

# The Examiner.

AND SEMI-WEEKLY INTELLIGENCER.

"THIS IS TRUE LIBERTY WHEN FREE-BORN MEN—HAVING TO ADVISE THE PUBLIC—MAY SPEAK FREE."—MILTON'S EURIPIDES.

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## BELEGY TALE.

### Mary of Mantua.

BY G. F. R. JAMES.

(Continued.)

Mary of Mantua drew back; she turned one timid glance toward the monastery; it was in sight: the people who were slowly preparing the carriage were within call: the stranger was alone, too. But that was not all; there was an open candor in his look, a nobility in his demeanor, a frank grace in his countenance, that struck and won upon her. He was in the prime of youth, with a warm glowing cheek and bright eye. The full arching lips parted in somewhat of a smile at her apprehensions, and there was a cheerful glance in his eye that spoke of a bright free spirit. Above the ordinary height, he was graceful as well as strong in frame, and his features were like some that he had seen before. His person and complexion were anything but Italian; and had he not spoken the language without the slightest accent, she might have taken him for one of the followers of the house of Austria. His whole appearance, however, was extremely pleasing, and though still somewhat alarmed, she at length ventured to ask what were his wishes.

"Be not afraid, lady," he answered in a full, sweet-toned voice; "I come to save you from danger, not to place you in it. Approach a little nearer for I must speak low, and must not be seen by any but you."

She took a step nearer to the place where he stood, still looking upon him as a timid fawn looks at those who would draw it to eat bread out of their hand.

"Listen!" he said, "listen, Mary of Mantua, for what I have to say imports you much to know; and I have a short time to say it. Your hand is a prize for which three princes now will strive. First, Vincenzo, Duke of Mantua!"

"Heaven forbid!" exclaimed Mary, in a tone of fear; "can you mean my uncle?"

"Even so," answered the stranger, "but hear me out, fair maid, for time is short: the next is one you know well, Ferrand, Prince of Gustalla."

"I know him not," cried Mary, with a look of horror, "Once, only once, have I seen his dark and lowering face; but I have heard enough to make me abhor the ground that bears him."

The stranger made no comment, but went on, "the third is Charles, Duke of Rhetel."

"An alien to our race, and the son of my father's enemy," exclaimed Mary.

The stranger smiled apparently well pleased.

"These are three princes," he said, "but what say you, lady, if a simple gentleman, of noble birth, and of some renown—against these three princes, fate, fortune, and all the world to boot—were to enter the lists for that fair hand?"

"He were a bold man," answered Mary with a deep blush.

"Thank God! he is a bold man," replied the stranger, "but to my more pressing task, for I see the carriage is nearly ready. The Prince of Gustalla is now within the territory of Mantua; he knows that this night you enter the city. If you go by the ordinary road, you will fall into his hands, and nothing but a miracle can save you from his power. When you come to the vineyard of Perrotti, just opposite the castle of Frederic di Sasso, order the driver to turn down the left hand road and follow it to the city. Aid shall be near at hand, if needful; but it were better, far better to avoid than to encounter evil."

"Oh! better, far better! echoed Mary; "but, oh! gentle stranger, do not leave me. If you have power, give me protection against that daring man!"

"I will not be far from thee, fairest and brightest," replied the stranger; "but have I not said that I am without power in the land? What this hand can do shall be done in your defence; and if it be needful to pour out the last drop of my heart's blood, it shall be staked as freely as a gambler's ducat. A few faithful servants, too, will not flinch from their poor master in the hour of need; and if you are saved from hazard, my guerdon shall be one kiss of that fair hand—shall it not be so?"

"Oh, you might claim far better boons than that," cried Mary eagerly.

"Well, then, it shall be so," he said, "one kiss of those sweet lips!—but now, bethink you, lady, how will you meet your uncle. If, as sure as I am he will, he offers, contrary to God's law, to make his brother's child his wife, be wise, and drive not his passionate mind to frenzy. He has a wife still living; but the bonds between them, the pliant church is now about to sever. Be cautious; show no harsh repugnance. Tell him that you can hear no such words as long as he is priest, uncle, husband to another; that all those bonds must be loosened by the church ere you can even let his words rest in your ear. But, lo! they seek you; I must away! Contrive some short delay, that I may reach the point of danger first. To-morrow, at this hour, if you have returned, I will seek you here."

Thus saying, the stranger turned and left her, and in a few minutes the servants sought her, saying that the carriage was ready. The directions of the stranger she followed implicitly, trusting with the confidence of unchastised youth. She detained the carriage for a few minutes, and then ordered the coachman to drive as she had been instructed. The Italian looked at her in sulky silence, and went on as if intending to obey; but when the vehicle had reached the turning of the road, he was evidently about to pursue the way he had been forbidden. Mary of Mantua, however, stopped the carriage, and trying to rise her gentle voice into the sharp tone of displeasure, asked how he dared to disobey.

The man replied surrily, "Because it is the best road!" and he would have certainly driven on had not the old servant who attended upon her interfered to enforce his mistress's command. Even his authority the driver was inclined to resist; but while, with true Italian carelessness of mind, with loud words, and exaggerated gestures, the two were arguing, there came a sound of horses galloping. It was what the driver wished and expected, and looking up the road, he saw a body of some ten or twelve mounted men coming full speed. Mary saw them too, and terror and anguish took possession of her heart. As they came on, however, there suddenly appeared other figures on the road between her and them. From amongst trees and vineyards poured out a little band on foot and horseback, and at their head, managing his fiery horse with ease and grace, he whom she had seen at the convent not an hour before. Of her he now took no notice; but standing firm in his way, formed with his band a barrier between her and the coming horsemen. The driver still paused, though she besought him to go on, and she could behold swords crossed and pistols fired, and one or two horsemen fly up the road again. She saw not well which party had the advantage, but the driver judged more clearly, and smacking his whip, drove

down the road he had been ordered to take.

New agitation now fell upon Mary of Mantua as she approached the abode of her uncle; and as drawbridge after drawbridge, gate after gate were passed, she prayed to Heaven for strength and prudence to save herself from the dark horror of his love.

She had not seen the Duke Vincenzo for many years, and had long forgotten him, so that imagination drew her own sketch from the rumors and stories of the day. It was now twilight when she was ushered up the long flights of marble stairs—afterwards destroyed in the cruel sacking of the city—and then into a cabinet where she remembered having played in the days of her childhood, when her father was living Duke of Mantua. It now seemed smaller, but more gloomy, though it was well lighted, and on the opposite side sat one whose appearance at once marked out the Prince. He rose and advanced towards her as different a being as was possible to conceive, from all that she had previously fancied. Tall, graceful, handsome, though in his decline, and though sickness—perhaps vice—had worn all the rosy lines of youth away, and left nothing but the shadow of beauty behind, his appearance was far more prepossessing than Mary of Mantua had expected. Nevertheless, there was something in the expression of his countenance—something in the fixed and criticising gaze with which he looked upon the lovely form before him, that made an involuntary shudder pass over her frame; and when he took her by the hand, and as her uncle kissed her cheek, the warm blood rose up in it, and she thought of the warning she had received, and of him who had given it.

The Duke was not long ere he spoke upon the theme which she most dreaded to hear; but it was not in the terms which might have been most painful to her. He treated it but as a matter of court necessity; he talked of his marriage with her as a thing that would benefit the state. Princes, he said, must be the slaves to their duties; and though he doubted not that to one so young and beautiful as herself, it must be somewhat painful to unite herself to a man in the decline of life, yet he was sure that she would make no opposition to that which would set at rest forever all the contending claims of Mantua and Monterrat.

(To be concluded in our next.)

## The Examiner.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1850.

The only apology for political apostasy which a discomfited and disingenuous renegade could offer, is made by Mr. Maclean in the last number of the *Islander*. He intimates that, seven years ago, when he penned the fierce diatribes against the present officials, from which we presented to our readers a few extracts in a late No. of THE EXAMINER, he was misinformed as to the real character of the men, and deceived by those of the liberal party with whom he then associated. Mr. Maclean may fancy that this is a very satisfactory explanation of his conduct, but to us it appears to be infinitely more damaging to Mr. Maclean than anything he has yet written. It shews that he had no discrimination—no segacity, when he condemn-

ed the officials upon insufficient evidence—describing them as a tyrannical and oppressive set of harpies, merely because he was told they were such! What would be thought of a Judge who, not waiting to hear evidence for the defence, would straightway charge the Jury to find the prisoner at the Bar guilty of a capital offence? In such a case Justice would be not only allegorically but truly blind, and common sense and common honesty would assert their power in hooting the ermpied rascal from the Bench.

But Mr. Maclean was misled, (if we are to place any reliance on his confession of stupid credulity) not only as to the character of the existing Government, but as to the condition of the country. He described it as oppressed, impoverished, and ruined,—and attributed this manifold calamity to the misconduct of the officials whom he now flatters and labours to keep in office. If he judged of the condition of the country through his own eyes, his visual organs must have been painfully defective; if he observed it with the eyes of other men, his judgment must have been lamentably weak to give credence to testimony which did not bear the stamp of truth. In the latter case, he would be like those literary thieves, who carry us, in imagination, all the world over—describing the manners, customs, and condition, of different countries; while, in fact, they never stirred from their garrets or firesides, and purloined their knowledge from the forgotten books of other authors.

Giving Mr. Maclean the full benefit of his recreant confession, and admitting that he may have been misled as to the character and motives of the men who constitute the two parties, viz. the liberals and the anti-liberals, or those out of office and those who are in—is it possible that he was deceived regarding the principles entertained by both? A cause is not necessarily bad because some of its advocates may be men of bad dispositions; and by the same analogy, a cause is not good, though it be supported by men of correct feeling. Take any great question which agitated the public mind in Britain—the Corn Laws, the Slave Trade, or the Repeal of the Union—would it be reasonable or just to estimate the merits of either parties who have been foremost in its advocacy? Mr. Cobden may have been deemed an impracticable and wrong-headed enthusiast by the friends of Protection; but that did not lessen the importance of giving cheap bread to the starving millions of the mother country. Mr. Wilberforce may have been regarded as an infatuated old fool by those interested in the continuance of the Slave Trade; but would that be a sufficient reason for perpetuating the traffic in human flesh, and giving to a particular class of men the right to buy and sell, and flagellate at will, any portion of their species. Mr. O'Connell has been stigmatized as a mercenary agitator, solely intent upon putting