely distract his attention from interest or ambition. To become the head of his class, to rise to the first honours of his beloved city of London, had become to Nicholas Alwyn a hope and aspiration which made as much a part of his being as glory to a warrior, power to a king, an Eureka to a scholar; and though more mechanically than with any sordid calculation or self-seeking, Nicholas Alwyn