

"Nay, reverend and brave knight," answered Isaac, "but in chief measure by a balsam of marvelous virtue."

"Where had she that secret?" said Beaumanoir.

"It was delivered to her," answered Isaac reluctantly, "by Miriam, a sage matron of our tribe."

"Ah, false Jew!" said the Grand Master, "was it not from that same witch Miriam, the abomination of whose enchantments have been heard of throughout every Christian land?" exclaimed the Grand Master, crossing himself. "Her body was burnt at a stake, and her ashes were scattered to the four winds; and so be it with me and mine order, if I do not as much to her pupil, and more also! I will teach her to throw spell and incantation over the soldiers of the blessed Temple. There, Damian, spurn this Jew from the gate, shoot him dead if he oppose or turn again. With his daughter we will deal as the Christian law and our own high office warrant."

Poor Isaac was hurried off accordingly, and expelled from the preceptory; all his entreaties, and even his offers, unheard and disregarded. He could do no better than return to the house of the rabbi, and endeavor, through his means, to learn how his daughter was to be disposed of. Meanwhile the Grand Master ordered to his presence the Preceptor of Templestowe.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

ALBERT MALVOISIN, president, or, in the language of the order, preceptor, of the establishment of Templestowe, was brother to that Philip Malvoisin who has been already occasionally mentioned in this history, and was, like that baron, in close league with Brian de Bois-Guilbert.

Amongst unprincipled men, of whom the Temple order included but too many, Albert of Templestowe might be distinguished; but with this difference from the audacious Bois-Guil-

bert, that he knew how to throw over his vices and his ambition the veil of hypocrisy, and to assume in his exterior the fanaticism which he internally despised. Had not the arrival of the Grand Master been so unexpectedly sudden, he would have seen nothing at Templestowe which might have appeared to argue any relaxation of discipline; and even although surprised, and to a certain extent detected, Albert Malvoisin listened with such respect and apparent contrition to the rebuke of his superior, and made such haste to reform the particulars he censured,—succeeded, in fine, so well in giving an air of ascetic devotion,—that Lucas Beaumanoir began to entertain a higher opinion of the preceptor's morals than the first appearance of the establishment had inclined him to adopt.

But these favorable sentiments on the part of the Grand Master were greatly shaken by the intelligence that Albert had received within a house of religion a Jewish, the captive of a brother of the order; and when Albert appeared before him, he was regarded with unwonted sternness.

"There is in this mansion, dedicated to the purposes of the holy Order of the Temple," said the Grand Master in a severe tone, "a Jewish woman, brought hither by a brother of religion, by your connivance, Sir Preceptor."

Albert Malvoisin was overwhelmed with confusion; for the unfortunate Rebecca had been confined in a remote and secret part of the building, and every precaution used to prevent her residence there from being known. He read in the looks of Beaumanoir ruin to Bois-Guilbert and to himself unless he should be able to avert the impending storm.

"Why are you mute?" continued the Grand Master.

"Is it permitted to me to reply?" answered the preceptor in a tone of the deepest humility, although by the question he only meant to gain an instant's space for arranging his ideas.

"Speak, you are permitted," said the Grand Master. "How comes it, then, I demand of thee once more, that thou hast suffered a brother to bring a Jewish sorceress into this holy place?"

"A Jewish sorceress!" echoed Albert Malvoisin. "Good angels, guard us!"

"Ay, brother, a Jewish sorceress!" said the Grand Master sternly. "I have said it. Darest thou deny that this Rebecca, the daughter of that wretched usurer Isaac of York, and the pupil of the foul witch Miriam, is now lodged within this thy preceptory?"

"Your wisdom, reverend father," answered the preceptor, "hath rolled away the darkness from my understanding. Much did I wonder at Brian de Bois-Guilbert's devotion to this Jewess. I could not but ascribe it to some touch of insanity more to be cured by pity than reproof; but, since your reverend wisdom hath discovered her to be a sorceress, perchance it may account fully for his folly."

"It doth, it doth!" said Beaumanoir. "See, brother Conrade, the Ancient Enemy,¹ the devouring Lion, obtains power over us by talisman and spell. It may be that our brother Bois-Guilbert does in this matter deserve rather pity than severe chastisement, rather the support of the staff than the strokes of the rod; and that our admonitions and prayers may turn him from his folly, and restore him to his brethren."

"It were deep pity," said Conrade Mont-Fitchet, "to lose to the order one of its best lances, when the holy community most requires the aid of its sons. Three hundred Saracens hath this Brian de Bois-Guilbert slain with his own hand."

"The blood of these accursed dogs," said the Grand Master, "shall be a sweet and acceptable offering to the saints and angels whom they despise and blaspheme; and with their aid will we counteract the spells and charms with which our brother is entwined as in a net. He shall burst the bands of this Delilah, as Samson burst the two new cords with which the Philistines had bound him, and shall slaughter the infidels, even heaps upon heaps. But concerning this foul witch, who hath flung her enchantments over a brother of the holy Temple, assuredly she shall die the death."

¹ Satan.

"But the laws of England"—said the preceptor, who, though delighted that the Grand Master's resentment, thus fortunately averted from himself and Bois-Guilbert, had taken another direction, began now to fear he was carrying it too far.

"The laws of England," interrupted Beaumanoir, "permit and enjoin each judge to execute justice within his own jurisdiction. The most petty baron may arrest, try, and condemn a witch found within his own domain; and shall that power be denied to the Grand Master of the Temple within a preceptory of his order? No: we will judge and condemn. The witch shall be taken out of the land, and the wickedness thereof shall be forgiven. Prepare the castle hall for the trial of the sorceress."

Albert Malvoisin bowed and retired,—not to give directions for preparing the hall, but to seek out Brian de Bois-Guilbert, and communicate to him how matters were likely to terminate. It was not long ere he found him, foaming with indignation. "The unthinking," he said, "the ungrateful, to scorn him who, amidst blood and flames, would have saved her life at the risk of his own! By Heaven, Malvoisin! I abode until roof and rafters crackled and crashed around me. I was the butt of a hundred arrows: they rattled on mine armor like hailstones against a latticed casement, and the only use I made of my shield was for her protection. This did I endure for her; and now the self-willed girl upbraids me that I did not leave her to perish, and refuses me not only the slightest proof of gratitude, but even the most distant hope that ever she will be brought to grant any. The devil, that possessed her race with obstinacy, has concentrated its full force in her single person!"

"The devil," said the preceptor, "I think, possessed you both. By the mass, I think old Lucas Beaumanoir guesses right, when he maintains she hath cast a spell over you."

"Lucas Beaumanoir!" said Bois-Guilbert reproachfully. "Are these your precautions, Malvoisin? Hast thou suffered the dotard to learn that Rebecca is in the preceptory?"

"How could I help it?" said the preceptor. "I neglected

nothing that could keep secret your mystery; but it is betrayed, and, whether by the devil or no, the devil only can tell. But I have turned the matter as I could: you are safe if you renounce Rebecca. You are pitied,—the victim of magical delusion. She is a sorceress, and must suffer as such."

"She shall not, by Heaven!" said Bois-Guilbert.

"By Heaven, she must and will!" said Malvoisin. "Neither you nor any one else can save her. Lucas Beaumanoir hath settled that the death of a Jewess will be an offering; and thou knowest he hath both the power and will to execute so reasonable and pious a purpose."

"Will future ages believe that such stupid bigotry ever existed!" said Bois-Guilbert, striding up and down the apartment.

"What they may believe, I know not," said Malvoisin calmly; "but I know well, that in this our day, clergy and laymen take ninety-nine to the hundred, will cry 'amen' to the Grand Master's sentence."

"I have it," said Bois-Guilbert. "Albert, thou art my friend. Thou must connive at her escape, Malvoisin, and I will transport her to some place of greater security and secrecy."

"I cannot, if I would," replied the preceptor. "The mansion is filled with the attendants of the Grand Master, and others who are devoted to him; and, to be frank with you, brother, I would not embark with you in this matter, even if I could hope to bring my bark to haven. I have risked enough already for your sake. I have no mind to encounter a sentence of degradation, or even to lose my preceptory; and you, if you will be guided by my counsel, will give up this wild-goose chase. Think, Bois-Guilbert, thy present rank, thy future honors, all depend on thy place in the order. Shouldst thou adhere perversely to this Rebecca, thou wilt give Beaumanoir the power of expelling thee, and he will not neglect it. He is jealous of the truncheon which he holds in his trembling gripe, and he knows thou stretchest thy bold hand towards it. Doubt not he will ruin thee, if thou

affordest him a pretext so fair as thy protection of a Jewish sorceress. Give him his scope in this matter, for thou canst not control him."

"Malvoisin," said Bois-Guilbert, "thou art a cold-blooded"—

"Friend," said the preceptor, hastening to fill up the blank, in which Bois-Guilbert would probably have placed a worse word—"a cold-blooded friend I am, and therefore more fit to give thee advice. I tell thee once more, that thou canst not save Rebecca. I tell thee once more, thou canst but perish with her. Go, hie thee to the Grand Master, throw thyself at his feet, and tell him"—

"Thou speakest the truth, Malvoisin," said Brian de Bois-Guilbert after a moment's reflection. "I will cast her off! Yes, I will leave her to her fate, unless"—

"Qualify not thy wise and necessary resolution," said Malvoisin. "For the present we part, nor must we be seen to hold close conversation. I must order the hall for his judgment-seat."

"What!" said Bois-Guilbert, "so soon?"

"Ay," replied the preceptor, "trial moves rapidly on when the judge has determined the sentence beforehand."

"Rebecca," said Bois-Guilbert when he was left alone, "one effort will I make to save thee; but beware of ingratitude!"

The preceptor had hardly given the necessary orders, when he was joined by Conrade Mont-Fitchet, who acquainted him with the Grand Master's resolution to bring the Jewess to instant trial for sorcery.

"It is surely a dream," said the preceptor. "We have many Jewess physicians, and we call them not wizards, though they work wonderful cures."

"The Grand Master thinks otherwise," said Mont-Fitchet; "and, Albert, I will be upright with thee: wizard or not, it were better that this miserable damsel die than that Brian de Bois-Guilbert should be lost to the order, or the order divided by internal dissension. Thou knowest his high rank, his fame in

arms; thou knowest the zeal with which many of our brethren regard him."

"I have been working him even now to abandon her," said Malvoisin; "but still, are there grounds enough to condemn this Rebecca for sorcery? Will not the Grand Master change his mind when he sees that the proofs are so weak?"

"They must be strengthened, Albert," replied Mont-Fitchet, "they must be strengthened. Dost thou understand me?"

"I do," said the preceptor, "nor do I scruple to do aught for advancement of the order; but there is little time to find engines fitting."

"Malvoisin, they *must* be found," said Conrade: "well will it advantage both the order and thee. This Templestowe is a poor preceptory: that of Maison-Dieu is worth double its value. Thou knowest my interest with our old chief. Find those who can carry this matter through, and thou art preceptor of Maison-Dieu in the fertile Kent.¹ How sayest thou?"

"There are," replied Malvoisin, "among those who came hither with Bois-Guilbert, two fellows whom I well know. Servants they were to my brother Philip de Malvoisin, and passed from his service to that of Front-de-Bœuf. It may be they know something of the witcheries of this woman."

"Away! Seek them out instantly! and hark thee, if a byzant or two will sharpen their memory, let them not be wanting."

"They would swear any one a sorceress for a zecchin," said the preceptor.

"Away, then!" said Mont-Fitchet. "At noon the affair will proceed. I have not seen our senior in such earnest preparation since he condemned to the stake Hamet Alfagi, a convert who relapsed to the Moslem faith."

The ponderous castle-bell had tolled the point of noon, when Rebecca heard a trampling of feet upon the private stair which led to her place of confinement. The noise announced the arrival of several persons. The door of the chamber was un-

¹ A county forming the southeastern extremity of England.

locked, and Conrade and the preceptor Malvoisin entered, attended by four warders clothed in black, and bearing halberds.

"Daughter of an accursed race!" said the preceptor, "arise and follow us."

"Whither," said Rebecca, "and for what purpose?"

"Damsel," answered Conrade, "it is not for thee to question, but to obey. Nevertheless, be it known to thee that thou art to be brought before the tribunal of the Grand Master of our holy order, there to answer for thine offenses."

"May the God of Abraham be praised!" said Rebecca, folding her hands devoutly. "The name of a judge, though an enemy to my people, is to me as the name of a protector. Most willingly do I follow thee: permit me only to wrap my veil around my head."

They descended the stair with slow and solemn step, traversed a long gallery, and, by a pair of folding-doors placed at the end, entered the great hall in which the Grand Master had for the time established his court of justice.

The lower part of this ample apartment was filled with squires and yeomen, who made way, not without some difficulty, for Rebecca (attended by the preceptor and Mont-Fitchet, and followed by the guard of halberdiers) to move forward to the seat appointed for her. As she passed through the crowd, her arms folded and her head depressed, a scrap of paper was thrust into her hand, which she received almost unconsciously, and continued to hold without examining its contents. The assurance that she possessed some friend in this awful assembly gave her courage to look around, and to mark into whose presence she had been conducted.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE tribunal, erected for the trial of the innocent and unhappy Rebecca, occupied the dais or elevated part of the upper end of the great hall,—a platform, which we have already described as the place of honor, destined to be occupied by the most distinguished inhabitants or guests of an ancient mansion.

On an elevated seat, directly before the accused, sat the Grand Master of the Temple, in full and ample robes of flowing white, holding in his hand the mystic staff, which bore the symbol of the order. At his feet was placed a table, occupied by two scribes, chaplains of the order, whose duty it was to reduce to formal record the proceedings of the day. The black dresses, bare scalps, and demure looks of these churchmen formed a strong contrast to the warlike appearance of the knights who attended, either as residing in the preceptory or as come thither to attend upon their Grand Master. The preceptors, of whom there were four present, occupied seats lower in height, and somewhat drawn back behind that of their superior; and the knights, who enjoyed no such rank in the order, were placed on benches still lower, and preserving the same distance from the preceptors as these from the Grand Master. Behind them, but still upon the dais or elevated portion of the hall, stood the esquires of the order, in white dresses of an inferior quality.

The whole assembly wore an aspect of the most profound gravity; and in the faces of the knights might be perceived traces of military daring, united with the solemn carriage becoming men of religious profession, and which, in the presence of their Grand Master, failed not to sit upon their brow.

The remaining and lower part of the hall was filled with guards, holding partisans, and with other attendants whom curiosity had drawn thither to see at once a Grand Master and a Jewish sorceress. By far the greater part of those inferior persons were, in one rank or other, connected with the order,

and were accordingly distinguished by their black dresses. But peasants from the neighboring country were not refused admittance; for it was the pride of Beaumanoir to render the edifying spectacle of the justice which he administered as public as possible. His large blue eyes seemed to expand as he gazed around the assembly; and his countenance appeared elated by the conscious dignity and imaginary merit of the part which he was about to perform. A psalm, which he himself accompanied with a deep mellow voice, which age had not deprived of its powers, commenced the proceedings of the day; and the solemn sounds, *Venite exultemus Domino*,¹ so often sung by the Templars before engaging with earthly adversaries, was judged by Lucas most appropriate to introduce the approaching triumph, for such he deemed it, over the powers of darkness. The deep, prolonged notes, raised by a hundred masculine voices accustomed to combine in the choral chant, arose to the vaulted roof of the hall, and rolled on amongst its arches with the pleasing yet solemn sound of the rushing of mighty waters.

When the sound ceased, the Grand Master glanced his eye slowly around the circle, and observed that the seat of one of the preceptors was vacant. Brian de Bois-Guilbert, by whom it had been occupied, had left his place, and was now standing near the extreme corner of one of the benches occupied by the Knights Companions of the Temple, one hand extending his long mantle, so as in some degree to hide his face; while the other held his cross-handled sword, with the point of which, sheathed as it was, he was slowly drawing lines upon the oaken floor.

"Unhappy man!" said the Grand Master, after favoring him with a glance of compassion. "Thou seest, Conrade, how this holy work distresses him. Seest thou he cannot look upon us; he cannot look upon her; and who knows by what impulse from his tormentor his hand forms these cabalistic lines upon the floor? It may be our life and safety are thus aimed at; but we spit at and defy the foul enemy. *Semper Leo percutiatur!*"

¹ "Come, let us rejoice exceedingly in the Lord!"

This was communicated apart to his confidential follower, Conrade Mont-Fitchet. The Grand Master then raised his voice, and addressed the assembly.

"Reverend and valiant men, knights, preceptors, and companions of this holy order, my brethren and my children!—you also, well-born and pious esquires, who aspire to wear this holy cross!—and you also, Christian brethren, of every degree!—Be it known to you, that it is not defect of power in us which hath occasioned the assembling of this congregation; for, however unworthy in our person, yet to us is committed, with this baton,¹ full power to judge and to try all that regards the weal of this our holy order. Holy St. Bernard, in the rule of our knightly and religious profession, hath said, in the fifty-ninth capital,² that he would not that brethren be called together in council, save at the will and command of the Master; leaving it free to us, as to those more worthy fathers who have preceded us in this our office, to judge, as well of the occasion as of the time and place in which a chapter of the whole order, or of any part thereof, may be convoked. Also, in all such chapters, it is our duty to hear the advice of our brethren, and to proceed according to our own pleasure. But when the raging wolf hath made an inroad upon the flock, and carried off one member thereof, it is the duty of the kind shepherd to call his comrades together, that with bows and slings they may quell the invader, according to our well-known rule, that the lion is ever to be beaten down. We have therefore summoned to our presence a Jewish woman, by name Rebecca, daughter of Isaac of York,—a woman infamous for sortileges³ and for witcheries; whereby she hath maddened not a churl, but a knight—not a secular knight, but one devoted to the service of the holy Temple—not

¹ Baton, emblem of office.

² The reader is again referred to the rules of the Poor Military Brotherhood of the Temple, which occur in the works of St. Bernard.

³ The art of foreseeing future events by drawing lots: hence, loosely, magic.

a Knight Companion, but a preceptor of our order, first in honor as in place. Our brother, Brian de Bois-Guilbert, is well known to ourselves, and to all degrees who now hear me, as a true and zealous champion of the cross, by whose arm many deeds of valor have been wrought in the Holy Land, and the holy places purified from pollution by the blood of those infidels who defiled them. Neither have our brother's sagacity and prudence been less in repute among his brethren than his valor and discipline; in so much, that knights, both in eastern and western lands, have named De Bois-Guilbert as one who may well be put in nomination as successor to this baton, when it shall please Heaven to release us from the toil of bearing it. If we were told that such a man, so honored, and so honorable, suddenly cast away regard for his character, his vows, his brethren, and his prospects, and finally was utterly blinded by folly, what should we say but that the noble knight was possessed by some evil demon, or influenced by some wicked spell? If we could suppose it otherwise, think not rank, valor, high repute, or any earthly consideration, should prevent us from visiting him with punishment, that the evil thing might be removed, even according to the text, *Auferte malum ex vobis.*"

He paused. A low murmur went through the assembly, which then became grave, and anxiously waited what the Grand Master was next to propose.

"Such," he said, "and so great, should indeed be the punishment of a Knight Templar who willfully offended against the rules of his order. But if, by means of charms and of spells, Satan had obtained dominion over the knight, we are then rather to lament than chastise his backsliding; and, imposing on him only such penance as may purify him, we are to turn the full edge of our indignation upon the instrument which had so well-nigh occasioned his utter falling-away. Stand forth, therefore, and bear witness, ye who have witnessed these unhappy doings, that we may judge of the sum and bearing thereof; and judge whether our justice may be satisfied with the punishment of this

infidel woman, or if we must go on, with a bleeding heart, to the further proceeding against our brother."

Several witnesses were called upon to prove the risks to which Bois-Guilbert exposed himself in endeavoring to save Rebecca from the blazing castle, and his neglect of his personal defense in attending to her safety. The men gave these details with the exaggerations common to vulgar minds which have been strongly excited by any remarkable event, and their natural disposition to the marvelous was greatly increased by the satisfaction which their evidence seemed to afford to the eminent person for whose information it had been delivered. Thus the dangers which Bois-Guilbert surmounted, in themselves sufficiently great, became portentous in their narrative. The devotion of the knight to Rebecca's defense was exaggerated beyond the bounds, not only of discretion, but even of the most frantic excess of chivalrous zeal; and his deference to what she said, even although her language was often severe and upbraiding, was painted as carried to an excess which, in a man of his haughty temper, seemed almost preternatural.

The Preceptor of Templestowe was then called on to describe the manner in which Bois-Guilbert and the Jewess arrived at the preceptory. The evidence of Malvoisin was skillfully guarded; but while he apparently studied to spare the feelings of Bois-Guilbert, he threw in from time to time such hints as seemed to infer that he labored under some temporary alienation of mind. With sighs of penitence the preceptor avowed his own contrition for having admitted Rebecca. "But my defense," he concluded, "has been made in my confession to our most reverend father the Grand Master. Joyfully will I submit to any penance he shall assign me."

"Thou hast spoken well, brother Albert," said Beaumanoir. "Thirteen paternosters are assigned by our pious founder for matins, and nine for vespers: be those services doubled by thee. Thrice a week are Templars permitted the use of flesh; but do thou keep fast for all the seven days. This do for six weeks to come, and thy penance is accomplished."

With a hypocritical look of the deepest submission, the Preceptor of Templestowe bowed to the ground before his superior, and resumed his seat.

"Were it not well, brethren," said the Grand Master, "that we examine something into the former life and conversation of this woman, specially that we may discover whether she be one likely to use magical charms and spells, since the truths which we have heard may well incline us to suppose that in this unhappy course our erring brother has been acted upon by some infernal delusion?"

Herman of Goodalricke was the fourth preceptor present: the other three were Conrade, Malvoisin, and Bois-Guilbert himself. Herman was an ancient warrior, whose face was marked with scars inflicted by the saber of the Mussulman, and had great rank and consideration among his brethren. He arose, and bowed to the Grand Master, who instantly granted him license of speech. "I would crave to know, most reverend father, of our valiant brother Brian de Bois-Guilbert, what he says to these wondrous accusations."

"Brian de Bois-Guilbert," said the Grand Master, "thou hearest the question which our brother of Goodalricke desireth thou shouldst answer. I command thee to reply to him."

Bois-Guilbert turned his head towards the Grand Master when thus addressed, and remained silent.

"He is possessed by a dumb devil," said the Grand Master. "Avoid thee, Sathanas!—Speak, Brian de Bois-Guilbert, I conjure thee, by this symbol of our holy order."

Bois-Guilbert made an effort to suppress his rising scorn and indignation, the expression of which, he was well aware, would have little availed him. "Brian de Bois-Guilbert," he answered, "replies not, most reverend father, to such wild and vague charges. If his honor be impeached, he will defend it with his body, and with that sword which has often fought for Christendom."

"We forgive thee, brother Brian," said the Grand Master: "though that thou hast boasted thy warlike achievements before

us, is a glorifying of thine own deeds, and cometh of the Enemy, who tempteth us to exalt our own worship. But thou hast our pardon, judging thou speakest less of thine own suggestion than from the impulse of him whom, by Heaven's leave, we will quell, and drive forth from our assembly." A glance of disdain flashed from the dark, fierce eyes of Bois-Guilbert, but he made no reply.—"And now," pursued the Grand Master, "since our brother of Goodalricke's question has been thus imperfectly answered, pursue we our quest, brethren, and with our patron's assistance we will search to the bottom this mystery.—Let those who have aught to witness of the life and conversation of this Jewish woman, stand forth before us." There was a bustle in the lower part of the hall; and when the Grand Master inquired the reason, it was replied there was in the crowd a bedridden man, whom the prisoner had restored to the perfect use of his limbs by a miraculous balsam.

The poor peasant, a Saxon by birth, was dragged forward to the bar, terrified at the penal consequences which he might have incurred by the guilt of having been cured of the palsy, by a Jewish damsel. Perfectly cured he certainly was not, for he supported himself forward on crutches to give evidence. Most unwilling was his testimony, and given with many tears; but he admitted that two years since, when residing at York, he was suddenly afflicted with a sore disease, while laboring for Isaac the rich Jew, in his vocation of a joiner; that he had been unable to stir from his bed until the remedies applied by Rebecca's directions, and especially a warming and spicy-smelling balsam, had in some degree restored him to the use of his limbs. Moreover, he said, she had given him a pot of that precious ointment, and furnished him with a piece of money withal, to return to the house of his father, near to Templestowe. "And, may it please your gracious Reverence," said the man, "I cannot think the damsel meant harm by me, though she hath the ill hap to be a Jewess; for, even when I used her remedy, I said the *pater* and the creed, and it never operated a whit less kindly."

"Peace, slave," said the Grand Master, "and begone! It well suits brutes like thee to be tampering and trinketing with hellish cures, and to be giving your labor to the sons of mischief. I tell thee, the Fiend can impose diseases for the very purpose of removing them, in order to bring into credit some diabolical fashion of cure. Hast thou that unguent of which thou speakest?"

The peasant, fumbling in his bosom with a trembling hand, produced a small box bearing some Hebrew characters on the lid, which was, with most of the audience, a sure proof that the Devil had stood apothecary. Beaumanoir, after crossing himself, took the box into his hand, and, learned in most of the Eastern tongues, read with ease the motto on the lid: *The Lion of the Tribe of Judah hath conquered*. "Strange powers of Sathanas," said he, "which can convert Scripture into blasphemy, mingling poison with our necessary food!—Is there no leech here who can tell us the ingredients of this mystic unguent?"

Two mediciners, as they called themselves,—the one a monk, the other a barber,—appeared, and avouched they knew nothing of the materials, excepting that they savored of myrrh and camphire, which they took to be Oriental herbs. But with the true professional hatred to a successful practitioner of their art, they insinuated, that, since the medicine was beyond their own knowledge, it must necessarily have been compounded from an unlawful and magical pharmacopœia; since they themselves, though no conjurers, fully understood every branch of their art, so far as it might be exercised with the good faith of a Christian. When this medical research was ended, the Saxon peasant desired humbly to have back the medicine which he had found so salutary, but the Grand Master frowned severely at the request. "What is thy name, fellow?" said he to the cripple.

"Higg, the son of Snell," answered the peasant.

"Then Higg, son of Snell," said the Grand Master, "I tell thee it is better to be bedridden than to accept the benefit of unbelievers' medicine, that thou mayest arise and walk; better

to despoil infidels of their treasure by the strong hand than to accept of them benevolent gifts, or do them service for wages. Go thou, and do as I have said."

"Alack!" said the peasant, "an it shall not displease your Reverence, the lesson comes too late for me, for I am but a maimed man; but I will tell my two brethren, who serve the rich Rabbi Nathan Ben Samuel, that your mastership says it is more lawful to rob him than to render him faithful service."

"Out with the prating villain!" said Beaumanoir, who was not prepared to refute this practical application of his general maxim.

Higg, the son of Snell, withdrew into the crowd, but, interested in the fate of his benefactress, lingered until he should learn her doom, even at the risk of again encountering the frown of that severe judge, the terror of which withered his very heart within him.

At this period of the trial the Grand Master commanded Rebecca to unveil herself. Opening her lips for the first time, she replied patiently, but with dignity, that it was not the wont of the daughters of her people to uncover their faces when alone in an assembly of strangers. The sweet tones of her voice, and the softness of her reply, impressed on the audience a sentiment of pity and sympathy. But Beaumanoir, in whose mind the suppression of each feeling of humanity which could interfere with his imagined duty was a virtue of itself, repeated his commands that his victim should be unveiled. The guards were about to remove her veil accordingly, when she stood up before the Grand Master, and said, "Nay, for the remembrance of your mothers, for the love of your sisters, let me not be thus handled in your presence. It suits not a maiden to be unveiled by such rude grooms. I will obey you," she added with an expression of patient sorrow in her voice, which had almost melted the heart of Beaumanoir himself. "Ye are elders among your people, and at your command I will show the features of an ill-fated maiden."

She withdrew her veil, and looked on them with a countenance

in which bashfulness contended with dignity. Her exceeding beauty excited a murmur of surprise. Higg, the son of Snell, felt most deeply the effect produced by the sight of the countenance of his benefactress. "Let me go forth," he said to the warders at the door of the hall—"let me go forth! To look at her again will kill me, for I have had a share in murdering her."

"Peace, poor man!" said Rebecca, when she heard his exclamation. "Thou hast done me no harm by speaking the truth. Thou canst not aid me by thy complaints or lamentations. Peace, I pray thee! Go home and save thyself."

Higg was about to be thrust out by the compassion of the warders, who were apprehensive lest his clamorous grief should draw upon them reprehension, and upon himself punishment; but he promised to be silent, and was permitted to remain. The two men-at-arms, with whom Albert Malvoisin had not failed to communicate upon the import of their testimony, were now called forward. Though both were hardened and inflexible villains, the sight of the captive maiden, as well as her excelling beauty, at first appeared to stagger them; but an expressive glance from the Preceptor of Templestowe restored them to their dogged composure, and they delivered, with a precision which would have seemed suspicious to more impartial judges, circumstances either altogether fictitious or trivial, and natural in themselves, but rendered pregnant with suspicion by the exaggerated manner in which they were told, and the sinister commentary which the witnesses added to the facts. The circumstances of their evidence would have been, in modern days, divided into two classes,—those which were immaterial, and those which were actually and physically impossible,—but both were, in those ignorant and superstitious times, easily credited as proofs of guilt. The first class set forth that Rebecca was heard to mutter to herself in an unknown tongue; that the songs she sung by fits were of a strangely sweet sound, which made the ears of the hearer tingle and his heart throb; that she spoke at times to herself, and seemed to look upward for a reply; that her garments were of a

strange and mystic form, unlike those of women of good repute; that she had rings impressed with cabalistical devices; and that strange characters were broidered on her veil.

All these circumstances, so natural and so trivial, were gravely listened to as proofs, or at least as affording strong suspicions, that Rebecca had unlawful correspondence with mystical powers.

But there was less equivocal testimony which the credulity of the assembly, or of the greater part, greedily swallowed, however incredible. One of the soldiers had seen her work a cure upon a wounded man brought with them to the castle of Torquilstone. She did, he said, make certain signs upon the wound, and repeated certain mysterious words, which he blessed God he understood not, when the iron head of a square crossbow-bolt disengaged itself from the wound, the bleeding was stanchd, the wound was closed, and the dying man was within the quarter of an hour walking upon the ramparts, and assisting the witness in managing a mangonel, or machine for hurling stones. This legend was probably founded upon the fact that Rebecca had attended on the wounded Ivanhoe when in the castle of Torquilstone. But it was the more difficult to dispute the accuracy of the witness, as, in order to produce real evidence in support of his verbal testimony, he drew from his pouch the very bolt-head which, according to his story, had been miraculously extracted from the wound; and, as the iron weighed a full ounce, it completely confirmed the tale, however miraculous.

His comrade had been a witness, from a neighboring battlement, of the scene betwixt Rebecca and Bois-Guilbert, when she was upon the point of precipitating herself from the top of the tower. Not to be behind his companion, this fellow stated that he had seen Rebecca perch herself upon the parapet of the turret, and there take the form of a milk-white swan, under which appearance she flitted three times round the castle of Torquilstone, then again settle on the turret, and once more assume the female form.

Less than one half of this weighty evidence would have been

sufficient to convict any old woman, poor and ugly, even though she had not been a Jewess. United with that fatal circumstance, the body of proof was too weighty for Rebecca's youth, though combined with the most exquisite beauty.

The Grand Master had collected the suffrages, and now in a solemn tone demanded of Rebecca what she had to say against the sentence of condemnation which he was about to pronounce.

"To invoke your pity," said the lovely Jewess with a voice tremulous with emotion, "would, I am aware, be as useless as I should hold it mean; to state that to relieve the sick and wounded of another religion cannot be displeasing to the acknowledged Founder of both our faiths, were also unavailing; to plead that many things which these men (whom may Heaven pardon!) have spoken against me are impossible, would avail me but little, since you believe in their possibility; and still less would it advantage me to explain that the peculiarities of my dress, language, and manners, are those of my people—I had well-nigh said of my country, but, alas! we have no country. Nor will I even vindicate myself at the expense of my oppressor, who stands there listening to the fictions and surmises which seem to convert the tyrant into the victim. God be judge between him and me! But rather would I submit to ten such deaths as your pleasure may denounce against me than listen to the suit which that man of Belial has urged upon me, friendless, defenseless, and his prisoner. But he is of your own faith, and his lightest affirmance would weigh down the most solemn protestations of the distressed Jewess. I will not, therefore, return to himself the charge brought against me; but to himself—yes, Brian de Bois-Guilbert, to thyself—I appeal, whether these accusations are not false, as monstrous and calumnious as they are deadly."

There was a pause. All eyes turned to Brian de Bois-Guilbert. He was silent.

"Speak," she said, "if thou art a man! If thou art a Christian, speak! I conjure thee, by the habit which thou dost wear, by the name thou dost inherit, by the knighthood thou dost vaunt,

by the honor of thy mother, by the tomb and the bones of thy father—I conjure thee to say, are these things true?"

"Answer her, brother," said the Grand Master, "if the Enemy with whom thou dost wrestle will give thee power."

In fact, Bois-Guilbert seemed agitated by contending passions, which almost convulsed his features; and it was with a constrained voice that at last he replied, looking to Rebecca, "The scroll, the scroll!"

"Ay," said Beaumanoir, "this is indeed testimony! The victim of her witcheries can only name the fatal scroll, the spell inscribed on which is doubtless the cause of his silence."

But Rebecca put another interpretation on the words extorted, as it were, from Bois-Guilbert, and, glancing her eye upon the slip of parchment which she continued to hold in her hand, she read written thereupon in the Arabian character, *Demand a champion!* The murmuring commentary which ran through the assembly at the strange reply of Bois-Guilbert gave Rebecca leisure to examine and instantly to destroy the scroll unobserved. When the whisper had ceased, the Grand Master spoke.

"Rebecca, thou canst derive no benefit from the evidence of this unhappy knight, for whom, as we well perceive, the Enemy is yet too powerful. Hast thou aught else to say?"

"There is yet one chance of life left to me," said Rebecca, "even by your own fierce laws. Life has been miserable,—miserable, at least, of late,—but I will not cast away the gift of God while he affords me the means of defending it. I deny this charge. I maintain my innocence, and I declare the falsehood of this accusation. I challenge the privilege of trial by combat, and will appear by my champion."

"And who, Rebecca," replied the Grand Master, "will lay lance in rest for a sorceress? Who will be the champion of a Jewess?"

"God will raise me up a champion," said Rebecca. "It cannot be that in merry England—the hospitable, the generous, the free, where so many are ready to peril their lives for honor

—there will not be found one to fight for justice. But it is enough that I challenge the trial by combat: there lies my gage."

She took her embroidered glove from her hand, and flung it down before the Grand Master with an air of mingled simplicity and dignity which excited universal surprise and admiration.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

EVEN Lucas Beaumanoir himself was affected by the mien and appearance of Rebecca. He was not originally a cruel or even a severe man; but by nature cold, and with a high though mistaken sense of duty, his heart had been gradually hardened by the ascetic life which he pursued, the supreme power which he enjoyed, and the supposed necessity of subduing infidelity and eradicating heresy, which he conceived peculiarly incumbent on him. His features relaxed in their usual severity as he gazed upon the beautiful creature before him, alone, unfriended, and defending herself with so much spirit and courage. He crossed himself twice, as doubting whence arose the unwonted softening of a heart which on such occasions used to resemble in hardness the steel of his sword. At length he spoke.

"Damsel," he said, "if the pity I feel for thee arise from any practice thine evil arts have made on me, great is thy guilt; but I rather judge it the kinder feelings of nature, which grieves that so goodly a form should be a vessel of perdition. Repent, my daughter! Confess thy witchcrafts, turn thee from thine evil faith, embrace this holy emblem, and all shall yet be well with thee here and hereafter. In some sisterhood of the strictest order shalt thou have time for prayer and fitting penance, and that repentance not to be repented of. This do, and live. What has the law of Moses done for thee that thou shouldst die for it?"

"It was the law of my fathers," said Rebecca: "it was de-