JOHN INGLESANT (VOLUME I)

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A Romance

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JOHN INGLESANT

A Romance

by

John Henry Shorthouse

[Greek: Agapetoí, nûn tékna Theoû esmen, kaì oúpo ephanerothe tí esómetha.]

VOL. I.

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TO
RAWDON LEVETT, ESQ.

MY DEAR LEVETT,

I dedicate these volumes to you, that I may have an opportunity of calling myself your friend.

J. HENRY SHORTHOUSE.

LANSDOWNE, EDGBASTON, *May 1, 1881.*

Memoirs of the Life
OF

MR. JOHN INGLESANT
SOMETIME SERVANT TO KING CHARLES I.
WITH
AN ACCOUNT OF HIS BIRTH, EDUCATION, AND TRAINING BY
THE JESUITS
AND
A PARTICULAR RELATION OF THE SECRET SERVICES
IN WHICH HE WAS ENGAGED
ESPECIALLY IN CONNECTION WITH THE LATE
IRISH REBELLION
WITH
SEVERAL OTHER REMARKABLE PASSAGES AND OCCURRENCES.
ALSO
A HISTORY OF HIS RELIGIOUS DOUBTS AND EXPERIENCES
AND OF THE MOLINISTS OR QUIETISTS IN ITALY
IN WHICH COUNTRY HE RESIDED FOR MANY YEARS
WITH AN ACCOUNT OF
THE ELECTION OF THE LATE POPE
AND
MANY OTHER EVENTS AND AFFAIRS.

JOHN INGLESANT.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

During my second year at Oxford I became acquainted with a Roman Catholic gentleman, the eldest son of a family long resident on the borders of Shropshire towards Wales. My friend, whose name was Fisher, invited me to his home, and early in my last long vacation I accepted his invitation. The picturesque country was seen to great advantage in the lovely summer weather. That part of Shropshire partakes somewhat of the mountain characteristics of Wales, combined with the more cultivated beauties of English rural scenery. The ranges of

hills, some of which are lofty and precipitous, which intersect the country, form wide and fertile valleys which are watered by pleasant streams. The wide pastures are bordered by extensive plantations covering the more gradual ascents, and forming long lines along the level summits. We had some miles to drive even from the small station on the diminutive branch line of railway which had slowly conveyed us the last dozen miles or so of our journey. At last, just at the foot of one of the long straight hills, called Edges in that country, we came upon my friend's house, seen over a flat champaign of pasture land, surrounded by rows of lofty trees, and backed by fir and other wood, reaching to the summit of the hill behind it. It was an old and very picturesque house, jumbled together with the additions of many centuries, from the round tower-like staircase with an extinguisher turret, to a handsome addition of two or three years ago. Close by was the mutilated tower of a ruined priory, the chancel of which is used as the parish church. A handsome stone wing of one story, built in the early Gothic style, and not long completed, formed the entrance hall and dining-room, with a wide staircase at the back. The hall was profusely hung with old landscapes and family portraits. After a short introduction to my friend's family, we were soon assembled in the newly finished dining-room, with its stone walls and magnificent overhanging Gothic fireplace. The dinner party consisted of my friend's father and mother, his two sisters, and a Roman Catholic clergyman, the family chaplain and priest of a neighbouring chapel which Mr. Fisher had erected and endowed. The room was hung entirely with portraits, several of them being ecclesiastics in different religious costumes, contrasting, to my eyes, strangely with the gay cavaliers and the beautiful ladies of the Stuarts' Court, and the not less elaborately dressed portraits of the last century, and with those of my host and hostess in the costume of the Regency. I was struck with the portrait which happened to be opposite me, of a young man with a tonsured head, in what appeared to me to be a very simple monk's dress, and I asked the Priest, a beautiful and mild-looking old man, whom it was intended to represent.

"A singular story is attached to that portrait," he said, "which, it may surprise you to learn, is not that of a—a member of our communion. It is the portrait of a young Englishman named Inglesant, a servant of King Charles the First, who was very closely connected with the Roman Catholics of that day, especially abroad, and was employed in some secret negotiations between the King and the Catholic gentry; but the chief interest connected with his story consists in some very remarkable incidents which took place abroad, connected with the murderer of his only brother—incidents which exhibit this young man's character in a noble and attractive light. He is connected with Mr. Fisher's family solely through the relations of his brother's wife, but, singularly, he is buried not far from here, across the meadows. In the latter years of his life he purchased an estate in this

neighbourhood, though it was not his native country, and founded an almshouse or rather hospital, for lunatics, in the chapel in which his tomb is still standing. That portrait, in which he appears in the dress of a novice," he continued, turning to the one before me, "was taken in Rome, when he was residing at the English college, where he certainly was received, as he appears to have been generally when abroad, into full communion with us. As a contrast to it, I will show you another in the drawing-room, by Vandyke, which, though it really was intended for his brother, yet may equally well represent himself, as, at that period, the two brothers are said to have been so exactly alike that they could not be known apart. On his tomb at Monk's Lydiard, as you may see if you incline to take the trouble to walk so far—and it is a pleasing walk—he is represented in his gown of bachelor of civil law, a degree which he received at Oxford during the civil war, and he is there also represented with tonsured head. I have often thought," continued the Priest, musingly, "of arranging a considerable collection of papers referring to this gentleman's story, which is at present in the library; or at least of writing out a plain statement of the facts; but it would be better done, perhaps, by a layman. I have the authority of these young ladies," he continued, with a smile, turning to the Miss Fishers, "that the story is a more entertaining and even exciting one than the sensational novels of the day, of which, I need not say, I am not a judge."

The young ladies confirmed this as far as their knowledge went; but they had heard only fragments of the story, and were urgent with the clergyman to set about the task. He, however, replied to their entreaties only by a shake of the head; and the ladies soon after left the room.

When we went into the drawing-room, I was eager to see the Vandyke, and was shown a magnificent picture at one end of the room, representing a singularly handsome young man, in a gorgeous satin court dress of the reign of Charles the First, whose long hair and profusion of lace and ornament would probably, in the work of another artist, have produced an unpleasing impression, but, softened by the peculiar genius of Vandyke, the picture possessed that combination of splendour and pathos which we are in the habit of associating only with his paintings. His satin shoes and silk stockings contrasted curiously with the grass on which the cavalier stood, and the sylvan scene around him; and still more so with his dogs and two horses, which were held at some little distance by a page. His face was high and noble, but on closely comparing it—as I did several times—with that of the Monk in the dining-room, I arrived at the conclusion that either the likeness between the brothers was exaggerated, or the expression of the survivor must have altered greatly in after years; for no difference in dress, great as was the contrast between the coarse serge of the novice and the satin of the cavalier, and between the close-cropped tonsured head and the flowing love

locks, would account for the greater strength and resolve of the portrait in the dining-room, combined, strangely, as this expression was, with a slightly wild and abstracted look, indicating either religious enthusiasm, or perhaps unsettlement of the reason within; this latter expression being totally wanting in the face of the cavalier.

The next day was Sunday, and I opened my window on a lovely prospect of lawn and water, with the fir woods sweeping up the hill-sides beyond. Walking out in the avenue when I was dressed, I met the family returning from low mass at the chapel. I attended high mass with them at eleven o'clock. The Chapel was picturesquely built higher up in the wood than the house. It had a light and graceful interior, and the coverings of the altar were delicate and white. The exquisite plaintive music, the pale glimmer of the tapers in the morning sunlight, the soothing perfume of the incense, the sense of pathetic pleading and of mysterious awe, as if of the possibility of a Divine Presence, produced its effect on me, as it does, I imagine, on most educated Churchmen; but this effect failed in convincing me (then, as at other times) that there was more under that gorgeous ceremonial than may be found under the simpler Anglican ritual of the Blessed Sacrament. After church, my friend, who had some engagement with the Priest, accepted my assurance that I was fond of solitary walks; and I set off alone on my quest of the tomb of John Inglesant.

I followed a footpath which led direct from the ruined Church near the house, across the small park-like enclosure, into the flat meadows beyond. The shadows of the great trees lay on the grass, the wild roses and honeysuckle covered the hedges, a thousand butterflies fluttered over the fields. That Sunday stillness which is, possibly, but the echo of our own hearts, but which we fancy marks the day, especially in the country, soothed the sense. The service in the morning had not supplied the sacrament to me, but it had been far from being without the sense of worship; and the quiet country in the lovely summer weather, in connection with it, seemed to me then, as often, the nearest foretaste we can gain of what the blissful life will be. As I went on the distant murmur of Church bells came across the meadows, and following a footpath for a couple of miles, I came to the Hospital or Almshouse, standing amid rows of elms, and having a small village attached to it, built probably since its erection. The bells which I had heard, and which ceased a little before I reached the place, were in a curious turret or cupola attached to the Chapel, which formed one side of the court. The buildings were of red brick, faced with stone, in the latest style of the Stuart architecture. The door of the Chapel was wide open, and I entered and dropped into a seat just as the Psalms began. The room was fitted in a style exactly corresponding to the outside; a circular recess at the upper end took the place of chancel, lighted with three windows, which were filled with innumer-

able small panes of glass. The altar was richly draped; and on it, besides vases of flowers, were two massive candlesticks of an antique pattern, and an old painting, apparently of the Virgin and Child. The lower walls of the chancel and of the whole Chapel were panelled, and the whole had a flat ceiling of panelled oak, painted in the centre with a sun with rays. Partly in the chancel, and partly in the Chapel, the surpliced choir was accommodated in stalls or pews, and the organ and pulpit, in elaborate carved mahogany, completed the interior. There was a good congregation; and from this, and from many tablets on the walls, I gathered that the Chapel was used by the neighbourhood as probably being nearer than the Parish Churches. The soft afternoon light filled the place, gilding the old brass-work, and lighting up the dark carving and the sombre narrow pews. The music was of a very high class, deliciously sung, and I found afterwards that there was an endowment especially for the choir, and that the chaplains were required to be musical. The service bore comparison favourably with the morning's mass, and a short sermon followed. When all was over, and the people were gone out into the sunshine, I began to look for the tomb I had come to see, and the chaplain, having come out of the vestry, and seeming to expect it, I went up and spoke to him. I told him I had walked from Lydiard—my friend's house—to see the tomb of the founder, to which I had been directed by the Roman Catholic gentleman who resided there. He was well acquainted with Father Arnold, he told me, and took me at once to the tomb, which was in a recess by the altar, screened from view by the choir seats. There he lay, sure enough, just as the Priest had told me, carved from head to foot in alabaster, in his gown of bachelor of civil law, and his tonsured head. The sculptor had understood his work; the face was life-like, and the likeness to the portrait was quite perceptible. The inscription was curious—"sub marmore isto Johannes Inglesant, Peccator, usque ad judicium latet, expectans revelationem filiorum Dei."

I told the chaplain what Father Arnold had told me of this man's story, and of the materials that existed for writing it. He had heard of them too, and even examined them.

"The Priest will never write it," he said.

"Why do not you?" I asked.

He laughed. "I am a musician," he said, "not an author. You seem more interested in it than most people; you had better do it."

As I came back across the fields I pondered over this advice; and after dinner I asked the Priest the story. He told me the outline, and the next morning took me into the library, and showed me the papers.

The library at Lydiard is a very curious room below the level of the ground, and in the oldest part of the house. It adjoins the tower with the extinguisher turret, by which there is communication with the bed chambers, and with the leads

and garrets at the top of the house. The room was large, and had several closets besides a smaller room beyond, which had no visible communication except into the library; but the Priest showed me a secret doorway and staircase, which, he said, descended into the cellars. Both these rooms and the closets were crammed with books, the accumulation of four hundred years—most of them first editions, and clean as when they came from the binder, but browned and mellowed with age. Early works of the German press, a Caxton, the scarce literature of the sixteenth century—all the books which had once been fashionable—Cornelius Agrippa, and Cardan, two or three editions of the Euphues, folios of Shakespeare and the dramatists, and choice editions of the literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, down to our own day. Besides this general literature, there was a large collection of Roman Catholic works and pamphlets, many privately printed at home or published abroad; biographies of Seminary Priests who had suffered death in England, reports of trials, private instructions, and even volumes of private letters, for Lydiard had always been a secure hiding-place for the hunted priests, and more than one had died there, leaving all his papers in the library. No fitter place could exist in which to attempt the task I had already determined to undertake, and I obtained leave of the Priest, promising to make nothing public without his approval. I had the whole vacation before me; too idle and desultory to read for honours, I had always been fond of literature and the classics, and was safe for my degree, and I gave myself up unreservedly to my task. I have endeavoured, as Father Arnold said, to tell a plain story. I have no pretensions to dramatic talent, and I deprecate the reader's criticism. If I have caught anything of the religious and social tone of the seventeenth century, I am more than content.

GEOFFREY MONK, M.A.

CHAPTER I.

When Cromwell, Earl of Essex, was in the zenith of his power, and was engaged in completing the suppression of the smaller monasteries before commencing on the greater,—he had in his service a young gentleman named Richard Inglesant, the son of a knight, and descended from a knightly family, originally of Flanders, who had come into England with the Princess of Hainault. This young man was

of an attractive person, a scholar, active and useful in many ways, and therefore a favourite with his master. One evening in the end of June 1537, he was sent for by Cromwell into the great gallery of his magnificent house in Throgmorton Street, where he found his master walking up and down in thought.

"You must be ready to depart at once, Richard," he said, "into Wiltshire. I have in this commission appointed you Visitor of the Priory of Westacre, six miles south of Malmsbury, on the way into Somerset, which they call the Priory in the Wood. The King's Grace is resolved on the suppression of this house, as a priory; but note very carefully what I tell you;—it will be for your guidance. Great interest has been made to his Grace's Highness on behalf of this house, both by many of the gentry dwelling thereabout, and also by the common people by the mouth of the Mayor of Malmsbury. They say the house is without any slander or evil fame; that it stands in a waste ground, very solitary, keeping such hospitality, that except with singular good management it could not be maintained though it had half as much land again as it has, such a number of the poor inhabitants nigh thereunto are daily relieved. The Prior is a right honest man, and well beloved of all the inhabitants therewith adjoining, having with him, in the house, eight religious persons, being priests of right good conversation, and living religiously. They spend their time in writing books with a very fair hand, in making garments for the poor people, in printing or graving. Now the prayer of these people is that the King's Highness shall translate this priory into a college, and so continue as many of the priests as the lands will maintain for the benefit of the neighbours; and the King is much inclined to do this. Now, on the other hand, this house has a proper lodging, where the Prior lay, with a fair garden and an orchard, very mete to be bestowed on some friend of mine, and some faithful servant of the King's Grace. There is no small number of acres ready sown with wheat, the tilthes ordered for barley; the house and grounds are well furnished with plate, stuff, corn, cattle; the woods well saved, and the hedgerows full of timber, as though the Prior had looked for no alteration of his house. I had set mine hand on this house for a friend of mine, but the King's Grace is determined upon this:—if the Prior will surrender the house in a discreet and frank manner, and will moreover, on Sunday next, which is the Feast of the most Precious Blood, after mass, to which all the neighbouring people shall have been called, in his sermon, make mention of the King's title of Supreme Head, and submit himself wholly, in all matters spiritual, to the King's Grace, under Christ, the house shall be continued as a college, and no man therein disturbed, and not so much as an ounce of plate taken, that they may pray God Almighty to preserve the King's Grace with his blessed pleasure. Now I send you on this mission because, if things go as I think they may, I mean this house for you; and there is so much clamour about this business that I will have no more hands in it than I can help. Take two or three

of the men with you whom you can trust; but see you fail not in one jot in the course you take with the Prior, for should it come to the King's ears that you had deceived the Prior—and it surely would so come to his Grace—your head would not be your own for an hour, and I should doubt, even, of my own favour with the King."

Richard Inglesant was on horseback before daylight the next morning; and riding by easy stages, arrived at Malmsbury at last, and slept a night there, making inquiries about the way to Westacre. At Malmsbury, and at all the villages where he stopped, he heard nothing but what agreed with what Cromwell had told him; and what he heard seemed to make him loiter still more, for he slept at Malmsbury a second night, and then did not go forward to Westacre till noonday. In the middle of the summer afternoon he crossed the brow of the hilly common, and saw the roofs of the Priory beneath him surrounded by its woods. The country all about lay peaceful in the soft, mellow sunlight; wide slopes of wood, intermixed with shining water, and the quiet russet downs stretching beyond. Richard had sent on a man the day before to warn the Prior, who had been expecting his coming all day. The house stood with a little walled court in front of it, and a gate-house; and consisted of three buildings—a chapel, a large hall, and another building containing the Prior's parlour and other rooms on the ground floor, and a long gallery or dormitory above, out of which opened other chambers; the kitchens and stables were near the latter building, on the right side of the court. The Prior received Inglesant with deference, and took him over the house and gardens, pointing out the well-stocked fish-ponds and other conveniences, with no apparent wish of concealing anything. Richard was astonished at the number of books, not only in the book-room, but also in the Prior's own chamber; these latter the Prior seemed anxious he should not examine. As far as Richard could see, they were, many of them, chemical and magical books. He supped with the Prior in Hall, with the rest of the household, and retired with him to the parlour afterwards, where cakes and spiced wine were served to them, and they remained long together. Inglesant delivered his commission fairly to his host, dwelling, again and again, on every particular, while the Prior sat silent or made but short and inconclusive replies. At last Inglesant betook himself to rest in the guest-chamber, a room hung with arras, opening from the gallery where the monks slept, towards the west; one of his servants slept also in the dormitory near his door. The Prior's care had ordered a fire of wood on the great hearth that lighted up the carved bed and the hunting scene upon the walls. He lay long and could not sleep. All night long, at intervals, came the sound of chanting along the great hall and up the stairs into the dormitory, as the monks sung the service of matins, lauds, and prime. His mind was ill at ease. A scholar, and brought up from boyhood at the Court, he had little sympathy with the new doctrines, and

held the simple and illiterate people who mostly followed them in small esteem. He was strongly influenced by that mysterious awe which the Romish system inspires in the most careless, even when it is not strong enough to influence their lives. The mission he had undertaken, and the probable destruction of this religious house, and the expulsion of its inmates for his benefit, frightened him, and threatened him with unknown penalties and terrors hereafter which he dared not face. He lay listlessly on his bed listening to the summer wind, and when at last he fell asleep, it was but a light fitful slumber, out of which he woke ever and anon to hear the distant chanting of the monks, and see by the flickering fire-light the great hounds coursing each other over the walls of his room.

In the morning he heard mass in the chapel, after which the Prior sent a message to explain his absence, informing him that he was gone to Malmsbury to consult with his friends there how he might best serve the King's Grace. All that morning Richard Inglesant sat in the hall receiving the evidence of all who came before him (of whom there was no lack)—of the neighbours, gentry, and country people. He evidently examined them with great care and acuteness, noting down every answer, in a fair clerkly hand, exactly as he received it, neither extenuating anything nor adding the least word. He also in the same report kept an exact account of how he passed his time while at Westacre. There appears—as Cromwell had said—not to have been the least breath of scandal against the Prior or any of the priests in the house. The only report at all injurious to the character of the Prior seems to have been an opinion—oftentimes hinted at by the witnesses—that he was addicted to the study of chemistry and magic; that, besides his occult books, he had in his closet in his chamber a complete chemical apparatus with which he practised alchemy, and was even said to be in possession of the Elixir of Life. These reports Inglesant does not appear to have paid much attention to, probably regarding them as not necessarily coming within the limits of his commission; and, indeed, there is evidence of his having acted with the most exact fairness throughout the investigation, more than once putting questions to the witness, evidently for the purpose of correcting misapprehensions which told against the Prior. After dinner he rode out to the downs to a gentleman who had courteously sent him word that he was coursing with greyhounds: he, however, was not absent from the Priory long, declining the gentleman's invitation to supper. After he had supped he spent the rest of the evening in his own chamber, reading what he calls "Ovidii Nasonis metamorphoseos libri moralizati," an edition of which, printed at Leipsic in 1510, he had found in the Prior's room.

The next forenoon he spent in the same manner as the last, the people flocking in voluntarily to give their evidence in favour of the house. A little after noon the Prior came back, travelling on foot and alone. As he came along he was thinking of the words of the gospel which promise great things to him who gives

up houses and land for the Lord's sake.

When he reached the brow of the hill from which he could see the three red-tiled roofs of the Priory peeping out from among the trees, with the gardens and the green meadows, and the cattle seen here and there, he stood long to gaze. The air was soft and yet fresh, and the woods stretching up the rising-grounds about the Priory were wavering and shimmering all over with their myriad rustling leaves, instinct with life and beauty both to the ear and eye; a perpetual change from light to shadow, from the flight of the fleecy clouds, would have made the landscape dazzling but for the green on which the eye dwelt with a sense of rest to the wearied and excited brain. A gentle sound and murmur, as of happy and contented beings, made itself softly felt rather than heard, through the noontide air. "Omnes qui relinquunt patrem, domes, uxorem," said the Prior; but his eyes were so dim that he stumbled as he went on down the hill.

Richard Inglesant and he were some time alone together that evening. Whether the Prior prepared him at all for the course he had determined to pursue, does not appear, but certainly he did not, to any great extent.

The next day was Sunday, being the "Feast of the most Precious Blood"—a Sunday long remembered in that country side. The people, for a score of miles round, thronged to hear the Prior's sermon. The Mayor of Malmsbury was there; but the clergy of the Abbey, it was noticed, were not present. The little Chapel would not hold a tithe of the people—indeed, few more than the gentry and their ladies, who came in great numbers, were allowed admission. Richard Inglesant and the Sheriff had Fald-stools in front of the altar, where they remained kneeling the whole of mass. The doors and windows of the Chapel were opened, that the people outside might assist at the celebration. They stood as thick as they could be packed in the little courtyard, and up the sloping fields around the Priory, listening in silence to the music of the mass; and at the sound of the bell the whole multitude fell on their knees as one man, remaining so for several minutes. Mass being over, the Prior came in procession from the Chapel to where a small wooden pulpit had been set up just outside the gate-house, in front of which seats were placed for the Sheriff and Inglesant, and the chief gentry. The silence was greater than ever, when the Prior, who had changed the gorgeous vestments in which he had celebrated mass, and appeared only as a simple monk, ascended the pulpit and began to preach. The Prior was a great preacher; a small and quiet man enough to look at, when he entered the pulpit he was transfigured. His form grew dignified, his face lighted up with enthusiasm, and his voice, even in the open air, was full and clear, and possessed that magical property of reaching the hearts of all who heard him, now melted into tenderness, and now raised to firm resolve. He began with the text that had haunted his memory the day before, and the first part of his sermon was simply an earnest and eloquent exhortation to follow

Christ in preference to anything beside on earth. Then, warming in his subject, he answered the question (speaking that magnificent English tongue that even now rings in the pages of Foxe), Where was Christ? and urging the people to follow Him as He manifested Himself in the Church, and especially in the sacrament of the altar. Then suddenly throwing aside all reserve, and with a rapidity of utterance and a torrent of eloquence that carried his hearers with him, he rushed into the question of the day, brought face to face the opposing powers of the State and Christ, hurled defiance at the former, and while not absolutely naming the King or his council, denounced his policy in the plainest words. Then, amid the swaying of the excited crowd, and a half stifled cry and murmur, he suddenly dropped his voice, pronounced the formal benediction, and shrank back, to all appearance, into the quiet, timid monk.

It is needless to describe the excitement and astonishment of the crowd. The Prior and his procession with difficulty returned to the chapel through the press. The Sheriff and Richard Inglesant, who with the other leading gentry had affected perfect unconsciousness that anything unusual was taking place, entered the hall of the Priory, and the Prior had a message sent into the sacristy that the King's commissioner desired to see him immediately in the parlour.

When the Prior entered, Inglesant was standing upon the hearth; he was pale, and his manner was excited and even fierce.

"You are a bold man, master Prior," he said almost before the other was in the room; "do you know that you have this day banished yourself and all your fellowship into the world without shelter and without help? Nay, I know not but the King's Grace may have you up to answer for this day with your life! Do you know this?"

The Prior looked him steadily in the face, but he was deadly pale, and his manner was humble and cowed.

"Yes, I know it," he said.

"Well," continued the other still more excitedly, "I call you to witness, master Prior, as I shall before the throne of God Almighty, that I have neither hand nor part in this day's work; that you have brought this evil upon yourself by your own deed and choice, by no want of warning and no suddenness on my part, but by your own madness alone."

"It is very true," said the Prior.

"I must to horse," said Inglesant, scarcely heeding him, "and ride post to my lord. It is as much as my head is worth should any rumour of this day's business reach the King's Grace by any other tongue than mine. You will stay here under the Sheriff's guard; but I fear you will too soon hear what a tragedy this day's play has been for you! God have you in his keeping, Prior! for you have put yourself out of all hope of mercy from the King's Grace."

He might have said more, but an alarming noise made him hasten into the hall. The most lawless and poorest of the people—of whom numbers had mingled in the crowd in the hope of spoil, taking for granted that the house was dissolved—had made an attack upon the Chapel and the Prior's lodging, and it was some time before the Sheriff, assisted by Inglesant and the other gentlemen and their servants, all of whom were armed, could restore order. When this was done, and the peaceable people and women reassured, Inglesant's horses were brought out, and he mounted and rode off through the dispersing but still excited and lawless crowds, leaving the Priory to a strong guard of the Sheriff's men. As he rode up the hill—the people shrinking back to let him pass—he muttered, bitterly:

"A fine piece of work we have set our hands to, with all the rascal people of the country to aid. And why should not the Poverty get some of the droppings, when the Gentry cuts the purse?"

Travelling at a very different pace from that at which he had ridden from London, he reached the city the next night, and went at once to the Lord Cromwell, who, the next morning, took him to the King, to whom he gave a full account of what had occurred. Henry—who appears to have been induced to form his previous intention by the influence of a gentleman at Court who probably had his private expectations with regard to the future possession of the Priory—seems to have really cared little about the matter. He was, however, highly incensed at the Prior's sermon, and made no difficulty of immediately granting the Priory to Richard Inglesant. A pursuivant was sent down to bring the Prior up to London to be examined before the Council, but it does not appear that he ever was examined. Probably Inglesant exerted his influence with Cromwell in his behalf, for Cromwell examined him himself, and appears to have informed the King that he was harmless and mad. At any rate, he was set at liberty; and his troubles appear to have actually affected his reason, for he is said to have returned to the neighbourhood of Malmsbury, and to have wandered about the Priory at nights. The other inmates of the Priory had been dispersed, and the house taken possession of by Inglesant's servants; but he himself seems to have taken but little pleasure in his new possession, for it was more than a year before he visited it; and when he did so, events occurred which increased his dislike to the place.

It was late in October when his visit took place, and the weather was wild and stormy. He slept in the Prior's guest-chamber, which was in the same state as when he had occupied it before. The wind moaned in the trees, and swept over the roofs and among the chimneys of the old house. In the early part of the night he had a terrible dream, or what was rather partly a dream and partly a feverish sense of the objects around him. He thought he was lying in the bed in the room

where he really was, and could not sleep; a fierce contention of the elements and of some powers more fearful than the elements seemed going on outside. The room became hateful to him, with its dark, hearse-like bed, and the strange figures on the tapestry, which seemed to his bewildered fancy to course each other over the walls with a rapidity and a fantastic motion which made his senses reel. He thought that, unable to remain where he was, he rose and went out into the old dormitory, now silent and deserted, from one end of which he could look into the courtyard, while from the other he could see a dark mass of woodland, and a lurid distant sky. On this side all was quiet; but the courtyard seemed astir. The moon shone with the brightness of day on the mouldering, ivy-grown walls, and on the round pebble stones between which the long grass was growing all over the court. The wind swept fiercely across it, and splashes of rain, every now and then, made streaks in the moonlight like fire; strange voices cried to him in an unknown language, and undistinguished forms seemed passing to and fro. The Chapel was all alight, and low and mournful music proceeded from it, as for the dead. Fascinated with terror, he left the gallery and descended into the court. An irresistible impulse led him to the Chapel, which was open, and he went in. As he did so, voices and strange forms seemed to rush forward to enter with him, and an overwhelming horror took possession of him. Inside, the Chapel was hung with black; cowled forms filled the stalls, and chanted, with hollow, shadowy voices, a dirge for the departed. A hooded and black form stood before the altar, celebrating the mass. The altar was alight with tapers, and torches were borne by sable attendants on either side of the choir. The ghostly forms that entered with him now thronged about him in the form and habit of living men. Voices called from without, and were answered from within the Chapel; rushing sounds filled the air as though the trees were being torn up, and the Chapel and house rocked. There was no coffin nor pall, nor any sign of mourning; and it seemed to Inglesant that he was present at the celebration of some obyte, or anniversary of the death of one long departed, over whom a wild and ghostly lamentation was made by beings no longer of the earth. An inexpressible dread and sorrow lay upon him—an overwhelming dread, as if the final Reckoning were near at hand, and all hope taken away—sorrow, as though all whom he had ever loved and known lay before him in death, with the solemn dirge and placebo said over them by the ghostly choir. The strain was too intense and painful to be borne, and with a cry, he awoke.

Utterly incapable of remaining where he was, he dressed, and went out into the gallery, and down into the courtyard. The court was lighted by the moonlight as brightly as in his dream for one moment, and then was totally dark from the passing clouds flitting over the moon. All was calm and still. A small door in the corner of the court near the Chapel was open, and, surprised at this, Inglesant

crossed over and passed through it. It led into the graveyard of the Priory outside the Chapel, where the monks and some of the country people had been used to bury their dead. It was walled round, but the wall at the farther side was old and ruinous, and had partly fallen down. As Inglesant reached the postern door, the moon shone out brightly, and he saw, between himself and the ruined wall, a wasted and cowled figure slowly traversing the rows of graves. For a moment he felt a terror equal to that of his dream, but the next the thought of the Prior flashed upon his mind, and he crossed the graveyard and followed silently in the track of the figure. The ghostly form reached the opposite wall, and commenced, with some substance that shone like fire, to draw magic figures upon the stones of one of its most perfect parts. Placing himself in a position evidently indicated by these geometrical figures, he carefully observed the precise spot where his shadow was projected on the wall before him by the moonlight, and going to this spot, he carefully loosened and removed a stone. By this time Inglesant was close upon him, and saw him take from within the wall an antique glass or vial of a singular and occult shape. As he raised it, some slight motion the other made caused him to turn round, and at the sight of Inglesant he dropped the magic glass upon the stone he had removed, and shattered it to pieces. When he saw what had happened, the strange and weird creature threw his arms above his head, and with a piercing cry that rang again and again through the chill night air, fell backwards senseless, and lay in the pale moonlight white and still among the graves. Inglesant removed him into the house, and he was restored to sense, but scarcely to reason. He lived for more than five years, never leaving the Priory, where Inglesant directed that all his wants should be attended to, wandering about the gardens, and sometimes poring over his old books, which still remained upon his shelves. Inglesant never saw him again; but when he died the old man sent him his blessing, and was buried before the altar in the Chapel, where all the Priors of the house had lain before him; he on whom the evil days, which they perhaps had merited but had escaped, had fallen, and had crushed.

CHAPTER II.

Richard Inglesant never, till the last few years of his life, lived at Westacre, and visited it very seldom. He was a successful courtier; and at Cromwell's fall became a servant of the King. He married, and lived entirely at the Court. He

was all his life a Catholic at heart, but conformed outwardly to the religion of the hour. He had one son, named after him, who was educated at Oxford, and intended for the bar, but his father left him so considerable a fortune that he was independent of any profession. That Richard Inglesant left no more than he did, shows that he adhered through life to the line of conduct we have seen him pursue at Westacre—conduct which probably satisfied his conscience as being rigidly exact and honest. On Henry's death he still retained one of his places about the Court; but on King Edward's death, being a partisan of Queen Mary's and a hearty conformer, he became a great favourite, and held a lucrative post. He visited Westacre more frequently, and built a stately range of buildings on one side of the court, where formerly the old stables and kitchen were, no doubt for his son's sake, enlarging the garden on that side to form a terrace in front of the new rooms. At Queen Mary's accession service was recommenced in the Prior's Chapel, which was repaired and fitted up afresh, and a regular priest appointed to serve it. Inglesant's name does not appear in the trials of the Protestants, a circumstance which makes it appear probable that he was true to the temporising policy of his youth, and kept his zeal under good control. When Elizabeth came to the throne, the service in the Chapel underwent some modification, King Edward's Service Book being used. The service then had been found so useful to the neighbours that the parish petitioned for its continuance, and it was legally settled as a chapelry. The priest conformed to the new order of things, and Richard Inglesant—who at that time resided constantly at Westacre—attended the service regularly. He remained a Catholic, but during the first seven years of Queen Elizabeth's reign, which were all he lived to see, the Catholics generally came to their parish churches until forbidden by the Pope's Bull. It remained, therefore, for his son, who was eighteen years of age at his father's death, to declare himself; and he conformed to the usage of the English Church. He resided entirely at Westacre, with an occasional visit to Court, keeping open-handed hospitality, and slightly embarrassing the estate, though, like his father, he had only one child. He was a favourer of the Papists, and once or twice was in trouble on that account; but being perfectly loyal, and a very popular man, he was rather a favourite with the Queen, who always noticed him when he came to Court, and was wont to say that "the dry crust Dick Inglesant gave a Papist should never choke him while she lived." He lived beyond the term of years usual in his family, and died in 1629, at the age of eighty-two, having been for the last twenty years of his life, since the death of the Queen, entirely under the guidance of his son, very much to his own advantage, as during those black years for the Papists, he would most probably have committed imprudences which might have been his ruin. His son, whose name was Eustace, was a shrewd lawyer and courtier. He was—much more than his father—a Papist at heart, but he conformed strictly

to the English Church, and possessed considerable indirect influence at Court. He was thought much of by the Catholics, who regarded him as one of their most powerful friends. He married young, in 1593, but he had no children by his first wife, who died in 1610; and in 1620 he married again, a Catholic lady who was his ward. With this lady he came to reside at Westacre; but two years after, his wife died in giving birth to two boys; and, disgusted with the country, he left the two infants to their grandfather's care and returned to London, visiting Westacre, however, regularly at intervals; where, with a small number of servants, the old gentleman, totally forgetful of his old hospitality, and of his friends the Papists, spent his last days with the greatest delight, in anxiously watching over his little grandchildren. They were beautiful boys, so exactly alike that it was impossible to tell them apart, and from their earliest infancy so united in love to each other that they became a proverb in the neighbourhood. The eldest was named Eustace, after his father; but the youngest, at the entreaty of his young mother—uttered in her faint and dying voice, as the children lay before her during the few moments that were given her in mercy to look at them before her eyes were closed on these dearly purchased treasures and all other earthly things—was named John, after her brother, a Seminary priest of Douay, executed in England for saying mass, and refusing the oath of supremacy.

Little need be told of the infancy of these boys: traditions remain, as in other cases, of their likeness to each other, needing different coloured ribbons to distinguish them; and of the old man's anxious doting care over them. Many a pretty group, doubtless, they made, on warm summer afternoons, on the shady terrace; but the old grandfather died when they were seven years old, and slept with his father beneath the Chapel floor. After the funeral, Eustace Inglesant had intended taking both the children back with him to London, but he had discovered—or fancied he had discovered—that the youngest was sickly, and would be better for the country air; and therefore kept him at Westacre, when he returned to the city with his brother. The truth appears to be that he was a worldly, selfish man, and while fully conscious of the advantage of an heir, he was by no means desirous of giving himself more trouble than was necessary about either of his children. The old Priory, however, was, at this time, not a bad place to bring up a child in, though it had been neglected during the last ten or eleven years; though the woods were overgrown, and the oaks came up, in places, close to the house; though the Prior's fish-ponds had transformed themselves into a large pool or lake; though the garden was a tangled wilderness, and centaury, woodsorrel, and sour herbs covered the ground; though the old courtyard and the Chapel itself were mouldering and ruinous, yet the air of the rich vales in the north of Wiltshire is more healthy than that of the higher downs, which are often covered with fogs when the vales are clear, and the sky is bright and serene. It

was remarked that people lived longer in the valleys than at places that would be supposed peculiarly healthy on the hills; that they sang better in the churches; and that books and rooms were not so damp and mouldy in the low situations as they were in those which stood very high, with no river or marsh near them. The fogs at times, indeed, came down into the valleys; and in the courtyard of the Priory dim forms had been seen flitting through the mist, in reality the shadows of the spectators thrown upon the mist itself, from the light of a lanthorn. Such sights as these in such a place, so haunted by the memories of the past, gave rise to many strange stories—to which young Inglesant listened with wonder, as he did, also, to others of the *ignis fatuus*, which, called by the people "Kit of the Candlestick," used, about Michaelmas, to be very common on the downs, and to wander down to the valleys across the low boggy grounds—stories of its leading travellers astray, and fascinating them. The boy grew up among such strange stories, and lived, indeed, in the old world that was gone for ever. His grandfather's dimly remembered anecdotes were again and again recalled by others, all of the same kind, which he heard every day. Stories of the rood in the Chapel, of the mass wafer with its mysterious awfulness and power, of the processions and midnight singing at the Priory. The country was full of the scattered spoil of the monasteries; old and precious manuscripts were used everywhere by the schoolboys for covering their books, and for the covers of music; and the glovers of Malmsbury wrapped their goods in them. In the churchyards the yew-trees stood thick and undecayed, scarcely grown again from the last lopping to supply bows for the archers of the King's army. The story was common of the Becket's path, along which he had been used to pass when curé priest at Winterbourn, and which could be seen through the deepest snow, or if ploughed up and sown with corn. Indeed the path itself could be seen within a pleasant ride across the downs from Westacre.

The boy's first instructor was the old curate of the Chapel, who taught him his Church Catechism and his latin grammar. This man appears to have been one of those ministers so despised by the Puritans as "mere grammar scholars," who knew better how to read a homily than to make a sermon; yet John Inglesant learnt of him more good lessons than he did, as he himself owned, afterwards from many popular sermons; and in his old age he acknowledged that he believed the only thing that had kept him back in after years, and under great temptations, from formally joining the communion of the Church of Rome, was some faint prejudice, some lingering dislike, grounded on the old man's teaching. Other teachers, of a different kind, the child had in plenty. The old servants who still remained in the house; the woodsmen and charcoal burners; the village girls whom the housekeeper hired from year to year at Malmsbury fair; the old housekeeper who had been his mother's maid, and whom the boy looked on as

his mother, and who could coax him to her lap when he was quite a tall boy, by telling him stories of his mother; one or two falconers or huntsmen who lingered about the place, or watched the woods for game for the gentry around. When he was ten years old, in 1632, the curate of the Chapel died; and Mr. Inglesant did not at once replace him, for reasons which will appear presently. John led a broken scholastic life for a year, going to school when it was fine enough to make a pleasant walk attractive to ——, where the Vicar taught some boys their grammar and latin Terence in the Church itself; and where there was a tradition that the great antiquary, Master Camden, Clarencieux King of Arms, coming on his survey to examine the Church, found him, and spoke to him and his scholars. At the end of a year, however, his father coming into the country, arranged for him to go to school at Ashley, where he was to stay in the house with the Vicar, a famous schoolmaster in the west country. This gentleman, who was a delicate and little person, and had an easy and attractive way of teaching, was a Greek scholar and a Platonist, a Rosicrucian and a believer in alchemy and astrology. He found in little Inglesant an apt pupil, an apprehensive and inquisitive boy, mild of spirit, and very susceptible of fascination, strongly given to superstition and romance: of an inventive imagination though not a retentive memory; given to day dreaming, and,—what is more often found in children than some may think, though perhaps they could not name it,—metaphysical speculation. The Vicar taught his boys in the hall of his Vicarage—a large room with a porch, and armorial bearings in the stained glass in the windows. Out of this opened a closet or parlour where he kept his books, and in this he would sit after school was over, writing his learned treatises, most of which he would read to John Inglesant, some of them in latin. This, with his readings in Plato, assisted by his eager interest, gave John, as he grew older, a considerable acquaintance with both languages, so that he could read most books in either of them, and turn over the remnants of the old world learning that still remained in the Prior's Library, with that lazy facility which always gives a meaning, though often an incorrect one—not always a matter of regret to an imaginative reader, as adding a charm, and, where his own thought is happy, a beauty. Here he imbibed that mysterious Platonic philosophy, which—seen through the reflected rays of Christianity—becomes, as his master taught him, in some sort a foreshadowing of it, as the innocent and heroic life of Socrates, commended and admired by Christians as well as heathens, together with his august death, may be thought, in some measure, to have borne the image of Christ; and, indeed, not without some mystery of purpose, and preparation of men for Christianity, has been so magnified among men. Here, too, he eagerly drank in his master's Rosicrucian theories of spiritual existences; of the vital congruity and three several vehicles of the soul; the terrestrial, in which the soul should be so trained that she may stay as short a time as possible

in the second or aerial, but proceed at once to the third, the etherial, or celestial; "that heavenly chariot, carrying us, in triumph, to the great happiness of the soul of man." Of the aerial genii, and souls separate, and of their converse with one another, and with mankind. Of their dress, beauty, and outward form; of their pleasures and entertainments, from the Divinest harmony of the higher orders, who, with voices perfectly imitating the passionate utterance of their devout minds, melt their souls into Divine Love, and lose themselves in joy in God; while all nature is transformed by them to a quintessence of crystalline beauty by the chemical power of the spirit of nature, acting on pure essences. Of the feastings and wild dances of the lower and deeply lapsed, in whom some sad and fantastic imitation of the higher orders is to be traced; and of those aerial wanderers to whom poetical philosophers or philosophical poets have given the rivers and springs—the mountains and groves; with the Dii Tutelares of cities and countries; and the Lares familiares, who love the warmth of families and the homely converse of men. These studies are but a part of the course of which occult chemistry and the lore of the stars form a part; and that mysterious Platonism which teaches that Pindar's story of the Argo is only a secret recipe for the philosopher's stone; and which pretends that at this distance of time the life of Priam can be read more surely in the stars than in history.

More than three years passed in these pursuits, when Inglesant,—now a tall, handsome, dreamy-looking boy of fourteen, was suddenly recalled to Westacre by his father, who had unexpectedly arrived from London. His master, who was very fond of him, gave him many words of learned advice; for he expected, as proved to be the case, that his school-days—at least as far as he was concerned,—were ended. He concluded with these words:—

"I have done my best to show you those hidden truths which the heathen divines knew as well as we; how much more, then, ought we to follow them, who have the light of Christ! Do not talk of these things, but keep them in your heart; hear what all men say, but follow no man: there is nothing in the world of any value but the Divine Light,—follow it. What it is no man can tell you; but I have told you many times, and you know very well it is not here nor there, as men shall tell you, for all men say they have it who are ignorant of its very nature. It will reveal itself when the time shall come. If you go to the Court, as I think you will, attach yourself wholly to the King and the Church party, the foundations of whose power are in the Divine will. I foresee dark clouds overhanging the Church, but let not these affright you; behind, the Divine Light shineth—the Light that shineth from the hill of God. I have taught you to clear your soul from the mists of carnal error, but I have never told you to act freely in this world: you are not placed here to reason (as the sectaries and precisians do), but to obey. Remember it is the very seal of a gentleman—to obey: remember the

Divine words of Plato, in the Crito, when Socrates was about to suffer; how he refused, when urged, to break those laws under which he was falsely condemned. Let those words ring in your ears as they did in his; so that, like the worshippers of Cybele, who heard only the flutes, you shall hear nothing but the voice of God, speaking to you in that rank in which He has placed you, through those captains whom He has ordained to the command. Whenever—and in whatever place—the Divine Light shall appear to you, be assured it will never teach you anything contrary to this."

There was no horse sent for John, but he was obliged to ride in an uncomfortable manner before the serving man who was sent to fetch him; children, and especially younger sons, being treated as little better than servants, and they were indeed often tyrannised over by the latter. When he reached Westacre, he was told his father was in one of the rooms in the new wing of the house, and on entering, he found him in company with three other persons. One of these was the newly appointed curate of the Church, whom Johnny had never yet seen; the other was a fine, handsomely dressed man, with a lofty, high-bred look, and in the window was a beautiful boy of about John's own age, in the costly dress of a page. Inglesant knew that this must be his brother Eustace; and after humbly receiving his father's rather cold greeting, he hastened to embrace him, and he returned the greeting with warmth. But his father immediately presented him to the gentleman who stood by him; telling him that this gentleman would probably spend some time at Westacre, and that it was chiefly that he should attend him, that he had sent for him home; charging him, at the same time, to serve and obey him implicitly, as he would his father or the King.

"He is a mere country lad," he said, "very different from his brother, but he is young, and may be useful in after days."

The gentleman looked at Johnny kindly, with a peculiar expression which the boy had never before seen, penetrating and alluring at the same time.

"He is, as you say, Esquire, a country lad, and wants the fine clothes of my friend the page, nevertheless he is a gallant and gentle boy, and were he attired as finely, would not shame you, Mr. Inglesant, more than he does. And I warrant," he continued, "this one is good at his books."

And sitting down, he drew Johnny on his knee, and taking from his pocket a small book, he said: "Here, my friend, let us see how you can read in this."

It was the Phaedo of Plato, which Johnny knew nearly by heart, and he immediately began, with almost breathless rapidity, to construe with, here and there, considerable freedom, till the gentleman stopped him with a laugh. "Gently, gently, my friend. I saw you were a scholar, but not that you were a complete Platonist! I fear your master is one who looks more to the Divine sense than to the grammar! But never mind, you and I shall be much together, and as you are

so fond of Plato, you shall read him with me. You shall go to your brother, who, if he cannot read 'In Phaedone,' can tell you many wonderful things of the Court and the city that no doubt you will hear very gladly;" and letting Johnny go, he turned to his father, saying, in an undertone, which, however, the boy heard; "The lad is apt, indeed! more so than any of us could have dreamt; no fitter soil, I could wager, we could have found in England!"

Johnny went to his brother, and they left the room together. The two boys,—as the two children had been,—were remarkably alike; the more so as this likeness of form and feature, which to a casual observer appeared exact, was consistent with a very remarkable difference of expression and manner—the difference being, as it were, contained in the likeness without destroying it. Their affection for each other, which continued through life, was something of the same nature, arising apparently from instinct and nature, apart from inclination. Their tastes and habits being altogether different, they pursued their several courses quite contentedly, without an effort to be more united, but once united, or once recalled to each other's presence or recollection even in the most accidental manner, they manifested a violent and overpowering attachment to each other. On the present occasion they wandered through the gardens and neighbourhood of the Priory; and as the strange gentleman had foretold, Johnny took the greatest interest in the conversation of his brother, whom, indeed, he both now and afterwards most unfeignedly admired, and to whose patronage he invariably submitted with perfect satisfaction. Eustace, who had lately been admitted one of the junior supernumerary pages to the King, talked incessantly of the King's state and presence chamber, of the yeomen of the guard, of the pageants and masques, and of banquets, triumphs, interviews, nuptials, tilts, and tournaments; the innumerable delights of the city; of the stage players, tumblers, fiddlers, inn-keepers, fencers, jugglers, dancers, mountebanks, bear-wardens; of sweet odours and perfumes, generous wines, the most gallant young men, the fairest ladies, the rarest beauties the world could afford, the costly and curious attire, exquisite music, all delights and pleasures which, to please the senses, could possibly be devised; galleries and terraces, rowing on the Thames, with music, on a pleasant evening, with the goodly palaces, and the birds singing on the banks.

All this Johnny listened to with admiration, and made little reply to his brother's disparaging remarks on the miserable life he had led in the country, or to his sage advice to endeavour, by some means, to come to London to the Court.

Johnny remembered his master's counsel, and was silent on his own pleasures and pursuits. His pleasant walks by the brook side, pleasant shade by the sweet silver streams, good air, and sweet smell of fine, fresh meadow flowers, his walks among orchards, gardens, green thickets, and such-like pleasant places, in

some solitary groves between wood and water, meditating on some delightful and pleasant subject—he thought his brother would only ridicule these things. It is true the next day when they went to the Avon to see an otter hunted, Johnny occupied the foremost place for a time; he was known to the keepers, and to two or three gentlemen who were at the sport, and was familiar with the terms in tracing the mark of the otter, and following through all the craft of the hunting, tracing the marks in the soft and moist places to see which way the head of the chase was turned. He carried his otter spear as well as any of the company, while the hounds came trailing and chanting along by the river-side, venting every tree root, every osier bed and tuft of bulrushes, and sometimes taking to the water, and beating it like spaniels. But as soon as the otter, escaping from the spears, was killed by the dogs, or, having by its wonderful sagacity and craft avoided the dogs, was killed by the spears, Eustace assumed his superior place, coming forward to talk to the gentlemen, who were delighted with him, while Johnny fell back into the quiet, dreamy boy again.

The two brothers were left together for several days, their father, with the strange gentleman—whose name Eustace told Johnny was Hall—having departed on horseback, on a visit to a gentleman in Gloucestershire. Eustace observed great caution in speaking of Mr. Hall, telling Johnny he would know all about him soon from himself. The boys passed the time happily enough. Johnny's affection for his brother increased every day, and withstood not only Eustace's patronage, but—what must have been much more hard to bear—the different way in which the servants treated the two boys. Eustace, who, though only a few minutes older than his brother, was the heir, was treated with great deference and respect; which might possibly also be owing to his being a stranger and to his Court breeding. Johnny, on the contrary, though he was quite as tall as his brother, they treated like a child: the housekeeper took him up to bed when it pleased her; the old butler would have caned him without hesitation had he thought he deserved it; and the maids alternately petted and scolded him, the first of which was more disagreeable to him than the last. The hard condition of children, and especially of younger brothers, is a common theme of the writers of the period, and Johnny's experience was not different from that of others. His disposition, however, was not injured by it, though it may have made him still fonder of retirement and of day-dreaming than he would have been. This hard discipline made him resolve to be silent on those wonderful secrets and the learning that his master had taught him, and to meditate increasingly upon them in his heart. He delighted more and more in wandering by the river-side, building castles in the air, and acting an infinite variety of parts. When his brother left him, this became still more delightful to him, and but for other influences he might have gone on in this fascinating habit till he realised Burton's terrible description,

and from finding these contemplations and fantastical conceits so delightful at first, might have become the slave of vain and unreal fancies, which may be as terrible and dismal as pleasing and delightful.

After about a fortnight's absence, Mr. Inglesant and Mr. Hall returned from their visit, or visits, for they appeared to have stayed at several places; and the next day Eustace and his father departed for London. His father displayed more affection than usual on leaving Johnny behind him, assuring him of his love, and that if he heard a good account of him from Mr. Hall, he should come up to London and see the Court. Eustace's grief at losing his brother again was much lessened by his joy at returning to his congenial life in London; but Johnny watched him from the old gatehouse in front of the Priory with a sad heart.

While he is standing looking after his father and brother, as they ride up the hill by the same path which the Prior came down that fine summer morning long years before, we will take a moment's time to explain certain events of which he was perfectly ignorant, but which were about to close about him and involve him in a labyrinth from which he may have been said never to have issued during his life. We call ourselves free agents;—was this slight, delicate boy a free agent, with a mind and spirit so susceptible, that the least breath affected them: around whom the throng of national contention was about to close; on whom the intrigue of a great religious party was about to seize, involving him in a whirlpool and rapid current of party strife and religious rancour? Must not the utmost that can be hoped,—that can be even rationally wished for—be, that by the blessing of the Divine guidance, he may be able to direct his path a little towards the Light?

The laws oppressing the Roman Catholics, which had been stringently enforced during the greater part of James's reign, had been considerably relaxed when he was negotiating with the Spaniards for the marriage of his son, and again on King Charles's marriage with Henrietta Maria of France. From that time greater and greater leniency was shown them, not only by the exertion of Catholic influence at Court, but also through Puritan jealousy; the juries refusing to punish Popish recusants, because Puritan separatists were included in the lists. Spasmodic exertions of severity were made from time to time by the King and the Church party; but, on the whole, the Papists enjoyed more and more liberty, especially between 1630 and 1640. Advantage was taken by the party of this freedom to the fullest extent; money was amassed abroad, an army of missionary priests poured into England, agents were sent from the Pope, and every effort made in every part of England to gain converts, and confirm uncertain members. Many Papists who had conformed to the authority of the English Church beginning to entertain hopes of the ultimate success of the old religion, fell away and became recusants—that is, ceased to attend their Parish Church. Mr. Inglesant, who—through all his life—had watched the progress of affairs with a careful and

far-reaching penetration, had, from the first, been in communication with chiefs of the popish party; but he was far too important a friend where he was to allow of any change in his behaviour, and he still rigidly conformed to the Established Church. The Roman Catholics were divided into two parties, holding two opinions, which, under different aspects, actuate all religious parties at the present day. The one viewed the English Church and its leader Archbishop Laud with hatred, regarding him, and doubtless with great truth, as their most formidable opponent, as occupying a place in the country and in the allegiance of the majority of Englishmen which otherwise could only have been filled by the older Church: the other looking more at the resemblances between the two Churches, held the opinion that little was needed to bring the Established Church into communion and submission to the Papal See, and by that means, at once, and without trouble, restore the papal authority in England. The efforts of this party were of a more political nature than those of the other; they endeavoured to win over Archbishop Laud to a conference, and a Cardinal's hat was offered to him more than once. To this party Mr. Inglesant belonged. Occupying a neutral position himself, and possessed of the confidence of members of both Churches, he was peculiarly fitted for such negotiations, and was in constant communication with those Churchmen, very numerous at Court, and among the clergy and the country gentry, who were favourably disposed to the Papists, though at the same time sincere members of their own Church. The value of emissaries possessing in this way the confidence of Church people and Papists alike was so obvious, that Mr. Inglesant and his friends did all they could to add to their number, especially as they were not very easy to procure, great jealousy existing, among nearly all Church people, of any foreign or armed interference in England on the part of the Romanists, who were always suspected of such intentions. Mr. Inglesant, therefore, whom nothing escaped, had marked out his younger son's temperament as one peculiarly fitted to be trained for such a purpose, and had communicated this idea to his intimate associate among the Papists, Father Sancta Clara, as he was called, of an English family named St Clare, a Jesuit missionary priest who travelled in England under the name of Mr. Hall. The latter was a man of great influence, unbounded devotion to his order, and unflinching courage; a profound scholar, and, according to the knowledge of that day, a man of science, trained, indeed, in every variety of human learning, and taking advantage of every scrap of knowledge and information for the advancement of his purpose. Of elegant and fascinating manners, and accustomed to courtly life abroad, he was, perhaps, the most influential agent among the thousand mission priests at that time scattered through England. His time, of course, was fully taken up with his difficult embassy, but he was interested in the account Inglesant gave of his son; and the idea of training him to such usefulness in three or four years' time, when their

plans might be expected to be ripe, commended itself exceedingly to his peculiar genius and habit of mind. He was at this time Superior over part of the south-west of England, and was much engaged among the gentry in those parts—a position of peculiar difficulty, as the people of the greater part of that district were strongly Puritan, and the gentry hostile to Rome. So secluded and convenient a position as Westacre Priory was exactly adapted to aid him in his mission, and he resolved to take up his quarters there, from whence he could, with great hopes of escaping observation, continue his work in the adjoining country. Mr. Inglesant, with an eye to such a contingency, had purposely omitted to appoint a chaplain at the Priory for some time, and now nominated a Mr. ——, a graduate of Oxford, a man who was "ex animo" a Papist, and who only waited a suitable time to declare himself one. The number of such men was very great, and they were kept in the English Church only by the High Church doctrines and ceremonies introduced by Archbishop Laud; affording one out of numberless parallels between that age and the present. It is perhaps not necessary to say more in this place to explain the presence of Mr. Hall (otherwise Father Sancta Clara) at Westacre, nor the future that lay before Johnny Inglesant as he stood by the gatehouse of the old Priory looking after his father and Eustace as they rode up the hill.

CHAPTER III.

Father Sancta Clara was obliged to remain quiet at Westacre for some time, and devoted himself entirely to gaining an influence over Johnny. Of course in this he was entirely successful. There was a good library, for that day, at the Priory; the Prior's old books were still on the shelves, and Richard Inglesant, who we have seen was a scholar, added largely to them, bringing all his books into the country when he came to live at Westacre. The difference between Johnny's former master and this present one was that between a theorist and dreamer and a statesman and man of the world and critical student of human nature. The Father made Johnny read with him every day, and by his wealth of learning and acquaintance with men and foreign countries, made the reading interesting in the highest degree. In this way he read the classics, making them not dead school books, but the most human utterances that living men ever spoke; and while from these he drew illustrations of human life when reading Plato—which he did every day—he led his pupil to perceive, as he did more fully when he grew older,

that wonderful insight into the spiritual life and spiritual distinctions which even Christianity has failed to surpass. He led him, step by step, through that noble resolve by which Socrates—at frightful odds, and with all ordinary experience against him—maintains the advantage to be derived from truth; he pointed out to him the three different elements to be found in Plato: the Socratic or negative argument, simply overthrowing received opinion; the pseudo-scientific, to which Plato was liable from the condition of knowledge in his day; and, finally, the exalted flight of the transcendental reason, which, leaving alike the scepticism of the negative argument and the dreams of false science, flies aloft into the pure ether of the heavenly life. He read to him Aristophanes, pointing out in him the opposing powers which were at work in the Hellenic life as in the life of every civilised age. He did not conceal from him the amount of right there is on the popular side of plain common sense, nor the soundness of that fear which hesitates to overthrow the popular forms of truth, time-honoured and revealed, which have become in the eyes of the majority, however imperfect they may really be, the truth itself. Nor did he fail to show him the unsuitability of the Socratic argument to the masses of the people, who will stop at the negative part, and fail of the ethereal flight beyond; and he showed him how it might be possible, and even the best thing for mankind, that Socrates should die, though Socrates at that moment was the noblest of mankind: as, afterwards, though for a different reason, it was expedient that a nobler than Socrates should die for the people,—nobler, that is, in that he did what Socrates failed in doing, and carried the lowest of the people with him to the ethereal gates. And in this entering into sympathy with the struggle of humanity, he prepared his pupil to receive in after years (for it is a lesson that cannot be fully learned until middle life is approached) that kindly love of humanity; that sympathy with its smallest interests; that toleration of its errors, and of its conflicting opinions; that interest in local and familiar affairs, in which the highest culture is at one with the unlearned rustic mind.

The boy drank in all this with the greatest aptitude, and would have listened all day, but his tutor insisted on his taking his full amount of exercise, and himself commanded his admiration as much by skill in the sports of the field as by learning. He made no effort to draw his mind away from the English Church, farther than by giving him a crucifix and rosary, and teaching him the use of them, and pointing out the beauties of the Roman use; he even took pains to prevent his becoming attached to Popery, telling him that his father would not wish him to leave the Church of England; and though that Church was at present in schism, it would probably soon be reunited, and that meanwhile the difference was unimportant and slight. He knew, indeed, that from the excitable and enthusiastic nature of his pupil, if he once became attached strongly to Roman theology, all his use as a mediator between the two parties would at once be lost;

and he therefore contented himself with securing his own influence over Johnny; which he accomplished to the most unlimited extent.

After certain preparations had been made, and some needful precautions taken, a great change took place in the life at Westacre Priory. Strangers were constantly arriving, stayed a few hours, and departed, mostly coming in the night, and leaving, also, after sunset. Several, however, remained a longer time, and took great pains to conceal themselves. They all had long interviews with the Father. Services were also performed in the Chapel, frequently in Latin. It was death to say mass in England, except in the Queen's Chapels at St. James's, at Somerset House, and at Woodstock, nevertheless mass was said in all parts of England, and it was said at Westacre. One night, after Johnny had been asleep for some hours, he was awakened by Father St. Clare, who told him to dress himself and come with him, and, at the same time, charged him never to tell any one what he might be about to see—an injunction which the boy would have died rather than disobey. The long streaks of the summer dawn stretched across the sky before them as they crossed the courtyard towards the Chapel, and the roofs stood out sharp and distinct in the dim, chill air. The Chapel was lighted, and on the white cloth of the altar were tapers and flowers. Half awake in the sweet fresh morning air, Johnny knelt on the cold flag stones of the Chapel and saw the mass. Strangers who had come to the Priory on purpose were present, and some gentlemen of the neighbourhood whom Johnny knew. It is strange that the Jesuit should have placed so much trust in the prudence and fidelity of a boy; but he probably knew his pupil, and certainly had no cause to repent. This was not the only time mass was said; for one winter night—or rather morning—an old peasant known in the neighbourhood as Father Wade had been to Marlborough wake, and being benighted, bethought himself of asking a lodging at the Priory, and approached it by a pathway from the east, which, crossing the meadows beyond the Chapel, came round to the gatehouse at the front. He, however, never reached the gate, and being found at home the next day, and questioned as to where he passed the night, he was at first evasive in his replies, but on being pressed, told a mysterious story of strange lights and shapes of men he had seen about the Priory; and approaching—he said—fearfully along the path, there, sure enough! were the old monks passing up in procession from the graveyard through the wall into the Chapel, as through a door; and he heard the long-remembered chanting of the mass, and saw the tapers shining through the east window, as he had seen them when a little boy.

This manner of life went on for about a year, at the end of which time Father St. Clare's absences became more frequent, and Johnny was left much alone. The Father's mission in the west of England was not prospering, for the very simple reason that he was too good for the work. As far as the duties of

a Superior went, everything was satisfactory. The country was mapped out in districts, and emissaries were appointed to each; but for the peculiar mission of Father St. Clare—that of personal influence—there was no scope. It was the habit of the Jesuits, by the charms of their conversation and learning, by their philosophical theories, and in some cases by their original systems of science, to gain the confidence and intimacy of the highest both in station and intellect. And for this seed to spring up, there must be first a suitable soil for it to be sown in, and this soil was particularly scarce in Wiltshire. All the refinement and learning of Father St. Clare was thrown away upon the country squires; any boon companion would have influenced them quite as well. Becoming conscious of this, the Jesuit rode frequently to London, where work which required the highest skill and talent was going on; and in his absence Johnny was left very much to his own devices. During one of these absences a priest who had remained concealed several days at the Priory, and who had taken a fancy to the boy, gave him at parting, a little book, telling him to read it carefully, and it would be of use to him through life. It was entitled, "The Flaming Heart, or the Life of St. Theresa," of which a later edition, printed in 1642, was dedicated to Henrietta Maria. It opened a new world of thought to Johnny, who was now sixteen years of age, and he read it many times from beginning to end. A great deal of it was so strange to Inglesant, that he was repelled by it. The exaggeration of the duty of self-denial, the grotesque humility, the self-denunciation for the most trifling faults,—most of the details indeed appeared to him either absurd or untrue; but, running through all the book, the great doctrine of Divine Illumination fascinated him. The sublime but mysterious way of devotion pointed out in it, while quite different from anything he had previously heard of, was still sufficiently in accordance with the romantic habit of his mind, and with the mystic philosophy in which his old master had trained him, to cause him to follow it with an eager sympathy. The natural and inspired writings of the great mystics, indeed, breathe a celestial purity, entirely distinct from those of their inferior disciples, who brought down their spiritual system to earth and earthly purposes. The rest from individual effort, the calm after long striving, the secret joy in God, the acquiescing in His will, in which the true elevation of devotion lies, and which is not the effect of lively imaginations or of fruitful inventions—of these, all men are not capable, but all may reach the silent and humble adoration of God which arises out of a pure and quiet mind, just as when a man enters into an entire friendship with another; then the single thought of his friend affects him more tenderly than all that variety of reflections which may arise in his mind where this union is not felt. This inward calm and quiet in which men may in silence form acts of faith and feel those inward motions and directions which, as this book taught, follow all those who rise up to this elevation, and which lead them

onward through the devious paths of this life,—what must this be but the Divine Light of which his old master had so often told him he was ignorant, but whose certain coming he had led him constantly to expect? Enticed by such thoughts as these, he passed the days, hardly knowing what he did; and wandered in this perplexed labyrinth without a guide. Without a guide! but this book of his told him of a guide—a spiritual guide!—nay, even recommended obedience and entire submission to this director; and dissuaded from self-confidence. Where, then, was this guide, to whom, in the midst of such spiritual light and life, and after such ecstatic visions, he should turn? The book said it was the priest—any priest would do—but still it was the priest. This seemed to John Inglesant, whose perceptions the Jesuit had sharpened, but whose unrestrained romance he had not crushed, to be very different from that Divine Light of which his master spoke, from that transcendental voice of the Platonic Reason speaking in the silence of the soul; nay, it seemed to him to be a fall even from the teaching of the book itself. Meditating on these things, Johnny thought he would visit his old master, to see what he had to say about this new doctrine.

It was a fine summer morning when he made the visit; he had a horse of his own now, and a servant if he chose, but he preferred to-day to go alone. He found Mr. —— had discontinued his school, and was entirely buried in his books; only reading morning and evening prayers, and a homily, or one of his old sermons in the Church on Sundays. He never left his study on other days, except for a turn in his little garden. His house was by the wayside, with a small paved court before the hall; and by the side of this court, the garden, into which the window of the study, in a gabled wing adjoining the hall, looked towards the road. He was pleased to see Inglesant, though he very dimly remembered him, and questioned him of his studies. Johnny read him some Plato with the Jesuit's comments, of which the old gentleman took notes eagerly, and afterwards incorporated them in his book. The book he was writing was upon Talismanic figures, but he was not particular what he put into it; anything of an occult and romantic character being welcome, and introduced with not a little ingenuity. He had no sense nor understanding of anything else in the world but such subjects and his books; and being exceedingly infirm, he could scarcely lift some of the larger folios which lay heaped about him within reach. He blessed God that his eyesight was so good, and that he could still read Greek—the contracted Greek type of that day. After some conversation, Inglesant opened his mind to him, told him what he had been reading, and asked his opinion. The old scholar pricked up his ears, and set to work with great delight, taking notes all the time; and Johnny found, years afterwards, when he happened to read his book in London, that all he told him was introduced into it.

"I find nothing, my dear pupil," he said, "in the Christian Church, very old,

concerning this doctrine—for that author who goes by the name of Dionysius the Areopagite is of far later date—but I will discover to you some mysteries concerning it, which, so far as I know, have never been brought to light by any man. I find the germ of this doctrine in those fragments of metaphysics which go under Theophrastus, his name; who was a disciple of Aristotle, and succeeded him in his school; and was an excellent philosopher, certainly, by the works by him which remain to this day. Here he says that the understanding joined to the body, can do nothing without the senses, which help it as far as they can to distinguish sensible things from their first causes, but that all knowledge and contemplation of the first causes must be by very touching and feeling of the mind and soul; which knowledge, thus gained, is not liable to error. Synesius, a man well known amongst scholars, being vexed that this new divinity began in his day to be in request amongst Christians; and some illiterate monks and others taking advantage of it to magnify ignorance, to bring themselves into repute—Synesius, I say, wrote that exquisite treatise, which he inscribed 'Dio,' to prove the necessity of human learning and philosophy to all who will contemplate high things with sobriety and good success. 'God forbid,' he says, 'that we should think that if God dwell in us, He should dwell in any other part of us than that which is rational, which is His own proper temple.'

"Now whether the writings of some ancient and later Platonists, Greeks and Arabs, Heathens and Mahometans be a sufficient ground and warrant for them that profess to ascribe more to the Scriptures, by which sobriety of sense is so much commended unto us, than to the opinions of heathen philosophers, I leave you to consider."

Then Inglesant left him, for he seemed more desirous to put ideas into his book than to impart them, and rode home across the downs. As he went, he overtook a gentleman riding an easy-going palfrey, whom he found to be one whom he knew; one, indeed, of those who had attended the early morning mass in the Chapel. This gentleman, who was one of those called Church Papists, that is, Papists who saved themselves from the charge of recusancy by sometimes attending their Parish Church, knowing Johnny, and placing faith in him, began at once to relate his troubles. He dwelt sadly on the fines he had to pay, and his difficulties in avoiding the communion at Easter; but his greatest troubles were caused by his wife, who was much more zealous than he was, and refused to go to Church once a month to keep off the Church-wardens. Her religion, indeed, was so costly to him, that he had rather have had a city lady with her extravagant dress. He was very particular in inquiring after Father St. Clare, and whether Inglesant knew of anything he was engaged in; but John could give him no information, not knowing anything of the Jesuit's plans. They were hard times, he said, for a good quiet subject who wished to live at peace with his

King and with his clergyman; but what with the fear of the apparitor on one hand, and of his wife and her advisers among the Catholics on the other—he had a hard time of it. He was a cheerful man naturally, however, and leaving this discourse, which he thought would tire his companion, he entertained him for some time with the news of the country, of which he gathered great abundance in his rides. Among other things, he told him of a clergyman at a parish not far off, who, he said, must be a Catholic in his heart, for his piety was so great and his punctuality in reading common prayer, morning and evening in the Church alone in his surplice so regular, that—so the common report ran—he had brought down an angel from heaven, who appeared to him in the Church one evening, in the glow of the setting sun, and told him many wonderful and heavenly things. When the gentleman had related this, they came to the point where their roads parted, and he invited Johnny—for he was very courteous—to come on to his house, and sup with him. To this Inglesant consented, visits being a rare pleasure to him, and they rode together to the gentleman's house, which stood on the edge of the downs, with a courtyard and gatehouse before it, and at the back a fair hall and parlour, having a wide prospect over the valley and the distant view. Johnny was courteously received by the popish lady and her sister, who was devout and very pretty. The supper would have been very plain—the day being a fast—but the gentleman insisted on waiting while a rabbit was cooked for his friend; and when it came, he partook of it himself, in spite of his wife's remonstrances—out of courtesy to his guest, he said, and also to enable him to get over his next fine, which, he said, it ought to do. The ladies asked John Inglesant many questions about the Father, and what took place at the Priory; also about his brother the Page. This made him leave early, for though he knew nothing of any plots or treason, he was constantly afraid of saying something he ought not to do; nothing was said, however, about the morning mass, which was too serious a matter to be lightly spoken of.

As he rode away through the soft evening light, he thought so much of the story the gentleman had told him, that he made up his mind to ride to the village and see the clergyman whose goodness was so manifest and so rewarded. He, surely—if no one else could—would show him the true path of Devotion.

Two or three days afterwards he took the ride, and arrived at the small old Church at a very opportune moment, for the clergyman in his surplice was just going into it to read the evening prayers. Inglesant attended devoutly, being the only person present; for the sexton's wife, who rang the bell, did not consider that her duty extended farther. Prayers being over, the parson invited Johnny to supper—a much better one than he had had at the Papist's—and Inglesant stated his difficulties to him, and asked his advice. The Parson showed him several small books which he had written; one on bowing and taking off the hat at the

name of Jesus; another on the cross in baptism, and kneeling at the communion; a third on turning to the east, which last appeared to be mostly quotations and enlargements from Dr. Donne; a fourth on the use of the surplice. He repudiated being popishly inclined; having disproved, he said, that any of these practices were popish, in all his books, all of which, as far as Johnny could see, displayed considerable ingenuity; and while he inserted many trivial and weak passages, he seemed to have been well read in the Fathers and other old authors, and to have been a loyal, honest, and zealous advocate, according to his capacity, of the Church of England. He evidently looked on forms and ceremonies with the greatest reverence, and was totally incapable of telling his visitor anything of that mystical life he was so anxious to realise. Johnny inquired about the angel, but his host, while not appearing displeased at the reports being spread abroad, professed to deny all knowledge of it, but in such a way as to make Inglesant think he would like to have acknowledged it, had he dared. He rode away disappointed, and began to think he must consult Father St. Clare; which, for some reason or other he had felt a disinclination to do.

While he was in this perplexity, he bethought himself of his first schoolmaster, the man who taught in the Church where Camden visited him. He had forgotten all about this man, except that he was of a mild and kind nature; but he was so anxious for direction that he went to him at once. This man had been very poor, and brought up a large family, all of whom, however, he had put forward in life, some at the University and the Church, and some among the clothiers and glove-makers at Malmsbury and the other towns of Wiltshire. Johnny found him living alone—for his wife was dead—in a small cottage no better than a countryman's, with a few books, which with his garden were all the wealth he possessed. He was a great herbalist, and famous in the country for his cures and for his sermons, though no two people could agree why they admired the latter; all uniting in considering him a simple and rather poor preacher. This Inglesant learnt from a countryman who walked at his horse's side as he came near the village; but when he found the old gentleman sitting on a bench before his study window, and he rose and met his look, Inglesant saw at once—thanks to the cultivation of his perception by the Jesuit's teaching—what it was that gained him the people's love. He had large and melting eyes that looked straight into the hearts of those who met him, as though eager to help them and do them good. He received Johnny with great kindness, though he had quite forgotten him, and did not even remember when he told him who he was. But when Inglesant, who found it very easy to speak to him of what had brought him there, told him of his difficulties, he listened with the greatest interest and sympathy. When he had finished speaking, he remained some minutes silent, looking across the garden where the hot mid-day air was playing above the flowers.

"You have been speaking," he said at length, "of very high and wonderful things, into which, it would seem, even the angels dare not look; for we are, as would appear, taught in Scripture that it is in man's history that they see the workings of Divine Glory. And indeed, worthy Mr. Inglesant, when you have lived to the limit of my many years, you will not stumble at this; nor think this life a low and poor place in which to seek the Divine Master walking to and fro. These high matters of which you speak, and this heavenly life, is not to be disbelieved, only it seems to me—more and more—that the soul or spirit of every man in passing through life among familiar things is among supernatural things always, and many things seem to me miraculous, which men think nothing of, such as memory, by which we live again in place and time—and of which, if I remember rightly, for I am a very poor scholar, you doubtless know, St. Augustine says many pertinent things—and the love of one another, by which we are led out of ourselves, and made to act against our own nature by that of another, or, rather, by a higher nature than that of any of us; and a thousand fancies and feelings which have no adequate cause among outward things. Here, in this book which I was reading when you so kindly came to see me, are withered flowers, which I have gathered in my rambles, and keep as friends and companions of pleasant places, streams and meadows, and of some who have been with me, and now are not. There is one, this single yellow flower—it is a tormentilla, which is good against the plague—what is it, that, as I hold it, makes me think of it as I do? Faded flowers have something, to me, miraculous and supernatural about them; though, in fact, it is nothing wonderful that the texture of a flower being dried survives. It is not in the flower, but in our immortal spirit that the miracle is. All these delightful thoughts that come into my mind when I look at this flower—thoughts, and fancies, and memories—what are they but the result of the alchemy of the immortal spirit, which takes all the pleasant, fragile things of life, and transmutes them into immortality in our own nature! And if the poor spirit and intellect of man can do this, how much more may the supreme creative intellect mould and form all things, and bring the presence of the supernatural face to face with us in our daily walk! Earth becomes to us, if we thus think, nothing but the garden of the Lord, and every fellow-being we meet and see in it, a beautiful and invited guest; and, as I think I remember, many of the heathen poets, after their manner, have said very fine things about this; that we should rise cheerfully from this life, as a grateful guest rises from an abundant feast; and though doubtless they were very dark and mistaken, yet I confess they always seemed to me to have something of a close and entire fellowship with the wants of men, which I think the Saviour would have approved. If you, sir, can receive this mystery, and go through the honourable path of life which lies before you, looking upon yourself as an immortal spirit walking among supernatural things—for the natural things

of this life would be nothing were they not moved and animated by the efficacy of that which is above nature—I think you may find this doctrine a light which will guide your feet in dark places; and it would seem, unless I am mistaken, that this habit of mind is very likely to lead to the blessedness of the Beatific Vision of God, on the quest of which you have happily entered so young: for surely it should lead to that state to which this vision is promised—the state of those who are Pure in Heart. For if it be true, that the reason we see not God is the grossness of this tabernacle wherein the soul is encased, then the more and the oftener we recognise the supernatural in our ordinary life, and not only expect and find it in those rare and short moments of devotion and prayer, the more, surely, the rays of the Divine Light will shine through the dark glass of this outward form of life, and the more our own spirit will be enlightened and purified by it, until we come to that likeness to the Divine Nature, and that purity of heart to which a share of the Beatific Vision is promised, and which, as some teach, can be attained by being abstract from the body and the bodily life. As we see every day that the supernatural in some men gives a particular brightness of air to the countenance, and makes the face to shine with an inimitable lustre, and if it be true that in the life to come we shall have to see through a body and a glass however transparent, we may well practise our eyes by making this life spiritual, as we shall have also to strive to do in that to which we go. My predecessor in this living, doubtless a very worthy man (for I knew him not), has left it recorded on his tombstone—as I will show you if you will come into the Church—that he was 'full of cares and full of years, of neither weary, but full of hope and of heaven.' I should desire that it may be faithfully recorded of me that I was the same!"

John went with him into the Church, and read the old vicar's epitaph, and several more—for he was very much taken with the old gentleman's talk, and indeed stayed with him the whole day: his host adding a dish of eggs and a glass of small beer to his daily very frugal meal. Johnny invited him to come to the Priory, and so left him, more pleased and satisfied with this than with any of his other visits. As he rode back through the darkening valley, and through the oak wood before the Priory gate, he little thought that not only should he not see the old Parson again, but that his quiet contemplative life was come to an end, and his speculations would now be chased away by a life of action; and for the future the decision, often to be made at once, as to what he ought to do, would appear of more consequence than that other decision, which had seemed to him, sometimes, the only important one, as to what it was right to think.

When he reached the Priory, he found the Jesuit had returned, and when at supper he inquired of Johnny if his ride had been a pleasant one, as the servant had told him he had been out since the morning, Johnny began at once, and told him all that had been passing in his mind since the priest had given him the book,

and of all the directors he had sought for his guidance. Father St. Clare listened (though it may be doubted whether the recital was altogether agreeable to him) with great attention, and seemed pleased and amused at the boy's descriptions, which showed his pupil's fine perception of character.

"You have taken a wise course," he said, "which has led you to see much of the workings of the minds of men: this is the most useful study you can follow, and the most harmless to yourself, if you keep your own counsel, and gain knowledge without imparting it. I am glad you have told me all this, because it shows me I have not been deceived in you, but that the time is fully ripe for you to play the part your father and I have destined for you, and to play it—to great extent—alone. The day after to-morrow we shall go up to London; on the way, I will open to you the position of parties, the crisis of affairs—a position and a crisis such as never was before in this or any other country! You are very young, but you are years older in mind than most of your age, and your youth renders you all the more fit for the work I have for you to do. I trust you without reserve; I shall commit to your keeping secrets which would, if revealed, bring the highest heads in England, not to speak of my own, to the block. I have no fear of you."

Inglesant listened breathlessly and with open eyes to this address. It made his heart beat high with delight and excitement. Death—nay, the bitterest torture—would be nothing to him, if only he could win this man's approval, and be not only true but successful in his trust. His entire devotion to the Jesuit cannot be looked upon as anything wonderful, for the whole mental power of the latter, directed by the nicest art—a power and an art at that time not surpassed in Europe—had been directed to this end upon the boy's susceptible nature, and the result could not be doubtful.

The Jesuit might well say that the crisis was imminent, and the position of affairs peculiar. Plotters were at work in all directions, and for different ends; but the schemes of all miscarried, and the expectations of all proved to be miscalculations: those of the Roman Catholics—with whom St. Clare was associated—more than all. Their expectations were at the highest pitch. The Court influence was with them to a large extent. The Church of England was at its highest summit of glory and power, and its standing-point was almost their own. Laud was partly gained. He had refused a cardinal's hat; but in such a way that the offer was immediately renewed, and remained open. It seemed, indeed, as though little more remained to do, when this goodly edifice began to crumble, slowly, indeed, but surely, and with accelerating speed. A new power appeared in the country; hostile, indeed, to Catholicism, but, what was much worse, also slightly contemptuous of it, directing its full force against the Church and the Crown. The Church collapsed with wonderful suddenness; and the Crown was compelled to seek its own preservation, extending what little aid it might be able to render to

the Church; neither had the least power or time to give to the assistance of their former allies. All this had not happened when the Jesuit and Johnny rode up to London, but it was foreshadowed clearly in the immediate future.

CHAPTER IV.

Father St. Clare and Johnny set out the next day, accompanied by two servants on horseback. The road was quite new to Inglesant after they left Malmsbury; and he was greatly delighted and amused with all he saw. The fair landscapes, the prospects of goodly cities with the towers and spires of their Churches rising into the clear smokeless air; the stately houses and gardens, the life of the country villages, the fairs and markets, strolling players, the morris dancing, the drinking and smoking parties, the conjurors and mountebanks, peasants quarrelling "together by the ears," and buying and selling; wandering beggars, and half-witted people called "Tom o' Bedlams" who were a recognised order of mendicants—everything amused and delighted him, especially with his companion's witty and penetrating comments upon all they met with.

At Windsor they walked on the terrace, from which Johnny saw the view, which was then considered only second to that of Greenwich, of the river and many pleasant hills and valleys, villages and fair houses, far and near. As they rode along, at every suitable opportunity, and at night after supper at the inns, the Jesuit explained to Johnny the position of public affairs. He told him that though the power of the King and the Archbishop was apparently at its greatest height, as the trial and condemnation of Laud's traducers, Prynne, Baswick, and Burton had just been decided, and the trial of Hampden for refusal to pay ship-money was about to commence, yet nevertheless, the impossibility of governing without a Parliament was becoming so evident, and the violent and aggressive temper of the people was so marked, that he, and those like him, who possessed the best information of what was passing throughout all classes, and among all parties, however secret, considered that changes of a very remarkable character were imminent. The temper of the people, he said, was the more remarkable, because in the one case, libellers like Prynne would have been put to death without mercy in either of the preceding reigns, and no notice taken by the people; and the tax, called ship's money, was so light and so fairly levied, as to be scarcely felt. The Archbishop, he said, was determined to force the service book upon the

Scots; a most unwise and perilous proceeding at the present moment, and he was informed by the emissary priests then in the north of England and Scotland, that the resistance to it would be determined, and that the Scottish malcontents were supported by the Puritan party in the English Parliament. Under these circumstances, he explained to Johnny, that a change had taken place in the policy of some of the Roman Catholic party, who had formerly acted with Mr. Inglesant and Father St. Clare, and they had arrived at the conclusion that the Church of England was no longer worth the pains of humouring and conciliating. The Queen had been advised to attempt the perversion of the Parliamentary leaders, and several of the Catholic plotters had undertaken a similar enterprise. Father St. Clare told Johnny candidly, that he neither sympathised entirely with these views nor altogether with those of the party to which he had hitherto belonged. On the one hand, he had arrived at the conclusion that Laud was a true servant of the Church of England, and would never consent to submission to Rome, except on terms which could not be granted, but on the other, he had so long regarded the Church as the natural ally of Rome, and the uselessness of attempting to win over the Puritans was so apparent, that he had not entered warmly into these new schemes. He, however, was inclined to think that were a change to take place, and the Puritan party to gain the supreme power in the State, the re-action among the upper classes would be so great, that the Romish faith would gain numberless converts. He finally pressed upon Johnny the necessity of great prudence, telling him that he should be immediately placed about the person of the Queen as one of her pages; and, as soon as possible, transferred to the King's service in as high a post as the influence to be exerted could command, in order that he should possess as much influence as possible: that in the meantime his business would be simply to become acquainted with as many of all parties as he possibly could, and to gain their confidence, opportunities for doing which should be given him both in the assemblies he would meet at his father's house, and in other company into which he should be introduced. He warned him against crediting anything he heard, unless assured of its truth by himself—the most exaggerated reports upon every subject, he said, prevailing in the Court and city. The conversions to Romanism, he told him, though numerous, were nothing like so many as were reported, as might be supposed when the reputed ones included such men as Mr. Endymion Porter, the most faithful servant of the King and a firm Church of England man, though, like many others, entertaining very friendly opinions of the Papists.

Conversing in this way, they entered London one afternoon at the beginning of August 1637. Johnny, as may be supposed, was all eyes as they entered London, which they did by Kensington and St. James's Park. The beautiful buildings at Kensington, and the throng of gentry and carriages in the park astonished

him beyond measure. As they passed through the park many persons recognised Father St. Clare, but they passed on without stopping, through the gateway by the side of the beautiful banqueting-house into the narrow street that led by Charing Cross and the Strand. The crowds were now of a different kind to those they had passed in the park. They passed several groups assembled round quack doctors and itinerant speakers, one of whom was relating how the congregation of a Parish Church the Sunday before had been alarmed by an insurrection of armed Papists—stories of this kind being then a common invention to excite and stir up the people. At one of these groups they were startled by hearing a man who was selling books, announce the name as "Jesus' Worship Confuted;" as the thing was new to the Jesuit, he stopped and ordered one of his men to dismount and bring him one, when it was found to be a tract against ceremonies, and especially against bowing at the name of Jesus. They resumed their passage down the Strand, Father St. Clare remarking on the strange ideas a stranger would attach to the state of religion in England if he listened only to the opposing cries. All down the Strand the Jesuit pointed out the beautiful houses of the nobility, and the glimpses of the river between them. They stopped at last at Somerset House, then a large rambling series of buildings extending round several courts with gardens and walks on the river banks, and a handsome water-gate leading to the river. They went to the lodgings of Father Cory, the Queen's confessor, who was at home, and received them hospitably. Johnny was so taken up with all the astonishing sights around him, especially with the wonderful view up and down the river, with the innumerable boats and barges, the palaces and gardens, and churches and steeples on the banks, that it was a day or two before he could talk or think calmly of anything. The next morning the Jesuit took him to his father's house on the north side of the Strand, where he saw both his father and brother, it not being the latter's turn in waiting at the Court. Mr. Inglesant was not more affectionate to his son than usual; he appeared anxious and worn, but he told him he was pleased at his arrival, that he must obey Father St. Clare in all things, and that he would become a useful and successful man. Father St. Clare had sent for a Court tailor, and ordered a proper dress and accoutrements for Johnny, who was astonished at his own appearance when attired in lace and satin, and his long hair combed and dressed. The Jesuit regarded him with satisfaction, and told him they were going at once to the Queen. Mr. Inglesant's coach was sent for them, and was waiting in one of the courts; and entering, they were driven through London to Whitehall.

It was the third of August, and the Archbishop was marrying the Duke of Lennox to the Lady Mary Villiers, the daughter of the great Duke of Buckingham, in his Chapel at Lambeth. The King was expected to go to Lambeth to be present at the ceremony, but this was of no consequence to the Jesuit, who wished to

introduce his protégé to the Queen alone. When they reached Whitehall, however, they found that both their Majesties had gone to the wedding, and the day being very rainy, news had been sent from Lambeth immediately after the ceremony that the Queen was returning, and she was then on the water. The Jesuit and Johnny left their carriage and went down to the water-gate. The Jesuit was evidently well known at the Court, and way was made for him everywhere. At that time the greatest laxity was allowed to the Catholics, and other priests besides the Queen's confessors were tolerated openly in London. As they reached the water-gate, the rain had ceased for a time, and a gleam of sunlight shone upon the river, and rested on the Queen's barge as it approached. Johnny's heart beat with excitement, as it reached the steps amid a flourish of trumpets, and the guard presented arms. The Queen, splendidly dressed, came from under the awning and up the steps, accompanied by her gentlemen and the ladies of her Court. Johnny never forgot the sight to his dying day, and it was doubtless one to be long remembered by those who saw it for the first time. When the Queen was near the top of the stairs and saw St. Clare, she stopped, and extending her hand she welcomed him to the Court. She seemed to remember something, and spoke to him rapidly in French, to which he replied with the utmost deference, in the same language. Then falling back, he indicated Johnny to the Queen, saying—"This is young John Inglesant, your Majesty, of whom I spoke to your Grace concerning the business you wot of."

The Queen looked kindly at the boy, who indeed was handsome enough to incline any woman in his favour.

"They are a handsome race," she said, still speaking French; "this one, I think, still more so than his brother."

"This is a refined spirit, your Majesty," said the Jesuit, in a low voice, "of whom I hope great things, if your Majesty will aid."

"You wish to be one of my servants, my pretty boy," said the Queen, extending her hand to Johnny, who kissed it on one knee; "Father Hall will tell you what to do."

And she passed on, followed by her train, who looked at St. Clare and the boy with curiosity, several nodding and speaking to the Jesuit as they proceeded.

Johnny was duly entered the next day as one of the supernumerary pages without salary, and entered upon his duties at once, which consisted simply of waiting in anterooms and following the Queen at a distance in her walks. This life, however, was beyond measure interesting to Johnny: the beautiful rooms and galleries in the palace, with their wonderful contents were an inexhaustible source of delight to him; especially the King's collection of paintings which was kept in a single apartment, and was admired over Europe. Father Hall took him also to many gentlemen's virtuoso collections of paintings and curiosities, where

his intelligence and delight attracted the interest and kindness of all his hosts. Father St. Clare also gave him from time to time, small editions of the classics and other books which he could keep in his pocket, and read in the anterooms and galleries when he was in waiting. He would have been astonished, if the Jesuit had not told him it would be so, at the number of persons of all ranks and opinions in the Court who spoke to him and endeavoured to make his acquaintance, that they might remember him at a future time, evidently at the request of the priest.

Shortly after he came to London he was present at the Chapel Royal, at Whitehall, when the King took the sacrament and presented the gold pieces coined especially for this purpose. The sight impressed Johnny very much. The beautiful Chapel, the high altar on which candles were burning, the Bishops and the Dean of the Chapel in their copes, the brilliant crowd of courtiers, the King—devout and stately—alone before the altar, the exquisite music, and the singing of the King's choir, which was not surpassed in Rome itself. As the sunlight from the stained windows fell on this wonderful scene, it is not surprising that young Inglesant was affected by it, nor that this young spirit looking out for the first time on the world and its surprising scenes, and pageants, and symbols, realised the truth of what the old Parson had told him, and converted all these sights into spiritual visions; this one in particular, which led back his thoughts, as it was meant, to the three kings of old, who knelt and offered gifts before the mysterious Child.

Johnny saw his brother frequently, as the latter had grown out of his pagehood, and held another post about the Court, which gave him much leisure. The two young courtiers were at this time more alike than ever, and were much admired at Court as a pair. At one of the Queen's Masques, about this time, they acted parts somewhat similar to the brothers in Comus, but requiring greater resemblance, as in Shakespeare's Comedy of Errors, and both their acting and appearance was applauded by the King himself, who began to take notice of Johnny. Mr. Inglesant, the elder, had never been a favourite with the King, who was aware of his leaning to Popery, and indeed, at this time, both he and his friend the Jesuit were very much discouraged at the aspect of affairs. The position of the Papists had never been so good as at present, but this very circumstance was the ruin of their party. All restraints and reproaches of former times seemed forgotten; a public agent from Rome resided openly at the Court, and was magnificently fêted and caressed; the priests, though to avow popish orders was by law punishable with death, went about and preached openly without fear; and it was related as a sign of the times, that a Jesuit at Paris who was coming into England, coolly called on the English ambassador there, who knew his profession, offering his services in London, as though there were no penal law to condemn him the moment he landed! High Mass at Somerset House was

attended at noon-day by great numbers of the Papists, who returned together from it through the streets as openly as the congregation of the Savoy, and the neighbouring churches. Their priests succeeded in converting several ladies of some of the greatest families, thereby provoking the anger of their relations, and causing them to long for their suppression. They held large political conferences openly, and ostentatiously subscribed a large sum of money to assist the King against the Scots. Clarendon, indeed, says that they acted as though they had been suborned by these latter to root out their own religion.

It would seem, indeed, that the English mind is not habituated to plotting, and that the majority of any party are not equal to a sustained and concealed effort. The Jesuit, Mr. Inglesant, and the other astute members of their party perceived with sorrow the course things were taking without being able to remedy it. The former desisted from all active efforts, contenting himself with assisting the Queen in her attempts to win over members of the Parliament to her interest, and in opposing and counteracting the intrigues of a small and fanatical section of the Papists who were attempting a wild and insane plot against the King and the Archbishop, which was said to extend to even the attempting their death. As neither of these occupations was very arduous, he had little need of Johnny's assistance, and left him very much to himself. Inglesant, therefore, continued the cultivation of his acquaintance with both parties pretty much in his own way. He had several friends whose society he much valued among the Papists, and he frequently attended mass when not obliged to by his attendance upon the Queen; but he was rather more inclined to attach himself to the members of the Laudian and High Church party, who presented many qualities which interested and attracted him. He read with delight the books of this party, Dr. Donne's and Herbert's Poems, and the writings of Andrews and Bishop Cosin's Devotions, which last was much disliked by the Puritans, and, indeed, the course he took could not have been more in accordance with the Jesuit's plan of preparing him for future service, should the time ever arrive when such usefulness should be required. In his mind he was still devoted, though in a halting and imperfect manner, to that pursuit of the spiritual life and purity which had attracted him when so young, and he lost no opportunity of consulting any on these mysterious subjects who he thought would sympathise with his ideas. In this he had no assistance from his brother, who was devoted to the pursuit of pleasure—of worldly pleasure, it is true, in its most refined aspect—but still of such pleasures as are entirely apart from those of the soul.

One of his friends had presented Inglesant with a little book, "Divine Considerations of those things most profitable in our Christian profession," written in Spanish by John Valdesso, a Papist, and translated by a gentleman of whom Johnny heard a great deal, and was exceedingly interested in what he heard. In

this book the author says several very high and beautiful things concerning the Spiritual life, and of the gradual illumination of the Divine Light shed upon the mind, as the sun breaks by degrees upon the eyes of a traveller in the dark. But though Johnny was attracted to the book itself, he was principally interested in it by what he heard of the translator. This was Mr. Nicholas Ferrar, who had founded a religious house at Little Gidding, in Huntingdonshire, or, as it was called in the world, the "Protestant Nunnery," in which he lived with his mother and several nephews and nieces, in the practice of good works and the worship of God. Extraordinary attention had been attracted to this establishment by the accounts of the strange and holy life of its inmates; and still more by the notice which the King had condescended to take of it, not only visiting it on his journey to Scotland, in 1633, but also requesting and accepting presents of devotional books, which it was part of the occupation of the family to prepare.

The accounts of this religious house, and of the family within it, so excited Johnny's imagination that he became exceedingly desirous to see it, especially as it was said that Mr. Ferrar was very infirm, and was not expected to survive very long.

It was late in the autumn when he made this visit, about two months before Mr. Ferrar's death. The rich autumn foliage was lighted by the low sun as he rode through the woods and meadows, and across the sluggish streams of Bedford and Huntingdon. He slept at a village a few miles south of Little Gidding, and reached that place early in the day. It was a solitary, wooded place, with a large manor house, and a little Church close by. It had been for some time depopulated, and there were no cottages nor houses near. The manor house and Church had been restored to perfect order by Mr. Ferrar, and Inglesant reached it through a grove of trees planted in walks, with latticed paths and gardens on both sides. A brook crossed the road at the foot of the gentle ascent on which the house was built. He asked to see Mr. Ferrar, and was shown by a man-servant into a fair spacious parlour, where Mr. Ferrar presently came to him. Inglesant was disappointed at his appearance, which was plain and not striking in any way, but his speech was able and attractive. Johnny apologised for his bold visit, telling him how much taken he had been by his book, and by what he had heard of him and his family; and that what he had heard did not interest him merely out of curiosity, as he feared it might have done many, but out of sincere desire to learn something of the holy life which doubtless that family led. To this Mr. Ferrar replied that he was thankful to see any one who came in such a spirit, and that several, not only of his own friends, as Mr. Crashaw the poet, but many young students from the University at Cambridge came to see him in a like spirit, to the benefit, he hoped, of both themselves and of him. He said with great humility, that although on the one hand very much evil had been spoken of him which was not true, he had no

doubt that, on the other, many things had been said about their holiness and the good that they did which went far beyond the truth. For his own part, he said he had adopted that manner of life through having long seen enough of the manners and vanities of the world; and holding them in low esteem, was resolved to spend the best of his life in mortifications and devotion, in charity, and in constant preparation for death. That his mother, his elder brother, his sisters, his nephews and nieces, being content to lead this mortified life, they spent their time in acts of devotion and by doing such good works as were within their power, such as keeping a school for the children of the next parishes, for teaching of whom he provided three masters who lived constantly in the house. That for ten years they had lived this harmless life, under the care of his mother, who had trained her daughters and grand-daughters to every good work; but two years ago they had lost her by death, and as his health was very feeble he did not expect long to be separated from her, but looked forward to his departure with joy, being afraid of the evil times he saw approaching.

When he had said this, he led Inglesant into a large handsome room upstairs, where he introduced him to his sister, Mrs. Collet, and her daughters, who were engaged in making those curious books of Scripture Harmonies which had so pleased King Charles. These seven young ladies, who formed the junior part of the Society of the house, and were called by the names of the chief virtues, the Patient, the Cheerful, the Affectionate, the Submiss, the Obedient, the Moderate, the Charitable, were engaged at that moment in cutting out passages from two Testaments, which they pasted together so neatly as to seem one book, and in such a manner as to enable the reader to follow the narrative in all its particulars from beginning to end without a break, and also to see which of the sacred authors had contributed any particular part.

Inglesant told the ladies what fame reported of the nuns of Gidding, of two watching and praying all night, of their canonical hours, of their crosses on the outside and inside of their Chapel, of an altar there richly decked with plate, tapestry, and tapers, of their adoration and genuflexions at their entering. He told Mr. Ferrar that his object in visiting him was chiefly to know his opinion of the Papists and their religion, as, having been bred among them himself, and being very nearly one of them, he was anxious to know the opinions of one who was said to hold many of their doctrines without joining them or approving them. Mr. Ferrar appeared at first shy of speaking, but being apparently convinced of the young man's sincerity, and that he was not an enemy in disguise, he conversed very freely with him for some time, speaking much of the love of God, and of the vanity of worldly things; of his dear friend Mr. George Herbert, and of his saintly life; of the confused and troublesome life he had formerly led, and of the great peace and satisfaction which he had found since he had left the world and

betaken himself to that retired and religious life. That, as regards the Papists, his translating Valdessa's book was a proof that he knew that among them, as among all people, there were many true worshippers of Jesus, being drawn by the blessed Sacrament to follow Him in the spiritual and divine life, and that there were many things in that book similar to the mystical religion of which Inglesant spoke, which his dear friend Mr. George Herbert had disapproved, as exalting the inward spiritual life above the foundation of holy Scripture: that it was not for him, who was only a deacon in the Church, to pronounce any opinion on so difficult a point, and that he had printed all Mr. Herbert's notes in his book, without comment of his own: that though he was thus unwilling to give his own judgment, he certainly believed that this inward spiritual life was open to all men, and recommended Inglesant to continue his endeavours after it, seeking it chiefly in the holy Sacrament accompanied with mortification and confession.

While they were thus talking, the hour of evening prayer arrived, and Mr. Ferrar invited Johnny to accompany him to the Church; which he gladly did, being very much attracted by the evident holiness which pervaded Mr. Ferrar's talk and manner. The family proceeded to Church in procession, Mr. Ferrar and Inglesant walking first. The Church was kept in great order, the altar being placed upon a raised platform at the east end, and covered with tapestry stretching over the floor all round it, and adorned with plate and tapers. Mr. Ferrar bowed with great reverence several times on approaching the altar, and directed Inglesant to sit in a stalled seat opposite the reading pew, from which he said the evening prayer. The men of the family knelt on the raised step before the altar, the ladies and servants sitting in the body of the Church. The Church was very sweet, being decked with flowers and herbs; and the soft autumn light rested over it. From the seat where Inglesant knelt, he could see the faces of the girls as they bent over their books at prayers. They were all in black, except one, who wore a friar's grey gown; this was the one who was called the Patient, as Inglesant had been told in the house, and the singularity of her dress attracted his eye towards her during the prayers. The whole scene, strange and romantic as it appeared to him, the devout and serious manner of the worshippers—very different from much that was common in churches at that day—and the abstracted and devout look upon the faces of the girls, struck his fancy, so liable to such influences, and so long trained to welcome them; and he could not keep his eyes from this one face from which the grey hood was partly thrown back. It was a passive face, with well-cut delicate features, and large and quiet eyes.

Prayers being over, the ladies saluted Inglesant from a distance, and left the Church with the rest, in the same order as they had come, leaving Mr. Ferrar and Johnny alone. They remained some time discoursing on worship and Church ceremonies, and then returned to the house. It was now late, and Mr. Ferrar,

who was evidently much pleased with his guest, invited him to stay the night, and even extended his hospitality by asking him to stay over the next, which was Saturday, and the Sunday, upon which, as it was the first Sunday in the month, the holy Sacrament would be administered, and several of Mr. Ferrar's friends from Cambridge would come over and partake of it, and to pass the night and day in prayer and acts of devotion. To this proposition Inglesant gladly consented, the whole proceeding appearing to him full of interest and attraction. Soon after they returned to the house supper was served, all the family sitting down together at a long table in the hall. During supper some portion of the book of the Martyrs was read aloud. Afterwards two hours were permitted for diversion, during which all were allowed to do as they pleased.

The young ladies having found out that Inglesant was a Queen's page, were very curious to hear of the Court and royal family from him, which innocent request Mr. Ferrar encouraged, and joined in himself. One reason of the success with which his mother and he had ruled this household appears to have been his skill in interesting and attracting all its inmates by the variety and pleasant character of their occupations. He was also much interested himself in what Johnny told him, for in this secluded family, themselves accustomed to prudence, Inglesant felt he might safely speak of many things upon which he was generally silent; and after prayers, when the family were retired to their several rooms, Mr. Ferrar remained with him some time, while Johnny related to him the aspect of religious parties at the moment, and particularly all that he could tell, without violating confidence, of the Papists and of his friend the Jesuit.

The next morning they rose at four, though two of the family had been at prayer all night, and did not go to rest till the others rose. They went into the oratory in the house itself to prayers, for they kept six times of prayer during the day. At six they said the psalms of the hour, for every hour had its appropriate psalms, and at half-past six went to Church for matins. When they returned at seven o'clock they said the psalms of the hour, sang a short hymn, and went to breakfast. After breakfast, when the younger members of the family were at their studies, Mr. Ferrar took Inglesant to the school, where all the children in the neighbourhood were permitted to come. At eleven they went to dinner, and after dinner there was no settled occupation till one, every one being allowed to amuse himself as he chose. The young ladies had been trained not only to superintend the house, but to wait on any sick persons in the neighbourhood who came to the house at certain times for assistance, and to dress the wounds of those who were hurt, in order to give them readiness and skill in this employment, and to habituate them to the virtues of humility and tenderness of heart. A large room was set apart for this purpose, where Mr. Ferrar had instructed them in the necessary skill, having been himself Physic Fellow at Clare Hall, in

Cambridge, and under the celebrated Professors at Padua, in Italy. This room Inglesant requested to see, thinking that he should in this way also see something of and be able to speak to the young ladies whose acquaintance he had hitherto not had much opportunity of cultivating. Mr. Ferrar told his nephew to show it him—young Nicholas Ferrar, a young man of extraordinary skill in languages, who was afterwards introduced to the King and Prince Charles, some time before his early death. When they entered the room Inglesant was delighted to find that the only member of the family there was the young lady in the Grey Friar's habit, whose face had attracted him so much in Church. She was listening to the long tiresome tale of an old woman, following the example of George Herbert, who thought on a similar occasion, that "it was some relief to a poor body to be heard with patience."

Johnny, who in spite of his Jesuitical and Court training was naturally modest, and whose sense of religion made him perfectly well-bred, accosted the young lady very seriously, and expressed his gratitude at having been permitted to stay and see so many excellent and improving things as that family had to show. The liking which the head of the house had evidently taken for Inglesant disposed the younger members in his favour, and the young lady answered him simply and unaffectedly, but with manifest pleasure.

Inglesant inquired concerning the assumed names of the sisters and how they sustained their respective qualities, and what exercises suited to these qualities they had to perform. She replied that they had exercises, or discourses, which they performed at the great festivals of the year, Christmas and Easter; and which were composed with reference to their several qualities. All of these, except her own, were enlivened by hymns and odes composed by Mr. Ferrar, and set to music by the music master of the family, who accompanied the voices with the viol or the lute. But her own, she said, had never any music or poetry connected with it; it was always of a very serious turn, and much longer than any other, and had not any historical anecdote or fable interwoven with it, the contrivance being to exercise that virtue to which she was devoted. Inglesant asked her with pity if this was not very hard treatment, and she only replied, with a smile, that she had the enjoyment of all the lively performances of the others. He asked her whether they looked forward to passing all their lives in this manner, or whether they allowed the possibility of any change, and if she had entirely lost her own name in her assumed one, or whether he might presume to ask it, that he might have wherewithal to remember her by, as he surely should as long as he had life. She said her name was Mary Collet; and that as to his former question, two of her sisters had had, at one time, a great desire to become veiled virgins, to take upon them a vow of perpetual chastity, with the solemnity of a Bishop's blessing and ratification, but on going to Bishop Williams he had discouraged, and at last,

dissuaded them from it.

Inglesant and the young lady remained talking in this way for some time, young Nicholas Ferrar having left them; but at last she excused herself from staying any longer, and he was obliged to let her go. He ventured to say that he hoped they would remember him, that he was utterly ignorant of the future that lay before him, but that whatever fate awaited him, he should never forget the "Nuns of Gidding" and their religious life. She replied that they would certainly remember him, as they did all their acquaintance, in their daily prayer, especially as she had seldom seen her uncle so pleased with a stranger as he had been with him. With these compliments they parted, and Inglesant returned to the drawing-room, where more visitors had arrived.

In the afternoon there came from Cambridge Mr. Crashaw the poet, of Peterhouse, who afterwards went over to the Papists and died Canon of Loretto, and several gentlemen, undergraduates of Cambridge, to spend the Sunday at Gidding, being the first Sunday of the month. Mr. Crashaw, when Inglesant was introduced to him as one of the Queen's pages, finding that he was acquainted with many Roman Catholics, was very friendly and conversed with him apart. He said he conceived a great admiration for the devout lives of the Catholic saints, and of the government and discipline of the Catholic Church, and that he feared that the English Church had not sufficient authority to resist the spread of Presbyterianism, in which case he saw no safety except in returning to the communion of Rome. Walking up and down the garden paths, after evening prayers in Church, he spoke a great deal on this subject, and on the beauty of a retired religious life, saying that here at Little Gidding and at Little St. Marie's Church, near to Peterhouse, he had passed the most blissful moments of his life, watching at midnight in prayer and meditation.

That night Mr. Crashaw, Inglesant, and one or two others remained in the Church from nine till twelve, during which time they said over the whole Book of Psalms in the way of antiphony, one repeating one verse and the rest the other. The time of their watch being ended they returned to the house, went to Mr. Ferrar's door and bade him good-morrow, leaving a lighted candle for him. They then went to bed, but Mr. Ferrar arose according to the passage of Scripture "at midnight I will arise and give thanks," and went into the Church, where he betook himself to religious meditation.

Early on the Sunday morning the family were astir and said prayers in the oratory. After breakfast many people from the country around and more than a hundred children came in. These children were called the Psalm children, and were regularly trained to repeat the Psalter, and the best voices among them to assist in the service on Sundays. They came in every Sunday, and according to the proficiency of each were presented with a small piece of money, and the

whole number entertained with a dinner after Church. The Church was crowded at the morning service before the Sacrament. The service was beautifully sung, the whole family taking the greatest delight in Church music, and many of the gentlemen from Cambridge being amateurs. The Sacrament was administered with the greatest devotion and solemnity. Impressed as he had been with the occupation of the preceding day and night, and his mind excited with watching and want of sleep and with the exquisite strains of the music, the effect upon Inglesant's imaginative nature was excessive. Above the altar, which was profusely bedecked with flowers, the antique glass of the East window, which had been carefully repaired, contained a figure of the Saviour of an early and severe type. The form was gracious and yet commanding, having a brilliant halo round the head, and being clothed in a long and apparently seamless coat; the two forefingers of the right hand were held up to bless. Kneeling upon the half-pace, as he received the sacred bread and tasted the holy wine, this gracious figure entered into Inglesant's soul, and stillness and peace unspeakable, and life, and light, and sweetness, filled his mind. He was lost in a sense of rapture, and earth and all that surrounded him faded away. When he returned a little to himself, kneeling in his seat in the Church, he thought that at no period of his life, however extended, should he ever forget that morning or lose the sense and feeling of that touching scene, of that gracious figure over the altar, of the bowed and kneeling figures, of the misty autumn sunlight and the sweeping autumn wind. Heaven itself seemed to have opened to him and one fairer than the fairest of the angelic hosts to have come down to earth.

After the service, the family and all the visitors returned to the mansion house in the order in which they had come, and the Psalm children were entertained with a dinner in the great hall; all the family and visitors came in to see them served, and Mrs. Collet, as her mother had always done, placed the first dish on the table herself to give an example of humility. Grace having been said, the bell rang for the dinner of the family, who, together with the visitors, repaired to the great dining-room, and stood in order round the table. While the dinner was being served they sang a hymn to the organ at the upper end of the room. Then grace was said by the Priest who had celebrated the communion, and they sat down. All the servants who had received the Sacrament that day sat at table with the rest. During dinner one of the young people whose turn it was, read a chapter from the Bible, and when that was finished conversation was allowed; Mr. Ferrar and some of the other gentlemen endeavouring to make it of a character suitable to the day, and to the service they had just taken part in. After dinner they went to Church again for evening prayer; between which service and supper Inglesant had some talk with Mr. Ferrar concerning the Papists and Mr. Crashaw's opinion of them.

"I ought to be a fit person to advise you," said Mr. Ferrar with a melancholy smile, "for I am myself, as it were, crushed between the upper and nether millstone of contrary reports, for I suffer equal obloquy—and no martyrdom is worse than that of continual obloquy—both for being a Papist and a Puritan. You will suppose there must be some strong reason why I, who value so many things among the Papists so much, have not joined them myself. I should probably have escaped much violent invective if I had done so. You are very young, and are placed where you can see and judge of both parties. You possess sufficient insight to try the spirits whether they be of God. Be not hasty to decide, and before you decide to join the Romish communion, make a tour abroad, and if you can, go to Rome itself. When I was in Italy and Spain, I made all the inquiries and researches I could. I bought many scarce and valuable books in the languages of those countries, in collecting which I had a principal eye to those which treated on the subjects of spiritual life, devotion, and religious retirement, but the result of all was that I am now, and I shall die, as I believe and hope shortly, in the Communion of the English Church. This day, as I believe, the blessed Sacrament has been in the Church before our eyes, and what can you or I desire more?"

The next morning before Inglesant left, Mr. Ferrar showed him his foreign collections, his great treasure of rarities and of prints of the best masters of that time, mostly relative to historical passages of the Old and New Testaments. Inglesant dined with the family, of whom he took leave with a full heart, saluting the ladies with the pleasant familiarity which the manners of the time permitted. Mr. Ferrar went with him to the borders of the parish, and gave him his blessing. They never saw each other again, for two months afterwards Nicholas Ferrar was in his grave.

CHAPTER V.

The next year of Inglesant's life contained several incidents which had very important results. The first of these was the illness and death of his father, which occurred shortly after Johnny's return to London. His end was doubtless hastened by the perplexity and disappointment of many of his political projects, for his life in many respects was a failure. Though a rich man he had spent large sums in his political intrigues, and the property he left was not large. His lands and all his money he left to his eldest son, but he left Johnny some houses in

the city, which Inglesant was advised to sell. He therefore disposed of them to a Parliament man, and deposited the money with a goldsmith to be ready in case of need. The possession of this money made him an important person, and he was advised to purchase a place about the Court, which, with his interest with the Queen's advisers, would secure his success in life. He endeavoured to act on this advice, but it was some time before he was successful.

After his return to London Inglesant saw Mr. Crashaw two or three times, when that gentleman was in London, and his conversation led him to think more of the Roman Catholics than he had hitherto done, and inclined him more and more to join them. Nothing would have recommended him so much to the Queen as such a step, and his feelings and sympathies all led him the same way. He was exceedingly disgusted with the conduct and conversation of the Puritans, and the extreme lengths to which it was evident they were endeavouring to drive the people. Most of his friends, even those who were themselves sound Churchmen, looked favourably on the Papists, and it was thought the height of ill breeding to speak against them at Court. It is probable, therefore, that Inglesant would have joined them openly but for two very opposite causes. The one was his remembrance of the Sacrament at Little Gidding, the other was the influence of his friend the Jesuit. The first of these prevented that craving after the sacrifice of the Mass, which doubtless is the strongest of all the motives which lead men to Rome; the other was exerted several ways.

It was one of the political maxims of this man that he never, if possible, allowed anything he had gained or any mode of influence he had acquired to be lost or neglected, even though circumstances had rendered it useless for the particular purpose for which he had at first intended it. In the present case he had no intention of permitting all the care and pains he had been at in Inglesant's education to be thrown away. It is true the exact use to which he had intended to devote the talents he had thus trained no longer existed, but this did not prevent his appreciating the exquisite fitness of the instrument he had prepared for such or similar use. Circumstances had occurred which in his far-seeing policy made the Church of England scarcely worth gaining to the Catholic side, but in proportion as the Church might cease to be one of the great powers in the country, the Papists would step into its place: and in the confused political struggles which he foresaw, the Jesuit anticipated ample occupation for the peculiar properties of his pupil. In the event of a struggle, the termination of which none could foresee, a qualified agent would be required as much between the Papists and the popular leaders as between the Catholics and the Royal and Church Party. Acting on these principles, therefore, the Jesuit was far from losing sight of Inglesant, or even neglecting him. So far indeed was he from doing so, that he was acquainted with most that passed through his mind, and was well aware of his increased at-

traction towards the Church to which he himself belonged. Now for Inglesant to have become actively and enthusiastically a Papist would at once have defeated all his plans for him, and rendered him useless for the peculiar needs for which he had been prepared. He would doubtless have gone abroad, and even if he had not remained buried in some college on the Continent, he would have returned merely as one of those mission priests (for doubtless he would have taken orders) of whom the Jesuit had already more than he required. It was even not desirable that he should associate exclusively with Papists. He was already sufficiently known and his position understood among them for the purposes of any future mission on which he might be engaged; and it would be more to the purpose for him to extend his acquaintance among Church of England people, and gain their confidence. To this end the Jesuit thought proper to remove him from the immediate attendance on the Queen, where he saw few except Papists, and to assist in his endeavours to purchase a place about the King's person. In this he was successful, and about the end of 1639 Inglesant purchased the place of one of the Esquires of the Body who relinquished his place on account of ill health. This post, which followed immediately after that of the gentlemen of the Privy Chamber, was looked upon as a very important and influential one, and cost Inglesant a large sum of money before he obtained it. He was, as we have seen, rather a favourite with the King, who had noticed him more than once, and he began to be regarded as a rising courtier whose friendship it would be well to keep.

When the Jesuit had seen him settled in his new post, he put in motion another and still more powerful engine which he had prepared for preventing his pupil from joining the Romish Church. He had himself inculcated as much as possible a broad and philosophical method of thought upon his pupil, but he was necessarily confined and obstructed in this direction by his own position and supposed orthodoxy, and he was therefore anxious to infuse into Inglesant's mind a larger element of rational inquiry than in his sacred character it was possible for him to accomplish without shocking his pupil's moral sense. If I have not failed altogether in representing that pupil's character, it will have been noticed that it was one of those which combine activity of thought with great faculty of reverence and of submission to those powers to which its fancy and taste are subordinated. These natures are enthusiastic, though generally not supposed to be so, and though little sign of it appears in their outward conduct; for the objects of their enthusiasm being generally different from those which attract most men, they are conscious that they have little sympathy to expect in their pursuit of them, and this gives their enthusiasm a reserved and cautious demeanour. They are not, however, blindly enthusiastic, but are never satisfied till they have found some theory by which they are able to reconcile in their own minds the widest

results to which their activity of thought has led them, with the submission and service which it is their delight and choice to pay to such outward systems and authorities as have pleased and attracted their taste. This theory consists generally in some, at times half-formed, conception of the imperfect dispensation in which men live, which makes obedience to authority, with which the most exalted reason cannot entirely sympathise, becoming and even necessary. This feeling more than anything else, gives to persons of this nature a demeanour quite different from that of the ordinary religious or political enthusiast, a demeanour seemingly cold and indifferent, though courteous and even to some extent sympathetic, and which causes the true fanatic to esteem them as little better than the mere man of the world, or the minion of courtly power. The enthusiastic part of his character had been fully cultivated in Inglesant, the reasoning and philosophic part had been wakened and trained to some extent by his readings in Plato under the direction of the Jesuit; it remained now to be still more developed, whether to the ultimate improvement of his character it would be hard to say.

The Jesuit took him one day into the city to Devonshire House, where, inquiring for Mr. Hobbes, they were shown into a large handsome room full of books, where a gentleman was sitting whose appearance struck Inglesant very much. He was tall and very erect, with a square mallet-shaped head and ample forehead. He wore a small red moustache, that curled upward, and a small tuft of hair upon his chin. His eyes were hazel and full of life and spirit, and when he spoke they shone with lively light; when he was witty and laughed the lids closed over them so that they could scarcely be seen, but when he was serious and in earnest they expanded to their full orb, and penetrated, as it seemed, to the farthest limit of thought. He was dressed in a coat of black velvet lined with fur, and wore long boots of Spanish leather laced with ribbon. When the first compliments were over, the Jesuit introduced Inglesant to him as a young gentleman of promise, who would derive great benefit from his acquaintance, and whose friendship he hoped might not prove unacceptable to Mr. Hobbes.

Inglesant came often to Mr. Hobbes, whose conversation delighted him. It frequently referred to the occurrences of the day, in which Mr. Hobbes sided with the Government, having a great regard for the King personally, as had Harrington afterwards, and most of the philosophers—all their sympathies and theories being on the side of law and strong government; but their discourse frequently went beyond this, and embraced those questions of human existence which interest thinking men. He soon found out Inglesant's tendency towards Catholicism, and strongly dissuaded him from it.

"Your idea of the Catholic system," he said, "is a dream, and has no real existence among the Papists. Your ideal is an exalted Platonic manifestation of

the divine existence diffused among men: the reality is a system of mean trivial details, wearisome and disgusting to such men as you are. Instead of the perfect communion with the Divine Light, such as you seek, you will have before you and above you nothing but the narrow conceptions of some ignorant priest to whom you must submit your intellect. What freedom of thought or existence will remain to you when you have fully accepted the article of transubstantiation, and truly believe that the priest is able of a piece of bread to make absolutely and unconditionally our Saviour's body, and thereby at the hour of death to save your soul? Will it not have an effect upon you to make you think him a god, and to stand in awe of him as of God Himself if He were visibly present?"

"I suppose it would," said Inglesant.

"One of our divines of the English Church, writing much above their wont—for they are much stronger in their lives than in their writings—puts this very plainly in the matter of the judgment of the priest in confession. 'Yet this extorted confession on Pain of Damnation is not the stripping a man to his naked body, but the stripping him of his body, that they may see his naked heart, and so, by the force of this superstition, break into those secrets which it is the only due privilege of Almighty God to be acquainted with, who is the only rightful Searcher of hearts.' These men may well pretend to be followers of Aristotle, who reason only from the names of things, according to the scale of the Categories; but of those of the better sort, as you and I take ourselves to be, who follow Plato, and found our doctrine on the conceptions and ideas of things, we must ever submit to be called heretics by them as a reproach, though we, doubtless, and not they, are the true sacramentalists, that is, the seekers for the hidden and the divine truth. It is for this reason that I take the Sacrament in the English Church, which I call in England the Holy Church, and believe that its statutes are the true Christian Faith."

"There seems to me," he went on after a pause, "something frightfully grotesque about the Romish Church as a reality. Showing us on the one side a mass of fooleries and ridiculous conceits and practices, at which, but for the use of them, all men must needs stand amazed; such rabble of impossible relics,—the hay that was in the manger, and more than one tail of the ass on which Christ rode into Jerusalem, besides hundreds which for common decency no man in any other case would so much as name. To look on these, I say, on one side, and on the other to see those frightful and intolerable cruelties, so detestable that they cannot be named, by which thousands have been tormented by this holy and pure Church, has something about it so grotesque and fantastic that it seems to me sometimes more like some masque or dance of satyrs or devils than the followers of our Saviour Christ."

"All this," said Inglesant, "I partly believe, yet I imagine that something may

be said upon the other side of the argument, and I should suppose that there is not one of these doctrines and practices but what has some shadow of truth in it, and sprang at first from the wellspring of truth."

"Doubtless," said the philosopher, "there is nothing but has had its origin in some conception of the truth, but are we 'for this cause,' as that same divine says, 'also to forsake the Truth itself, and devotionally prostrate ourselves to every evanescent and far-cast show of Him—shadows of shadows—in infinite myriads of degenerations from Him?' Surely not."

"What is truth?" said Inglesant; "who shall show us any good?"

"Truth," said the philosopher, "is that which we have been taught, that which the civil government under which we live instructs us in and directs us to believe. Our Saviour Christ came as the Messiah to establish His kingdom on earth, and after Him the Apostles and Christian Princes and Commonwealths have handed down His truth to us. This is our only safe method of belief."

"But should we believe nothing of Christianity," said Inglesant, "unless the civil government had taught it us?"

"How can you believe anything," said Hobbes, "unless you have first been taught it? and in a Christian Commonwealth the civil government is the vicar of Christ. I know the Jesuits," said Hobbes, "and they me; when I was in France, some of them came to trouble me about something I had said. I quieted them by promising to write a book upon them if they did not let me be: what they seek is influence over the minds of men; to gain this they will allow every vice of which man is capable. I could prove it from their books. It is not for me, whom you scarcely know, to say anything against a friend whom you have known so long; but, as I understand you, your friend does not advise you to become a Papist. I do not suppose, though possibly you may do so, that he has no other object in view than your welfare. He has doubtless far-reaching reasons of which we know nothing; nevertheless, be not distrustful of him, but in this especially follow his advice. Shakespeare, the play-writer, says 'there's a divinity that shapes our ends,' or, I should say, the ends that others work out for us, to His higher purpose. Let us have faith in this beneficent Artist, and let Him accomplish His will on us."

"But this," said Inglesant, "is very different from what my reading and experience in mystical religion has taught me. Is there then no medium between the Divine Life and ourselves than that of the civil government? This would seem to me most repulsive and contrary to experience."

"If you pretend to a direct revelation," said Hobbes with a smile, "I have nothing to allege against it, but, to the rest of us, Christian sovereigns are the supreme pastors and the only persons we now hear speak from God. But because God giveth faith by means of teachers, therefore I call hearing the immediate cause of faith. In a school where many are taught, some profit, others profit not;

the cause of learning in them that profit is the Master, yet it cannot be thence inferred that learning is not the gift of God. All good things proceed from God, yet cannot all that have them say that they are inspired, for that implies a gift supernatural and the immediate hand of God, which he that pretends to, pretends to be a prophet."

"I am loth to believe what you say," said Inglesant; "I am no prophet, yet I would willingly believe that God is speaking to me with an immediate voice, nay, more, that I may enter into the very life that God is leading, and partake of His nature. Also, what you now say seems to me to contradict what you said before, that we should endeavour to found our doctrine on the conceptions and ideas of things, which I take to mean a following after divine truth: nor do I see why you take the sacrament, as you say you do, except you expect some immediate communication from God in it."

The philosopher smiled. "One may see you have been taught in the Jesuits' college," he said, "and are a forward pupil and a close reasoner. But what I have said concerning faith coming by hearing need not prevent that afterwards God may convey other gifts to men by other means. Yet I confess I am not a proficient in this divine knowledge or life of which you speak; nor do I follow your master Plato very far into the same conclusions which many profess to find in him. One disputant grounds his knowledge upon the infallibility of the Church, and the other on the testimony of the private spirit. The first we need not discuss, but how do you know that your private spirit, that this divine life within you, is any other than a belief grounded on the authority and arguments of your teachers?"

Inglesant made no reply, which the philosopher perceiving, began to talk of something else, and the other soon after took his leave. Hobbes's doctrine was new to him, as it was to every one in that day, indeed, the particular form it took was peculiar to Hobbes, and perished with him; but the underlying materialism which in some form or other has presented itself to the thinkers of every age, and which now for the first time came before Inglesant's mind, was not without its effect. "How do I know indeed," he said, "that this divine life within me is anything but an opinion formed by what I have heard and read? How do I know that there is any such thing as a divine life at all?"

Such thoughts as these, if they produced no other effect, yet gradually lessened that eagerness in his mind towards divine things which had been so strong since his visit to Little Gidding, and quite satisfied him to defer at any rate any thoughts of joining the Church of Rome. But his thoughts were turned into other channels by the events which were occurring in the political world, and which

began now to assume a very exciting character.

CHAPTER VI.

On the 20th of August 1640 the King set out for York on his way to Scotland, in some haste, and Inglesant accompanied or rather preceded him, his duty being to provide apartments for the King. The King advanced no farther than North Allerton, Lord Strafford being at Darlington, and a large part of the army at Newburn-upon-Tyne, from whence they retreated before the Scots almost without fighting. It was at this time that Inglesant began to see more of the real state of affairs among the leaders of the royal party, and became aware of the real weakness of their position. He appears to have formed the opinion that Lord Strafford, in spite of his great qualities, had failed altogether in establishing himself on a firm and lasting footing of power, and was deficient in those qualities of a statesman that ensure success, and incapable of realising the necessities of the times. His army, on which he relied, was disorganised, and totally without devotion or enthusiasm. It melted away before the Scots, or fraternised with them, and the trained bands and gentry who came in to the King's standard and to the Earl, prefaced all their offers of service with petitions for the redress of grievances and the calling together a Parliament. Inglesant had already formed the opinion that the Archbishop, who was now left at the head of affairs in London with the Privy Council, and was vainly endeavouring to prevent the citizens from sending up monster petitions to the King, was even more at variance with the inevitable course of events, and more powerless to withstand them than the Earl; and he appears to have written to his friend the Jesuit, for his guidance, careful explanations of his own views on these subjects. Father Hall, however, was not a man hastily to change his course. He had belonged from the beginning to that section of the popish party whose policy had been to support the High Church party rather than to oppose it, and this policy was strengthened now that the royal power itself began to be attacked. Whatever others of the popish party might think, those with whom the Jesuit acted, and the party at Rome which directed their conduct, were undeviating supporters of the King, and were convinced that all advantage which the Papists might in future achieve was dependent upon him. It is not apparent what action the Jesuit was taking at this moment, probably he was contented to watch the course of events; but this much is certain, that

his efforts to induce Churchmen to work with him were increased rather than diminished.

While the King was at York, the Marquis of Montrose, who was in the Covenanters' army, carried on a correspondence with him, and copies of his letters were believed to be stolen from the King's pockets at night by one of the gentlemen of the bed-chamber, and sent to the leader of the Scots' army. Montrose retired into Scotland, and as the King was desirous of continuing a correspondence which promised so much, he decided upon sending a special messenger to the Marquis. Inglesant was fixed upon for this mission, as being known by the Royalists as a confidential agent of the Court, but at the same time almost entirely unknown to the opposite party. He found Montrose at Edinburgh, at a time when the Marquis was endeavouring to form a party among the nobility of Scotland, in opposition to the Covenant. Inglesant was probably little more in this negotiation than an accredited letter-carrier; but a circumstance occurred in connection with his stay in Scotland which is not without interest with reference to his future character. Among the gentlemen with whom Montrose was in connection were some of the Highland chiefs, and to one of these the Marquis sent Inglesant as a safe agent, being perfectly unknown in Scotland. This gentleman, understanding that the messenger of Montrose was coming to meet him, travelled down from the Highlands with a great retinue of servants, and sent on one of his gentlemen, with a few attendants, to meet the young Englishman on the borders of Perthshire. Inglesant had ridden from Stirling, and the night being stormy and dark, he had stopped at a gentleman's house in a lonely situation at the foot of the Badenoch Hills. Here, late in the evening, his entertainers met him, and they passed the night in company. After supper, as they were sitting in front of the fire with the master of the house and several more, the conversation turned upon the faculty of second sight, and the numberless instances of its certainty with which the Highland gentlemen were acquainted. While they were thus discoursing, the attention of the gentleman who had come to meet Inglesant was attracted by an old Highlander who sat in the large chimney, and he inquired whether he saw anything unusual in the Englishman, that made him regard him with such attention. He said no, he saw nothing: in him fatal or remarkable more than this, that he was much mistaken if that young man was not a seer himself, or, at any rate, would be able before many months were over to see apparitions and spirits. Inglesant thought little of this at the time, but he remembered it afterwards when an event occurred on his return to London which recalled it to his recollection.

The treaty having been settled with the Scots, and the writs issued for a new Parliament, the King returned to London.

One day in September, Inglesant received a visit from one of the servants

of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who brought a message from Laud expressing a wish to see Mr. Inglesant at his dinner at Lambeth Palace on any day that would suit his convenience. He went the next day by water at the proper hour, and was ushered into the great hall of the palace, where dinner was laid, and many gentlemen and clergymen standing about in the windows and round the tables, waiting the Archbishop. Inglesant's entrance was remarked at once, his dress and appearance rendering him conspicuous, and his person being well known, and occasioned some surprise; for the Archbishop had not been latterly on friendly terms with the Queen, whom he had opposed on some questions relating to Papists, to whose party, even since his being in the King's household, Inglesant was considered to belong. The servants had evidently received orders concerning him, for he was placed very high at table and waited upon with great attention. On the Archbishop's entrance he noticed Inglesant particularly, and expressed his pleasure at seeing him there. The conversation at dinner turned entirely on the Scotch rebellion, and the failure of the Earl of Strafford to repress it; and on the King's return to London, which had not long taken place. Several gentlemen present had been with the army, and spoke of the insubordination among the officers, especially such as had been Parliament men. The elections for the new Parliament were expected shortly to take place, and many of the officers were deserting from the army, and coming up to London and other places to secure their return. The utmost dissatisfaction and insubordination prevailed over the whole country, for Laud and Strafford, after exciting the animosity of the people, had proved themselves weak, and the people began to despise as well as hate them—not perceiving that this probably proved that they were not the finished tyrants they were supposed to be. Strafford's army, raised by himself, having proved powerless against the Scots and insubordinate against its master, the popular party was encouraged to attack him, whom they hated as much as ever, though they began to fear him less. The violent excitement of the popular party against the High Churchmen and against ceremonies was also a subject of conversation. The wildest rumours were prevalent as to the probable conduct of the new Parliament, but all agreed that the Lord Lieutenant and the Archbishop, and probably the Lord Keeper, would be impeached. After dinner the Archbishop rose from table, and retired into one of the windows at the upper end of the hall, overlooking the river, requesting Inglesant, to whom he pointed out the beauties of the view, to follow him. Having done this, he said a few words to him in a low voice, explaining his regret at the difference which had arisen between himself and the Queen, whose most faithful servant he protested he had ever been, and whom he was most desirous to please. He then went on to say that he both could and intended to inform Her Majesty of this through other channels than Mr. Inglesant, though he bespoke his good offices therein; but he wished princi-

pally to speak to him of another matter, which would require privacy to explain fully to him; but thus far he would say, that although he had always been a true servant of the Church of England, and had never entertained any thoughts inconsistent with such fidelity, yet he believed the Roman Catholics were aware that he had always behaved with great toleration to them, and had always entertained a great respect for their religion, refusing to allow it to be abused or described as Antichrist in the English pulpits; that it was notorious that he had excited the enmity of the popular party by this conduct; and that whatever he might suffer under the new Parliament would be in consequence of it. He was aware that Mr. Inglesant was in the confidence of that party, and especially the particular friend of Father Hall, the leader of the most powerful section of it; and he entreated his services to bring the Jesuit and himself to some understanding and concerted action, whereby, at least, they might ward off some of the blows that would be aimed at them. The Archbishop said that many of the wisest politicians considered that the two parties who would divide the stage between them would be the popular party and the Papists; and if this were really the case (though he himself thought that the loyal Church party would prove stronger than was thought), it was evident that Mr. Inglesant's friend would be well able to return any kindness that the Archbishop had shown the Romanists.

Inglesant went to the Jesuit as soon as possible, and related his interview with the Archbishop. Father Hall listened to it with great interest.

"He has been like a true ecclesiastic," he said, "blind to facts while he was in the course of his power, astonished and confounded when the natural results arrive. Nevertheless, I fancy he will make a good fight, or at least a good ending. The people know not what they want, and might have been led easily, but it is too late. What was the real amount of tyranny and persecution the people suffered? The Church officers were blamed on the one hand for not putting the laws in force against the Papists, and on the other, for putting them in force against the Puritans. However, he has a right view of the power of the Church party, in which I join him. We shall see the good fight they will make for the King yet. The gentry and chivalry of England are rather rusty for want of use, but we shall see the metal they are made of before long. However, the Catholics will be ready first, are ready in fact now, and I have great hopes of the use that we shall make of these opportunities. I am much mistaken if such a chance as we shall have before many months are over will not be greater than we have had for a century. I shall count on you. We have been long delayed, and you must have thought all our pains would come to nothing; but we must have long patience if we enter on the road of politics.

"You are now," said the Jesuit, "embracing the cause full of enthusiasm and zeal, and this is very well; how else could we run out the race, unless we began

with some little fire? But this will not last, and unless you are warned, you may be offended and fall away. When you have lived longer in this world and outlived the enthusiastic and pleasing illusions of youth, you will find your love and pity for the race increase tenfold, your admiration and attachment to any particular party or opinion fall away altogether. You will not find the royal cause perfect any more than any other, nor those embarked in it free from mean and sordid motives, though you think now that all of them act from the noblest. This is the most important lesson that a man can learn—that all men are really alike; that all creeds and opinions are nothing but the mere result of chance and temperament; that no party is on the whole better than another; that no creed does more than shadow imperfectly forth some one side of truth; and it is only when you begin to see this that you can feel that pity for mankind, that sympathy with its disappointments and follies, and its natural human hopes, which have such a little time of growth, and such a sure season of decay.

"I have seen nothing more pathetic than touches in the life of some of these Puritans—men who have, as they thought in obedience to the will of the Deity, denied themselves pleasure—human pleasure—through their lives, and now and then some old song, some pleasant natural tale of love flashes across their path, and the true human instinct of the sons of Adam lights up within them.

"Nothing but the Infinite pity is sufficient for the infinite pathos of human life.

"As you know, we have many parties in our Church, nay, in our own order: different members may be sent on opposing missions; but it is no matter, they are all alike. Hereafter it will be of little importance which of these new names, Cavalier or Roundhead, you are called by, whether you turn Papist or Puritan, Jesuit or Jansenist, but it will matter very much whether you acted as became a man, and did not flinch ignobly at the moment of trial. Choose your part from the instinct of your order, from your birth, or from habit or what not; but having chosen it, follow it to the end. Stand by your party or your order, and especially in the hour of trial or danger be sure you never falter; for, be certain of this, that no misery can be equal to that which a man feels who is conscious that he has proved unequal to his part, who has deserted the post his captain set him, and who, when men said 'such and such a one is there on guard, there is no need to take further heed,' has left his watch or quailed before the foeman, to the loss, perhaps the total ruin, of the cause he had made his choice. I pray God that such misery as this may never be yours."

The elections being over, London became very full. The new members hastened up. The nobility and country gentry came crowding in, and all the new houses in the Strand and Charing Cross were occupied, and a throng of young Cavaliers filled the courts and precincts of the palace. As soon as the King arrived,

Inglesant went into waiting in his new post, in which great responsibility in the keeping of the royal household, especially at night, devolved upon him. His post came immediately after that of the gentlemen of the privy chamber, with whom the immediate attendance on the person of the King stopped, but the charge of the King's rooms brought him continually into the royal presence.

As soon as the Parliament met, the impeachment of Strafford began; and as it proceeded, the excitement grew more and more intense. It was not safe for the courtiers to go into the city, except in numbers together, and a court of guard was kept by the Cavaliers before Whitehall towards Charing Cross.

One day Inglesant received a letter from the Jesuit, whom he seldom saw, as follows:—

"Jack, tell your friend, the Archbishop, that Lambeth House will be attacked two nights from this, by a rabble of the populace. The Parliament leaders will not be seen in this, but they can be felt. Burn this, but let the Archbishop know the hand from which it comes."

On receiving this warning the Archbishop fortified his house, and crossed the water to his chamber in Whitehall, where he slept that night and two others following. His house was attacked by a mob of five hundred men; one of them was wounded and afterwards executed; not much damage was done.

History can furnish few events so startling and remarkable as the trial and death of Lord Strafford—events which, the more they are studied, the more wonderful they appear. It is not easy to find words to express the miserable weakness and want of statesmanship which led to, and made possible, such an event; and one is almost equally surprised at the comparatively few traces of the sensation and consternation that such an event must have produced. I am not speaking of the justice or the injustice of the sentence, nor of the crime or innocence of the accused,—I speak only of a great minister and servant of the Crown, in whose policy and support the whole of the royal power, the whole strength of the national establishment, was involved and pledged. That such a man, by the simple clamour of popular opinion, should have been arrested, tried, and executed in a few days, with no effort but the most degrading and puny one made on his behalf by his royal master and friend, certainly must have produced a terror and excitement, one would think, unequalled in history. That the King never recovered from it is not surprising; one would have thought he would never have held up his head again. That the royal party was amazed and confounded is not wonderful; one would have thought it would have been impossible ever to have formed a royal party afterwards. What considerations were powerful enough in the King's mind to induce him to consent to an act of such wretched folly and meanness we shall never know.

It was two nights after the execution. The guard was set at Whitehall and

the "all night" served up. The word for the night was given, and the whole palace was considered as under the sole command of Inglesant, as the esquire in waiting. He had been round to the several gates, and seen that the courts and anterooms were quiet and clear of idlers, and then came up into the anteroom outside the privy chamber, and sat down alone before the fire. In the room beyond him were two gentlemen of the privy chamber, who slept in small beds drawn across the door opening into the royal bedchamber beyond. The King was in his room, in bed, but not asleep; Lord Abergavenny, the gentleman of the bedchamber in waiting, was reading Shakespeare to him before he slept. Inglesant took out a little volume of the classics, of the series printed in Holland, which it was the custom of the gentlemen of the Court, and those attached to great nobles, to carry with them to read in antechambers while in waiting. The night was perfectly still, and the whole palace wrapped in a profound quiet that was almost oppressive to one who happened to be awake. Inglesant could not read; the event that had just occurred, the popular tumults, the shock of feeling which the royal party had sustained, the fear and uncertainty of the future, filled his thoughts. The responsibility of his post sat on him to-night like a nightmare, and with very unusual force; a sense of approaching terror in the midst of the intense silence fascinated him and became almost insupportable. His fancy filled his mind with images of some possible oversight and of some unseen danger which might be lurking even then in the precincts of the vast rambling palace. Gradually, however, all these images became confused and the sense of terror dulled, and he was on the point of falling asleep when he was startled by the ringing sound of arms and the challenge of the yeoman of the guard, on the landing outside the door. The next instant a voice, calm and haughty, which sent a tremor through every nerve, gave back the word "Christ." Inglesant started up and grasped the back of his chair in terror.

Gracious Heaven! who was this that knew the word? In another moment the hangings across the door were drawn sharply back, and with a quick step, as one who went straight to where he was expected and had a right to be, the intruder entered the antechamber. It wore the form and appearance of Strafford—it was Strafford—in dress, and mien, and step. Taking no heed of Inglesant, crouched back in terror against the carved chimney-piece, the apparition crossed the room with a quick step, drew the hangings that screened the door of the privy chamber, and disappeared. Inglesant recovered in a moment, sprang across the room, and followed the figure through the door. He saw nothing; but the two gentlemen raised themselves from their couches, startled by his sudden appearance and white, scared look, and said, "What is it, Mr. Esquire?"

Before Inglesant, who stood with eyes and mouth open, the picture of terror, could recover himself, the curtain of the bed-chamber was drawn hastily

back, and the Lord Abergavenny suddenly appeared, saying in a hurried, startled voice:—

"Send for Mayern; send for Dr. Mayern, the King is taken very ill!"

Inglesant, who by this time was recovered sufficiently to act, seized the opportunity to escape, and, hurrying through the antechamber and down the staircase to the guard-room, he found one of the pages, and despatched him for the Court physician. He then returned to the guard at the top of the staircase.

"Has any one passed?" he asked.

"No," the man said; "he had seen no one."

"Did you challenge no one a moment ago?"

The man looked scared, but finally acknowledged what he feared at first to confess, lest it should be thought he had been sleeping at his post, that he had become suddenly conscious of, as it seemed to him, some presence in the room, and found himself the next moment, to his confusion, challenging the empty space.

Failing to make anything of the man, Inglesant returned to the privy chamber, where Lord Abergavenny was relating what had occurred.

"I was reading to the King," he repeated, "and His Majesty was very still, and I began to think he was falling asleep, when he suddenly started upright in bed, grasped the book on my knee with one hand, and with the other pointed across the chamber to some object upon which his gaze was fixed with a wild and horror-stricken look, while he faintly tried to cry out. In a second the terror of the sight, whatever it was, overcame him, and he fell back on the bed with a sharp cry."

"Mr. Inglesant saw something," said both the gentlemen at once; "he came in here as you gave the alarm."

"I saw nothing," said Inglesant; "whatever frightened me I must tell the King."

Dr. Mayern, who lodged in the palace, soon arrived; and as the King was sensible when he came, he merely prescribed some soothing drink, and soon left. The moment he was gone the King called Abergavenny into the room alone to him, and questioned him as to what had occurred. Abergavenny told him all he knew, adding that the esquire in waiting, Mr. Inglesant, was believed to have seen something by the gentlemen of the privy chamber, whom he had aroused. Inglesant was sent for, and found the King and Abergavenny alone. He declined to speak before the latter, until the King positively commanded him to do so. Deadly pale, with his eyes on the ground, and speaking with the greatest difficulty, he then told his story; of the deep silence, his restlessness, the sentry's challenge, and the apparition that appeared. Here he stopped.

"And this figure," said Abergavenny in a startled whisper, "did you know

who it was?"

"Yes, I knew him," said the young man; "would to God I had not."

"Who was it?"

Paler, if possible, than before, and with a violent effort, Inglesant forced himself to look at the King.

A contortion of pain, short but terrible to see, passed over the King's face, but he rose from the chair in which he sat (for he had risen from the bed and even dressed himself) and, with that commanding dignity which none ever assumed better than he, he said,—

"Who was it? Mr. Esquire."

"My Lord Stafford."

Abergavenny stepped back several paces, and covered his face with his hands. No one spoke. Inglesant dared not stir, but remained opposite to the King, trembling in every limb, and his eyes upon the ground like a culprit. The King continued to stand with his commanding air, but stiff and rigid as a statue; it seemed as though he had strength to command his outward demeanour, but no power besides.

The silence grew terrible. At last the King was able to make a slight motion with his hand. Inglesant seized the opportunity, and, bowing to the ground, retired backward to the door. As he closed the door the King turned towards Abergavenny, but the room was empty. The King was left alone.

CHAPTER VII.

In the beginning of 1642 the King left Whitehall finally, and retired with the Queen to Hampton Court, from which he went to the south to see Her Majesty embark, and without returning to London proceeded to the north. Very few attendants accompanied him, and Inglesant was left at liberty to go where he pleased. His brother was in France, and he was at the moment ignorant where the Jesuit was. Several motives led him to go to Gidding, where he felt sure of a welcome, though Mr. Ferrar was dead, and he accordingly rode there in the end of March. Mr. Nicholas Ferrar jun. had been dead nearly a year, having not long survived his uncle, and the household was governed by Mr. John Ferrar, Mr. Nicholas Ferrar's brother. Their usual quiet and holy life seemed quieter and more holy; a placid melancholy and a sort of contented sorrow seemed to

fill the place, which was not disturbed even by those expectations of approaching trouble and danger which all felt. They received Inglesant with kindness and even affection, and begged him to remain as long as he pleased. Mary Collet, who, secretly he acknowledged to himself, was the principal reason of his coming down, met him frankly, and seemed more attractive and beautiful than before. He felt awed and quieted in her presence, yet nothing was so delightful to him as to be in the room or garden with her, and hear her speak. He endeavoured to assist her in her work of attending to the poor and sick, and in tending the garden, and became like a brother to her, without saying or desiring to say one word of gallantry or of love. The Puritans of the neighbouring towns, who had always disliked the Ferrars, came more frequently into their neighbourhood, and endeavoured to set the country people against them, and even to stir them up to acts of violence; but the Ferrars remarked that these annoyances were lessened by the efforts of a Puritan gentleman, who was possessed of considerable property in Peterborough, and who had latterly taken advantage of several excuses to come to Little Gidding.

Inglesant saw this gentleman once or twice, and became rather attracted towards him in a strange way. He appeared to him to be a man in whom a perpetual struggle was going on between his real nature and the system of religion which he had adopted, but in whom the original nature had been subdued and nearly extinguished, until some event, apparently of recent occurrence, had renewed this conflict, and excited the conquered human nature once more to rebellion. This alone would have afforded sufficient interest and attraction to a man of Inglesant's temperament; but this interest was increased tenfold when he perceived, as he did very soon, that this disturbing event and the reason which brought Mr. Thorne to Gidding, were in fact one and the same, the same indeed which brought himself there—attraction to Mary Collet. The peaceful half-religious devotion with which he regarded his friend prevented him from being incited to any feeling of jealousy by this discovery, and indeed would have made the idea of such a sentiment and opposition almost ridiculous. He treated Mr. Thorne, when they met at table or elsewhere, with the most marked courtesy—a courtesy which the other very imperfectly returned; at first ignoring Inglesant altogether, and when this was no longer possible, taking every opportunity to reprove and lecture him in the way the Puritans took upon them to do, all of which Inglesant bore good-humouredly. Things had gone on this way for several weeks, and Mr. Thorne's visits had grown less frequent, when one summer afternoon he rode over, and after seeing Mr. John Ferrar, came to seek Mary Collet. He found her and Inglesant alone in one of the small reading parlours looking on the garden. Inglesant had been reading aloud in Mr. Crashaw's poems; but on the other's entering the room, he rose and stood behind Mary Collet's chair, his hand rest-

ing on the high back. His attitude probably annoyed Mr. Thorne, whose manner was more severe and stern than usual. He made the lady a formal greeting, and took slight heed of Inglesant, who wished him Good-day.

"The days are far from good, sir," he said severely, "and the night of the soul is dark; nevertheless, there is a path open to the saints of God, which will lead to a brighter time."

He looked hard at Mary Collet as he spoke.

"I should hope, sir," said Inglesant, with a conciliatory smile, "that you and I may one day stand together in a brighter dawn."

The other's face slightly softened, for indeed the indescribable charm of Inglesant's manner few could resist, but he hardened himself instantly, and replied,—

"It is a fond hope, sir. How can two walk together unless they are agreed? What fellowship is there between the saints (however unworthy) and the followers of the pleasures of this world? And how may you, on whom the Prince of this world has bestowed every brilliant gift and power, stand at the resurrection amongst the poor and despised saints of God?"

Mary Collet moved slightly, and put her hand back upon the chair elbow, so that it partly and slightly touched Inglesant's hand, at which movement, a spasm, as of pain, passed over Mr. Thorne's features, and he drew himself up more sternly than before.

"But I am idling my time vainly and sinfully here," he said, "in chambering and wantonness, when I should be buckling on my armour. Mistress Collet, I came here to wish you farewell. I am going to London in the good cause, and I shall in all human probability never see you more. I intreat you to listen to the bridegroom's voice, and from my heart I wish you God-speed."

As she rose, he pressed her hand lightly, and raised his eyes to heaven, as the Puritans were ridiculed for doing; then he bowed stiffly to Inglesant, and was gone.

Inglesant followed him to the courtyard, where his horses were standing, but he took no further notice of him, and rode off through the gate. Johnny stood looking after him down the alley, between the latticed walks of the garden. At last he stopped and looked back. When he saw Inglesant still there, he seemed to hesitate, but finally dismounted and led his horse back. Inglesant hastened to meet him, with his plumed hat in his hand.

"Mr. Inglesant," said the Puritan, speaking slowly and with evident hesitation, "I am going to say something which will probably make you regard with increased contempt not only myself, which you may well do, but the religion which I profess to serve, but which I betray, in which last you will commit a fatal sin. But before I say it, I beg of you, if a few moments ago I said anything that

was unnecessarily severe and more than my Master would warrant, that you will forgive it. Woe be to us if we falter in the truth, and speak pleasant things when we should set our face as a flint; nevertheless, there is no need for us to go beyond the letter of the Spirit, and I almost feel that the Lord has disowned my speech, seeing that so soon after I fear I myself am fallen from Grace."

He stopped, and Inglesant wondered what this long preamble might mean.

He assured him that he bore no ill-feeling, but very much the contrary; but the Puritan scarcely allowed him to finish before he began again to speak, with still greater difficulty and hesitation.

"I came here to-day, sir, with the intention, at which I have arrived not without long wrestling in prayer, of proposing in the Lord's name a treaty of marriage with Mrs. Mary Collet. In this I have sought direction, as I say, for a long time before addressing her. At length, yesterday, sitting all alone, I felt a word sweetly arise in me as if I heard a voice, which said, 'Go and prevail!' and faith springing in my heart with the word, I immediately arose and went, nothing doubting. But when I came into her presence, and found her with you, upon whom I have ofttimes apprehended that her affections were fixed; when I thought of the disadvantage at which doubtless, in the world's eye at least, I should be thought to stand with regard to you; when I considered her breeding and education in every sort of prelatical and papistical superstition—which latter has all through been a great stumbling-block to me, and to some others of the godly to whom I have opened this matter;—when I thought of these things, I, wretched man that I am! I mistrusted the Lord's power. I was deaf to the voice that spoke within me, and I left my message unsaid. What my sin is in this cannot be told. It may be that I have frustrated the Lord's will and purpose with regard to her, not only as regards calling her out of that empty show and profession in which she is, but, which doubtless will seem of more force to you, of providing her with some refuge from the storm which assuredly is not far from this household. I have already, if you will believe me, done something in warding off the first advances of that storm, and think I do not deceive myself that I have power sufficient to continue to do so. I entreat you, Mr. Inglesant, to think of this, if you have not yet done so, for her sake, and not for mine." He spoke these last words in a different manner, and with an altered voice, as though they were not part of what he had originally intended to say, but had been forced from him by the spectacle his mind presented of danger to her whom it was evident he unselfishly loved. "I am not so ignorant in the world's ways," he went on, "as not to know how absurd such an appeal to you must seem; probably it will afford amusement to your friends in after days. Nevertheless, I cannot refrain myself. I am distracted between two opinions, and as I rode away it came into my mind, that I might after all be flying away from a shadow, and that there might be no

such relation between you as that which I have supposed—no other than that of a free and fair friendship; in which case I entreat you, Mr. Inglesant, though I confess I have no right nor claim upon you even for the commonest courtesy, to let me know it."

Inglesant had listened to this singular confession at first with surprise, but as the man went on, he became profoundly touched. There was something extremely pathetic in the sight of the human nature in this man struggling within him beneath the force of his Puritanism, the one now urging him to conciliate, and the next moment the old habit breaking out in insult and denunciation; the one opening to him glimpses of human happiness which the other immediately closed. And what he said was doubtless very true, and pointed plainly to Inglesant what men would say was his duty. What ground had he to oppose himself to this man—he, with scarcely any formed purpose of his own? If the lofty Strafford had fallen, and the Archbishop had proved powerless to protect himself, how was he to protect any who might trust to him? Even if he had thought nothing of this, it would have been impossible to have been angry with the distracted man before him, untrained to conceal his thoughts, nay, taught by his religion that self-restraint or concealment is a sin, and that to keep back a word or a thought is a frustration of the will of God—a training that would lay him open at every point before the polished pupil of the Jesuit and the Court.

These reflections gave to his ordinary courtesy an additional charm, which plainly commanded the confidence of his rival, and he said,—

"What do you wish me to do, Mr. Thorne? I am willing to leave everything to Mrs. Collet's decision."

"I will take nothing on myself again," said the other; "I will leave everything in the Lord's hands. If it is His will that we be brought together, we shall be so brought. I will not stay now—indeed I am in no fit state of mind—but in a few days I will come again, and whatever the Lord shall do in the meanwhile, His will be done."

The inconsistency of this last resolution with the denunciation of the Ferrar family, and especially of Inglesant, which he had before expressed, struck Inglesant as so extraordinary that he began to doubt the sanity of his companion; but finding that Mr. Thorne was determined to go, he parted from him with mutual courtesy, and returned at once into the house.

As he entered the room where Mary Collet was still sitting alone, she looked up with a smile, and was about to speak, no doubt to palliate the rudeness of their guest; but seeing from his manner that something extraordinary had occurred, she stopped, and Inglesant, who had resolved to tell her all that the Puritan had said, began at once and related simply, and, as closely as he could, word for word, what had happened. As he went on, the sympathy which the strange

conflict he had witnessed in the other's breast had excited in his own, and the feeling he had of the truth of the other's power to protect, inspired his manner so that he spoke well and eloquently of his rival's nature, and of the advantages that alliance with him would bestow; but honest as his purpose was, no course more fatal to his rival's chance could probably have been taken, while at the same time he seriously, if he had any cause himself, jeopardised that also.

Mary Collet listened with ever-increasing surprise, and the light in her eyes died away to coldness as she continued to look at Inglesant. Her calm look suffered no other change; but that acute perception which Inglesant's training had given him—perception which the purest love does not always give—showed him what was passing in his friend's mind: he stopped suddenly in his pleading, and knew that he had said too much not to say more. He sank on the ground before the chair, and rested his hands upon the carved elbow, with his face, to which excitement gave increased beauty, raised to Mary Collet's eyes.

"It is all true, Mary," he said. It was the first time he had called her by her name, and it sounded so sweetly that he said it again. "It is all true, Mary; I might have spoken to you of another, would many times have spoken, if all this had not been true. As he said to me, dark days are coming on, the State is shaken to its base, the highest in the realm are disgraced and ruined, and even harried to death; what will happen the wisest heads cannot think; the King is a fugitive; I am all but penniless, should be homeless but for you. This even is not all; if it had been I might have spoken, but there is more which must be told. I am not my own. I am but the agent of a mighty will, of a system which commands unhesitating obedience—obedience which is part of my very being. I cannot even form the thought of violating it. This is why, often, when I tried to speak, my tongue refused its office, my conscience roused itself to keep me still. But if, happily for me, I have been wrong; if, even for me, the gates of heaven may still open,—the gates that I have thought were inexorably closed,—I dare not face the radiance that even now issues through the opening space. Mary, you know me better than I know myself; I am ignorant and sinful and worldly; you are holy as a saint of God. Do with me what you will, if there is anything in me worthy of you, take me and make it more worthy; if not, let me go: either way I am yours—my life belongs to you—neither life nor death is anything to me except as it may advantage you."

The light shone full on Mary Collet's face, looking down on him as he spoke. The odour of the garden flowers filled the room. The stillness of the late afternoon was unbroken, save by the murmur of insect life. Her eyes—those wonderful eyes that had first attracted him in the Church—grew larger and more soft as they looked down on him with a love and tenderness which he had never seen before, and saw only once again. For some seconds she did not—perhaps

could not—speak, for the great lustrous eyes were moist with tears. He would have lain there for ever with no thought but of those kindly eyes. At last she spoke, and her voice was tender, but low and calm; "Johnny,"—it was the first time she had called him so, and she said it twice,—"Johnny, you were right, I know you better than you know yourself. Your first instinct was right; but it was not your poverty, nor the distraction of the time, nor yet this mysterious fate that governs you, which kept you silent; poverty and the troubles of the times we might have suffered together; this mysterious fate we might have borne together, or have broken through. No," she continued with a radiant smile, "cavalier and courtier as you are, you also, in spite of Mr. Thorne, have heard a voice behind you saying, 'This is the way, walk in it.' That way, Johnny, you will never leave for me. As this voice told you, this is not a time for us to spend our moments like two lovers in a play; we have both of us other work to do, work laid out for us, from which we may not shrink; a path to walk in where there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage. As for me, if I can follow in any degree in the holy path my uncle walked in, growing more into the life of Jesus as he grew into it, it is enough for me; as for you, you will go on through the dark days that are at hand, as your way shall lead you, and as the divine voice shall call; and when I hear your name, as I shall hear it, Johnny, following as the divine call shall lead, you may be sure that my heart will beat delightedly at the name of a very noble gentleman who loves me, and whom—I love."

The evening sun that lighted all the place went down suddenly behind the hedges of the garden, and the room grew dark.

CHAPTER VIII.

The manner of life at Gidding went on after this without the least alteration, and Inglesant's position in the family remained the same. Two or three days after, Mr. Thorne returned, and had an interview with Mary Collet alone. She told him she had not thought of marriage with any one, but had dedicated her life to other work. He attempted a flowing discourse upon the evils of celibacy, and managed to destroy by his manner much of the kindly feeling which Mary had conceived for him. He met John Ferrar and Inglesant coming from the Church, and Inglesant tried to exchange some kindly words with him; but he avoided conversation with him, and soon left. Inglesant passed most of his time (for he was not quite so

much with Mary Collet as before) in reading, especially in Greek, and in assisting some of the family in preparing that great book, which was afterwards presented to Prince Charles. The influence of Mr. Hobbes's conversation wore off in the peaceful religious talk and way of life of this family. It was here that he had first obtained glimpses of what the divine life might be, and it was here alone that he felt any power of approach to it in his own heart. His love for Mary Collet, which was increased tenfold by the acknowledgment she had made to him, and which grew more and more every day that he spent at Gidding, associated as it was with all the teachings and incidents of these quiet holy days, made this life of devotion more delightful than can be told, and, indeed, made that life more like to heaven than any other that Inglesant ever lived. As he knelt in Church during the calm hours of prayer, and now and again looked up into Mary Collet's face from where he knelt, he often felt as though he had found the Beatific Vision already, and need seek no more, so closely was her beauty connected with all that was pure and holy in his heart. In these happy days all pride and trouble seemed to have left him, and he felt free in heart from all self-will and sin. It was a dream and unreal, doubtless; but it was allowed him not altogether without design, perhaps, in the divine counsel, and it could not be without fruit in his spiritual life.

The long summer days that passed so quietly at Gidding were days of disturbance all over England, the King's friends and those of the Parliament endeavouring to secure the counties for one or other of the contending parties. Nearly the whole of the eastern counties were so strong for the Parliament that the King's friends had little chance, and those gentlemen who attempted to raise men or provide arms for the King were crushed in the beginning. But Huntingdonshire was more loyal, and considerable preparation had been made by several gentlemen, among others Sir Capel Beedel and Richard Stone, the High Sheriff, to repair to the King's quarters when the standard should be set up. Inglesant was waiting to hear from his brother, who had returned from France, and was in Wiltshire with the Lord Pembroke, who had set in force the commission of array in that county. Inglesant would have joined him but for the close neighbourhood of the King, who might be expected in those parts every day. Accordingly, one afternoon, the King, accompanied by the Prince, afterwards Charles the Second, and the Duke of Lennox, and by Prince Rupert, whom some called the Palsgrave after his father, came to Huntingdon. Inglesant rode into Huntingdon that evening, and found the King playing at cards with the Palsgrave. The King received him graciously, and spoke to him privately of Father St. Clare, who had latterly, he said, been very active among the Catholics of Shropshire and Staffordshire, from whom he soon expected to receive large sums of money. He said the Jesuit had told him where Inglesant was, and that he intended on the next day to come by

Little Gidding on his way, and should spend some hours there, as he was very desirous again to see a place which had so pleased him, and of whose inmates he had formed so high an opinion from what he had seen of them. Inglesant slept that night in Huntingdon, but very early on the fine summer morning he rode out to Little Gidding to warn the family of the honour that was intended them. Accordingly, about noon, they saw from the windows of the house the royal party approaching at the bottom of the hill. The whole family went out to meet them to the boundary of the lordship at a little bridge that spans the brook.

When the King approached foremost of all, they went to meet him, and kneeling down, prayed God to bless and preserve His Majesty, and keep him safe from his enemy's malice. The King rode up the hill at a foot pace, and alighted at the Chapel, which he examined carefully, and was then shown over the whole house, being particularly pleased with the almshouses, for whose inmates he left five pieces of gold, saying it was all he had. He had won them from the Palsgrave the night before at cards.

When he was come into the house, the great book that was being prepared for the Prince was brought him, and he spent some time in examining it and admiring the prints of which it was full, pointing out to the Palsgrave, who appeared to understand such things, the different style of each engraver. When he had sufficiently admired the book and walked about the house, admiring the pleasant situation upon a little hill, the sun beginning to go down, the horses were brought to the door, and the King and the rest mounted. The whole family, men and women, knelt down as the King mounted, and prayed God to bless and defend him from his enemies, and give him a long and happy reign. "Ah!" said the King, raising his hat, "pray for my safe and speedy return again," and so rode away, not knowing that he should return there again once more, in the very dead of night, a fugitive, and almost alone.

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When John Inglesant had said to Mary Collet that he was almost penniless, he had used rather a strong hyperbole, for at that time the sum of money his father had left him was almost untouched. Upon leaving London, he had managed to get it transferred from the goldsmith with whom he had deposited it to another at Oxford, by a bill of exchange on the latter, as was the custom in transmitting sums of money in those days. This bill being now due, Inglesant decided on going to Oxford to secure possession of the money. He lodged at first at Mr. Martin Lippiard's, a famous apothecary; but after a few days he entered himself at Wadham College, where he got rooms which were of great use to him afterwards, when the Court came to Oxford.

No place could have been found which offered more to interest and delight a man of Inglesant's temperament than Oxford did at this time. It was still at the height of that prosperity which it had enjoyed under the King and Laud for so many years, but which was soon to be so sadly overcast. The colleges were full of men versed and intelligent in all branches of learning and science, as they were then taught. The halls and chapels were full of pictures and of rich plate soon to be melted down; the gardens and groves were in beautiful order, and the bowling greens well kept. The utmost loyalty to Church and State existed. Many old customs of the Papists' times, soon to be discontinued, still survived. One of the scholars sang the Gospel for the day in Hall at the latter end of dinner. The musical services in the Chapels on Sundays, Holy Days, and Holy Day Eves, were much admired, and the subject of great care. Music was studied deeply as a science, antiquity and every foreign country being ransacked for good music, and every gentleman pretending to some knowledge of it. The High Church party, which reigned supreme, were on excellent terms with the Papists, and indeed they were so much alike that they mixed together without restraint. No people in England were more loyal, orthodox, and observant of the ceremonies of the Church of England than the scholars and generality of the inhabitants.

Every kind of curious knowledge was eagerly pursued; many of the Fellows' rooms were curious museums of antiquities and relics, and scarce books and manuscripts. Alchemy and astrology were openly practised, and more than one Fellow had the reputation of being able to raise Spirits. The niceties of algebra and the depths of metaphysics were inquired into and conversed upon with eagerness, and strange inquiries upon religion welcomed. Dr. Cressy, of Merton, was the first who read Socinus's books in England, and is said to have converted Lord Falkland, who saw them in his rooms. A violent controversy was going on among the physicians, and new schools had risen up who practised in chemical remedies instead of the old-fashioned vegetable medicines.

The members of the University had put themselves into array and a posture of defence, for as yet there was no garrison at Oxford, and divers parties of soldiers were passing through the country, sent by the Parliament to secure Banbury and Warwick. The deputy Vice-Chancellor called before him in the public schools every one who had arms, and the recruits were trained in the quadrangles of the colleges and other places. Matters being in this state, late in October, in the middle of the week, news reached Oxford that the King had left Shrewsbury with his army, and was marching through Warwickshire on his way to London. The Parliamentary army was following from Worcester, and, as was thought, the two armies would soon engage. Numbers of volunteers immediately started to meet the King's army; many of the undergraduates stealing out of Oxford secretly, and setting forth on foot. Inglesant joined himself to a company of gentlemen who

had horses, and who, with their servants, made quite a troop.

Some way out of Oxford he overtook a young undergraduate, the elder brother of Anthony Wood, afterwards the famous antiquary (who had stolen out of Oxford as above), and made one of his servants take him up behind him. They went by Woodstock and Chipping Norton, and slept the Friday night at Shipston-upon-Stour, and early the next morning obtained news of the royal army, which arrived under the Wormleighton Hills in the evening of Saturday. The King lodged that night at Sir William Chauncy's, at Ratoll Bridge, some distance from the army, where Inglesant went late in the evening. These quiet woodland places, some of the most secluded in England, both then and now—so much so, that it was said in those days that wolves even were found there—were disturbed by unwonted bustle these dark October nights, parties marching and countermarching, recruits and provisions arriving. It was not known where Lord Essex's army was, but after it was dark it was discovered by the Prince of Wales's regiment, which had been quartered in two or three villages under Wormleighton Hills. The whole regiment was drawn out into the fields, and remained there all night, provisions being brought to them from the villages, and news was sent to the King and Prince Rupert.

At Sir William Chauncy's Inglesant found the Jesuit and some other Catholic gentlemen whom he knew; for the number of Papists in the royal army was very great. Father Hall was dissatisfied at seeing Inglesant, and tried hard to persuade him to keep out of the battle, saying he had different and more useful work for him to do; but Inglesant would not consent, though he agreed not to expose himself unnecessarily. The Jesuit told him that his brother was with the Prince's regiment, but counselled him not to join him, but stay in the King's bodyguard, which his place at Court might well account for his doing. He enlarged so much upon the coming danger, that Inglesant, who had never seen a battle, became quite timid, and was glad when the Jesuit was sent for to the King. Inglesant slept in a farm house, not far from Sir William's, with several other gentlemen,—for those were fortunate who had half a bed,—and on the morning rode with the King's pensioners to the top of Edgehill. The Church bells were ringing for morning service as they rode along. The King was that day in a black velvet coat lined with ermine, and a steel cap, covered with velvet. He rode to every brigade of horse and to all the tertias of foot, and spoke to them with great courage and cheerfulness, to which the army responded with loud huzzahs. An intense feeling of excitement prevailed as this battle—the first fought in England for more than a century—was joined. Numbers of country people crowded the heights, and the army was full of volunteers who had only just joined, and had no idea of war. The King was persuaded with difficulty to remain on a rising-ground at some little distance, with his guard of pensioners on horseback; but Inglesant

did not remain with him, but joined his brother in the Prince's regiment under the Palsgrave, and rode in the charge against the enemy's horse, whom the Prince completely routed and chased off the field. Inglesant, however, did not share in the glory of this victory, for his horse was killed under him at the first shock of the encounter, and he went down with him, and received more than one kick from the horses' hoofs as they passed over him, rendering him for some time senseless. On recovering himself he managed to get on his feet, and crossed the field to the royal foot, but unfortunately joined the foot guards at the moment they were attacked and routed by the Parliamentary horse and foot. The Earl of Lindsay and his son were taken prisoners, and the royal Standard was taken. At this moment the King was in great danger, being with fewer than a hundred horse within half a musket shot of the enemy. The two regiments of his reserve, however, came up, and Charles was desirous of charging the enemy himself. Inglesant remained with the broken regiment of the guard who retreated up the road over the hill, along which the enemy's horse advanced, but, the early October evening setting in, the enemy desisted and fell back upon their reserves. It was a hard frost that night, and very cold. The King's army marched up the hills which they had come down so gallantly in the morning. Inglesant remained with the broken foot guards and the rest of the foot, which were confusedly mixed together, all night. The men made fires all along the hill top to warm themselves, and gathered round them in strange and motley groups. Many of the foot were very badly armed, the Welshmen, especially, having only pitchforks and many only clubs; but Prince Rupert the next day made a descent upon Keinton, and carried off several waggon loads of arms, which were very useful. The officers and men were mixed up together round the fires without distinction. As Inglesant was standing by one of them stiff and stunned with the blows he had received, and weak from a sabre cut he had received on the arm, he heard some one who had come up to the fire inquiring for him by name. It was the Jesuit, who had given him up for dead, as he had met his brother who had returned with Prince Rupert when he rejoined the King, and had learnt from him that Inglesant had fallen in the first charge. He told him that Eustace had gone down into the plain to endeavour to find him, which surprised and touched Inglesant very much, as he suspected his brother of caring very little for him. Father St. Clare stayed with Inglesant at the fire all night, for the latter was too stiff to move, and made himself quite at home with the soldiers, as he could with people of every sort, telling them stories and encouraging them with hopes of high pay and rewards when the King had once marched to London and turned out the Parliament. Inglesant dozed off to sleep and woke up again several times during this strange night, with a confused consciousness of the flaring fire lighting up the wild figures, and the Jesuit still talking and still unwearied all through the night.

One of the first men he saw in the morning was Edward Wood, whom he had helped on his way from Oxford. This young man had been much more fortunate than Inglesant, for he had come on foot without arms, and he had succeeded in getting a good horse and accoutrements.

"You are much more lucky than I am," said Inglesant; "I have lost my horses and servants and all my arms, and am beaten and wounded, as you see, till I can scarcely stand, while you seem to have made your fortune."

"I shall certainly get a commission," said the young man, who was only eighteen, and certainly was very much pleased with himself; "but never mind, Mr. Inglesant," he continued patronizingly, "it is your first battle, as it is mine, and you have no doubt learnt much from it that will be useful to you."

It had been one of the principal parts of Inglesant's training to avoid assumption himself, and to be amused with it in others, so he took his patronage meekly, and wished him success on his return, to Oxford, where he really was made an officer in the King's service soon after.

Soon after he was gone Inglesant found his brother, and with him his own servants, with an additional horse they had managed to secure, with which he replaced the one he had lost; and the next morning he rode with the Palsgrave into Keinton, where they surprised the rear of the Parliamentary army, and took much spoil of the arms and ammunition, and many wounded officers and other prisoners; but his wound being very painful, and being sick and weary of the sight of fighting, and especially of plundering, he left the Prince in Keinton and returned to Oxford, where he was very glad to get back to his pleasant rooms in Wadham. After the King had wasted his time in taking Banbury and Broughton Castle, he marched to Oxford with his army, where he was received with demonstrations of joy, and stayed some days.

After the King had rested a short time at Oxford, he proceeded to march to London; but Inglesant did not accompany him. The blows he had received about the head, together with his wound and the excitement he had gone through, brought on a fever which kept him in his rooms for some time. The Jesuit stayed with him as long as he could, but many other of Inglesant's friends at Oxford showed him great kindness. When he recovered he found himself, to his great surprise, something of a hero. Though, as we have seen, few men could have done less at Edgehill than Inglesant did, or have had less influence on the event of the day, yet, as he had been in the charge of the Prince's horse, and also in the rout of the foot guards, and had been wounded in both, and above all was, especially with the ladies, something of a favourite, of whom no one objected to say a good word, he gained a decided reputation as a soldier. It was indeed reported and believed at Little Gidding that he had performed prodigies of valour, had saved the King's life several times, and retrieved the fortunes of the day when they

were desperate. In some respects this reputation was decidedly inconvenient to him; he was looked upon as a likely man to be in all foraging parties and in expeditions of observation sent out to trace the marchings and countermarchings of the enemy. Now, as he was pledged to the Jesuit not to expose himself to unnecessary danger, these expeditions were very troublesome to him, besides taking him away from the studies to which he was anxious to apply himself, and from the company of the leaders of both the Churchmen and Papists, to obtain the acquaintance and confidence of whom he still applied himself, both from inclination and in accordance with the Jesuit's wish. It is true, however, that in these expeditions about the country he formed several friendships of this kind, which might afterwards be useful.

CHAPTER IX.

The King returned to Oxford in December, and the Court was established at Christ Church College. There has perhaps never existed so curious a spectacle as Oxford presented during the residence of the King at the time of the civil war. A city unique in itself became the resort of a Court under unique circumstances, and of an innumerable throng of people of every rank, disposition, and taste, under circumstances the most extraordinary and romantic. The ancient colleges and halls were thronged with ladies and courtiers; noblemen lodged in small attics over baker's shops in the streets; soldiers were quartered in the college gates and in the kitchens; yet, with all this confusion, there was maintained both something of a courtly pomp, and something of a learned and religious society. The King dined and supped in public, and walked in state in Christ Church meadow and Merton Gardens and the Grove of Trinity, which the wits called Daphne. A Parliament sat from day to day; service was sung daily in all the Chapels; books both of learning and poetry were printed in the city; and the distinctions which the colleges had to offer were conferred with pomp on the royal followers, as almost the only rewards the King had to bestow. Men of every opinion flocked to Oxford, and many foreigners came to visit the King. There existed in the country a large and highly intelligent body of moderate men, who hovered between the two parties, and numbers of these were constantly in Oxford,—Harrington, the philosopher, the King's friend, Hobbes, Lord Falkland, Lord Paget, the Lord Keeper, and many others.

Mixed up with these grave and studious persons, gay courtiers and gayer ladies jostled old and severe divines and college heads, and crusty tutors used the sarcasms they had been wont to hurl at their pupils to reprove ladies whose conduct appeared to them at least far from decorous. Christmas interludes were enacted in Hall, and Shakespeare's plays performed by the King's players, assisted by amateur performers; and it would have been difficult to say whether the play was performed before the curtain or behind it, or whether the actors left their parts behind them when the performance was over, or then in fact resumed them. The groves and walks of the colleges, and especially Christ Church meadow and the Grove at Trinity, were the resort of this gay and brilliant throng; the woods were vocal with song and music, and love and gallantry sported themselves along the pleasant river banks. The poets and wits vied with each other in classic conceits and parodies, wherein the events of the day and every individual incident were pourtrayed and satirized. Wit, learning, and religion joined hand in hand as in some grotesque and brilliant masque. The most admired poets and players and the most profound mathematicians became "Romancists" and monks, and exhausted all their wit and poetry and learning in furthering their divine mission, and finally, as the last scenes of this strange drama came on, fell fighting on some hardly-contested grassy slope, and were buried on the spot, or in the next village churchyard, in the dress in which they played Philaster, or the Court garb in which they wooed their mistress, or the doctor's gown in which they preached before the King, or read Greek in the schools.

This gaiety was much increased the next year, when the Queen came to Oxford, and the last happy days of the ill-fated monarch glided by. It was really no inapt hyberbole of the classic wits which compared this motley scene to the marriage of Jupiter and Juno of old, when all the Gods were invited to the feast, and many noble personages besides, but to which also came a motley company of mummers, maskers, fantastic phantoms, whifflers, thieves, rufflers, gulls, wizards, and monsters, and among the rest Crysalus, a Persian Prince, bravely attended, clad in rich and gay attire, and of majestic presence, but otherwise an ass; whom the Gods at first, seeing him enter in such pomp, rose and saluted, taking him for one worthy of honour and high place; and whom Jupiter, perceiving what he was, turned with his retinue into butterflies, who continued in pied coats roving about among the Gods and the wiser sort of men. Something of this kind here happened, when wisdom and folly, vice and piety, learning and gaiety, terribly earnest even to death and light frivolity, jostled each other in the stately precincts of Parnassus and Olympus.

With every variety and shade of this strange life Inglesant had some acquaintance; the philosophers knew him, the Papists confided in him; Cave, the writer of news-letters for the Papists, sought him for information; the Church

party, who knew his connection with the Archbishop, and the services he had rendered him, sought his company; the ladies made use of his handsome person and talents for acting, as they did also that of his brother. He had the entrée to the King at all times, and was supposed to be a favourite with Charles, though in reality the King's feelings towards him were of a mixed nature. No man certainly was better known at Oxford, and no man certainly knew more of what was going on in England than Inglesant did.

Among the chief beauties of the Court the Lady Isabella Thynne was the most conspicuous and the most enterprizing: the poet Waller sang her praise, music was played before her as she walked, and she affected the garb and manner of an angel. She was most beautiful, courteous, and charitable; but she allowed her gaiety and love of intrigue to lead her into very equivocal positions. She was intimately acquainted with Eustace Inglesant, who was one of her devoted servants, and assisted her in many of her gaieties and gallant festivals and sports; but she was shy of Johnny, and told Eustace that his brother was too much of a monk for her taste. She had a bevy of ladies, who were her intimate friends, and were generally with her, some of whom she did not improve by her friendship.

There was in Oxford a gentleman, a Mr. Richard Fentham, who was afterwards knighted, a member of the Prince's council, and a person of great trust with the King. This gentleman had been at school with Eustace Inglesant at that famous schoolmaster's, Mr. Farnabie, in Cripplegate Parish in London,—a school at one time frequented by more than three hundred young noblemen and gentlemen, for whose accommodation he had handsome houses and large gardens. One day Fentham took Eustace Inglesant to call on two young ladies, the daughters of Sir John Harris, who had lately come to Oxford to join their father, who had suffered heavy losses in the royal cause, and had been made a baronet. They found these two young ladies, to the eldest of whom Fentham was engaged, in a baker's house in an obscure street, ill-furnished and mean-looking. They were both, especially the eldest, extremely beautiful, and had been brought up in a way equal to any gentlemen's daughters in England, so that the gentlemen could not help condoling with them on this lamentable change of fortune, to which they were reduced by their father's devotion to the royal cause. The eldest young lady, Ann, a spirited, lively girl, confessed it was "a great change from a large well-furnished house to a very bad bed in a garret, and from a plentiful table to one dish of meat—and that not the best ordered,—with no money, for they were as poor as Job, and had no clothes," she said, "but what a man or two had brought in the cloak bags." Eustace Inglesant pursued the acquaintance thus begun; and both he and his brother were at Wolvercot Church some time afterwards, when Richard Fentham and Mistress Ann were married in the presence of Sir Edward Hyde, afterwards the Lord Chancellor, and Geoffry Palmer, the King's attorney.

Lady Fentham was much admired and sought after, and became one of Lady Isabella's intimate friends. She was a lively, active girl, and fond of all kinds of stirring exercise and excitement, and was peculiarly liable to be led into scrapes in such society. Besides Lady Isabella, she was also exposed to other temptations from political ladies, who endeavoured to persuade her that a woman of her talent and energy should take some active part in public affairs, and get her husband to trust to her the secrets of the Prince's Council. They succeeded so far as to cause her to press her husband on this matter, and to cause some unpleasant feeling on her part, which, but for his kind and forgiving conduct, might have led to a serious breach. This danger passed over, but those springing from the acquaintance with Lady Isabella were much more serious. Sir Richard was much away at Bristol with the Prince, and during his absence Lady Isabella promoted an intimacy between Lord H——, afterwards the Duke of P——, and her young friend. In this she was assisted by Eustace Inglesant, who appeared to be actuated by some very strange personal motive, which Johnny, who saw a great deal of what was going on, could not penetrate.

Matters were in this state when one day Shakespeare's play of "The Comedy of Errors," or an adaptation of it, was given by the gentlemen of the Court, assisted by the King's players, in the Hall at Christ Church. The parts of the brothers Antipholus were taken by the two Inglesants, who were still said to be so exactly alike that mistakes were continually being made between them. The play was over early, and the brilliant company streamed out into the long walk at Christ Church, which was already occupied by a motley throng. The players mingled with the crowd, and solicited compliments on their several performances. The long avenue presented a singular and lively scene—ladies, courtiers, soldiers in buff coats, clergymen in their gowns and bands, doctors of law and medicine in their hoods, heads of houses, beggars, mountebanks, jugglers and musicians, popish priests, college servants, country gentlemen, Parliament men, and townspeople, all confusedly intermixed; with the afternoon sun shining across the broad meadow, under the rustling leaves, and lighting up the windows of the Colleges and the windings of the placid river beyond.

John Inglesant, in the modern Court dress in which, according to the fashion of the day, he had played Antipholus of Ephesus, was speaking to Lord Falkland, who had not been at the play, but who, grave and melancholy, with his dress neglected and in disorder, was speaking of the death of Hampden, which had just occurred, when a page spoke to Inglesant, telling him that Lady Isabella desired his presence instantly. Rather surprised, Inglesant followed him to where the lady was walking, a little apart from the crowd, in a path across the meadows leading from the main walk. She smiled as Inglesant came up.

"I see, Mr. Esquire Inglesant," she said, "that the play is not over. It was

your brother I sent for, whom this stupid boy seemingly has sought in Ephesus and not in England."

"I am happy for once to have supplanted my brother, madam," said Johnny, adapting from his part. "I have run hither to your grace, whom only to see now gives me ample satisfaction for these deep shames and great indignities."

"I am afraid of you, Mr. Inglesant," said the lady; "you have so high a reputation with grave and religious people, and yet you are a better cavalier than your brother, when you condescend that way. That is how you please the Nuns of Gidding so well."

"Spare the poor Nuns of Gidding your raillery, madam," said Inglesant; "surely Venus Aphrodite is not jealous of the gentle dove."

"I will not talk with you, Mr. Inglesant," said the lady pettishly; "find your brother, I beseech you; his wit is duller than yours, but it is more to my taste."

Inglesant went to seek his brother, but before he found him his attention was arrested from behind, and turning round he found his scarf held by Lord H——, who said at once, "Is the day fixed, and the place? have you seen the lady?"

"My lord," said Inglesant, "the play really is over, though no one will believe it. 'I think you all have drunk of Circe's Cup.' I am afraid as many mishaps wait me here as at Ephesus."

Lord H—— saw his mistake. "I beg your pardon," he said; "I took you for your brother, who has some business of mine in hand. I wish you good day."

"I must get to the bottom of the mischief that is brewing," said Inglesant; "there is some mystery which I cannot fathom. The lady no doubt is pretty Lady Fentham, but Eustace surely can never mean to betray his friend in so foul a way as this."

That evening he sought his brother, and telling him all he had noticed, and what he had overheard, he begged him to tell him the plain facts of what was going on, lest he might add to the confusion in his ignorance. Eustace hesitated a little, but at last he told him all.

"There is no real harm intended, except by Lord H——," he said; "Lady Isabella simply wants to make mischief and confusion all around her. She has persuaded Ann Fentham to encourage Lord H—— a little, to lead him into a snare in which he is to be exposed to ridicule. There is a lady in Oxford, whom you no doubt know, Lady Cardiff, whom, if you know her, you know to be one of the most fantastic women now living, to bring whom into connection with Lord H—— Mrs. Fentham has conceived would be great sport; now, to tell you a secret, this lady, who entered into this affair merely for excitement and sport, is gradually becoming attached to me. I intend to marry her with Lady Isabella's help. She has an immense fortune and large parks and houses, and has connections on both sides in this war, so that her property is safe whatever befalls. This is

a profound secret between me and the Lady Isabella, who is under obligations to me. Mrs. Fentham knows nothing of it, and is occupied solely with bringing Lord H—— and Lady Cardiff together. The ladies are going down to Newnham to-morrow. I meet them there, and Lord H—— is to be allowed to come. I intend to press my suit to Lady Cardiff, and certainly by this I shall spoil Lady Fentham's plot; but this is all the harm I intend. What will happen besides I really cannot say, but nothing beyond a little honest gallantry, doubtless."

"But is not such sport very dangerous?" said John. "Suppose this intimacy came to Richard Fentham's ears, what would he say to it? You told me there had already been some mischief made by some of the women between them."

"If he hears of it," said Eustace, carelessly, "it can be explained to him easily enough; he is no fool, and is not the man to misunderstand an innocent joke."

Inglesant was not satisfied, but he had nothing more to say, and changed the subject by inquiring about Lady Cardiff, of whom he knew little.

This lady was a peeress in her own right, having inherited the title and estates from her father. She had been carefully educated, and was learned in many languages. She had acted all her life from principles laid down by herself, and different from those which governed the actions of other people. She had bad health, suffering excruciating pain at frequent intervals from headache, which it is supposed unsettled her reason. At her principal seat, Oulton, in Dorsetshire, she collected around her celebrities and uncommon persons, "Excentrics" as they were called, principally great physicians and quacks, and religious persons and mystic theologians. Van Helmont, the great alchemist, spent much time there, attempting to cure her disorder or allay her sufferings, and Dr. Henry More of Cambridge condescended to reside some time at Oulton. It was a great freestone house, surrounded by gardens, and by a park or rather chase of great extent, enclosing large pieces of water, and surrounded by wooded and uncultivated country for many miles. At the time at which we are arrived, however, her health was better than it afterwards became, and she was chiefly ambitious of occupying an important position in politics, and of seeing every species of life. She was connected with some of the principal persons on both sides in the civil contention, and passed much time both in London and in Oxford. In both these places, but especially in the royal quarters, where greater license was possible, she endeavoured to be included in anything of an exciting and entertaining character that was going on. Whatever it was, it afforded her an insight into human nature and the manners of the world. Such a character does not seem a likely one to be willing to submit to the restraints of the married life, and indeed Lady Cardiff had hitherto rejected the most tempting offers, and, as she had attained the mature age of thirty-two, most people imagined that she would not at that time of life exchange her condition. It appeared, however, that her fate had at last met her

in the handsome person of Eustace Inglesant, and the secret which Eustace had told his brother was already beginning to be whispered in Oxford, and opinions were divided as to whether the boldness of the young man or his good fortune were the most to be admired.

When Inglesant left his brother and walked under the starry sky to his lodgings at Wadham, his mind was ill at ease. He had taken a great interest in Lady Fentham and her husband; indeed, his feelings towards the former were those of an attached friend, attracted by her lively innocence and good nature. He was, as the reader will remember, still very young, being only in his twenty-second year. He was sincerely and vitally religious, though his religion might appear to be kept in subordination to his taste, and he had formed for himself, from various sources, an ideal of purity, which in his mind connected earth to heaven, and which, at this period of his life at any rate, he may have been said faultlessly to have carried out. The circumstances of his youth and early training, which we have endeavoured to trace, acting upon a constitution in which the mental power dominated, rendered self-restraint natural to him, or rather rendered self-restraint needless. It was one of the glories of that age that it produced such men as he was, and that not a few; men who combined qualities such as, perhaps, no after age ever saw united; men like George Herbert, Nicholas Ferrar, Falkland, the unusual combination of the courtier and the monk. Yet these men were naturally in the minority, and even while moulding their age, were still regarded by their age with wonder and a certain kind of awe. It is not meant that John Inglesant was altogether a good specimen of this high class of men, for he was more of a courtier than he was of a saint. He was a sincere believer in a holy life, and strongly desirous of pursuing it; he endeavoured conscientiously to listen for the utterances of the Divine Voice; and provided that Voice pointed out the path which his tastes and training had prepared him to expect, he would follow it even at a sacrifice to himself; but he was not capable of a sacrifice of his tastes or of his training. On the other hand, as a courtier and man of the world, he was profoundly tolerant of error and even of vice (provided the latter did not entail suffering on any innocent victim), looking upon it as a natural incident in human affairs. This quality had its good side, in making him equally tolerant of religious differences, so that, as has been seen, it was not difficult to him to recognize the Divine prompting in a Puritan and an opponent. He was acutely sensitive to ridicule, and would as soon have thought of going to Court in an improper dress as of speaking of religion in a mixed company, or of offering any advice or reproof to any one. In the case which was now disturbing his mind, his chief fear was of making himself ridiculous by interfering where no interference was necessary.

He passed a restless night, and the next morning went to Trinity Chapel,

then much frequented for the high style of the music. He was scarcely here before Lady Isabella and young Lady Fentham, who lodged in that college, came in, as was their habit, dressed to resemble angels in loose and very inadequate attire. At another time he might not have thought much of it, but, his suspicions being aroused, he could not help, courtier as he was, contrasting the boldness of this behaviour with the chaste and holy life of the ladies at Little Gidding; and it made him still more restless and uncertain what to do. He avoided the ladies after Chapel, and returned to his own rooms quite uncertain how to act. It came at last into his mind to inquire of the Secretary Falkland whether Sir Richard Fentham was expected shortly in Oxford, as his journeys were very irregular, and generally kept a profound secret. He went to Lord Falkland and asked the question, telling him that he did so from private reasons unconnected with the State. Falkland declined at first to answer him; but on Inglesant's taking him a little more into his confidence, he confided to him, as a great secret, that Sir Richard was expected that very night, and further, that he would pass through Newnham in the afternoon, where he would meet a messenger with despatches. Upon learning this startling piece of news, Inglesant hastened to his brother's rooms, but found he was too late, Eustace having been gone more than two hours, and as he started considerably after the ladies' coach, there could be no doubt but that the party was already at Newnham. Inglesant went to the stables where his horses were kept, and having found one of his servants, he ordered his own horse to be saddled, as he was going to ride alone. While it was being prepared he attempted to form some plan upon which to act when he arrived at Newnham, but his ingenuity completely failed him. Merely to walk into a room where some ladies and gentlemen were at dinner, to which he was not invited, and inform one of the ladies that her husband was in the neighbourhood, appeared an action so absurd that he discarded the intention at once. When his horse was brought out and he mounted and rode out of Oxford towards the south, telling his servant he should be back at night, he probably did not know why he went. He rode quickly, and arrived in about an hour. The Plough at Newnham (it has long disappeared) stood upon the banks of the river, in a picturesque and retired situation, and was much frequented by parties of pleasure from Oxford. The gardens and bowling-greens lay upon the river bank, and the paths extended from them through the fields both up and down the river. It was apparent to Inglesant that a distinguished party was in the house, from the servants loitering about the doors, and coming in and out. More than one of these he recognized as belonging to Lord H——. The absurdity of suspecting any mischief from so public a rendezvous struck Inglesant as so great, that he was on the point of passing the house. He however alighted and inquired of one of the men whether any of his brother's servants were about. The man, who knew him, replied that Mr. Eustace Inglesant had

dined there with his lordship and the ladies, but was then, he believed, either in the garden or the fields with Lady Cardiff; he had brought no servants with him. Having got thus into conversation with the man, Inglesant ventured to inquire, with as careless a manner as he could assume, if Lady Isabella were there.

Lady Isabella, the man said, had dined there, but after dinner had gone on a little farther in her coach, and attended by her servants, he believed to make some call in the neighbourhood.

Then Inglesant knew that he had done right to come.

"I have a message to Lady Ann Fentham," he said to the man, "but not being of the party, I would rather have sent it through my brother. As I suppose it is useless to attempt to find him, I shall be glad if you will tell me in which room the lady is, for I suppose his lordship is with her."

"His lordship left orders that he was not to be disturbed," said the man insolently; "you had better try and find your brother."

"Nevertheless, I must give her my message," said Inglesant quietly; "therefore, pray show me upstairs."

"I don't know the room," said the man still more rudely, "and you cannot go upstairs; his lordship has engaged the house."

During the conversation the other men had gathered round, and it seemed to Inglesant that his lordship must have brought all his servants with him, for the house appeared full of them. None of the ordinary servants of the place were to be seen.

Inglesant had no arms but his riding sword, and even if he had had, the use of them would have been absurd.

"You know who I am," he said, looking the man steadily in the face, "one of the King's gentlemen whom they call the Queen's favourite page. I bring a message to Lady Fentham from her husband, the Secretary to the Prince's council; do you think your lord will wish you to stop me?"

As he spoke he made a step forward as though to enter, and the man, evidently in doubt, stepped slightly on one side, making it possible to enter the house. The rest took this movement to imply surrender, and one of the youngest, probably to gain favour, said, "The lady is in the room opposite the stairs, sir." Inglesant walked up the low oak staircase to the door, the men crowding together in silence at the bottom of the stairs.

Inglesant tried the latch of the door, though he did not intend to go in without knocking.

The door was fastened, and he knocked.

For a moment there was silence, and then a voice said, angrily, "Who is there?"

"A message from Sir Richard Fentham," said Inglesant.

There was another and a longer pause, and then the same voice said,—

"Is Sir Richard without?"

"No," replied Inglesant; "but he may be here any moment; he is on the road."

The door was immediately opened by his lordship, and Inglesant walked in.

The moment he did, Lady Fentham, who was in the further part of the room, started up from the seat in which she was lying, and throwing herself on Johnny's shoulder said,—

"Help me, Mr. Inglesant, I have been cruelly deceived."

Inglesant took no notice of her, but turning to Lord H—— he said with marked politeness,—

"I have to beg your lordship's pardon for intruding upon your company, but I am charged to let Lady Fentham know that Sir Richard is expected in Oxford to-night, and may pass this house at any time, probably in a few minutes. I thought Lady Fentham would wish to know this so much that I ventured to knock, though your servants told me you wished to be private."

His words were so chosen and his manner so faultless and devoid of suspicion, that Lord H—— could find nothing in either to quarrel with, though he was plainly in a violent passion, and with difficulty controlled himself. It had also the effect of calming Lady Fentham, who remained silent; indeed, she appeared too agitated to speak. It was an awkward pause, but less so to Inglesant than to the other two.

"I wished," he continued, still speaking to Lord H——, "to have sent my message by my brother, but I find he is walking in the fields, and Lady Isabella appears to have gone in her carriage to make a call in the neighbourhood. I presume she will call for you, Lady Fentham, on her way back."

Lady Fentham made a movement of anger, and Lord H—— roused himself at last to say,—

"I am much obliged to you, Mr. Inglesant, for the great trouble you have taken. I assure you I shall not forget it. Lady Fentham, as Sir Richard will so soon be here"—he stopped suddenly as an idea struck him, and looking full at Inglesant, said slowly and with marked emphasis, "Supposing Mr. Inglesant to"—to have spoken the truth he would have said, but Johnny's perfectly courteous attitude of calm politeness, the utter absence of any tangible ground of offence, and his own instincts as a gentleman, checked him, and he continued,—"has not been misinformed, you will not need my protection any further. I will leave you with Mr. Inglesant; probably Lady Cardiff will be back before long."

He took his leave with equal courtesy both to the lady and Inglesant, and went down to his men.

Ann Fentham sank into her chair, and began to sob bitterly, saying,—

"What shall I say to my husband, Mr. Inglesant? He will be here directly, and will find me alone. What would have happened to me if you had not come?"

"If I may offer any advice, madam, I should say, Tell your husband everything exactly as it happened. Nothing has happened of which you have need to be ashamed. Sir Richard will doubtless see that you have been shamefully deceived by your friends, as far as I understand the matter. You can trust to his sympathy and kindness."

She did not reply, and Inglesant, who found his situation far more awkward than before, said, "Shall I seek for Lady Cardiff, madam, and bring her to you?"

"No, don't leave me, Mr. Inglesant," she said, springing up and coming to him; "I shall bless your name for ever for what you have done for me this day."

Inglesant stayed with the lady until it was plain Lord H—— had left the house with his servants, and he then left her and went into the garden to endeavour to find his brother and Lady Cardiff; but in this he was not successful, and returned to the house, where he ordered some dinner—for he had eaten nothing since the morning—and seated himself at the window to wait for Sir Richard. He had sat there about an hour when the latter arrived, and drew his rein before the house before dismounting. Inglesant greeted him and went out to him in the porch. Fentham returned his greeting warmly.

"Your wife is upstairs, Sir Richard," Inglesant said; "she came down with Lady Isabella Thynne, and is waiting for her to take her back."

Fentham left his horse with the servant and ran upstairs straight to his wife, and as Inglesant followed him into the house he met Lady Cardiff and his brother, who came in from the garden. Eustace Inglesant was radiant, and introduced Lady Cardiff to his brother as his future wife. He took them into a private room, and called for wine and cakes. Johnny thought it best not to tell them what had occurred, but merely said that Sir Richard and his wife were upstairs; upon which Eustace sent a servant up with his compliments, asking them to come and join them. Both Lady Cardiff and Eustace appeared conscious, however, that some blame attached to them, for they expressed great surprise at the absence of Lady Isabella, and took pains to inform Johnny that they had left Lady Fentham with her, and had no idea she was going away. Sir Richard and Lady Fentham joined the party, and appeared composed and happy, and they had not sat long before Lady Isabella's coach appeared before the door, and her ladyship came in. The ladies returned to Oxford in the coach, and the gentlemen on horseback. Nothing was said by the latter as to what had occurred until after they had left Eustace at his lodgings, and Johnny was parting with Fentham at the door of Lord Falkland, to whom he was going. Then Sir Richard said,—

"Mr. Inglesant, my wife has told me all, and has told me that she owes everything to you, even to this last blessing, that there is no secret between us. I

beg you to believe two things,—first, that nothing I can do or say can ever repay the obligation that I owe to you; secondly, that the blame of this matter rests mostly with me, in that I have left my wife too much."

Inglesant waited for several days in expectation of hearing from Lord H——, but no message came. They met several times and passed each other with the usual courtesies. At last Eustace Inglesant heard from one of his lordship's friends that the latter had been very anxious to meet Johnny, but had been dissuaded.

"You have not the slightest tangible ground of offence against young Inglesant," they told him, "and you have every cause to keep this affair quiet, out of which you have not emerged with any great triumph. Inglesant has shown by the line of conduct he adopted that he desires to keep it close. None of the rest of the party will speak of it for their own sakes. Were it known, it would ruin you at once with the King, and damage you very much in the estimation of all the principal men here, who are Sir Richard's friends, and such as are not would resent such conduct towards a man engaged on his master's business. Besides this you are not a remarkably good fencer, whereas John Inglesant is a pupil of the Jesuits, and master of all their arts and tricks of stabbing. That he could kill you in five minutes if he chose, there can be no doubt."

These and other similar arguments finally persuaded Lord H—— to restrain his desire of revenge, which was the easier for him to do as Inglesant always treated him when they met with marked deference and courtesy.

The marriage of Lady Cardiff and Eustace Inglesant was hurried forward, and took place at Oxford some weeks after the foregoing events; the King and Queen being present at the ceremony. It was indeed very important to attach this wealthy couple unmistakably to the royal party, and no efforts were spared for the purpose. Lady Cardiff and her husband, however, did not manifest any great enthusiasm in the royal cause.

The music of the wedding festival was interrupted by the cannon of Newbury, where Lord Falkland was killed, together with a sad roll of gentlemen of honour and repute. Lord Clarendon says,—"Such was always the unequal fate that attended this melancholy war, that while some obscure, unheard-of colonel or officer was missing on the enemy's side, and some citizen's wife bewailed the loss of her husband, there were on the other above twenty officers of the field and persons of honour and public name slain upon the place, and more of the same quality hurt." In this battle Inglesant was more fortunate than in his first, for he was not hurt, though he rode in the Lord Biron's regiment, the same in which Lord Falkland was also a volunteer.

The King returned to Oxford, where Inglesant found every one in great dejection of mind; the conduct of the war was severely criticized, the army discontented, and the chief commanders engaged in reproaches and recriminations.

One afternoon Inglesant was sent for to Merton College, where the Queen lay, and where the King spent much of his time; where he found the Jesuit standing with the King in one of the windows, and Mr. Jermyn, who had just been made a baron, talking to the Queen. The King motioned Inglesant to approach him, and the Jesuit explained the reason he had been sent for.

The trial of Archbishop Laud was commencing, and in order to incite the people against him Mr. Prynne had published the particulars of a popish plot in a pamphlet which contained the names of many gentlemen, both Protestant and Catholic, the publication of which at such a moment excited considerable uneasiness among their relations and friends.

"I wish you, Mr. Inglesant," said the King, "to ride to London. Mr. Hall has provided passes for you, and letters to several of his friends. The new French Ambassador is landing; I wish to know how far the French Court is true to me. Prynne's wit has overreached himself. His charges have frightened so many, that a reaction is setting in in favour of the Archbishop, and many are willing to testify in his favour in order to exonerate themselves. You will be of great use in finding out these people. Seek every one who is mentioned in Prynne's libel; many of them are men of influence. Your familiar converse with Papists, in other respects unfortunate, may be of use here."

Inglesant spent some time in London, and was in constant communication with Mr. Bell, the Archbishop's secretary. He was successful in procuring evidence from among the Papists of their antipathy to Laud, and in various other ways in providing Bell with materials for defence. Laud was informed of these acts of friendship, and being in a very low and broken state, was deeply touched that a comparative stranger, and one who had been under no obligation to him, should show so much attachment, and exert himself so much in his service, at a time when the greatest danger attended any one so doing, and when he seemed deserted both by his royal master and by those on whom he had showered benefits in the time of his prosperity. He sent his blessing and grateful thanks, the thanks of an old and dying man, which would be all the more valuable as they never could be accompanied by any earthly favour. Inglesant's name was associated with that of the Archbishop, and the Jesuit's aim in sending him to London was accomplished.

CHAPTER X.

Inglesant was of so much use in gaining information, and managed to live on such confidential terms with many in London in the confidence of members of the Parliament, that he remained there during all the early part of the year, and would have stayed longer; but the enemies of the Archbishop, who pursued him with a malignant and remorseless activity, set their eyes at last upon the young envoy, and he was advised to leave London, at any rate till the trial was over. He was very unwilling to leave the Archbishop, but dared not run the risk of being imprisoned and thwarting the Jesuit's schemes, and therefore left London about the end of May, and returned straight to Oxford.

He left London only a few days before the allied armies of Sir W. Waller and the Earl of Essex, and had no sooner arrived in Oxford than the news of the advance of the Parliamentary forces caused the greatest alarm. The next day Abingdon was vacated by some mistake, and the rebels took possession of the whole of the country to the east and south of Oxford; Sir William Waller being on the south, and the Earl of Essex on the east. It was reported in London that the King intended to surrender to the Earl's army, and such a proposition was seriously made to the King by his own friends a few days afterwards in Oxford. The royal army was massed about the city, most of the foot being on the north side; Inglesant served with the foot in Colonel Lake's regiment of musketeers and pikes, taking a pike in the front rank. It was a weapon which the gentlemen of that day frequently practised, and of which he was a master. Several other gentlemen volunteers were in the front rank with him. The Earl's army was drawn up at Islip, on the other side of the river Cherwell, having marched by Oxford the day before, in open file, drums beating and colours flying, so that the King had a full view of them on the bright fine day. The Earl himself, with a party of horse, came within cannon shot of the city, and the King's horse charged him several times without any great hurt on either side. It was a gay and brilliant scene to any one who could look upon it with careless and indifferent eyes.

The next morning a strong party of the Earl's army endeavoured to pass the Cherwell at Gosford bridge, where Sir Jacob Astley commanded, and where the regiment in which Inglesant served was stationed. The bridge was barricaded with breastworks and a bastion, but the Parliamentarian army attempted to cross the stream both above and below. They succeeded in crossing opposite to Colonel Lake's regiment, under a heavy fire from the musketeers, who advanced rank by rank between the troops of pikes and a little in advance of them, and after giving their fire, wheeled off to the right and left, and took their places again in the rear. The rebels reserved their fire, their men falling at every step; but they still advanced, supported by troops of horse, till they reached the Royalists, when they delivered their fire, closed their ranks, and charged, their horse charging the pikes at the same time. The ranks of the royal musketeers halted and closed up, and

the pikes drew close together shoulder to shoulder, till the rapiers of their officers met across the front. The shock was very severe, and the struggle for a moment undecided; but the pikes standing perfectly firm, owing in a great measure to the number of gentlemen in the front ranks, and the musketeers fighting with great courage, the enemy began to give way, and having been much broken before they came to the charge fell into disorder, and were driven back across the stream, the Royalists following them to the opposite bank, and even pursuing them up the slope. Inglesant had noticed an officer on the opposite side who was fighting with great courage, and as they crossed the river he saw him stumble and nearly fall, though he appeared to struggle forward on the opposite slope to where an old thorn tree broke the rank of the pikes. Johnny came close to him, and recognized him as the Mr. Thorne whom he had known at Gidding. As he knew the regiment would be halted immediately, he fell out of his rank, leaving his file to the bringer-up or lieutenant behind him, and stooped over his old rival, who evidently was desperately hurt. He raised his head, and gave him some *aqua vitæ* from his flask. The other knew him at once, and tried to speak; but his strength was too far gone, and his utterance failed him. He seemed to give over the effort, and lay back in Inglesant's arms, staining his friend with his blood. Inglesant asked him if he had any mission he would wish performed, but the other shook his head, and seemed to give himself to prayer. After a minute or two he seemed to rally, and his face became very calm. Opening his eyes, he looked at Johnny steadily and with affection, and said, slowly and with difficulty, but still with a look of rest and peace,—

"Mr. Inglesant, you spoke to me once of standing together in a brighter dawn; I did not believe you, but it was true; the dawn is breaking—and it is bright."

As he spoke a volley of musketry shook the hill-side, and the regiment came down the slope at a run, and carrying Inglesant with them, crossed the river, and, halting on the other side, wheeled about and faced the passage in the same order in which they had stood at first. This dangerous manoeuvre was executed only just in time, for the enemy advanced in great force to the river-side; but the Royalists being also very strong, they did not attempt to pass. After facing each other for some time, the fighting having ceased all along the line, Inglesant spoke to his officer, and got leave to cross the river with a flag of truce to seek his friend. An officer from the other side met him, most of the enemy's troops having fallen back some distance from the river. He was an old soldier, evidently a Low-country officer, and not much of a Puritan, and he greeted Inglesant politely as a fellow-soldier.

Inglesant told him his errand, and that he was anxious to find out his friend's body, if, as he feared, he would be found to have breathed his last. They went to the old thorn, where, indeed, they found Mr. Thorne quite dead. Several

of the rebel officers gathered round. Mr. Thorne was evidently well known, and they spoke of him with respect and regard. Inglesant stopped, looking down on him for a few minutes, and then turned to go.

"Gentlemen," he said, raising his hat, "I leave him in your care. He was, as you have well said, a brave and a good man. I crossed his path twice—once in love and once in war—and at both times he acted as a gallant gentleman and a man of God. I wish you good day."

He turned away, and went down to the river, from which his regiment had by this time also fallen back, the others looking after him as he went.

"Who is that?" said a stern and grim-looking Puritan officer. "He does not speak as the graceless Cavaliers mostly do."

"His name is Inglesant," said a quiet, pale man, in dark and plain clothes; "he is one of the King's servants, a concealed Papist, and, they say, a Jesuit. I have seen him often at Whitehall."

"Thou wilt not see him much longer, brother," said the other grimly, "either at Whitehall or elsewhere. It were a good deed to prevent his further deceiving the poor and ignorant folk," and he raised his piece to fire.

"Scarcely," said the other quietly, "since he came to do us service and courtesy." But he made no effort to restrain the Puritan, looking on, indeed, with a sort of quiet interest as to what would happen.

"Thou art enslaved over much to the customs of this world, brother," said the other, still with his grave smile; "knowest thou not that it is the part of the saints militant to root out iniquity from the earth?"

He arranged his piece to fire, and would no doubt have done so; but the Low-country officer, who had been looking on in silence, suddenly threw himself upon the weapon, and wrested it out of his hand.

"By my soul, Master Fight-the-fight," he said, "that passes a joke. The good cause is well enough, and the saints militant and triumphant, and all the rest of it; but to shoot a man under a flag of truce was never yet required of any saint, whether militant or triumphant."

The other looked at him severely as he took back his weapon.

"Thou art in the bonds of iniquity thyself," he said, "and in the land of darkness and the shadow of death. The Lord's cause will never prosper while it puts trust in such as thou." But he made no further attempt against Inglesant, who, indeed, by this time had crossed the river, and was out of musket shot on the opposite bank.

A few days afterwards the King left Oxford and went into the West. Inglesant remained in garrison, and took his share in all the expeditions of any kind that were undertaken. The Roman Catholics were at this time very strong in Oxford; they celebrated mass every day, and had frequent sermons, at which many

of the Protestants attended; but it was thought among the Church people to be an extreme thing to do, and any of the commanders who did it excited suspicion thereby. The Church of England people were by this time growing jealous of the power and unrestrained license of the Catholics, and the Jesuit warned Inglesant to attach himself more to the English Church party, and avoid being much seen with extreme Papists. Colonel Gage, a Papist, was appointed governor by the King; but being a very prudent man and a general favourite, as well as an excellent officer, the appointment did not give much offence. Inglesant was present at Cropredy Bridge, which battle or skirmish was fought after the King returned to Oxford from his hasty march through Worcestershire, and was wounded severely in the head by a sword cut—a wound which he thought little of at the time, but which long afterwards made itself felt. Notwithstanding this wound he intended following the King into the West, for His Majesty had latterly shown a greater kindness to him, and a wish to keep him near his person; but Father St. Clare, after an interview with the King, told Inglesant that he had a mission for him to perform in London, and so kept him in Oxford.

The trial of the Archbishop was dragging slowly on through the year, and the Jesuit procured Inglesant another pass, and directed him to endeavour in every way to assist the Archbishop in his trial, without fear of his prosecutors, telling him that he could procure his liberation even if he were put in prison, which he did not believe he would be. Inglesant, therefore, on his return to London, gave himself heartily to assisting the counsel and secretary of the Archbishop, and found himself perfectly unmolested in so doing. He lodged at a druggist's over against the Goat Tavern, near Toy Bridge in the Strand, and frequented the ordinary at Haycock's, near the Palsgrave's Head Tavern, where the Parliament men much resorted. Here he met among others Sir Henry Blount, who had been a gentleman pensioner of the King's, and had waited on him in his turn to York and Edgehill fight, but then, returning to London, walked into Westminster Hall, with his sword by his side, so coolly as to astonish the Parliamentarians. He was summoned before the Parliament, but pleading that he only did his duty as a servant, was acquitted. This man, who was a man of judgment and experience, was of great use to Inglesant in many ways, and put him in the way of finding much that might assist the Archbishop; but it occurred to Inglesant more than once to doubt whether the latter would benefit much by his advocacy, a known pupil of the Papists as he was. This caused him to keep more quiet than he otherwise would have done; but what was doubtless the Jesuit's chief aim was completely answered; for the Church people, both in London and the country, who regarded the Archbishop as a martyr, becoming aware of the sincere and really useful exertions that Inglesant had made with such untiring energy, attached themselves entirely to him, and took him com-

pletely into their confidence, so that he could at this time have depended on any of them for assistance and support. The different parties were at this time so confused and intermixed—the Papists playing in many cases a double game—that it would have been difficult for Inglesant, who was partly in the confidence of all, to know which way to act, had he stood alone. He saw now, more than he had ever done, the intrigues of that party among the Papists who favoured the Parliament, and was astonished at their skill and duplicity. At last the Commons, failing to find the Archbishop guilty of anything worthy of death, passed a Bill of Attainder, as they had done with Lord Strafford, and condemned him with no precedence of law. The Lords hesitated to pass the Bill, and on Christmas Eve, 1644, demanded a conference with the Commons. The next day was the strangest Christmas Day Inglesant had ever spent. The whole city was ordered to fast in the most solemn way by a special ordinance of Parliament, and strict inquisition was made to see that this ordinance was carried out by the people. Inglesant was well acquainted with Mr. Hale, afterwards Chief Justice Hale, one of the Archbishop's counsel, then a young lawyer in Lincoln's Inn, who, it was said, had composed the defence which Mr. Hern, the senior counsel, had spoken before the Lords. Johnny spent part of the morning with this gentleman, and in the afternoon walked down to the Tower from Lincoln's Inn. The streets were very quiet, the shops closed, and a feeling of sadness and dread hung over all—at any rate in Inglesant's mind. At the turnstile at Holborn he went into a bookseller's shop kept by a man named Turner, a Papist, who sold popish books and pamphlets. Here he found an apothecary, who also was useful to the Catholics, making "Hosts" for them. These both immediately began to speak to Inglesant about the Archbishop and the Papists, expressing their surprise that he should exert himself so much in his favour, telling him that the Papists, to a man, hated him and desired his death, and that a gentleman lately returned from Italy had that very day informed the bookseller that the news of the Archbishop's execution was eagerly expected in Rome. The Lords were certain to give way, they said, and the Archbishop was as good as dead already. They were evidently very anxious to extract from Inglesant whether he acted on his own responsibility or from the directions of the Jesuit; but Inglesant was much too prudent to commit himself in any way. When he had left them he went straight to the Tower, where he was admitted to the Archbishop, whom he found expecting him. He gave him all the intelligence he could, and all the gossip of the day which he had picked up, including the sayings of the wits at the taverns and ordinaries respecting the trial and the Archbishop, of whom all men's minds were full. Laud was inclined to trust somewhat to the Lords' resistance, and Inglesant had scarcely the heart to refute his opinion. He told him the feeling of the Papists, and his fear that even the Catholics at Oxford were not acting sincerely with him. After the

failure of the King's pardon, Laud entertained little hope from any other efforts Charles might be disposed to make; but Inglesant promised him to ride to Oxford, and see the Jesuit again. This he did the next day, before the Committee of the Commons met the Lords, which they did not do till the 2d of January. He had a long interview with the Jesuit, and urged as strongly as he could the cruelty and impolicy of letting the Archbishop die without an effort to save him.

"What can be done?" said the Jesuit; "the King can do nothing. All that he can do in the way of pardon he has done: besides, I never see the King; the feeling against the Catholics is now so strong, that His Majesty dare not hold any communications with me."

Inglesant inquired what the policy of the Roman Catholic Church really was; was it favourable to the King and the English Church, or against it?

The Jesuit hesitated, but then, with that appearance of frankness which always won upon his pupil, he confessed that the policy of the Papal Court had latterly gone very much more in favour of the party who wished to destroy the English Church than it had formerly done; and that at present the Pope and the Catholic powers abroad were only disposed to help the King on such terms as he could not accept, and at the same time retain the favour of the Church and Protestant party; and he acknowledged that he had himself under-estimated the opposition of the bulk of English people to Popery. He then requested Inglesant to return to London, and continue to show himself openly in support of the Archbishop, assuring him that in this way alone could he fit himself for performing a most important service to the King, which, he said, he should be soon able to point out to him. The old familiar charm, which had lost none of its power over Johnny, would, of itself, have been sufficient to make him perfectly pliant to the Jesuit's will. He returned to London, but was refused admission to the Archbishop until after the Committee of the Commons had met the Lords, and on the 3d of January the Lords passed the Bill of Attainder. When the news of this reached the Archbishop, he broke off his history, which he had written from day to day, and prepared himself for death. He petitioned that he might be beheaded instead of hanged, and the Commons at last, after much difficulty, granted this request. On the 6th of January it was ordered by both Houses that he should suffer on the 10th. On the same day Inglesant received a special message from the Jesuit in these words, in cypher:—"Apply for admission to the scaffold; it will be granted you."

Very much surprised, Inglesant went to Alderman Pennington, and requested admission to attend the Archbishop to the scaffold, pleading that he was one of the King's household, and attached to the Archbishop from a boy.

Pennington examined him concerning his being in London, his pass, and place of abode, but Inglesant thought more from curiosity than from any other

motive; for it was evident that he knew all about him, and his behaviour in London. He asked him many questions about Oxford and the Catholics, and seemed to enjoy any embarrassment that Inglesant was put to in replying. Finally he gave him the warrant of admission, and dismissed him. But as he left the room he called him back, and said with great emphasis,—

"I would warn you, young man, to look very well to your steps. You are treading a path full of pitfalls, few of which you see yourself. All your steps are known, and those are known who are leading you. They think they hold the wires in their own hands, and do not know that they are but the puppets themselves. If you are not altogether in the snare of the destroyer, come out from them, and escape both destruction in this world and the wrath that is to come."

Inglesant thanked him and took his leave. He could not help thinking that there was much truth in the alderman's description of his position.

The next three days the Archbishop spent in preparing for death and composing his speech; and on the day on which he was to die, Inglesant found when he reached the Tower, that he was at his private prayers, at which he continued until Pennington arrived to conduct him to the scaffold. When he came out and found Inglesant there, he seemed pleased, as well he might, for excepting Stern, his chaplain, the only one who was allowed to attend him, he was alone amongst his enemies. He ascended the scaffold with a brave and cheerful courage, some few of the vast crowd assembled reviling him, but the greater part preserving a decent and respectful silence. The chaplain and Inglesant followed him close, and it was well they did so, for a crowd of people, whether by permission or not is not known, pressed up upon the scaffold, as Dr. Heylyn said, "upon the theatre to see the tragedy," so that they pressed upon the Archbishop, and scarcely gave him room to die. Inglesant had never seen such a wonderful sight before—once afterwards he saw one like it, more terrible by far. The little island of the scaffold, surrounded by a surging, pressing sea of heads and struggling men, covering the whole extent of Tower Hill; the houses and windows round full of people, the walls and towers behind covered too. People pressed underneath the scaffold; people climbed up the posts and hung suspended by the rails that fenced it round; people pressed up the steps till there was scarcely room within the rails to stand. The soldiers on guard seemed careless what was done, probably feeling certain that there was no fear of any attempt to rescue the hated priest.

Inglesant recognized many Churchmen and friends of the Archbishop among the crowd, and saw that they recognized him, and that his name was passed about among both friends and enemies. The Archbishop read his speech with great calmness and distinctness, the opening moving many to tears, and when he had finished, gave the papers to Stern to give to his other chaplains, praying God to bestow His mercies and blessings upon them. He spoke to a man

named Hind, who sat taking down his speech, begging him not to do him wrong by mistaking him. Then begging the crowd to stand back and give him room, he knelt down to the block; but seeing through the chinks of the boards the people underneath, he begged that they might be removed, as he did not wish that his blood should fall upon the heads of the people. Surely no man was ever so crowded upon and badgered to his death. Then he took off his doublet, and would have addressed himself to prayer, but was not allowed to do so in peace; one Sir John Clotworthy, an Irishman, pestering him with religious questions. After he had answered one or two meekly, he turned to the executioner and forgave him, and kneeling down, after a very short prayer, to which Hind listened with his head down and wrote word for word, the axe with a single blow cut off his head. He was buried in All Hallows Barking, a great crowd of people attending him to the grave in silence and great respect,—the Church of England service read over him without interruption, though it had long been discontinued in all the Churches in London.

News of his death spread rapidly over England, and was received by all Church people with religious fervour as the news of a martyrdom; and wherever it was told, it was added that Mr. John Inglesant, the King's servant, who had used every effort to aid the Archbishop on his trial, was with him on the scaffold to the last. Inglesant returned to Oxford, where the Jesuit received him cordially. He had, it would have seemed, failed in his mission, for the Archbishop was dead; nevertheless, the Jesuit's aim was fully won.

On the King's leaving Oxford, before the advance of General Fairfax, Inglesant accompanied him, and was present at the battle of Naseby, so fatal to the royal cause. No mention of this battle, however, is to be found among the papers from which these memoirs are compiled; and the fact that Inglesant was present at it is known only by an incidental reference to it at a later period. Amid the confusion of the flight, and the subsequent wanderings of the King before he returned to Oxford, it is impossible to follow less important events closely, and it does not seem clear whether Inglesant met with the Jesuit immediately after the battle or not. Acting, however, there can be no doubt, with his approval, if not by his direction, he appears very soon after to have found his way to Gidding, where he remained during several weeks.

CHAPTER XI.

The autumn days passed quickly over, and with them the last peaceful hours that Inglesant would know for a long time, and that youthful freshness and bloom and peace which he would never know again. Such a haven as this, such purity and holiness, such rest and repose, lovely as the autumn sunshine resting on the foliage and the grass, would never be open to him again. It was long before rest and peace came to him at all, and when they did come, under different skies and an altered life, it was a rest after a stern battle that left its scars deep in his very life; it was apart from every one of his early friends; it was unblest by first love and early glimpse of heaven. It was about the end of October that he received a message from the Jesuit, which was the summons to leave this paradise, sanctified to him by the holiest moments of his life. The family were at evening prayers in the Church when the messenger arrived, and Inglesant, as usual, was kneeling where he could see Mary Collet, and probably was thinking more of her than of the prayers. Nevertheless he remembered afterwards, when he thought during the long lonely hours of every moment spent at Gidding, that the third collect was being read, and that at the words "Lighten our darkness" he looked up at some noise, and saw the sunshine from the west window shining into the Church upon Mary Collet and the kneeling women, and, beyond them, standing in the dark shadow under the window, the messenger of the Jesuit, whom he knew. He got up quietly and went out. From his marriage feast, nay, from the table of the Lord, he would have got up all the same had that summons come to him.

His whole life from his boyhood had been so formed upon the idea of some day proving himself worthy of the confidence reposed in him (that perfect unexpressed confidence which won his very nature to a passionate devotion capable of the supreme action, whatever it might be, to which all his training had tended), that to have faltered at any moment would have been more impossible to him than suicide, than any self-contradictory action could have been—as impossible as for a proud man to become suddenly naturally humble, or a merciful man cruel. That there might have been found in the universe a power capable of overmastering this master passion is possible; hitherto, however, it had not been found.

Outside the Church the messenger gave him a letter from the Jesuit, which, as usual, was very short.

"Johnny, come to me at Oxford as soon as you can. The time for which we have waited is come. The service which you and none other can perform, and which I have always foreseen for you, is waiting to be accomplished. I depend on you."

Inglesant ordered some refreshment to be given to the messenger, and his own horses to be got out. Then he went back into the Church, and waited till the prayers were over.

The family expressed great regret at parting with him; they were in a continual state of apprehension from their Puritan neighbours; but Inglesant's presence was no defence but rather the contrary, and it is possible that some of them may have been glad that he was going.

Mary Collet looked sadly and wistfully at him as they stood before the porch of the house in the setting sunlight, the long shadows resting on the grass, the evening wind murmuring in the tall trees and shaking down the falling leaves.

"Do you know what this service is?" she said at last.

"I cannot make the slightest guess," he answered.

"Whatever it is you will do it?" she asked again.

"Certainly; to do otherwise would be to contradict the tenor of my life."

"It may be something that your conscience cannot approve," she said.

"It is too late to think of that," he said, smiling; "I should have thought of that years ago, when I was a boy at Westacre, and this man came to me as an angel of light—to me a weak, ignorant, country lad—to me, who owe him everything that I am, everything that I know, everything—even the power that enables me to act for him."

Did she remember how he had once offered himself without reserve to her, then at least without any reservation in favour of this man? Did she regret that she had not encouraged this other attraction, or did she see that the same thing would have happened whether she had accepted him or no? She gave no indication of either of these thoughts.

"I think you owe something to another," she said, softly; "to One who knew you before this Jesuit; to One who was leading you onward before he came across your path; to One who gave you high and noble qualities, without which the Jesuit could have given you nothing; to One whom you have professed to love; to One for whose Divine Voice you have desired to listen. Johnny, will you listen no longer for it?"

He never forgot her, standing before him with her hands clasped and her eyes raised to his,—the flush of eager speaking on her face,—those great eyes, moistened again with tears, that pierced through him to his very soul,—her trembling lip,—the irresistible nobleness of her whole figure,—her winning manner, through which the love she had confessed for him spoke in every part. He never saw her again but once—then in how different a posture and scene; and the beauty of this sight never went out of his life, but it produced no effect upon his purpose; indeed how could it, when his purpose was not so much a part of him as he was a part of it? He looked at her in silence, and his love and admiration spoke out so unmistakably in his look that Mary never afterwards doubted that he had loved her. He had not power to explain his conduct; he could not have told himself why he acted as he did. Amid the distracting purposes which

tore his heart in twain he could say nothing but,—

"It may not be so bad as you think."

Mary gave him her hand, turned from him, and went into the house; and he let her go—her of whom the sight must have been to him as that of an angel—he let her go without an effort to stay her, even to prolong the sight. His horses were waiting, and one of his servants would follow with his mails; he mounted and rode away. The sun had set in a cloud, and the autumn evening was dark and gloomy, yet he rode along without any appearance of depression, steadily and quietly, like a man going about some business he has long expected to perform. I cannot even say he was sad: that moment had come to him which from his boyhood he had looked forward to. Now at last he could prove, at any rate to himself, that he was equal to that effort which it had been his ideal to attempt.

When Inglesant reached Oxford he sought out the Jesuit and found him alone. The royal affairs were at the lowest ebb. Since the battle of Naseby the King had done little but wander about like a fugitive. He was now at Oxford; but it was doubtful whether he could stay there in safety through the winter, and certainly he would not be able to do so after the campaign began, unless some change in his fortunes meanwhile occurred. All this Inglesant knew only too well. The ruin of the royal cause, entailing his own ruin and that of all his friends, was too palpable to need description. The Jesuit therefore at once proceeded to the means which were prepared to remedy this disastrous state of things. The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, the Duke of Ormond, had, with the consent of the King, concluded a truce with the Irish, who, after long years of oppression, spoliation and misery, had, a few years before, broken out suddenly in rebellion, and massacred hundreds of the unprepared Protestants, men, women, and children, under circumstances, as is admitted by Catholics, and is perhaps scarcely to be wondered at, of frightful cruelty. A feeling of intense hatred and dread of these rebels had consequently filled the minds of the English Protestants, both Royalists and Parliamentarians; a feeling in which horror at murderous savages—for as such they not unnaturally regarded the Irish—was united with the old hatred and fear of popish massacres and cruelties. The Parliament had remonstrated with the King for his supineness in not concluding the war by the extirpation of these monsters, and when at last a truce was concluded with them, the anger of the Parliament knew no bounds, and even loyal Churchmen, although they acknowledged the hard necessity which obliged the King to such a step, yet lamented it as one of the severest misfortunes which had befallen them. The King hoped by this peace not only to be able to recall the soldiers who had been engaged against the rebels to his own assistance, but also to procure a detachment of Irish soldiers for the same purpose from the popish leaders. But the popish demands being very excessive, Ormond had not been able to advance far towards a settled

peace, when, in the previous spring, the Lord Herbert (afterwards Earl of Glamorgan), the son of the Marquis of Worcester, of a devoted Catholic family and of great influence, announced his intention of going to Ireland on private business, and offered to assist the King with his influence among the Catholics. He had married a daughter of the great Irish house of Thomond, and undoubtedly possessed more influence in that island among the Papists than any other of the royal party.

The King eagerly accepted his assistance, and Glamorgan afterwards produced a commission, undeniably signed by the King, in which he gives him ample powers to treat with the Papists, and to grant them any terms whatever which he should find necessary, consistent with the royal supremacy and the safety of the Protestants. In this extraordinary commission he creates him Earl of Glamorgan, bestows on him the Garter and George, promises him the Princess Elizabeth as a wife for his son, gives him blank patents of nobility to fill up at his pleasure, and promises him on the word of a King to endorse all his actions. The only limit which appears to have been set to the Earl was an obligation to inform the Lord Lieutenant of all his proceedings; and the only doubt respecting this commission appears to be whether it was filled up before the King signed it, or written on a blank signed by the King, in accordance with conclusions previously agreed upon between him and the Earl.

The Earl left Oxford for Ireland, where the nuncio from the Pope had arrived, and proceeded in his negotiations with this dignitary and the Supreme Council of the rebel Papists and Irish—negotiations in which he found endless difficulties and delays, owing chiefly to a mutual distrust of all parties towards each other;—a distrust of the King not unnatural on the part of the Irish, who knew that nothing but the utmost distress induced the King to treat with them at all, and that to treat with them, or at least to make any important concessions to them, was to alienate the whole of the English Protestants—both Royalists and Parliamentarians—to an implacable degree. The Irish demanded perfect freedom of religion; the possession of all Cathedrals and Churches; and that all the strong places in Ireland, including Dublin, should be in the hands at any rate of English Roman Catholics; that the English Papists should be relieved from all disabilities; and that the King in the first Parliament, or settlement of the nation, should ratify and secure all these advantages to them. In return for this the Pope offered a large present of money, and the Earl was promised 10,000 men from the rebel forces—3000 immediately for the relief of Chester, and 7000 to follow before the end of March.

In order to realize how repulsive such a proceeding as this would appear to the whole English nation, it is necessary to recollect the repeated professions of attachment to Protestantism on the part of the King, and of his determination to

repress Popery; the intense hatred of Popery on the part of the Puritan party, and of most of the Church people; and the horror caused in all classes by the barbarities of the Irish massacre—something similar to the feeling in England during the Sepoy rebellion. No Irish ever came into England, and the English knew them only by report as ferocious, half-naked savages, to which state, indeed, centuries of oppression had reduced them. So universal was this feeling, that the King dared only proceed in the most secret manner; and in a letter to Glamorgan he acknowledges that the circumstances are such that he cannot do more than hint at his wishes, promising him again, on the word of a King, to ratify all his actions, and to regard his proceedings with additional gratitude if they were conducted without insisting nicely on positive written orders, which it was impossible to give.

Communications between the Earl and the Court continued to be kept up, and the former represented the progress of the negotiations as satisfactory; but the state of the King's affairs became so pressing, especially with regard to the relief of Chester, which was reduced to great distress, that it was absolutely necessary that some envoy should be sent to Ireland to hasten the treaty, and if possible assist the Earl to convince the Supreme Council of the good faith of the King; and it was also as important that an equally qualified agent should go to Chester to prepare the leaders there to receive the Irish contingent, and to encourage them to hold out longer in expectation of it.

"There is no man so suited to both these missions as yourself," said the Jesuit. "You are a King's servant and a Protestant, and you will therefore have weight with the rebel Council in Ireland. Still more, as you are a Churchman and a favourite with the Church people—especially since the death of the Archbishop—you will be able to prepare the mind of the Lord Biron and the commanders at Chester to receive the Irish troops favourably; they will believe that you act by the King's direction, and will not know anything of the concessions which have been made in Ireland. You are ready to undertake it?"

Inglesant hesitated for a moment, but then he said simply and without effort,—

"I am ready; I will do my best: but there are some things I should like to ask."

"Ask what you will," said the Jesuit, quickly; "everything I know I will tell you."

"As a Churchman," said Inglesant, "if I lend myself to this plan I shall be considered by all Churchmen to have betrayed my religion, and to have done my best to ruin my country as a Protestant country. Is not this the case?"

"Probably," said the Jesuit, after a moment's hesitation.

"Shall I have any authority direct from the King for what I do?"

"I have advised not," said the Jesuit; "but His Majesty thinks that you will need some other warrant, both in Ireland and at Chester, than the mere fact of your belonging to the Household. He therefore intends to give you an interview, and also a written commission signed by himself."

"And in case the whole scheme miscarries and becomes public?" said Inglesant.

"I cannot answer," said the Jesuit, "for what course His Majesty may be advised to take; but in your case it will, of course, be your duty to preserve the strictest silence as to what has passed between the King and yourself."

"Then if I fall into the hands of the Parliament," Inglesant said, "my connection with the King will be repudiated?"

"His Majesty pledges his word as a King," began the Jesuit.

Inglesant made a slight impatient motion with his head, which the other saw, and instantly stopped.

He raised his eyes to Inglesant, and looked fully in his face for a moment, then, with that supreme instinct which taught him at once how to deal with men, he said:—

"If the necessities of the State demand it, all knowledge of this affair will be denied by the King."

"That is all I have to say," said Inglesant; "I am ready to go."

The next day Inglesant saw the King. The interview was very short. The King referred him to Father St. Clare for all instructions, telling him distinctly that all the instructions he would receive from him would have his approval, urging him to use all his efforts to assist Lord Glamorgan, but at all events to lose no time, after seeing his Lordship, in getting to Chester, and, when there, to use every exertion to induce the Cavaliers to receive the Irish troops, as they, no doubt, would be glad in their extremity to do. He received a few lines written by the King in his presence and signed, requiring all to whom he might show them to give credit to what he might tell them as if it came direct from the King. The King gave him his hand to kiss, and dismissed him.

Inglesant lost no time in reaching Bristol, taking with him all that remained of his money, considerable sums of which he had from time to time lent to the King. He found a vessel sailing for Waterford, and was fortunate enough to reach that harbour without loss of time. He did not stay by the ship while she went up to the city, but landed at Dunmore, and immediately took horses to Kilkenny. There he found the Earl and the Papal Nuncio engaged in negotiations with each other, and with the Supreme Council, the principal difficulty being an intense distrust of the King. The Nuncio, John Baptista Renuccini, Archbishop of Fermo, was of a noble family of Florence, and of long experience at the Court of Rome. He appeared pleased to see Inglesant, and came to visit him privately at his lodg-

ings, where he entered into a long discourse with him, endeavouring to find out the real standing and authority of the Earl, and whether the King could be trusted or not. Inglesant, who spoke both French and Italian as well as Latin, was able to enter very fully and freely into the state of affairs with him. He told him that the only way to gain any advantages which the Catholics might have in view was to assist the King promptly and effectively at once; that the King could only be enabled to fulfil his promises by being placed in a strong and independent position; and that if, by delays and half measures, the help was postponed till it was too late, or the negotiations became publicly known, the King would be powerless to fulfil his promises, and would be compelled to repudiate them altogether. He submitted to the Nuncio that, even supposing the King's good faith was doubtful, he was much more likely to be favourable to the Catholics, when restored to power, than the Parliament and the Puritan faction would ever be; he reminded the Nuncio of the great favour and leniency which had ever been shown to the Romanists during the King's reign, and he spoke warmly of the base ingratitude which had been shown to the King by that party among the Catholics who had intrigued with the Parliament against a King, very many of whose troubles had arisen from his leniency towards their religion.

The Nuncio was evidently much impressed with Inglesant's arguments, and was very courteous in his expressions of regard, assuring Inglesant that he should not forget to mention so excellent and intelligent a friend of the Romish Church in Rome itself, and that he hoped he might some time see him there, and receive him into closer relations to that glorious and tender mother.

Inglesant saw the Earl immediately after this interview; he found him perplexed and discouraged with the difficulties of his position. He introduced Inglesant to several of the Supreme Council, and many days were taken up in argument and negotiations. At last both Inglesant and the Earl agreed that the most important thing for him to do was to get to Chester without loss of time, as the delays and negotiations were so great that there was imminent danger that the city would be surrendered before the treaty could be completed. Inglesant therefore left Kilkenny immediately, and, posting to Dublin without loss of time, embarked for Anglesea, and arrived there on the 29th of December. Here he procured horses, and, crossing the island, he passed over into Flintshire and proceeded towards Chester. It was exceedingly unfortunate that he had not arrived a few days before, as the Parliamentary army, having lately received a reinforcement of Colonel Booth and the Lancashire forces who had just reduced Lathom House, had now entirely surrounded the city, guarding with sufficient force every gate and avenue, causing a great scarcity of provisions, and rendering it almost

impossible for any one to gain admission to the garrison.

CHAPTER XII.

Lord Biron and some of the commissioners who were associated with him in the defence of the city were at supper in a long, low room in the castle on the evening of the 12th of January. Lord Biron and more than one of the noblemen and gentlemen then in Chester had their ladies with them, but they lived apart, mostly at Sir Francis Gammul's house in the Lower Bridge Street, opposite to St. Olave's Church, and were provided for rather better than the rest; but the commanders partook of exactly the same food as the rest of the besieged, and their supper that night consisted of nothing but boiled wheat, with water to drink. The conversation was very flat, for the condition of the besieged was becoming utterly hopeless; and although they had rejected several offers of capitulation, they foresaw that it could not be long before they should be obliged to submit. The town had been singularly free from discontent and mutiny, and Lord Biron's high position and renown made him particularly fitted for the post he filled; but he felt that the task before him was well-nigh hopeless. He sat buried in thought, few of the other gentlemen present spoke, and they were on the point of separating, Lord Biron to make the round of the walls, when a servant came up from the court below, saying that there was a man below in the dress of a miner, who said he was Mr. Inglesant, the King's gentleman, and wished to see his lordship.

"Who did you say?" exclaimed Lord Biron, and the others crowded round in excitement, "Inglesant, the King's Esquire?"

"John Inglesant."

"The Esquire of the Body?"

"No doubt from Oxford and the King."

"How could he have got in?"

"In the dress of a miner, he says."

"Perhaps the King is near at hand?"

"At any rate he has not forgotten us."

"He has used his Jesuit's teaching to some purpose."

These and many other exclamations were uttered while Lord Biron told the servant to send Inglesant up at once. He entered the room in his miner's dress, his hands and face stained with dust, his hair matted and hanging over his eyes.

He carried a large kind of bag, such as the miners used, and his first action was to place it on the table, and to remove from it five or six bottles of claret, a large ham, and a goose.

"I knew you were somewhat short here," he said, "and I ran the risk of bringing these things, though I do not know, if I had been caught, that it would have told much against me, for we miners live well, I can tell your lordship."

"But how on earth did you get in?" said Lord Biron, "and where have you come from?"

"I thought I never should have got in," he replied. "The leaguer is well kept, and there is scarcely a weak point. But I fear," he added sadly, "from the state I find you in, it really mattered little whether I got in or not."

"Oh, never say that," said Lord Biron cheerily; "the sight of you is a corps of relief in itself. Come in here and let me hear what you have to say. I will not keep the news a moment from you, gentlemen," he added courteously to the rest.

"If you will pardon me, my lord," said Inglesant, "and allow me a moment to wash this dirt off, and if some one would lend me a suit of clothes, it would be a courtesy. I had to leave my own in Flintshire, and these are none of the pleasantest. My news will keep a few minutes, and your lordship will be all the better for a glass or two of this claret, which is not the worst you ever drank."

Lord Biron took him into another room, and left him to change his dress, lending him one of his own suits of clothes. Inglesant really wished to gain time, and also to say what he had to say with every advantage of appearance and manner, for he felt that his mission was a difficult one—how difficult he felt he did not know.

When he came back he found the gentlemen had opened one of the bottles, and were drinking the wine very frugally, but with infinite relish. They were warm in their thanks to Inglesant, and in congratulations on his improved appearance. Lord Biron took him on one side at once.

Inglesant had a letter for him from the Duke of Ormond, which the Duke had given him unsealed, telling him to read it. John Inglesant had done so several times during his journey, and did not altogether like its contents. The Duke alluded by name to Lord Glamorgan, and mentioned the number (10,000) of the troops intended to be sent to England. Neither fact would Inglesant have wished to communicate himself, at any rate at once, and he had resolved not to deliver the letter until he saw how Lord Biron took the rather vague information he intended to give him. But there is always this difficulty with negotiations of this kind, that while the first requisite is entire frankness, the least caution, even at the beginning, may convey a sense of suspicion which nothing afterwards can remove. Inglesant felt, therefore, that he should have to watch Lord Biron most closely, and decide instantly, and on the spur of the moment, when to trust him

and to what extent.

He began, after Lord Biron had expressed his cordial admiration at his exploit and his sense of obligation, by telling him he came direct from Lord Ormond, in Dublin, and that his object in getting into Chester was to let them know that they might expect relief from Ireland, at most within a few days, and to urge them to hold out to the last moment and the last bag of wheat.

Without appearing to do so, he watched Lord Biron narrowly as he spoke, and saw that he expected to hear a great deal more than this vague account.

He went on telling him of his interview with Ormond, of the King's great anxiety for the relief of Chester, and the difficulties the Lord Lieutenant met with in treating with the Irish; but he saw that Lord Biron was manifestly getting impatient. At last the latter said,—

"But you have not told me, Mr. Inglesant, where this relief is to come from. Ormond has no troops to spare—he has told us so often; indeed, all the troops that could be spared passed through Chester years ago when the truce was first proclaimed. He must keep all his to keep those murderous villains, the Irish Papists, in check. They will respect no truce. We hear something of Lord Glamorgan; have you seen him in Ireland? Have you no letter from Ormond to me?"

Inglesant saw that he must trust him at once to a very great extent.

"I have a letter from the Duke to you," he said; "but I wish first to show you this warrant the King gave me at Oxford, that you may see I do not speak without his authority. When he gave me that, he told me all the negotiations which the Duke was engaged in, at his desire, with the Irish Papists; and all that I tell you has been done with his sanction. As to Lord Glamorgan, I saw him at Kilkenny; he is striving all he can to second the Lord Lieutenant's efforts with the Irish and the Papal Nuncio, and he has the fullest warrant from the King."

Lord Biron read the warrant from the King carefully more than once; then returned it, and took Lord Ormond's letter, which he also read once or twice.

Inglesant walked to the window and looked out.

"The letter is not sealed, Mr. Inglesant," Lord Biron said.

"No," said Inglesant, "the Duke insisted on my bringing it open, and on my reading it. I requested him to seal it, but he refused."

"And you have read it?"

"Certainly."

"I see he speaks of a very large contingent—10,000 men, and that Glamorgan is to get them entirely from the Irish Papists. Ten thousand Irish Papists and murderers in England, Mr. Inglesant, is not what I should like to see, and I do not like the negotiation being entrusted so much to Glamorgan, a determined Papist. We know not what concessions he may make unknown to the King. I beg your pardon for my plain speaking;—they say you are half a Papist yourself."

"You will only have 3000 men sent here," said Inglesant, "and from what I saw in Ireland I fear it may be some time before the rest follow. Besides, surely, my lord, nothing can be worse than your present state here."

"It is sad enough, certainly, but there may be things much worse. I tell you, sir, I would rather die of hunger on these walls than see my country given over to murderous Irish rebels and savage Kerns. And bad as the King's affairs are at present, I am convinced that His Majesty would endure all gladly, rather than make any concessions to such as these,—much less expose England to their ravages."

"The troops who will be sent will be under the strictest orders, and commanded by gentlemen of honour and rank," said Inglesant; "and I assure your lordship, upon my sacred word of honour as a Christian, that nothing will be attempted but what has His Majesty's cordial consent."

Lord Biron was unsatisfied, but Inglesant considered he had achieved a success; his lordship had plainly not the least suspicious feeling towards him, all his dissatisfaction arising from his dislike to the means proposed for his relief. He would, moreover, hold out as long as possible, and this all the more as he saw help approaching, from whatever source it came.

They went back to the other officers, and communicated the news to them, rather to their disappointment; for Inglesant having spoken some words of encouragement to the soldiers of the guard below, the report had run through Chester that the King was at hand with 3000 horse. The effect, however, which Inglesant's news produced in Chester was altogether exhilarating. Officers, soldiers, and inhabitants set to work with redoubled vigour, and Inglesant became a hero wherever he went, and was introduced to Lady Biron and the ladies, who received him with gratitude, as though he had already raised the siege. He was himself, however, very far from being at ease, as day after day passed and no signs of help appeared. Lord Biron, though showing the greatest signs of confidence openly, had evidently become more and more hopeless, and continually sought opportunities of speaking to Inglesant privately; and Inglesant found it impossible to avoid letting him see more and more into the real facts of the case; so that the Duke and his share in the negotiations fell, day by day, deeper into the shade, and Lord Glamorgan and his share appeared every day in greater prominence. Lord Biron expressed himself increasingly dissatisfied, and suspicious that such negotiations did not originate with the King; but as no help or troops of any kind appeared, these imaginary dangers were not of much import. Sir William Brereton, the Parliamentary commander, was continually sending letters summoning them to surrender. Nine of these they refused, but when there appeared no longer any hopes of succour, Lord Biron answered the tenth. To this Sir William answered, upbraiding Lord Biron with having delayed so long,

"every day producing loss of blood and expense of treasure," but offering to appoint commissioners to treat on the terms of surrender. This letter was received on the 26th of January, and the same day Lord Biron replied. Sir William's answer came the next day, and the same morning, that is on the 27th of January, an event occurred which decided Lord Biron to surrender, and at the same time sealed Inglesant's fate.

Early in the forenoon a rumour spread through Chester, the source of which could not be discovered, but which no doubt arose from some soldiers' gossip between the outposts. It was said that some great Earl (Lord Glamorgan's name was immediately introduced into the report, but whether it was in the original rumour is doubtful) had been arrested in Ireland, for having concluded in the King's name, but without his sanction, a treaty with the Irish rebels and Papists, by which the latter were relieved from all disabilities and restored to the command of the island, in return for which they agreed to march a large army into England, to destroy the Parliament and the Protestant party, and restore the King and Popery. This report, garnished with great variety of additional horrors, spread rapidly through the city, and about ten o'clock reached Lord Biron's ears. Chiming in as it did with his worst suspicions, it excited and alarmed him not a little. His first thought was of Inglesant, and he sent at once to his lodgings to know if he was within. Inglesant had spent the whole of the night at one of the advanced bastions, where, having some reason to believe that the enemy were working a mine, the garrison made a sortie, and, wearied out, had come home to his room in the Bridge Street to rest. His wounds, and especially the one in his head, which had been supposed to be cured, began to affect him again, probably through exhaustion, excitement, and want of food, and for several days he had felt a giddiness and confusion of brain which at times was so great that he scarcely knew what he did. He had scarcely fallen asleep on the great bed in the small room, crowded with the valuables of the good people of the house in which he lodged, when the messenger from the governor entered the room and aroused him. Sending the man back before him he waited a few minutes to collect his faculties and arrange his dress, and then followed him to the Castle. He found Lord Biron in the state dining-room, a noble room, handsomely furnished, with large windows at the end over-looking the Dee estuary, and a great carved fireplace, before which Lord Biron was standing, impatiently awaiting him.

"Mr. Inglesant," he said, as he entered the room, "you showed me once a commission from His Majesty; will you let me see it again?"

Inglesant, who had heard nothing of the rumour that had caused such dismay, and who suspected nothing, immediately produced the paper and handed it to Lord Biron, who took out another from his pocket, and compared the two carefully together, going to the window to do so.

Then, coming back to Inglesant, and holding the two papers fast in his hand, he said:—

"Mr. Inglesant, I have heard this morning, what I have reason to believe is true, that the Lord Glamorgan has been arrested in Dublin by the King's Council for granting the Papists terms in the King's name, and conspiring to bring over a Papist army into England. Have you any knowledge of such matters as these?"

Inglesant's astonishment and dismay were so unfeigned that Lord Biron saw at once that such news was most unexpected by him. He had indeed, among all the dangers he was on his guard against, never calculated upon such as this. Distasteful as he supposed the negotiations with the Papists would be to numbers of the Church party, the idea never entered his mind that any loyal authorities would take upon them, without communicating with the King, the responsibility of arresting the negotiations or making them public, and this with a high hand, presupposing that they were without the King's sanction. But, supposing this extraordinary news to be true, he saw at once an end to his efforts,—he saw himself at once helpless and deserted, nothing before him but long imprisonment and perhaps death.

He stood for some moments looking at Lord Biron, the picture of astonishment and dismay. At last he said,—

"I cannot think, my lord, that such news can be true. What possible motive could the Council have to take such a step? I give you my word of honour as a Christian, that Lord Glamorgan has done nothing but what he had authority for from the King."

"You are much in his confidence evidently, sir," said Lord Biron severely; "but I am inclined to believe my information nevertheless."

"But he had commission and warrants signed by the King himself; and private letters from him, which would have removed all suspicion," said Inglesant.

"Yes, sir, no doubt he had commissions, professedly from the King, as you have," said Lord Biron still more severely. "Your commission names Lord Glamorgan, and you are evidently of one council with him. Will you pledge me your honour that this paper was written by the King?"

And he held out Inglesant's commission,

Johnny hesitated: the circumstances of the case were beginning to arrange themselves before him, racked and weary as his brain was. If this news were true, if the Lord Lieutenant and the Council had really disclaimed, in the King's name, the negotiations, and boldly before the world proclaimed them unauthorized, and the warrants a forgery, the game was evidently played out, and his course clear before him, dark and gloomy enough. Yet he thought he would make one effort to recover the paper, a matter, whatever might turn out, of the first importance to the King.

"If I swear to you, Lord Biron, that the King wrote it, will you give it me back?"

"I am sorry, sir, that I cannot," said Lord Biron, "I am grieved at my heart to do anything which would seem to doubt in the least the word of a gentleman such as I have always believed you to be; but in the post I hold, and in the crisis of an affair so terribly important as this, I must act as my poor judgment leads me. I cannot give this paper up to any one until I learn more of this distressing business."

"If I swear to you," said Inglesant, beaten at every point, but fighting to the last, "that it is the King's writing, will you give me your word of honour that you will burn it immediately?"

"No, sir," said the other loftily; "what the King has been pleased to write, it can be the duty of no man to conceal."

"Then it is not the King's," said Inglesant.

Lord Biron stared at him for a moment, then folded up the papers carefully, and replaced them in his pocket-case. Then he went to the door of the dining-room at the top of the stairs and called down.

"Without! send up a guard."

Inglesant unhooked his sword from the scarf, and handed it to Lord Biron without a word. Then he said,—

"It can be of no advantage to me now, may probably tell against me, when I entreat your lordship to believe me when I tell you, as I hope for salvation before the throne of God, that if you burn that paper now you will be glad of it every day you live."

"I certainly shall not burn it, sir," said the other, speaking now with a cold disdain. And he turned his back upon Inglesant, and stood looking at the fire.

Johnny went to the window and looked out. The bright winter's sun was shining on the walls and roofs of the town, on the dancing waves of the estuary, and on the green oak banks of Flintshire beyond. He remembered the view long afterwards, as we remember that on which the eye rests almost unconsciously in any supreme moment of our lives.

Presently the guard came up.

"This gentleman is under arrest," said Lord Biron to the sergeant; "you will secure him in one of the strong rooms of the tower, and see that he has fire and his full share of provisions until the garrison is relieved; but no one must be admitted to see him, and you are responsible for his person to me. You can send word to your servant to bring you anything you may want from your lodgings, Mr. Inglesant," he said, "but he must not come to you, and all the things must pass through my hands."

Inglesant bowed, "I have to thank you for the courtesy, Lord Biron," he said;

"I have nothing to complain of in your treatment of me."

The other turned away, half impatiently, and Inglesant followed the sergeant to his room, the guard following one by one, through the passages and up the narrow staircase of the tower.

It was a pleasant room enough, fitted with glass windows strongly barred. The sergeant caused a fire to be lighted, and left Inglesant to himself.

It was the first time he had ever been imprisoned, and as the door locked upon him that terrible feeling crept over him which the first sense of incarceration always brings,—a nameless dread and a frantic desire of escape, of again mixing with fellow-men. But to Inglesant this sad feeling was increased immensely by the circumstances that surrounded him, and the peculiar nature of his position. The very nature of his position debarred him from all hope, cut him off from all help alike from friend and foe. Those who in any other case would be most forward to help him were now his jailers, nay, he was turned by this strange reverse into his own jailer and enemy; debarred from attempting anything to help himself, he must actually employ all his energies in riveting the chains more tightly on his limbs, in preparing the gallows himself. Exposed to the contempt and hatred of all his friends, of those dearer to him than friends, he could make no effort to clear himself, nay, every word he spoke must be nicely calculated to increase their aversion and contempt. He was worn and ill and half-starved, and his brain was full of confusion and strange noises, yet the idea of faltering in his course never so much as presented itself to him. The Jesuit's work was fully done.

The next day the Commissioners for the surrender of the city met, and the day after Sir William Brereton's commissioners made a formal announcement of the news that had been received from Ireland. Lord Glamorgan, they said, had arrived in Dublin from Kilkenny. The 26th of December was fixed for him to appear before the Council, but in the meantime letters were received by several persons in Dublin giving an account of some papers found on the person of the titulary Archbishop of Tuam, who was slain in an encounter at Sligo in October. The papers contained the details of the treaty come to between Lord Glamorgan and the Papists, which details threw the Council into such dismay that they concluded that if such things were once published, and they could be believed to be done by his Majesty's authority, they could have no less fatal an effect than to make all men conclude all the former scandals cast upon His Majesty of the inciting the Irish Rebellion true; that the King was a Papist, and designed to introduce Popery even by ways the most unkingly and perfidious; and consequently, that there would be a general revolt of all good Protestants from him. Now, the Council, considering all this, and also hearing that the affair was already public through Dublin, and beginning to work such dangerous effects that they did not

consider themselves safe, they concluded that the only course open to them was to arrest Lord Glamorgan in the Council, which was accordingly done on the 26th of December.

The Commissioners also informed Lord Biron that they were told that there were many Irish in Chester, born of Irish parents, who had formerly served in the rebel armies in Ireland, and that also there was even then in Chester an emissary from Lord Glamorgan. They therefore demanded that these Irish should be exempted from the general terms of surrender, and made over to them as prisoners of war, and that the emissary from Lord Glamorgan should also be given up to them as a traitor, seeing that he was condemned by the royal party as well as by themselves.

To this it was answered by Lord Biron's Commissioners that the Irish—such at least as were born of Irish parents and had served with the rebels—should be delivered as they requested, and that as to Mr. Inglesant, the emissary alluded to, he was already under arrest on the charge of treason, and should remain so until more of this affair could be known, when, if the truth appeared to be as was supposed, he should be given up also.

With this the Parliamentary Commissioners professed themselves satisfied, and the treaty was proceeded with, and on the 3d of February Chester was formally surrendered. On the same day Sir William Brereton informed Lord Biron that the King, in a message to the Parliament, dated from Oxford, January 29th, utterly repudiated all knowledge of the Earl of Glamorgan's proceedings, and denied that he had given him any authority whatever to treat with the Irish Papists. Sir William added, he supposed Lord Biron would no longer have any scruple to surrender the person of Lord Glamorgan's emissary, as by so doing could he alone convince men of the sincerity of his belief in the King's freedom from complicity in his designs. Lord Biron answered that he had nothing to object to in this, and would give Mr. Inglesant up, and indeed it was not in his power to do anything else. On the 3d day of February the Parliamentary forces were marched into the town, and Lord Biron with his lady, and the rest of the noblemen and gentlemen and their ladies, prepared to leave. According to the articles of the treaty, carriages were provided for them and their goods, and a party of horse appointed to convey them to Conway. The ladies and gentlemen were assembled at Sir Francis Gammul's in the lower Bridge Street. The street was blocked with carriages and horses, and carts full of goods; companies of foot were forcing their way through; the overhanging rows and houses were full of people, the Church bells were ringing, the Parliamentary officers passing to and fro. There was a certain amount of relief and gaiety in all hearts; the Royalists were relieved from the hardships of the siege, and were expecting to go to their homes; the Parliamentarians, of course, were jubilant. The principal inhabitants of Chester were the worst off,

but even they looked forward to a time of quiet, and to the possibility of at last retrieving their losses and their position in the town. Amid all this confusion and bustle, a sergeant's guard entered the room where Inglesant was confined, and desired him to accompany them to the commander, that the transfer of his person might be arranged. He followed them out of the castle, by St. Mary's Church, and up the short street into the Bridge Street, at the corner of which Sir Francis Gammul's house stood. Forcing his way through the crowd that gaped and pressed upon them, the sergeant conducted Inglesant into the house, and up into one of the principal rooms, where the commanders and the ladies and many others were assembled. A crowd of curious spectators pressed after them to the door as soon as it was known whom the sergeant had brought; a dead silence fell upon the whole company, and the two commanders, who were seated at a table, on which were the articles of surrender, rose and gazed at Inglesant. A confused murmur, the nature of which it would have been difficult to describe, ran through the room, and the ladies pressed together, with mingled timidity and curiosity, to look on. Inglesant was thin and pale, his clothes shabby and uncared for, his hair and moustache undressed, his whole demeanour cowed and dispirited—very different in appearance from the fine gentleman who had played Philaster before the Court. Doubtless, many among the Royalists pitied him; but at present no doubts were felt, or at any rate had time to circulate, of the King's sincerity, and the dislike to the Jesuits, even by the High Church Loyalists, closed their hearts against him. The Lord Biron asked him whether he had anything to say before he was delivered over to Sir William, to which he replied,—

"No."

He made no effort to speak to any one, or to salute Lady Biron or any of his acquaintances, but stood patiently, his eyes fixed on the ground.

Sir William asked whether he adhered to his statement that the commission he had exhibited was a forgery?

At which he looked up steadily, and said,—

"Yes; it was not written by the King."

As he made the avowal a murmur of indignation passed through the room, and Sir William ordered him to be removed, telling him he should be examined to-morrow, the account of his answers sent up to London, and the will of the Parliament communicated to him as soon as possible. Inglesant bowed in reply and turned to leave the room, making no effort to salute or take leave of any one; but Lord Biron stopped him with a gesture, and said, probably actuated by some feeling which he could not have explained,—

"I wish you good-day, Mr. Inglesant. I may never see you again."

Inglesant looked up, a slight flush passing over his features, and their eyes met.

"I wish you good-day, my lord," he said; "you have acted as a faithful servant of the King."

Lord Biron made no further effort to detain him, and he left the room.

The next day he was brought up before Sir William Brereton, and examined at great length. He stated that the plot had originated with the Roman Catholics, especially the Jesuits, whose envoy Lord Glamorgan was; that all the warrants and papers were forged by them, and that he had received his instructions and the King's commission from Father St. Clare himself. He stated that if the design failed, the King was to know nothing of it, and if it succeeded it was supposed that he would pardon the offenders on consideration of the benefits he would receive. A vast mass of evidence was taken by Sir William from Irish soldiers, inhabitants of Chester, and people of every description, relative to what had taken place in the city, and all was sent to London to the Parliament. In the course of a few days orders came down to bring Inglesant up to town, together with some of the most important witnesses, to be examined before a Committee of the House of Commons; and this was accordingly done at once, Sir William Brereton accompanying his prisoner and conveying him by easy stages to London, where he was confined in St. James's palace till the will of the Parliament should be known.

CHAPTER XIII.

When the news of the arrest of the Earl of Glamorgan reached Oxford, it caused the greatest consternation, and the King wrote letters, in his own name and in that of the Chancellor, to the Parliament and to all the principal politicians denying all participation in or knowledge of his negotiations.

The most violent excitement prevailed on the subject all over England. All parties, except the Papists, joined in expressing the most lively horror and indignation at proposals which not only repudiated the policy of the last hundred years, and let loose the Papists to pursue their course unimpeded, but also placed England at the mercy of the most repulsive and lawless of the followers of the Roman Catholic faith. The barbarities of the Irish rebels, which were sufficiently horrible, were magnified by rumour on every side; and the horror which the English conceived at the thought of their homes being laid open to those monsters, was only equalled by their indignation against those who had conceived so trea-

sonable and unnatural a plot. Besides this, the King having denied all knowledge of such negotiations, the indignation of all loyal Churchmen was excited against those who had so treasonably and miserably done all they could to compromise the King's name, and make him odious to all right-thinking Englishmen. The known actors in this affair being very few, consisting, indeed, only of the Earl and Inglesant, and of the Jesuits (which last was a vague and intangible designation, standing in the ordinary English mind merely as a synonym for all that was wicked, base, and dangerous), and the Earl being, moreover, out of reach, the public indignation concentrated on Inglesant, and his life would have been worth little had he fallen into the hands of the mob. When the news of the fall of Chester and of Inglesant's arrest and subsequent transference to the Parliamentary commander, reached Oxford, the King sent for the Jesuit privately, and received him in his cabinet at Christ Church.

The King appeared anxious and ill, and as though he did not know where to turn or what to do.

"You have heard the news, Father, I suppose," he said. "Lord Biron, as well as Digby, has taken upon himself to keep the King's conscience, and know the King's mind better than he does himself. How many Kings there are in England now, I do not know, but I have ever found my most faithful servants my most strict masters. You know Jack Inglesant has been given over to the rebels? What are we to do for him?"

"Your Majesty can do nothing," said the Jesuit. "All that could be done has been done, and as far as may be has been done well. All that your Majesty has to do now is to be silent."

"Then Inglesant must be given up," said the King.

"He must be given up. Your Majesty has no choice."

"Another!" said the King, bitterly. "Strafford, whose blood tinges every sight I see! Laud, Glamorgan, now another! What right have I to suppose my servants will be faithful to me, when I give them up, one by one, without a word?"

"Your Majesty does not discriminate," said the Jesuit; "your good heart overpowers your clearer reason. It is as much your duty, for the good of the State, to be deaf to the voice of private feeling and friendship, as it is for your servants to be deaf to all but the call of duty to your Majesty; and this your servants know, and do not dream that they have any cause to complain. Strafford and the Archbishop both acknowledged this, and now it will be the same again. There is no fear of John Inglesant, your Majesty."

"No," said the King, rising and pacing the closet with unequal steps, "there is no fear of John Inglesant, I believe you. There is no fear that any man will betray his friends, and be false to his Order and his plighted word, except the King!—except the King!"

Apparently the Jesuit did not think it worth while to answer this outbreak, for he said, after a pause,—

"Your Majesty has written to Glamorgan?"

"Yes, I have told him to keep quiet," said the King, sitting down again; "he is in no danger—I am clear of him. But do you mean to say, Father, that Inglesant must be left to the gallows without a word?"

"No, I do not say that, your Majesty," said the other; "the rebels will do nothing in a hurry, you may depend. They will do all they can to get something from him which may be useful against your Majesty, and it will be months before they have done with him. I have good friends among them, and shall know all that happens. When they are tired of him, and the thing is blown over a little, I shall do what I can."

"And you are sure of him," said the King; "any evidence signed by him would be fatal indeed."

"Your Majesty may be quite easy," said the other, "I am sure of him."

"They will threaten him with the gallows," said the King, "life is sweet to most men."

"I suppose it is," said the Jesuit, as if it were an assertion he had heard several times lately, and began to think he must believe; "I have no experience in such matters. But, however sweet it may be, its sweetness will not induce John Inglesant to utter a syllable against the cause in which he is engaged."

"You are very confident of your pupil," said the King. "I hope you will not be deceived."

The Jesuit smiled, but did not seem to think it necessary to make any further protestations, and soon after left the closet.

* * * * *

Inglesant remained some time in confinement at St. James's before he was summoned before the Parliamentary Committee; but at the beginning of March another of those extraordinary events occurred which seemed arranged by some providential hand to fight against the King. A packet boat put into Padstow, in Cornwall, supposing it to be a royal garrison; on discovering their mistake, and some slight resistance having been overpowered, the captain threw a packet of letters and some loose papers overboard. The papers were lost, but the packet was fished out of the sea, and proved to contain the most important of the correspondence from Lord Digby, describing the discovery of the plot, the articles of agreement with the Papists, the copy of the warrant from the King to the Earl of Glamorgan, and several letters from the Earl himself, all asserting his innocence of any actions but those directed and approved by the King. These letters were

published *in extenso* by the Parliament in a pamphlet which appeared on the 17th of March. The information contained in these papers was of the greatest use to the Parliament, for, though there was nothing in them absolutely to inculpate the King (indeed the letters of Lord Digby, as far as they went, were strong proofs to the contrary), yet it placed it in their power to make assertions and inquiries based upon fact, and it brought forward Lord Glamorgan as an evidence on their side. If they could now have produced a confession signed by Inglesant to the same effect, the case would have been almost complete—at any rate few would have hesitated to call the moral proof certain. A Committee of the Commons was appointed to examine Inglesant, and he was summoned to appear before them.

On the day appointed he was brought from St. James's across the park in a sedan, guarded by soldiers, and not being recognised escaped without any notice from the passers-by.

The Committee sat in one of the rooms of the Parliament House, and began by asking Inglesant his name.

"I understand," said one of the members savagely, "that your name is Inglesant, of a family of courtiers and sycophants, who for generations have earned their wretched food by doing any kind of dirty work the Court set them; and that they never failed to do it so as to earn a reputation even among the mean reptiles of the Court precincts. This is true, is it not? And you have held some of those posts which an honest man would scorn."

Inglesant had recovered his health during his imprisonment, thanks to rest and sufficient food, and his manner was quiet and confident. To the attack of the Parliamentarian he answered simply,—

"My name is Inglesant; I have been Esquire of the Body to the King."

The Chairman checked the warmth of the Puritan, and began to question Inglesant concerning the plot, endeavouring to throw him off his guard by mentioning facts which had come to their knowledge through the recent discoveries. But Inglesant was prepared with his story. Though he was surprised at the amount of knowledge the Committee possessed, yet he stood to his assertion that he knew nothing of any instructions except those which he had himself received, and that the whole plot originated with the Jesuits, as far as he knew, and had every reason to believe. When he was asked how he, a Protestant and a Churchman, could lend himself to such a plot, he replied that he was very much inclined to the Romish Church, and that he thought the King's affairs so desperate that the plan of obtaining help from the Irish rebels appeared to him and to Father St. Clare as almost the only resource left to them. The Committee, finding gentle means fail, adopted a sterner tone, telling him he was guilty of high treason, without benefit, and that he might certainly, on his own confession, be condemned to the gallows without further trial. They then offered him a statement to sign, which,

they said, they had sure information contained nothing but the truth. Inglesant looked at it, and saw that in truth it did contain a very fair statement of what had really taken place.

He replied that it was impossible for him to sign anything so opposite to what he had himself confessed; and that even if he did, no one would believe so monstrous a statement, and one so contrary to the known opinions and professions of the King. The Committee then asked him why, if the King's commission was forged, it was kept back, and where it was?

Inglesant said that "the Lord Biron had it, having forcibly taken it from him, and refused to return it, telling him plainly that he should keep it as evidence against him."

He observed that this impressed the Committee, and he was soon after dismissed. He returned to St. James's the same way that he came, but found a strong guard summoned to attend him; for, the news of his examination having got wind, the crowd assembled at the Parliament House, and accompanied him, with hootings and insults of every kind, across the Park.

As one result of his examination, Inglesant was removed from St. James's, and sent by water to the Tower, where a close confinement in a small cell, and insufficient diet, again affected his health. He formed the idea that the Parliament intended to weaken him with long imprisonment, and so cause him to confess what they wished; he feared that the state of his health, and especially the extent to which his brain was affected, would assist this purpose; and this fear preyed upon him, and made him nervous and miserable—dreading above everything that, his mind being clouded, he might say something inadvertently which might discover the truth. His health rapidly declined, and he became again thin and worn. The Parliament Committee now spread a report that the royal party, who pretended to indicate the offenders in this plot, did not really do so; and that in particular they kept back the originals of the King's warrants and commissions, which they asserted to be forgeries, and refused to bring them forward and submit them to proof, which would be the surest way of making the fact of the King's ignorance of them certain. They did this because they knew Lord Biron's character as a man of unstained and unsuspicious honour, and they calculated that such a taunt as this would be certain to bring him forward with the commission, which he had in his keeping, and which they trusted to be able to prove was a genuine document. Their policy had the desired effect. Lord Biron, who was at Newstead, without consulting any one, sent up a special messenger to the Speaker to say that, a safe-conduct being granted him, he would come up to London, and appear before the Committee of Parliament, bringing the commission, which he asserted was a palpable forgery, with him. The safe-conduct was immediately sent him, and he came up. The Committee were rejoiced at the

success of their policy, and fixed a day for him to appear before them, and at the same time ordered Inglesant to be fetched up from the Tower to be confronted with his lordship. The affair caused the greatest interest, and the Committee Room was thronged with all who could command sufficient influence to obtain entrance, and crowds filled the corridors and the precincts of the House. Lord Biron was introduced, and gave his evidence with great clearness, describing the arrest of Inglesant, his suspicious conduct, and his attempt to induce Lord Biron to destroy the warrant; and finally produced the paper, and handed it to the clerk of the Committee. The Chairman then ordered Inglesant to be brought in through a side door; and he came up to the bar.

His appearance was so altered, and his manner so cowed and embarrassed, that a murmur ran through the room, and Lord Biron could not restrain an exclamation of pity. Inglesant started when he saw him, for he had been kept in complete ignorance of what had occurred, and his mind immediately recurred to the commission. He was evidently making the greatest efforts to collect himself, and keep himself calm. Nothing could have told more against himself, or in favour of the part he was playing, than his whole demeanour.

He was examined minutely on the circumstances of his arrest, and related everything exactly as it occurred, which, indeed, he had done before—both his relations tallying exactly with Lord Biron's.

When asked what his business was in Chester, he said—to prepare the Cavaliers to receive the Irish help; and added that he had been obliged to communicate a great deal more to Lord Biron than he had wished or intended, and that Lord Biron had always manifested the greatest suspicion of him and of his mission.

He gave his evidence steadily, but without looking at Lord Biron, or indeed at any one.

When asked why he wished to recover possession of the commission, or at least to induce Lord Biron to burn it, he replied,—

"Lest it should serve as evidence against myself."

This seemed to most present a very natural answer; yet it caused Lord Biron to start, and to fix a searching glance on Inglesant.

As a gentleman of high breeding and instinctive honour, it jarred upon his instinct, and conveyed a sudden suspicion that Inglesant was acting. That the latter might be so utterly perverted by his Jesuit teaching as to be lost to all sense of right and truth, he was prepared to believe; that he might have been led into treason knowingly or inadvertently, he was willing to think; but the low and pitiful motive that he gave was so opposed to his previous character, notorious for a fantastic elevation and refinement of sentiment, that it supposed him a monster, or that some miracle had been wrought upon him. A terrible doubt—a doubt

which Biron had once or twice already seen faintly in the distance—approached nearer and looked him in the face.

The Committee had examined the commission one by one, comparing it with some of the King's writing which they had before them; finally it passed into the hands of a Mr. Greenway, a lawyer, and skilled in questions of evidence and of writing, who examined it attentively.

It was curious to see the behaviour of the two men under examination while this was going on; Lord Biron, as a noble gentleman, from whose mind the doubt of a few minutes ago had passed, standing erect and confident, looking haughtily and freely at the expert, secure in his own honour and in that of his King; Inglesant, cowed and anxious, leaning forward over the bar, his eyes fixed also on the lawyer—pale, his lips twitching,—the very picture of the guilty prisoner in the dock.

The expert looked at both the men curiously, then threw down the paper contemptuously.

"It is a palpable forgery," he said; "and not even a clever imitation of the King's hand."

And indeed, from some accident or other, the letters were, some of them, formed in a manner unusual to the King.

Inglesant, weakened with illness and anxiety, could not restrain a movement of intense relief. He drew a long breath and stood erect, as if relieved from an oppressive weight. He raised his eyes, and they caught those of Lord Biron, which had been attracted towards him, and were fixed full on his face.

Biron started again; there was not the least doubt that Inglesant rejoiced in the proof of the forgery of the warrant. That terrible doubt stood close now before his lordship and grasped him by the throat.

Suppose, after all, this man whom he had imprisoned and despised, whose mission he had thwarted—this man whom all the royal party were calling by every contemptuous name, who stood there pale, cowed, beaten down;—suppose, after all, that this man, alone against these terrible odds, was all the time fighting a desperate battle for the King's honour, forsaken by God and men! But the consequences which would follow, if this view of the matter were the true one, were, in Lord Biron's estimation, too terrible to be thought of.

"I wish to say," said Inglesant, looking straight before him, "that the Lord Biron obtained possession of that paper when he was in possession of information of which I was ignorant. His lordship would probably have behaved differently, but he thought he was speaking to a thief."

There was something in this covert reproach, so worded, which so exactly accorded with what was passing in Lord Biron's mind that it cut him to the quick.

"I assure you, Mr. Inglesant," he said eagerly, "you are mistaken. Whatever I

may think of the cause in which you are engaged, I have always wished to behave to you as to a gentleman. If you consider that you have cause of complaint against me, I shall be ready, when these unhappy complications are well over, as I trust they may be, to give you satisfaction and to beg your pardon afterwards."

He said these last words so pointedly that Inglesant started, and saw at once that his fear had been well founded, and that, thrown off his guard by the success of the examination of the warrant, he had made a mistake. He looked up quickly at Biron—a strange terror in his face—and their eyes met.

That they understood each other is probable; at any rate Inglesant's look was so full of warning that Biron understood that if nothing more, and restrained himself at once. All this had passed almost unnoticed by the Committee, who were consulting together.

Lord Biron left the room, and Inglesant was taken back to the Tower as he had come. Mr. Secretary Milton, who had been present as a spectator, left the Parliament House and proceeded at once to Clerkenwell Green to the house of General Cromwell, and related to him and to General Ireton, who was with him, what had occurred.

"They have gained nothing by getting this warrant," he said; "nay, you have lost rather. You have brought up Lord Biron, who comes forward in the light of day and with the utmost confidence, and challenges this paper to be a forgery, and your own lawyers bear him out in it. I have not the least doubt it is the King's; but some of the letters, either purposely or more probably by accident, are not in his usual hand, and the best judges cannot agree on these matters. Out of Inglesant you will get nothing. He is a consummate actor, as I have known of old. He is prepared at every point, and carefully trained by his masters the Jesuits. I know these men, and have seen them both here and abroad. Acting on select natures the training is perfect. They will go to death more indifferently than to a Court ball. You may rack them to the extremity of anguish, and in the delirium of pain they will say what they have been trained to say, and not the truth. You may wear him out with fasting and anxiety until he makes some mistake; he made two to-day, besides one which was a necessity of the case,—for I do not see what else he could have said,—that was so slight that no one saw it but Biron. Weakened by anxiety, doubtless, he could not restrain a movement of relief when the expert declared the warrant a forgery; Biron saw that too, for I watched him. Last, which was the greatest mistake of all, and would show that his training is not entirely perfect, were we not to make allowance for his broken health, he forgot his part, and suffered his passion to get the better of him, and to taunt Lord Biron in such a way that Biron, who I think till then honestly believed the King's word, very nearly let out the truth in his astonishment. But what do you gain by all this? It rather adds to the apparent truth of the man's story, and

gives life to his evidence. Nothing but his written testimony will be of any use, and this you will never get."

"He shall be tried for his life at any rate," said Cromwell.

"You have threatened him with that already."

"Threatening is one thing," replied the General; "to stand beneath the gallows condemned to death another."

* * * * *

News of the taking of Chester and of the arrest of John Inglesant on such a terrible charge—a charge at once of treason against the King, his country, and his religion—as it travelled at once over England, reached Gidding in due course. It caused the greatest dismay and distress in that quiet household. About the middle of April a gentleman of Huntingdon, a Parliament man, who had lately come from London, dined with the family. He told them during dinner that he had been present in the Committee room when Mr. Inglesant had been examined. When dinner was over Mr. John Ferrar, who was now at the head of the family, remained at table with this gentleman, being anxious to hear more, and Mary Collet also stayed to hear what she could of her friend, watching every word with eager eyes. In that family, where there was nothing but love and kindliness and entire sympathy, it was thought only natural that she should do so, and no ill-natured thought occurred to any member of it. The Parliament man described more at full the examination before the Committee, and Inglesant's worn and guilty appearance,—sad news, indeed, to both his hearers. He described Lord Biron's examination and the production of the forged warrant.

"And did John Inglesant admit that it was forged?" said Mr. Ferrar.

"Yes, he said from his own knowledge that it was prepared by Father St. Clare the Jesuit."

"It is a strange world," said Mr. Ferrar dreamily, "and the Divine call seems to lead some of us into slippery places—scarcely the heavenly places in Christ of which the Apostle dreamt."

The gentleman did not understand him, nor did Mary Collet altogether until afterwards.

Presently Mr. Ferrar said,—

"And what do you think of it all? Was the warrant forged or not?"

"I am somewhat at a loss what to think," said the other, "I am not, as you know, Mr. Ferrar, and without wishing to offend you, an admirer of the King, but I do not believe him to be a fool and mad. There is no doubt that he has tampered with the Papists throughout, yet I cannot think, unless he is in greater extremities than we suppose, that he would have practised so wild and mad a

scheme as this one of the Irish rebels and murderers. On the other hand, I can conceive nothing too bad for the Jesuits to attempt; and it seems to me that I can discern something of their hand in this—an introduction of an armed Papist force into the country, to be joined, doubtless, by all the English Papists; only I should have thought they could have procured this without bringing in the King's name, but doubtless they had some reason for this also. The general opinion among the Parliament men is that the warrant is the King's, and that he has planned the whole thing. On the other hand, it is plain the Cavaliers do not believe it, or Lord Biron would never have come boldly up of his own accord, and brought up the warrant so confidently."

"But does not the warrant itself prove something one way or the other?" said Mr. Ferrar.

"These things are very difficult to judge upon," said the gentleman. "The expert to whom the Committee gave it pronounced it a forgery upon the spot, but he has been greatly blamed for precipitancy; and others to whom it has been shown pronounce it genuine. Some of the letters certainly are not like the King's, but the style of the hand is the King's, they say, even in these unusual letters. By the way, if you had seen Inglesant's guilty look when the expert took the paper in his hand, you would say with me it was a forgery. You could not, to my mind, have a stronger proof."

"But if the King had ordered this, would not he help Mr. Inglesant?" Mary Collet ventured to say.

"Help? madam," said the gentleman warmly, "when did the King help any of his friends?"

"Whichever way it is," said Mr. Ferrar mildly, "he cannot help. To help would be to condemn himself in public opinion, which in these unhappy distractions he dare not do. Did Lord Biron speak to Mr. Inglesant, sir?"

"Very little. They taunted each other once, and seemed about to come to blows. All the evidence went to show that Lord Biron suspected him from the first."

The gentleman soon after left. Mr. Ferrar returned to the dining-room after seeing him to his horse, and found Mary Collet sitting where they had left her, lost in sad and humiliating thought.

He sat down near her and said kindly,—

"My dear Mrs. Mary, I hardly know which of the two alternatives is the best for your friend—for my friend; but it is better at least for you to know the truth, and I think I can now pretty much tell which is the true one. If this plot were altogether the Jesuits', John Inglesant would not say it. If the King had no hand in it, proof would be given a thousand ways without having recourse to this. There are other facts which to my mind are conclusive that this way of

thinking is the right one, but I need not tell them all to you. What I have said I should say to none but you. You will see that it is of the utmost importance that you say nothing of it to any. I believe you may comfort yourself in thinking that, according to the light which is given him, John Inglesant is following what he believes to be his duty, and none can say at any rate that it is a smooth and easy path he has chosen to walk in."

Mary Collet thanked him, her beautiful eyes full of tears, and left the room.

A few days afterwards the news ran like wildfire over England that the King had left Oxford secretly, and that no one knew where he was; and a night or two afterwards Mr. John Ferrar was called up by a gentleman who said he was Dr. Hudson, the King's Chaplain, and that the King was alone, a few paces from the door, and that he would immediately fetch him in.

Mr. Ferrar received His Majesty with all possible respect. But fearing that Gidding, from the known loyalty of the family, might be a suspected place, for better concealment he conducted the King to a private house at Coppingford, an obscure village at a small distance from Gidding, and not far from Stilton. It was a very dark night, and but for the lantern Mr. Ferrar carried, they could not have known the way. As it was, they lost their way once, and wandered for some time in a ploughed field. Mr. Ferrar always spoke with the utmost passionate distress of this night, as of a night the incidents of which must have awakened the compassion of every feeling heart, however biassed against the King. As a proof of the most affecting distress, the King, he said, was serene and even cheerful, and said he was protected by the King of kings. His Majesty slept at Coppingford, but early in the May morning he was up, and parted from Mr. Ferrar, going towards Stamford. Mr. Ferrar returned to his house, and two days after it was known that the King had given himself up to the Scottish army.

CHAPTER XIV.

Inglesant remained in prison, and would have thought that he had been forgotten, but that every few weeks he was sent for by the Committee and examined. The Committee got no new facts from him, and indeed probably did not expect to get any; but it was very useful to the Parliament party to keep him before the public gaze as a Royalist and a Jesuit. It was a common imputation upon the Cavaliers that they were Papists, and anything that strengthened this belief

made the King's party odious to the nation. Here was a servant of the King's, an avowed Jesuit, and one self-condemned in the most terrible crimes. It is true he was disowned by the royal party, apparently sincerely; but the general impression conveyed by his case was favourable to the Parliament, and they therefore took care to keep it before the world. These examinations were looked forward to by Inglesant with great pleasure, the row up the river and the sight of fresh faces being such a delight to him. He was not confined to his room, being allowed to walk at certain hours in the court of the Tower, and he found a box containing a few books, a Lucretius, and a few other Latin books, probably left by some former occupant of the cell. These were not taken from him, and he read and re-read them, especially the Lucretius, many times. They saved him from utter prostration and despair,—they, and a secret help which he acknowledged afterwards,—a help, which to men of his nature certainly does come upon prayer to God, to whatever source it may be ascribed;—a help which in terrible sleepless hours, in hours of dread weariness of life, in hours of nervous pain more terrible than all, calms the heart and soothes the brain, and leaves peace and cheerfulness and content in the place of restlessness and despair. Inglesant said that repeating the name of Jesus simply in the lonely nights kept his brain quiet when it was on the point of distraction, being of the same mind as Sir Charles Lucas, when, "many times calling upon the sacred name of Jesus," he was shot dead at Colchester.

More than a year passed over him. From the scraps of news he could gather from his jailer, and from the soldiers in the court during his walks, he learnt that the King had been given up by the Scots, had escaped from Hampton Court, had been retaken and sent to Carisbrooke, and was soon to come to London, the man said, for his trial.

It was soon after he had learnt this last news that his jailer suddenly informed him that he was to be tried for his life.

Accordingly, soon after, a warrant arrived from Bradshaw, the President of the Council of State, to bring him before that body.

The Council sat in Essex House, and some gentlemen, who had surrendered Pembroke upon terms that they should depart the country in three days, but—accounting it base to desert their prince, and hoping that there might be further occasion of service to His Majesty,—had remained in London, were upon their trial. When Inglesant arrived with his guard these gentlemen were under examination, and one of them, who had a wife and children, was fighting hard for his life, arguing the case step by step with the lawyers and the Council. Inglesant was left waiting in the anteroom several hours; from the conversation he overheard, the room being constantly full of all sorts of men coming and going—soldiers, lawyers, divines—he learnt that the King's trial was coming on very soon, and he fancied that his name was mentioned as though the nearness of the

King's trial had something to do with his own being hurried on. It was a cold day, and there was a large fire in the anteroom. Inglesant had had nothing to eat since morning, and felt weak and faint. He wished the other examinations over that his own might come on; his, he thought, would not take long. At last the gentlemen were referred to the Council of War, to be dealt with as spies, and came out of the Council chamber with their guards. The one was a plain country gentleman, and neither of them knew Inglesant, but, stopping a moment in the anteroom, while the guard prepared themselves, one of them asked his name, saying he was afraid they had kept him waiting a long time. This was Colonel Eustace Powell, and Inglesant met him again when he thought he had only a few minutes to live.

The Council debated whether they should hear Inglesant that day, as it was now late in the afternoon, and the candles were lighted, but finally he was sent for into the Council.

As soon as he came to the bar, Bradshaw asked him suddenly when he saw the King last, to which he replied that he had not seen the King since Naseby field.

"You were at Naseby, then?" said Bradshaw.

"Yes," said Inglesant.

"And you ran away, I suppose?"

"Yes," said Johnny, "I ran away."

"Then you are a coward as well as a traitor," said Bradshaw.

"I am not braver than other men," said Inglesant.

Inglesant was then examined more in form, but very shortly; everything he said having been said so often before.

The President then told him that, by his own confession, he was guilty of death, and should be hanged at once if he persisted in it, but that the Council did not believe his confession—indeed, had evidence and confessions from others to prove the reverse; and therefore, if he persisted in his course, he was his own murderer, and could hope for no mercy from God. That if he would sign the declaration which they offered him, which they knew to be true, and which stated that he had only acted under the King's orders, he should not only have his life spared, but should very shortly be set at liberty.

To this he replied that if they had evidence to prove what they said, they did not want his; that he could not put his name to evidence so contrary to what he had always confessed, and was prepared to stand by to death; that, as to his fate before God, he left his soul in His hands, who was more merciful than man.

To this Bradshaw replied that they were most merciful to him, and desired to save him from himself; that, if he died, he died with a lie upon his lips, from his own obstinacy and suicide.

Making no answer to this, he was ordered back to the Tower, and warned to prepare himself for death. He saw clearly that their object was to bring out evidence signed by him on the eve of the King's trial, which no doubt would have been a great help to their cause. As he went back in his barge to the Tower, he wondered why they did not publish something with his name attached, without troubling themselves about his consent. As they went down the river, the darkness became denser, and the boat passed close to many other wherries, nearly running them down; the lights on the boats and the barges glimmered indistinctly, and made the course more difficult and uncertain. They shot the bridge under the mass of dark houses and irregular lights, and proceeded across the pool towards the Tower stairs. The pool was somewhat clear of ships, and the lanterns upon the wharves and such vessels as were at anchor made a clearer light than that above the bridge. As they crossed the pool, a wherry, rowed by a single man, came towards them obliquely from the Surrey side, so as to approach near enough to discern their persons, and then, crossing their bows, suffered itself to be run down before the barge could be stopped. The waterman climbed in at the bows, as his own wherry filled and went down. He seemed a stupid, surly man, and might be supposed to be either deaf or drunk. To the abuse of the soldiers and watermen he made no answer but that he was an up-river waterman, and was confused by the lights and the current of the bridge. The officer called him forward into the stern, and as he came towards them Inglesant knew him in spite of his perfect disguise. It was the Jesuit. He answered as many of the officer's questions as he appeared to understand, and took no manner of notice of Inglesant, who of course appeared entirely indifferent and uninterested. When they landed at the stairs, the waterman, with a perfectly professional manner, swung himself over the side into the water, and steadied the boat for the gentlemen to land, which act the officer took as an awkward expression of respect and gratitude. As Inglesant passed him he put his hand up for his to rest on, and Johnny felt a folded note passed into it. Without the least pause, he followed the officer across the Tower wharf, and was conducted to his room. As soon as he was alone he examined the paper, which contained these words only:—

"You are not forgotten. Keep on a little longer. The end is very near."

It made little impression upon him, nor did it influence his after conduct, which had already been sufficiently determined upon. He expected very little help from any one, though he believed that Father St. Clare would do what he could. The Jesuit would have died himself at any moment had his purpose required it, and he could not think that he would regard as of much importance the fall of another soldier in the same rank. He was mistaken, but he did not know it; the Jesuit, beneath his placid exterior, retained for his favourite and cleverest pupil an almost passionate regard, and would have done for him far more

than he would have thought worth the doing for himself. Meanwhile, Inglesant translated his words into a different language, and thought more than once that doubtless they were very true, and that, though in a sense not intended, the end was very near.

This took place at the beginning of December, and about a week afterwards the jailer advised Inglesant to prepare for death, for the warrant to behead him was signed, and would be put into execution that day week at Charing Cross. He immediately sent a petition to the Council of State, that a Priest, either of the Roman Catholic or the English Church, he was indifferent which, might be sent him. To this an answer was sent immediately that he was dying with a lie upon his lips, and that the presence of no priest or minister could be of any use to him, and would not be granted. The same day a Presbyterian minister was admitted to him, who used the same arguments for some time without effect, representing the fearful condition that Inglesant was in as an unrepentant sinner. Inglesant began to regret that he had made any application, and this regret was increased two days afterwards when a man, who offered him certain proofs that he was a Roman Catholic Priest, was admitted, and gave him the same advice, refusing him Absolution and the Sacrament unless he complied. Upon this Inglesant became desperate, and refused to speak again. The Priest waited some time and then left, telling him he was eternally lost.

This was the severest trial he had yet met with; but his knowledge of the different parties in the Romish Church, and the extent to which they subordinated their religion to their political intrigues, was too great to allow him to feel it so much as he otherwise would. He resigned himself to die unassisted. He applied for an English Prayer Book, but this also was refused. He remembered the old monastic missals he had possessed at Westacre, and thought over all those days with the tenderest regret.

The fatal morning arrived at last. Inglesant had passed a sleepless night; he had not the slightest fear of death, but excitement made sleep impossible. He thought often of his brother, but he had learned that he was in Paris alone; and even had he been in England, he felt no especial desire to see him under circumstances which could only have been intensely painful. Mary Collet he thought of night and day, but he knew it was impossible to obtain permission to see her, and he was tired of fruitless requests. He was tired and wearied of life, and only wished the excitement and strain over, that he might be at rest. It struck him that the greatest harshness was used towards him; his food was very poor and of the smallest quantity, and no one was admitted to him; but he did not wonder at this, knowing that his case differed from any other Loyalist prisoner.

At about eight o'clock on the appointed morning, the same officer who had conducted him before entered his room with the lieutenant of the Tower, bring-

ing the warrant for his death. The lieutenant parted from him in a careless and indifferent way. They went by water and landed by York Stairs, and proceeded by back ways to a house nearly adjoining Northumberland House, facing the wide street about Charing Cross. From one of the first floor windows a staircase had been contrived, leading up to a high scaffold or platform on which the block was fixed. Inglesant had not known till that morning whether he was to be hanged or beheaded; like every other thought, save one, it was indifferent to him—that one, how he should keep his secret to the last. In the room of this house opening on the scaffold, he found Colonel Eustace Powell, whom he had met at Essex House, who was to precede him to death. He greeted Inglesant with great kindness, but, as Johnny thought, with some reserve. He was a very pious man, strongly attached to the Protestant party in the Church of England, and he had passed the last three days entirely in the company of Dr. S——, who was then in the room with him, engaged in religious exercises, and his piety and resignation had attached the Doctor to him very much. The Doctor now proceeded to ask the Colonel, before Inglesant and the others, a series of questions, in order that he should give some account of his religion, and of his faith, charity, and repentance, to all of which he answered fully; that he acknowledged his death to be a just punishment of God for his former sins; that he acknowledged that his just due was eternal punishment, from which he only expected to escape through the satisfaction made by Christ, by which Mediator, and none other, he hoped to be saved. The Doctor then asking him if, by a miracle (not to put him in vain hope), God should save him that day, what life he would resolve to lead hereafter? he replied, "It is a question of great length, and requires a great time to answer. Men in such straits would promise great things, but a vow I would make, and by God's help endeavour to keep it, though I would first call some friend to limit how far I should make a vow, that I might not make a rash one, and offer the sacrifice of fools."

In answer to other questions, he said,—"He wished well to all lawful governments; that he did not justify himself in having ventured against the existing one; he left God to judge it whether it be righteous, and if it be, it must stand. He desired to make reparation to any he had injured, and he forgave his enemies."

The Doctor then addressed him at length, saying,—

"Sir, I shall trouble you very little farther. I thank you for all those heavenly colloquies I have enjoyed by being in your company these three days, and truly I am sorry I must part with so heavenly an associate. We have known one another heretofore, but never so Christianlike before. I have rather been a scholar to learn from you than an instructor. I wish this stage, wherein you are made a spectacle to God, angels, and the world, may be a school to all about you; for though I will not diminish your sins, yet I think there are few here have a lighter load upon

them than you have, and I only wish them your repentance, and that measure of faith that God hath given you, and that measure of courage you have attained from God."

The Colonel, having wished all who were present in the room farewell, went up on the scaffold accompanied by the Divine. The scaffold was so near that Inglesant and the officers and the guards, who stood at the window screened from the sight of the people, could hear every word that passed. They understood that the whole open place was densely crowded, but they could scarcely believe it, the silence was so profound.

Colonel Powell made a speech of some length, clearing himself of Popery in earnest language, not blaming his judges, but throwing the guilt on false witnesses, whom, however, he forgave. He bore no malice to the present Government, nor pretended to decide controversies, and spoke touchingly of the sadness and gloom of violent death, and how mercifully he was dealt with in being able to face it with a quiet mind. He finally thanked the authorities for their courtesy in granting him the death of the axe—a death somewhat worthy of his blood, answerable to his birth and qualification—which courtesy had much helped towards the pacification of his mind.

Inglesant supposed the end was now come, but to his surprise the Doctor again stepped forward, and before all the people repeated the whole former questions, to each of which the Colonel replied in nearly the same words.

Then, stepping forward again to the front of the scaffold, the Colonel said, speaking to the people in a calm and tender voice,—

"There is not one face that looks upon me, though many faces, and perhaps different from me in opinion and practice but methinks hath something of pity in it; and may that mercy which is in your hearts now, be meted to you when you have need of it! I beseech you join with me in prayer."

The completest silence prevailed, broken only by a faint sobbing and whispering sound from the excited and pitying crowd. Colonel Powell prayed for a quarter of an hour with an audible voice; then taking leave again of his friends and directing the executioner when to strike, he knelt down to the block, and repeating the words, "Lord Jesus, receive me," his head was smitten off with a blow.

A long deep groan, followed by an intense silence, ran through the crowd. The officer who accompanied Inglesant looked at him with a peculiar expression; and, bowing in return, Inglesant passed through the window, and as he mounted the steps and his eyes came to the level of, and then rose higher than the interposing scaffold, he saw the dense crowd of heads stretching far away on every hand, the house windows and roofs crowded on every side. He scarcely saw it before he almost lost the sight again. A wild motion that shook the crowd, a

roar that filled the air and stunned the sense, a yell of indignation, contempt, hatred, hands shook and clutched at him, wild faces leaping up and staring at him, cries of "Throw him over!" "Give over the Jesuit to us!" "Throw over the Irish murderer!" made his senses reel for a moment, and his heart stop. It was inconceivable that a crowd, the instant before placid, pitiful, silent, should in a moment become like that, deafening, mad, thirsting for blood. The amazing surprise and reaction produced the greatest shock. Hardening himself in a moment, he faced the people, his hat in his hand, his pale face hard set, his teeth closed. Once or twice he tried to speak; it would have been as easy to drown the Atlantic's roar. As he stood, apparently calm, this terrible ordeal had the worst possible effect upon his mind. Other men came to the scaffold calm in mind, prepared by holy thoughts, and the sacred, tender services of the Church of their Lord, feeling His hand indeed in theirs. They spoke, amid silence and solemn prayers, to a pitying people, the name of Jesus on their lips, the old familiar words whispered in their ears, good wishes, deference, respect all around, their path seemed smooth and upward to the heavenly gates. But with him—how different! Denied the aid of prayer and sacrament, alone, overwhelmed with contempt and hatred, deafened with the fiendish noise which racked his excited and overwrought brain. He was indifferent before; he became hardened, fierce, contemptuous now. Hated, he hated again. All the worst spirit of his party and of his age became uppermost. He felt as though engaged in a mad duel with a despised yet too powerful foe. He turned at last to the officer, and said, his voice scarcely heard amid the unceasing roar,—

"You see, sir, I cannot speak; do not let us delay any longer."

The officer hesitated, and glanced at another gentleman, evidently a Parliament man, who advanced to Inglesant, and offered him a paper, the purport of which he knew by this time too well.

He told him in his ear that even now he should be set at liberty if he would sign the true evidence, and not rush upon his fate and lose his soul. He repeated that the Parliament knew he was not guilty, and had no wish to put him to death.

Inglesant saw the natural rejoinder, but did not think it worth his while to make it. Only get this thing over, and escape from this maddening cry, tearing his brain with its terrible roar, to something quieter at any rate.

He rejected the paper, and turning to the officer he said, with a motion towards the people of inexpressible disdain,—

"These good people are impatient for the final act, sir; do not let us keep them any longer."

The officer still hesitated, and looked at the Parliament man, who shook his head, and immediately left the scaffold. The officer then leaned on the rail, and spoke to his lieutenant in the open space round the scaffold within the bar-

riers. The latter gave a word of command, and the soldiers fell out of their rank so as to mingle with the crowd. As soon as the officer saw this manoeuvre completed, he took Inglesant's arm, and said hurriedly,—"Come with me to the house, and be quick." Not knowing what he did, Inglesant followed him hastily into the room. They had need to be quick. A yell, to which the noise preceding it was as nothing—terrible as it had been,—a shower of stones, smashing every pane of glass, and falling in heaps at their feet,—showed the fury of a maddened, injured people, robbed of their expected prey.

The officer looked at Inglesant, and laughed.

"I thought there would be a tumult," he said; "we are not safe here; the troops will not oppose them, and they will break down the doors. Come with me."

He led Inglesant, still almost unconscious, through the back entries and yards, the roar of the people still in their ears, till they reached a stair leading to the river, where was a wherry and two or three guards. The officer stepped in after Inglesant, crying, "Pull away! The Tower!" then, leaning back, and looking at Inglesant, he said,—

"You stood that very well. I would rather mount the deadliest breach than face such a sight as that."

Inglesant asked him if he knew what this extraordinary change of intention meant.

To which he replied,—

"No; I acted to orders. Probably you are of more use to the Parliament alive than dead; besides, I fancy you have friends. I should think you are safe now."

That afternoon, a report spread through London that Inglesant, the King's servant, had confessed all that was required of him upon the scaffold, and had his life given him in return. This report was believed mostly by the lower orders, especially those who had been before the scaffold; but few of the upper classes credited it, and even these only did so for a day or two. The Parliament made no further effort; and Inglesant was left quietly in prison.

This happened on the 19th of December, and on the 20th of January the King's trial began. That could scarcely be called a trial which consisted entirely in a struggle between the King and the Court on a point of law. In the charge of high treason, read in Westminster Hall against the King, special mention was made of the commission which he "doth still continue to the Earl of Ormond, and to the Irish rebels and revolters associated with him, from whom further invasions upon the land are threatened." There appear to have been no witnesses examined on this point, all that were examined during three days, in the painted chamber, simply witnessing to having seen the King in arms. Indeed, all witnesses were unnecessary, the sentence having been already determined upon, and the King

utterly refusing to plead or to acknowledge the Court. The King, indeed, never appeared to such advantage as on his trial; he was perfectly unmoved by any personal thought; no fear, hesitation, or wavering appeared in his behaviour. He took his stand simply on the indisputable point of law that neither that Court, nor indeed any Court, had any authority to try him. To Bradshaw's assertion that he derived his authority from the people, he in vain requested a single precedent that the Monarchy of England was elective, or had been elective, for a thousand years. In his abandonment of self, and his unshaken constancy to a point of principle, he contrasted most favourably with his judges, whose sole motive was self. That none of the Parliamentary leaders were safe while the King lived is probable; but sound statesmanship does not acknowledge self-preservation as an excuse for mistaken policy, and the murder of the King was not more a crime than it was a blunder. Having been condemned by this unique Court, he was, with the most indecent haste, hurried to his end. A revolting coarseness marks every detail of the tragic story; the flower of England on either side was beneath the turf or beyond the sea, and the management of affairs was left in the hands of butchers and brewers. Ranting sermons, three in succession, before a brewer in Whitehall, is the medium to which the religious utterance of England is reduced, and Ireton and Harrison in bed together, with Cromwell and others in the room, signed the warrant for the fatal act. The horror and indignation which it impressed on the heart of the people may be understood a little by the fact, that in no country so much as in England the peculiar sacredness of Monarchy has since been carried so far. The impression caused by his death was so profound, that, forty years afterwards, when his son was arrested in his flight, the only thing that during the whole course of that revolution caused the least reaction in his favour was (according to the Whig Burnet) the fear that the people conceived that the same thing was going to be acted over again, and men remembered that saying of King Charles—"The prisons of princes are not far from their graves." He walked across the park from the garden at St. James's that January morning with so firm and quick a pace that the guards could scarcely keep the step, and stepping from his own banqueting house upon the scaffold, where the men who ruled England had so little understood him as to provide ropes and pulleys to drag him down in case of need, he died with that calm and kingly bearing which none could assume so well as he, and by his death he cast a halo of religious sentiment round a cause which, without the final act, would have wanted much of its pathetic charm, and struck that keynote of religious devotion to his person and the Monarchy which has not yet ceased to reverberate in the hearts of men.

"That thence the royal actor borne
The tragic scaffold might adorn,

While round the armed bands
Did clap their bloody hands:
He nothing common did, nor mean,
Upon that memorable scene;
But with his keener eye
The axe's edge did try;
Nor called the gods with vulgar spite
To vindicate his helpless right,
But bowed his comely head
Down, as upon a bed."

The Republican, Andrew Marvell.

CHAPTER XV.

Inglesant remained in the Tower for several months after the King's death. The Lords Hamilton, Holland, and Capel were the first who followed their royal master to the block, and many other names of equal honour and little inferior rank followed in the same list. In excuse for the murders of these men there is no other plea than, as in the case of their master—self-preservation. But the purpose was not less abortive than the means were criminal. The effect produced on the country was one of awe and hatred to the ruling powers. Thousands of copies of the King's Book, edged with black, were sold in London within the few days following his death, and Milton was obliged to remonstrate pitifully with the people for their unaccountable attachment to their King. The country, it is true, was for the moment cowed, and, although individual gentlemen took every opportunity to rise against the usurpers, and suffered death willingly in such a cause, the mass of the people remained quiet. The country gentlemen indeed were, as a body, ruined; the head of nearly every family was slain, and the widows and minors had enough to do to arrange, as best they might, with the Government agents who assessed the fines and compositions upon malignants' estates. It required a few years to elapse before England would recover itself, and declare its real mind unmistakably, which it very soon did; but during those years it never sank into silent acquiescence to the great wrong that had been perpetrated. It is the custom to regard the Commonwealth as a period of great national prosperity and peace. Nothing can be a greater mistake. There never was a moment's peace during the

whole of Cromwell's reign of power. He began by destroying that Parliament utterly, for seeking the arrest of five members of which the King lost his crown and was put to death. The best of the Republican party were kept in prison or exiled, just as the King had been seized and executed by Cromwell, independently of the Parliament. But the oppressed sections of the Puritan party never ceased to hate the usurper as much as the Royalists did, and the want of their support insured the fall of the Republic the moment the master hand was withdrawn.

After a few months Inglesant's imprisonment was much lighter; he was allowed abundance of food, and liberty to walk in the courtyards of the Tower, and was allowed to purchase any books he chose. He had received a sum of money from an unknown hand, which he afterwards found to have been that of Lady Cardiff, his brother's wife, and this enabled him to purchase several books and other conveniences. He remained in prison under these altered circumstances until the end of January 1650, when, one morning, his door opened, and without any announcement his brother was admitted to see him. Eustace was much altered; he was richly dressed, entirely in the French mode, his manner and appearance were altogether those of a favourite of the French Court, and he spoke English with a foreign accent. He greeted his brother with great warmth, and it need not be said that Johnny was delighted to see him.

Eustace told his brother at once that he was free, and showed him the warrant for his liberation.

"I was in Paris," he said, "on the eve of starting for England on affairs which I will explain to you in a moment, when 'votre ami' the Jesuit came to see me. He told me he understood I was going to England on my private affairs, but he thought possibly I might not object to do a little service for my brother;—you know his manner. He said if I would apply in certain quarters, which he named to me, I should find the way prepared, and no difficulties in obtaining your release. The words were true, and yesterday I received this warrant. As soon as it is convenient to you I shall be glad for you to leave this sombre place, as I want you to come with me to Oulton, to my wife,—my wife, who is indeed so perfectly English in all her manners, as I shall proceed to explain to you. Since you were at Oulton my wife has been growing worse and worse in health, and more and more eccentric and crotchety; every new remedy and every fresh religious notion she adopts at once. She has filled the house with quacks, of whom Van Helmont is chief, mountebanks, astrologers, and physicians,—a fine collection of beaux-esprits. The last time I was there I could not see her once, though I stayed a fortnight; she was in great misery, extremely ill, and said she was near her last. Since I have been in Paris I have been obliged to give up many of my suppers with the French King and Lords, from her letters saying she is at the point of death. She is ill at present, and no one has seen her these ten days; but I suppose

it is much after the same sort; and she sends me word that Van Helmont has promised that she shall not be buried, but preserved by his art till I can come and see her. To crown all, she has lately become a Quaker, and in my family all the women about my wife, and most of the rest, are Quakers, and Mons. Van Helmont is governor of that flock,—an unpleasing sort of people, silent, sullen, and of reserved conversation, though I hear one of the maids is the prettiest girl in all the county. These and all that society have free access to my wife, but I believe Dr. More, the Platonist, who is a scholar and gentleman, if an enthusiast, though he was in the house all last summer, did not see her above once or twice. She has been urging me for months to search all over Europe for an eagle's stone, which she says is of great use in such diseases as hers; and when I, at great labour and expense, found her one, she sends back word that it is not one, but that some of her quacks were able to decipher it at once, and that it is a German stone, such as are commonly sold in London at five shillings apiece. I have grown learned in these stones, by which the fairies in our grandfather's time used to preserve the fruits from hail and storms. There is a salamander stone. This eagle stone is one made after a cabalistic art and under certain stars, and engraved with the sign of an eagle. I could prove their virtue to you," he continued laughing, "throughout all arts and sciences, as Divinity, Philosophy, Physic, Astrology, Physiognomy, Divination of Dreams, Painting, Sculpture, Music, and what not. This affair of the stone, and these reports of sickness and death, however, and doleful stories of coffins prepared by art, and of open graves, would not have brought me over, but for another circumstance of much greater moment. When I was in Italy and stayed some time at Venice, and was desirous of engaging in some of the intrigues and amusements of the city, I was recommended to an Italian, a young man, who made himself useful to several of the nobility, as a man who could introduce me to, and show me more of that kind of pleasure, than any one else. I found him all that had been represented to me, and a great deal more, for, not to tell you too long a story, he was an adept at every sort of intrigue, and was acquainted at any rate with every species of villany and vice that the Italians have conceived. The extent to which they carry these tastes of theirs cannot be described, and from them the wildest of the gallants of the rest of Europe start back amazed. To cut this short, I was very deeply engaged to him, and in return I held some secrets of his, which he would not even now have known. At last, upon some villanous proposal made by him, I drew upon him. We had been dining at one of the Casinos in St. Mark's Place, and I would have run him through the body, but the crowd of mountebanks, charlatans, and such stuff, interposed and saved him. I have often wished since I had. He threatened me highly, but as I was a foreigner and acquainted with most of the principal nobles, he could do me no harm. He endeavoured to have me assassinated more than once, and one Englishman was set upon and desperately

wounded in mistake for me; but by advice I hired bravoes myself who baffled his plots, for I had the longest purse. I knew nothing of him afterwards until I heard that he had left Italy, a ruined and desperate man, whose life was sought by many; and the next thing I heard, not many weeks ago, was that he was at Oulton, having gained admission to my wife as a foreign physician who had some especial knowledge of her disease. She fancies herself much the better for his nostrums, and gives herself entirely to his directions, and I believe he professes Quakerism, or some sort of foreign mysticism allied to it, which has established him with the rest of her confidants. I no sooner heard this pleasing information than I resolved to come over to England at once, and at least drive away this villain from my family, even if I had no other way to do it than by running him through the body, as I might have done in Italy. I, however, sent a messenger to my wife to inform her that I was coming, and on my reaching London a few days ago, I found him waiting for me with a packet from Oulton. In a letter my wife desires me earnestly not to come to Oulton to see her, as she is assured by good hands that some imminent danger awaits me if I do, and she encloses this horoscope, which no doubt one of her astrologers has prepared for her. Now I have no doubt the Italian is at the bottom of all this, and that, at his instigation, the horoscope has been drawn out; yet I confess that it appears to me to have something about it that looks like the truth, something beyond what would be written at the instigation of an enemy. You can read it and judge for yourself. I have dabbled a little in astrology as in other arts."

John Inglesant took the paper from his brother and examined it carefully. At the top was an astrological scheme, or drawing of the heavens, taken at some moment when the intention of Eustace to come to Oulton had first become known to his wife. Beneath was the judgment of the adept, in the following words:—

"Saturn, the significator of the quesited, being in conjunction with Venus, I judge him to have gained by ladies to a considerable extent, to be much attached to them, greatly addicted to pleasure, and very fortunate where females are concerned, and to be a man of property. The significator being affected both by Mercury, lord of the eighth in the figure, and also by Mars, the lord of the quesited's eighth house, and the aspect of separation of the moon being bad,—namely, conjunction of Jupiter and square of Mercury, who is ill aspected to Jupiter, and is going to a square of the sun on the cusp of the mid-heaven,—I judge that the quesited is in imminent danger of death; and the lord of the third house being in the eighth, and the significator being combust, in conjunction with the lord of the eighth, and the hyleg afflicted by the evil planets, makes it more certain. His significator being in the eleventh house denotes that at the present time he is well situated and with some near friend (I should judge, as he is well aspected with the moon, the lady of the third house, a brother), and happy. Mars being

in the ascendant, and the cusp of the first house wanting only three degrees of the place of the evil planet in a common sign, I judge the time of death to occur in three weeks' time, and that it will be caused by a sword or dagger wound, by which Mars kills. The danger lies to the south-west—south, because the quarter of the heaven where the lord of the ascendant is, is south-west, because the sign where he is, is west."

John Inglesant read this paper two or three times, and returned it to his brother with a smile. "I should not be greatly alarmed at it," said he; "that is not a true horoscope, or rather it is a true horoscope tampered with. The man who erected the scheme, I should say, was an honest man, though not a very clever astrologer. It has, however, as most schemes have, a glimmering of a truth not otherwise known (you and I being together, which no one at Oulton could have thought of, though you see he was wrong as to the time); but some other hand has been at work upon the judgment, and a very unskilful one. It contradicts itself. What is most important, however, is that the artist has no ground to take Saturn for your significator, which should be either the lord of the third house, the cusp of the third, or the planets therein, neither of which Saturn is. Besides, he takes the place of Fortune to be hyleg, for which he has no ground. He has taken Saturn as significator, as suiting what he knows of your character, and I think there is no doubt the Italian's hand is in this. Now I should rather say that Venus, the lady of the third, being significator and applying to a friendly trine of Jupiter, lord of the ascendant, and Saturn being retrograde, and Venus also casting a sextile to the cusp of the ascendant, is a very good argument that the querent should see the quesited speedily, and that in perfect health. I would have you think no more of this rubbish, with which a wicked man has tried to make the heavens themselves speak falsely."

"I did not know you were so good an astrologer, Johnny," said his brother.

"Father St. Clare taught it me among other things," said Inglesant; "and I have seen many strange answers that he has known himself; but it is shameful that the science should be made a tool of by designing men."

Eustace returned the papers to his pockets, and requested his brother again to prepare to leave the Tower at once. After taking leave of the Lieutenant, and feeing the warders, the two brothers departed in a coach in which Eustace had come to the Tower, and went to the lodgings of the latter in Holborn. Eustace furnished his brother with clothes until he could procure some for himself, and gave him money liberally, of which he seemed to have no stint. He wished his brother to come with him to all the places of resort in the city, but Johnny prudently declined. Indeed, the city was so quiet and dull, that few places of amusement remained. The theatres were entirely closed. Whitehall was sombre and nearly empty, and the public walks were filled only with the townspeople in staid and

sober attire. The two brothers were therefore reduced to each other's society, and it seemed as though absence or a sense of danger united them with a warmth of affection which they had seldom before known.

To John Inglesant, who had always been devotedly attached to his brother, this display of affection was delightful, cut off as he had been so long from all sympathy and friendliness. Dressed in his brother's clothes, the likeness which had once been so striking returned again, and as they walked the streets people turned to look at them with surprise. The brothers felt in their hearts old feelings and thoughts returning, which had long been forgotten and had passed away; and to John Inglesant especially, always given to half melancholy musings and brooding over the past, all his happiest recollections seemed to concentrate themselves on his brother, the last human relation that seemed left to him, since he had, as he thought, lost the favour of all his friends, relations, and acquaintances in the world. Possibly a sense of a great misfortune made this sentiment more tender and acute, for, as we shall see, there were some things in his brother's position, and in the horoscope he had shown him, which Inglesant did not like. At present, however, his whole nature, so long crushed down and lacerated, seemed to expand and heal itself in the light of his brother's love and person, and to concentrate all its powers into one intense feeling, and to lose its own identity in this passion of brotherly regard.

This feeling might also be increased by his own state of health, which made him cling closer to any support, His long imprisonment, and the sudden change from his quiet cell to all the bustle of the city life, affected his mind and brain painfully. He was confused and excited among a crowd of persons and objects to which he had been so long unaccustomed; his brain and system had received a shock from which he never entirely recovered, and for some time, at any rate, he walked as one who is in a dream, rather than as a man engaged in the active pursuits of life.

After two or three days Eustace told his brother one morning that he was ready to go into the west, but before starting he said he wished Johnny to accompany him to a famous astrologer in Lambeth Marsh, to whom already he had shown the horoscope, and who had appointed a meeting that night to give his answer, and who had also promised to consult a crystal, as an additional means of obtaining information of the future.

Accordingly, late in the afternoon, they took a wherry at the Temple Stairs, and were ferried over to Lambeth Marsh, a wide extent of level ground between Southwark and the Bishop's Palace, on which only a few straggling houses had been built. The evening was dark and foggy, and a cold wind swept across the marsh, making them wrap their short cloaks closely about them. It was almost impossible to see more than a yard or two before them, and they would probably

have found great difficulty in finding the wizard's house had not a boy with a lantern met them a few paces from the river, who inquired if they were seeking the astrologer. This was the wizard's own boy, whom, with considerable worldly prudence at any rate, he had despatched to find his clients and bring them to his house. The boy brought them into a long low room, with very little furniture in it, a small table at the upper end, with a large chair behind it, and three or four high-backed chairs placed along the wall. On the floor, in the middle of the room, was a large double circle, but there were no figures or signs of any kind about it. On the table was a long thin rod. A lamp which hung from the roof over the table cast a faint light about the room, and a brazier of lighted coals stood in the chimney.

The astrologer soon entered the room with the horoscope Eustace had left with him in his hand. He was a fine-looking man, with a serious and lofty expression of face, dressed in a black gown, with the square cap of a divine, and a fur hood or tippet. He bowed courteously to the gentlemen, who saluted him with great respect. His manner was coldest to John Inglesant, whom he probably regarded with suspicion as an amateur. He, however, acknowledged that Inglesant's criticisms on the horoscope were correct, but pointed out to him that in his own reading of it many of the aspects were very adverse. John Inglesant knew this, though he had chosen to conceal it from his brother. The astrologer then informed them that he had drawn out a scheme of the heavens himself at the moment when first consulted by Eustace, and that, in quite different ways, and by very different aspects, much the same result had been arrived at. "As, however," he went on to say, "the whole question is to some extent vitiated by the suspicion of foul play, and it will be impossible for any of us to free our minds entirely from these suspicions, I do not advise any farther inquiry; but I propose that you should consult a consecrated beryl or crystal—a mode of inquiry far more high and certain than astrology, so much so, indeed, that I will seriously confess to you that I use the latter but as the countenance and blind; but this search in the crystal is by the help of the blessed spirits, and is open only to the pure from sin, and to men of piety, humility, and charity."

As he said these words he produced from the folds of his gown a large crystal or polished stone, set in a circle of gold, supported by a silver stand. Round the circle were engraved the names of angels. He placed this upon the table, and continued,—

"We must pray to God that He will vouchsafe us some insight into this precious stone; for it is a solemn and serious matter upon which we are, second only to that of communication with the angelical creatures themselves, which, indeed, is vouchsafed to some, but only to those of the greatest piety, to which we may not aspire. Therefore let us kneel down and humbly pray to God."

They all knelt, and the adept, commencing with the Prayer-book collect for the festival of St. Michael, recited several other prayers, all for extreme and spotless purity of life.

He then rose, the two others continuing on their knees, and struck a small bell, upon which the boy whom they had before seen entered the room by a concealed door in the wainscot. He was a pretty boy, with a fair and clean skin, and was dressed in a surplice similar to those worn by choristers. He took up a position by the crystal, and waited his master's orders.

"I have said," continued the adept, "that these visions can be seen only by the pure, and by those who, by long and intense looking into the spiritual world, have at last penetrated somewhat into its gloom. I have found these mostly to be plain and simple people, of an earnest faith,—country people, grave-diggers, and those employed to shroud the dead, and who are accustomed to think much upon objects connected with death. This boy is the child of the sexton of Lambeth Church, who is himself a godly man. Let us pray to God."

Upon this he knelt down again and remained for some time engaged in silent prayer. He then rose and directed the boy to look into the crystal, saying, "One of these gentlemen desires news of his wife."

The boy looked intently into the crystal for some moments, and then said, speaking in a measured and low voice,—

"I see a great room, in which there is a bed with rich hangings; pendant from the ceiling is a silver lamp. A tall dark man, with long hair, and a dagger in his belt, is bending over the bed with a cup in his hand."

"It is my wife's room," said Eustace in a whisper, "and it is no doubt the Italian; he is tall and dark."

The boy continued to look for some time into the crystal, but said nothing; then he turned to his master and said, "I can see nothing; some one more near to this gentleman must look; this other gentleman," he said suddenly, and turning to John Inglesant, "if he looks will be able to see."

The astrologer started. "Ah!" he said, "why do you say that, boy?"

"I can tell who will see aught in the crystal, and who will not," replied the boy; "this gentleman will see."

The astrologer seemed surprised and sceptical, but he made a sign to Inglesant to rise from his knees, and to take his place by the crystal.

He did so, and looked steadily into it for some seconds, then he shook his head.

"I can see nothing," he said.

"Nothing!" said the boy; "can you see nothing?"

"No. I see clouds and mist."

"You have been engaged," said the boy, "in something that was not good—

something that was not true; and it has dimmed the crystal sight. Look steadily, and if it is as I think, that your motive was not false, you will see more."

Inglesant looked again; and in a moment or two gave a start, saying,—"The mist is breaking! I see;—I see a large room, with a chimney of carved stone, and a high window at the end; in the window and on the carved stone is the same coat many times repeated—three running greyhounds proper, on a field vert."

"I know the room," said Eustace; "it is the inn parlour at Mintern, not six miles from Oulton. It was the manor of the Vinings before the wars, but is now an inn; that was their coat."

"Do you see aught else?" said the adept.

Inglesant gave a long look; then he stepped back, and gazed at the astrologer, and from him to his brother, with a faltering and ashy look.

"I see a man's figure lie before the hearth, and the hearthstone is stained, as if with blood. Eustace, it is either you or I!"

"Look again," said the adept eagerly, "look again!"

"I will look no more!" said Inglesant, fiercely; "this is the work of a fiend, to lure men to madness or despair!"

As he spoke, a blast of wind—sudden and strong—swept through the room; the lamp burnt dim; and the fire in the brazier went out. A deathly coldness filled the apartment, and the floor and the walls seemed to heave and shake. A loud whisper, or muffled cry, seemed to fill the air; and a terrible awe struck at the hearts of the young men. Seizing the rod from the table, the adept assumed a commanding attitude, and waved it to and fro in the air; gradually the wind ceased, the dread coldness abated, and the fire burned again of its own accord. The adept gazed at Inglesant with a stern and set look.

"You are of a strange spirit, young sir," he said; "pure in heart enough to see things which many holy men have desired in vain to see; and yet so wild and rebellious as to anger the blessed spirits with your self-will and perverse thoughts. You will suffer fatal loss, both here and hereafter, if you learn not to give up your own will, and your own fancies, before the heavenly will and call."

Inglesant stared at the man in silence. His words seemed to him to mean far more than perhaps he himself knew. They seemed to come into his mind, softened with anxiety for his brother, and shaken by these terrible events, with the light of a revelation. Surely this was the true secret of his wasted life, however strange might be the place and action which revealed it to him. Whatever he might think afterwards of this night, it might easily stand to him as an allegory of his own spirit, set down before him in a figure. Doubtless he was perverse and headstrong under the pressure of the Divine Hand; doubtless he had followed his own notions rather than the voice of the inward monitor he professed to hear: henceforth, surely, he would give himself up more entirely to the heavenly voice.

Eustace appeared to have seen enough of the future, and to be anxious to go. He left a purse of gold upon the wizard's table; and hurried his brother to take his leave.

Outside the air was perfectly still; a thick motionless fog hung over the marsh and the river; not a breath of wind stirred.

"That was a strange wind that swept by as you refused to look," said Eustace to his brother; "do you really think the spirits were near, and were incensed?"

Inglesant did not reply; he was thinking of another spirit than that the wizard had evoked.

They made their way through the fog to Lambeth, and took boat again to the Temple stairs.

CHAPTER XVI.

The next morning, when the brothers awoke and spoke to each other of the events of the night, Eustace did not seem to have been much impressed by them; he ridiculed the astrologer, and made light of the visions in the crystal; he, however, acknowledged to his brother that it might be better to avoid the inn parlour at Mintern, and said they might reach Oulton by another route.

"There is a road," he said, "after you leave Cern Abbas, which turns off five or six miles before you come to Mintern; it is not much farther, but it is not so good a road, and not much frequented. It will be quite good enough for us, however, and will not delay us above an hour. But I own I feel ashamed of taking it."

John Inglesant, however, encouraged him to do so; and towards middle day they left London on the Windsor Road. Inglesant noticed, as they started, that his brother's favourite servant was absent, and asked his brother where he was. He replied that he had sent him forward early in the morning to inform his wife of their coming.

"I would not have let them know of your intention," said Johnny.

Eustace shrugged his shoulders with a peculiar gesture, saying in French,—

"It is not convenient for me to come into my family unannounced. I do not know what I might find going forward."

Johnny thought that his brother had bought his fortune rather dear; but he said nothing more upon the subject.

They slept that night at Windsor, and hoped to have reached Andover the next day; but their servants' horses, and those with the mails, were not equal to so long a distance, and they slept at Basingstoke, not being able to get farther. The weather was pleasant for the season and, to Inglesant especially—so long confined within stone walls—the journey was very agreeable. It reminded him of his ride up to London with the Jesuit long ago when a boy, when everything was new and delightful to him, and the future open and promising. The way had then been enlivened and every interest doubled by the conversation of his friend, who had known how to extract interest and amusement from the most trivial incidents; but it was not less made pleasant now by the society of his brother. A great change seemed to be coming over Eustace. He was affectionate and serious. He spoke much of past years, of their grandfather, and of the old life at Westacre; of his early Court life, before Johnny came to London, and of the day when he came down to Westacre with his father and the Jesuit, and saw his brother again. He asked Johnny much about his own life, and listened attentively to all Inglesant thought proper to tell him of his religious inquiries. He asked about the Ferrars, and told Inglesant some of the things that had been said at Court about him and them. A sense of danger—even though it made little impression upon him—seemed to have called forth kindly feelings which had been latent before; or perhaps some foreboding sense hung over him, and—by a gracious Providence—fitted and tuned his mind for an approaching fate. Inglesant felt his heart drawn towards him with an intensity which he had never felt before. The whole world seemed for the time to be centred in this brother; and he looked forward to life associated with him.

They slept at Andover; and the next day made a shorter journey to Salisbury, where they slept again. The stately cathedral was closed and melancholy-looking, and knowing no one in the town, they passed the long evening alone in the inn. The next morning early they set out. They halted at Cern Abbas about one o'clock, and dined. Eustace made some inquiries about the road he had mentioned to his brother, but seemed more and more unwilling to take it, and it required all Inglesant's persuasion to keep him to his promise. The people at the inn seemed surprised that anyone should think of taking it, and made out that the delay would be very great, and the chance of missing the way altogether not a little. At this, however, Eustace laughed, saying that he knew the country very well. Indeed, his desire to show the truth of this assertion rather assisted his brother's purpose, and they left Cern Abbas with the full intention of taking the unusual route. The country was thickly wooded, many parts of the ancient forest remaining, and here and there rather hilly. In descending one of these hills John Inglesant's horse cast a shoe, just as they reached the point where the two roads diverged, the right hand one of which they were to take. As it was

impossible for them to proceed with the horse as it was, Johnny proposed sending it back with one of the servants to Cern Abbas, and taking the man's horse instead, who could easily follow them. As they were about to put in practice this scheme, however, one of the men said there was a forge about a mile beyond, on the road before them, where it would be easy to get the shoe put on. Eustace immediately approved of this plan, and Johnny was obliged at last reluctantly to yield. It seemed to him as though the impending fate came nearer and nearer at every step. The man proved himself to be an uncertain guide as to distance, and it was fully two miles before they reached the forge. When they reached it they found that a gentleman's coach, large and unwieldy, had broken some portion of its complicated machinery, and was taxing all the efforts of the smith and his assistants to repair it. The gentlemen dismounted and accosted the two ladies who had alighted from the coach, and whom Eustace remembered to have met before at Dorchester. The coach was soon mended, and the ladies drove off; but by this time Eustace had grown impatient, and, saying carelessly to his brother, "You will follow immediately," he mounted, and turned his horse's head still along the main road, his men mounting also.

"You are not going on that way," said Johnny; "you said we should turn back to the other road."

"Oh, we cannot turn back now," said his brother; "we have come farther than I expected. We will not stop at Mintern," he added significantly.

And so saying, he rode away after the carriage, followed by his men.

Inglesant looked after him anxiously, a heavy foreboding filling his mind. He saw his brother mount the little hill before the forge, between the bare branches of the trees on either side of the road; then a slight turn of the way concealed him, but, for a moment or two more, he could see glimpses of the figures as the leafless boughs permitted, then, when he could see even these no longer, he went back into the forge. It was some ten minutes before the horse was ready, and then Inglesant himself mounted, and rode off quickly after his brother. He had felt all the day, and during the one preceding it, a weariness and dulness of sense, the result, no doubt, of fatigue acting upon his only partially recovered health, and on a frame shattered by what he had gone through. As he rode on, his brain became more and more confused, so that for some moments together he was almost unconscious, and only by an effort regained his sense of passing events. The woods seemed to pass by him as in a dream, the thick winter air to hang about him like the heavy drapery of a pall; whether he was sleeping or waking he could scarcely tell. What added to his distress was an abiding sense of crisis and danger to his brother, which required him at that moment, above all others, to exert a strength and a prescience of which he felt himself becoming more and more incapable. He was continually making violent efforts to retain

his recollection of what was passing, and of what it behoved him to do,—efforts which each time became more and more painful, and of the futility of which he became more and more despairingly conscious. Words cannot describe the torture of such a condition as this.

At last he overtook some of his brother's servants with the led horses, whom he scarcely recognized, so far were his senses obscured. Their master had ridden on before with two servants, they told him; he would have to ride hard to overtake them. He seemed eager, they said, to be at home. Inglesant could scarcely sit his horse, much less expect to overtake his brother—who was well mounted and an impetuous rider—nevertheless he gave his horse the spur, and the animal, also a good roadster, soon left the servants far behind. The confusion of mind which he suffered increased more and more as he rode along, and the events of his past life came up before his eyes as clearly and palpably as the objects through which he was riding, so that he could not distinguish the real from the imaginary, the present from the past, which added extremely to his distress. He stood again amid the confusion and carnage of Naseby field; once more he saw the throng of heads, and heard that terrible cry that had welcomed him to the scaffold; again he looked into the fatal crystal, and strange visions and ghostly shapes of death and corruption came out from it, and walked to and fro along the hedgerows and across the road before him, making terrible the familiar English fields; a tolling of the passing bell rang continually in his ear, and his horse's footfalls sounded strange and funereal to his diseased sense. He knew nothing of the road, nor of what happened as he rode along, nor what people he passed; but he missed the direct turning, and reached Mintern at last by another lane which led him some distance round. The servants with the led horses were there before him, standing before the inn door, and other strange servants in his brother's liveries, and several horses stood about.

The old manor that was now an inn stood close to the Church, at the opening of the village, with a little green before it and a wall, in the centre of which was a pair of gates flanked with pillars. The iron gates were closed, but the wall had been thrown down for some yards on either side, thus giving ample access to the house within. It was a handsome house with a large high window over the porch, in the upper panes of which Inglesant could see coats of arms. Amid the tracery of the iron gates running greyhounds were interlaced.

John Inglesant saw all this as in a dream, and he saw besides creatures that were not real walking among the living men; haggard figures in long robes, and others beneath the grave shrouds, ghostly phantoms of his disordered brain. He made a desperate effort for the hundredth time to clear his sense of these terrible distracting sights, of this death of the brain that disabled all his faculties, and for the hundredth time in vain. It appeared to him—whether it was a vision or a

reality, he did not know—that one of his brother's servants came to his horse's side, and told him something of a gentleman of his lady's, a foreign physician, having met his master purposely, and that they were within together. Inglesant dismounted mechanically and entered the hotel, telling the servant to come with him. He had some dim feeling of dragging his brother away from a great danger, and a desire of gathering about him, if he could but distinguish them, such as would assist him and were of human flesh and blood. Inside the porch, and in the narrow hall beyond, the place swarmed with these distracting visions walking to and fro; the staircase at the farther end was crowded with them going up and down. He saw, as he thought, his brother, attended by a dark, handsome man, in the gown of a physician, come down the stairs to meet him, but when they came nearer they dissolved themselves and vanished into air.

The host came to meet him, saying that his brother and the foreign gentleman were upstairs in the parlour; he had thought they were having some words a while ago, but they were quiet now. The whole house, Inglesant thought, was deadly quiet, though seemingly to him so full of life. To what terrible deed were all these strange witnesses and assistants summoned? He told the host to follow him, as he had told the man before; and he did so, supposing he meant to order something. They went up the two flights of the oak stairs, and entered the room over the hall and porch. It was a large and narrow room, and was seemingly empty. Opposite them, in the high window, and on the great carved chimney to the right, running greyhounds coursed each other, as it seemed to Inglesant, round the room. A long table hid the hearth as they came in. With a fatal certainty, as if mechanically, Inglesant walked round it towards the fire, the others with him; there they stopped—sudden and still. On the white hearthstone—his hair and clothes steeped in blood—lay Eustace Inglesant, the Italian's stiletto in his heart.

CHAPTER XVII.

The sight of his brother's corpse seemed to steady Inglesant's nerves, and clear his brain. He turned to the host, and said, "What way can the murderer have escaped?"

The host shook his head; he was incapable of speech, or even thought. The three men stood looking at each other without a word. Then Inglesant knelt

down by the body, and raised the head; there was no doubt that life was extinct—indeed, the body must have been nearly drained of blood; the fine line of steel had done its work fully, and with no loss of time. Inglesant rose from the ground; his sight, his recollection, his senses were speedily failing him; nothing kept him conscious but the terrible shock acting with galvanic effect upon his frame. The back of the premises was searched, and mounted messengers were sent to the neighbouring towns and to the cross roads, and notice sent to the nearest Justice of the Peace. The country rose in great numbers, and came pouring in to Mintern before the early evening set in. The body was deposited on the long table in the parlour where the deed was committed; and more than one Justice examined the room that afternoon. Inglesant saw that the guard was set, and proper care taken; and then he mounted to ride to Oulton. He was not fit to ride; but to stay in the house all night was impossible—to lie down equally so. In the night air he rode to Oulton, through the long wild chase, by the pools of water—from which the flocks of birds rose startled as he passed, and by the herds of deer. The ride settled his nerves, and when he reached the house he was still master of himself. The news had preceded him; Lady Cardiff was said to be in a paroxysm of grief; but, as no one had seen her for days except her immediate servants, Inglesant did not attempt to obtain an interview with her. He was received by Dr. More and the superior servants, and sat down to supper. Not a word was spoken during that sombre meal except by the doctor, who pressed Inglesant to eat and drink, and offered to introduce him to Van Helmont, who was not present. The doctor said grace after supper; but when he had done, one of the female servants, a Quakeress, stood up, and spoke some words recommending patience and a feeling after God, if perchance He might be found to be present, and a help in such a terrible need. The singularity of this proceeding roused Inglesant from the lethargy in which he was, and the words seemed to strike upon his heart with a familiar and not uncongenial sense. The mystical doctrine which he had studied was not unlike much that he would hear from Quaker lips. He went to his room after supper, intending to rise early next morning; but before daybreak he was delirious and in a high fever, and Van Helmont was sent for to his room, and bled him freely, and administered cordials and narcotic draughts. The skilful treatment caused him to sleep quietly for many hours; and when he awoke, though prostrate with weakness, he was free from fever, and his brain was calm and clear.

From inquiries which he made, it appeared that the Italian had been making preparations for leaving for several days, probably doubting the success of his attempt to win over Eustace to tolerate his continued stay at Oulton. Inglesant was told that it was supposed that he had not intended to murder his brother; but that Eustace had probably threatened him, and that in the heat of contention the

blow was struck. The Italian had destroyed all his papers, and everything that could give any clue to his conduct or history; but he had left a very bad reputation behind him, independently of his last murderous act; and his influence with Lady Cardiff was attributed to witchcraft.

The funeral of Eustace Inglesant took place a few days after, at the Church on the borders of the chase. Snow had fallen in the meanwhile; and the train of black mourners passed over the waste of white that covered the park. A multitude of people filled the churchyard, and crowded round the outside of the hall. Lady Cardiff, by lavish almsgiving and other vagaries, had always attracted a number of vagrant and masterless people to Oulton; and there were always some encampments of such people in the chase. She particularly favoured mountebanks and quacks of all kinds, and numbers of them were present at the funeral. Some few of the country gentry attended; but Eustace being almost unknown in the county, and his wife by no means popular, many who otherwise would have been present were not so. The Puritan authorities of the neighbourhood suspected Lady Cardiff's establishment as a haunt of recusants. Dr. More was a known Royalist; Eustace had been only restrained from active exertion on the same side by his love of pleasure and his wife's prudence; and the Puritans regarded the Quakers with no favour. The herd of idle and vicious people, as the authorities considered them, who frequented Oulton, was an abomination in their eyes; and understanding that a number of them would be at the funeral, two or three Puritan magistrates, with armed servants and constables, assembled to keep order, as they said; but, as it proved, to provoke a riot. To make matters worse, Dr. More began to read the Prayer Book service, which was forbidden by law. The Justices interposed; the mob of mountebanks, and players, and idle people sided with the Church party, which had always given them a friendly toleration, and commenced an assault upon the constables and Justices' servants, driving them from the grave side with a storm of snowballs. The funeral was completed with great haste, and the mourning party returned to the house, whither the mob also resorted, and were regaled with provisions of all kinds during the afternoon, being with difficulty induced to disperse at night.

Inglesant took no part in this riot, being indeed still too weak and ill to exert himself at all. He expected to be arrested and sent back to London; but the authorities did not take much notice of the riot, contenting themselves with dispersing the people, and seeing that most of them left the neighbourhood, which they were induced to do by being set in the village stocks, and otherwise imprisoned and intimidated.

Lady Cardiff had sent messages to Inglesant every day, expressing her interest in him, and she now sent Van Helmont to him with the information that a large sum of money, which she had assigned to his brother, would now be his.

This sum, which amounted to several thousand pounds, she was ready to pay over to Inglesant whenever he might desire it. She hoped he would remain at Oulton till his health was more established, but she hinted that she thought it was for his own interest that neither his stay there, nor indeed in England, should be unnecessarily prolonged. Meanwhile, she recommended him to Dr. More and to the Quakers; the teaching which he would derive from both sources, she assured him, would be much to his benefit. Inglesant returned a courteous message expressive of his obligation for her extraordinary generosity, and assuring her that he should endeavour to benefit by whatever her inmates might communicate to him. He informed her that he intended, as soon as his strength was sufficiently established, to go to Paris, where the only friend he had left was, and that any sum of money she was so generous as to afford him might be transmitted to the merchants there. He had some thoughts, he said, of going to Gidding, but had learnt that soon after the execution of the King, the house had been attacked by a mob of soldiers and others, and that the family, who had timely warning of their intention, had left the neighbourhood and were dispersed. He concluded by hoping that before he left he might be allowed to thank his benefactress in person.

Some weeks passed over at Oulton with great tranquillity, and Inglesant regained his strength and calmness of mind. There was a large and valuable library in the house, and the society of Dr. More was pleasant to Inglesant, though in many ways they were far from congenial; indeed, there was more in Van Helmont's character and tastes that suited his tone of mind. During these weeks, however, Inglesant began to adapt himself to a course of religious life from which he never altogether departed, and which, after some doubts and many attempts on the part of others to divert him from it, he followed to the end of his life. He was no doubt strengthened at the beginning of this course by the conversation of Dr. More and also of the Quakers. These latter, whom Inglesant had been led to regard with aversion, he found harmless and sober people, whose blameless lives, and the elevated mysticism of their conversation, commended them to him.

The transient calm of this existence was, however, broken by one absorbing idea—the desire of being revenged upon his brother's murderer, of tracking the Italian's path, and bringing him to some terrible justice. It was this that induced him to seek the Jesuit, whom at one time he had been inclined to shun. No one, he considered, would have it in his power, from the innumerable agents in every country with whom he had connection, to assist him in his search so much as the Jesuit; and he believed that he had deserved as much at his master's hand. But it was not natural that, at any rate at once, he should suppose that such a motive as this would be any hindrance to him in a religious life, and for a long time he was unconscious of any such idea.

It will be as well here to endeavour to understand something of the peculiar form which Christianity had assumed in Inglesant's mind—a form which was not peculiar to himself, but which he possessed in common with most in that day whose training had been more or less similar to his own. It was similar in many respects to that which prevails in the present day in most Roman Catholic countries, and may be described as Christianity without the Bible. It is doubtful whether, except perhaps once or twice in College Chapel, he had ever read a chapter of the Bible himself in his life. Certainly he never possessed a Bible himself; of its contents, excepting those portions which are read in Church and those contained in the Prayer Book, he was profoundly ignorant. It was not included in the course of studies set him by the Jesuit. Of the Protestant doctrines of justification by faith and by the blood of Christ, and of the Calvinistic ones of predestination and assurance, he was only acquainted in a vague and general way, as he might have heard mention of them in idle talk, mostly in contempt and dislike. It is true the Laudian School in the Church, in which he had been brought up, held doctrines which, in outward terms, might seem to bear some affinity with some, if not all of these; but they were in reality very different. The Laudian School held, indeed, that the sacrifice of Christ's blood had removed the guilt of sin, and that by that, and that only, was salvation secured of men; but they held that this had been accomplished on the Cross, once for all, independently of anything that man could do or leave undone. The very slightest recognition, on the part of man, of this Divine sacrifice, the very least submission to the Church ordinances, combined with freedom from outward sin, was sufficient to secure salvation to the baptized; and indeed the Church regarded with leniency and hope even the wild and reprobate. It is true that the Laudian press teemed with holy works, setting the highest of pure standards before its readers, and exhorting to the following of a holy life; but this life was looked upon rather as a spiritual luxury and privilege, to which high and refined natures might well endeavour to attain, rather than as absolutely necessary to salvation. With this view the Church regarded human error with tolerance, and amusements and enjoyments with approbation, and as deserving the highest sanctions of religion. Inglesant's Christianity, therefore, was ignorant of doctrine and dogma of almost every kind, and concentrated itself altogether on what may be called the Idea of Christ, that is, a lively conception of and attraction to the person of the Saviour. This idea,—which comes to men in different ways, and which came to Inglesant for the first time in the sacrament at Gidding, being, I should suppose, a purely intellectual one,—would no doubt be inefficient and transitory, were it not for the unique and mysterious power of attraction which it undoubtedly possesses. In the pursuit of this idea he received little assistance either from Dr. More. The school to which the doctor belonged,—the Christian Platonists,—had no tendency to that

exclusive worship of the person of Jesus, which, in some religious schools, has almost superseded the worship of God. This he had received from the Jesuits and the mystical books of Catholic devotion which had had so great an influence over him. The Jesuits, with all their faults, held fast by the motive of their founder, and the worship of Jesus was by them carried to its fullest extent. Dr. More's theology was more that of a philosophical Deism, into which the person and attributes of Christ entered as a part of an universal scheme, in which the universe, mankind, the all-pervading Spirit of God, and the objects of thought and sense, played distinct and conspicuous parts.

One fine and warm day in the early spring, Inglesant and the doctor were walking in the garden at the side of the house bordering on the chase and park. The wide expanse of grassy upland stretched before them; overhead, the arch of heaven, chequered by the white clouds, was full of life and light and motion; across the water of the lakes the Church bells, rung for amusement by the village lads, came to the ear softened and yet enriched in tone; the spring air, fanned by a fresh breeze, refreshed the spirits and the sense. The doctor began, as upon a favourite theme, to speak of his great sense of the power and benefit of the fresh air.

"I would always," he said, "be '*sub dio*', if it were possible. Is there anything more delicious to the touch than the soft, cool air playing on our heated temples, recruiting and refrigerating the spirits and the blood? I can read, discourse, or think nowhere as well as in some arbour, where the cool air rustles through the moving leaves; and what a rapture of mind does such a scene as this always inspire within me! To a free and divine spirit how lovely, how magnificent is this state for the soul of man to be in, when, the life of God inactuating her, she travels through heaven and earth, and unites with, and after a sort feels herself the life and soul of this whole world, even as God? This indeed is to become Deiform—not by imagination, but by union of life. God doth not ride me whither I know not, but discourseth with me as a friend, and speaks to me in such a dialect as I can understand fully,—namely, the outward world of His creatures; so that I am in fact '*Incola coeli in terrâ*,' an inhabitant of paradise and heaven upon earth; and I may soberly confess that sometimes, walking abroad after my studies, I have been almost mad with pleasure,—the effect of nature upon my soul having been inexpressibly ravishing, and beyond what I can convey to you."

Inglesant said that such a state of mind was most blessed, and much to be desired; but that few could hope to attain to it, and to many it would seem a fantastic enthusiasm.

"No," said the doctor, "I am not out of my wits, as some may fondly interpret me, in this divine freedom; but the love of God compelleth me; and though you yourself know the extent of fancy, when phantoms seem real external objects,

yet here the principle of my opponents, the Quakers (who, it may be, are nearer to the purity of Christianity—for the life and power of it—than many others), is the most safe and reasonable,—to keep close to the Light within a man."

"You agree with the Quakers, then, in some points?" said Inglesant.

"They have indeed many excellent points, and very nobly Christian, which I wish they would disencumber from such things as make them seem so uncouth and ridiculous; but the reason our lady has taken so to them as to change some of her servants for Quakers, and to design to change more, is that they prove lovers of quiet and retirement, and they fit the circumstances that she is in, that cannot endure any noise, better than others; for the weight of her affliction lies so heavy upon her, that it is incredible how very seldom she can endure any one in her chamber, and she finds them so still, quiet, and serious, that their company is very acceptable to her; and she is refreshed by the accounts of their trials and consolations, and their patience and support under great distress. Baron Van Helmont frequents their meetings."

"What do you think of the Baron?"

"I think he knows as little of himself, truly and really, as one who had never seen him in his life."

Inglesant did not try to penetrate into this oracular response; but said,—

"Have you seen Mr. Fox, the famous Quaker?"

"Yes; I saw him once," replied the doctor; "and in conversation with him I felt myself as it were turned into brass, so much did his spirit and perversity oppress mine."

"There are some men," the doctor went on, after a pause—but Inglesant did not know of whom he was thinking—"that by a divine sort of fate are virtuous and good, and this to a very great and heroical degree; and come into the world rather for the good of others, and by a divine force, than through their own proper fault, or any immediate or necessary congruity of their natures. All which is agreeable to that opinion of Plato, that some descend hither to declare the being and nature of the gods, and for the greater health, purity, and perfection of this lower world. I would fain believe, Mr. Inglesant," he continued, to the other's great surprise, "that you are one of those. Ever since I first saw you I have had some thought of this; and the more I see of you the more I hope and believe that some such work as this is reserved for you. You have, what is very happy for you, what I call an ethereal sort of body—to use the Pythagoric phrase—even in this life, a mighty purity and plenty of the animal spirits, which you may keep lucid by that conduct and piety by which you may govern yourself. And this makes it all the more incumbent on you to have a great care to keep in order this luciform vehicle of the soul, as the Platonists call it; for there is a sanctity of body which the sensually minded do not so much as dream of. And this divine body should be

cultivated as well as the divine life; for by how much any person partakes more of righteousness and virtue, he hath also a greater measure of this divine body or celestial matter within himself; he throws off the baser affections of the earthly body, and replenishes his inner man with so much larger draughts of ethereal or celestial matter; and to incite you still more to this effort, you have only to consider that the oracle of God is not to be heard but in His holy temple, that is to say, in a good and holy man, thoroughly sanctified in spirit, soul, and body."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Shortly after the conversation recorded in the previous chapter, Inglesant, who appeared completely restored to health,—thanks to the Baron Van Helmont and to rest of body,—left Oulton, and, without going to London, went to Rye, and sailed thence to France, where he arrived about the middle of May 1651. He had taken a passage in a vessel sailing to Dieppe, and from thence he posted to Paris, this route being thought much safer than the one through Calais, which was much infested by robbers.

He found Paris full of the fugitive Royalists in a state of distress and destitution, which was so great, that on the Queen of England's going to St. Germain's on one occasion, her creditors threatened to arrest her coach. The young King Charles was in Scotland, previous to his march into England, which terminated in the battle of Worcester. Inglesant was well received by the Royalists to whom he made himself known on his arrival. The Glamorgan negotiations were by this time pretty well understood among the Royalists, and Inglesant's conduct fairly well appreciated. He had the reputation of being a useful and trustworthy agent, and as such was well received by the heads of the party. He presented himself at the Louvre, where the Queen was, who received him graciously, and expressed a wish that he would remain in Paris, as she had been speaking not many days ago with Father St. Clare concerning him. Inglesant inquired where the Jesuit was, and was told, at St. Germain's with the French Court, and that he would be in Paris again shortly. After leaving the Queen, Inglesant applied to the merchants with whom his money was to have been lodged; but found that by some misunderstanding a much smaller sum had arrived than he had expected. Such as it was, however, he was able from it to make advances to the Royalist gentlemen, many of whom of the highest rank were in absolute distress; and he even

advanced a considerable sum indirectly to the Queen, and, through the Duke of Ormond, to the young Duke of Gloucester.

It is not necessary to enter into any details with regard to the state of France or the French Court at that time. The Court had been obliged to leave Paris some time before, owing to the violence of the populace, and was at present much embarrassed from the same cause. It was therefore quite unable to afford any help to the distressed fugitives from England, had it wished to do so, and even the Queen Henrietta,—a daughter of France,—could scarcely obtain assistance, and was reduced to the greatest pecuniary distress. The Duke of Ormond parted with his last jewel to procure money for the use of the Duke of Gloucester, whose guardian he was, and the inferior Royalists were reduced to still greater necessities. No sooner, therefore, was it known that Inglesant had means at his disposal, than he became once more a person of the greatest consequence, and every one sought him out, or, if not before acquainted with him, desired an introduction. He frequented the Chapel of Sir Richard Browne, who had been ambassador from Charles the First, and still retained his privileges, his chapel, and his household, being accredited from the young fugitive King to the French Court. This was the only Anglican place of worship in Paris, or indeed at that time, perhaps, in the world. Ordinations were performed there, and it was frequented by the King and the two young Princes, the Duke of York and the Duke of Gloucester, and by all the Royalist fugitives then in Paris.

Inglesant was the more welcome, as many of the Royalist gentlemen who had any money at all, refused to stay in Paris, where there were so many claims upon them, but went on to other countries, especially Italy. He found many of these gentlemen in a very excited state, owing to the efforts of the Queen Mother to discourage the English Church, and to win over perverts to Romanism. The King and the Duke, it is true, received the sacrament in the Ambassador's Chapel, partaking of it together before the other communicants, Lord Biron, Inglesant's old friend, and Lord Wilmot, holding a white cloth before the two Princes; but the Queen Mother was making every effort to pervert the young Duke of Gloucester, and throwing all the weight of her influence and patronage on the side of the Papists. Several of the maids of honour had been discharged shortly before Inglesant's arrival in Paris, for refusing to conform to the Romish Mass. Dr. Cosin, the Dean of Peterborough, a profound Ritualist, but at the same time devoted to the Anglican Church, had preached a sermon in the Chapel comforting and supporting these ladies. Inglesant being with the Queen at the Palais Royal, one morning, as she was going to her private mass, was commanded to accompany her; and upon his readily complying, the Queen afterwards spoke to him on the subject of religion, inquiring why he, who had so long been so closely connected with the Catholic Church, did not become one of its members. Inglesant pleaded

that the Jesuit, Father St. Clare, had discouraged him from joining the Papists, as not convenient in the position in which he had been placed. The Queen said that the reasons which actuated the Father did not any longer exist, but that she would wait till she could take his advice; in the meantime requesting Inglesant to attend the Romish services as much as possible, which he promised to do. As a matter of choice, he preferred the English communion to the mass, but he regarded both as means of sacramental grace, and endeavoured at low mass to bring his mind into the same devout stillness and condition of adoration as at a communion. It would appear that about this time he must have been formally received into the Romish Church, for he confessed and received the sacrament at low mass; but no mention of the ceremony occurs, and it is possible that the priests received instructions respecting him, while there is clear proof that he attended the services at the Ambassador's Chapel, and once at any rate partook of the sacrament there.

Here he met with Mr. Hobbes, who expressed himself pleased to see him, and entered into long discourses with him respecting the Glamorgan negotiations and the late King's policy generally,—discourses which were very instructive to Inglesant, though he felt a greater repugnance to the man than when he formerly met him in London. The religious thoughts which had filled Inglesant's mind at Oulton were far from forgotten, and when he arrived in Paris, his first feeling had been one of dissatisfaction at finding himself at once involved again in political intrigue; but his affection for the Jesuit, apart from his desire to discover the Italian by his means, made him desire to meet him; and he continued in Paris, waiting with this intention, when an event occurred which altogether diverted his thoughts.

He spent his time in many ways,—partly in acts of religion, partly in studies, frequenting several lectures, both in letters and in science, such as Mons. Febus's course of chemistry. He also frequented the tennis court in the Rue Verdelet, where the King of England, and the princes and nobles, both of that country and of France, amused themselves. He had been at this latter place one morning, and something having happened to prevent the gentleman who had arranged to play the match from appearing, Inglesant, who was a good tennis player, had been requested to take his place against Mons. Saumeurs, the great French player. There was a large and brilliant attendance to watch the play, and Inglesant exerted himself to the utmost, so much so, that he earned the applause and thanks of the company for the brilliant match played before them. Having at last been beaten, which occurred probably when the great player considered he had afforded sufficient amusement to the spectators, Inglesant turned to leave the court, having resumed his dress and sword, when he was accosted by an English nobleman whom he very slightly knew; who, no doubt, influenced by the

applause and attention which Inglesant had excited, asked him to dine with him at a neighbouring place of entertainment. After dinner the gentleman told Inglesant that he was in the habit, together with many other English who wished to perfect their knowledge of French, of resorting to one or other of the convents of Paris, to talk with the ancient sisters, whose business it was to receive strangers, and had several such acquaintances with whom he might "chat at the grates, for the nuns speak a quaint dialect, and have besides most commonly all the news that passes, which they are ready to discourse upon as long as you choose to listen, whereby you gain a greater knowledge of the most correct and refined manner of speaking of all manner of common and trifling events than you could otherwise gain." He said that he had received a parcel of English gloves and knives from England the day before, some of which he intended that afternoon taking to one of his "Devota" (as they call a friend in a convent, he said, in Spain), and would take Inglesant with him if the latter wished to come. Inglesant willingly consented, and they went to a convent of the —— in the Rue des Terres Fortes. They found the ancient nun—a little courtly old lady—as amusing and pleasant as they expected; and she was on her part apparently equally pleased with Lord Cheney's presents, and with Inglesant's courteous discourse and good French. She invited Inglesant to visit her again, but the next day he received a message which was brought by a servant of the convent, who had found his lodgings with some difficulty through Lord Cheney, requesting him to come to the convent at once. It lay in a retired and rather remote part of the city, and but for his friend's introduction he would never have visited it. Thinking the message somewhat strange, he complied with the request, and in the afternoon found himself again in the convent parlour. The nun came immediately to the grate.

"Ah, monsieur," she said, "I am glad that you are come. You think it strange, doubtless, that I should send for you so soon; but I spoke of you last night to an inmate of this house, who is a compatriot of yours, and who, I am sorry to say, is very ill,—nay, I fear at the point of death,—and she told me she had known you very well—ah, very well indeed—in times past; and she entreated me to send to you if I could find out your residence. I only knew of you through Milord Chene, but I sent to him."

"What is this lady's name, madame?" said Inglesant, who, even then, did not guess who it was.

"Ah, her name," said the nun; "her name is Collette—Mademoiselle Marie Collette."

She had the door in the grate opened for Inglesant, and took him through the house, and past a court planted with trees, to a small and quiet room overlooking the distant woodlands. There, upon a little bed—her face white, her hands and form wasted to a shadow, only her wonderful eyes the same as ever—lay

Mary Collet, her face lighting up and her weak hands trembling as he came in. On his knees by the bedside, his face buried in his hands, her white fingers playing over his hair, Inglesant could not speak, dare not even look up. The old nun looked on kindly for some few minutes, and then left them.

Mary was the first to speak, and as she spoke, Inglesant raised his head and fixed his eyes on hers, keeping down the torrent of grief that all but mastered him as he might.

She spoke to him of her joy at seeing him—she so lonely and lost in a foreign land, separated from all her friends and family,—not knowing indeed where they were; of the suffering and hardships she had passed through since they had left Gidding—hardships which had caused the fever of which she lay dying as she spoke. She had come to Paris after parting from her uncle in Brittany, where they had suffered much deprivation with the Lady Blount, and had been received into this convent, where she had meant to take the veil; but the fever grew upon her, and the physicians at last gave her no hope of recovery. There she had lain day after day, tended by the kind nuns with every care, yet growing weaker and more weary—longing for some voice or face of her own country or of former days. While she had been well enough to listen, the nuns had told her all the little scraps of news relating to her own countrymen and to the Queen which had reached them; but Inglesant's arrival was not likely to be among these, and Mary had heard nothing of his being in Paris till the night before, when the kindly old nun, finding her a little better than usual, had thought to amuse her by speaking of the pleasant young Englishman who spoke French so well, and whose half foreign name she could easily remember, and who, Lord Cheney had told her, had been one of the most faithful servants of the poor murdered King.

The start of the dying girl before her, her flushed face as she raised herself in bed and threw herself into her friend's arms, entreating her that this old friend, the dearest friend she had ever known—ah! dearer now than ever—might be sent for at once while she had life and strength to speak to him, showed the nun that this was yet again a reacting of that old story that never tires a woman's heart. The nuns were not strict—far from it—and, even had Mary already taken the veil, the sisters would have thought little blame of her even for remembering that once she dreamt of another bridegroom than the heavenly Spouse. The nun had promised to send early in the morning to Lord Cheney, who, no doubt, knew the abode of his friend; and Mary, as she finished telling all this in her low and weak speech, lay still and quiet, looking upon her friend almost with as calm and peaceful a glance of her absorbing eyes as when she had looked at him in the garden parlour at Gidding years ago. He himself said little; it was not his words she wanted, could he have spoken them. That he was there by her, looking up in her face, holding her hand, was quite enough. At last she said,—

"And that mission to the Papist murderers, Johnny, you did not wish to bring them into England of your own accord or only as a plot of the Jesuits? Surely you were but the servant of one whom you could not discover."

"I had the King's own commission for all I did, for every word I said," said Inglesant eagerly—"a commission written by himself, and signed in my presence, which he gave me himself. That was the paper the Lord Biron would not burn."

"I knew it must be so, Johnny; my uncle told me it must be so. It seems to me you have served a hard master, though you do not complain. We heard about the scaffold at Charing Cross. Will you serve your heavenly Master as well as you have served your King?"

"I desire to serve Him, am seeking to serve Him even now, but I do not find the way. Tell me how I can serve Him, Mary, and I swear to you I will do whatever you shall say."

"He must teach you, Johnny, not I. I doubt not that you follow Him now, will serve Him hereafter much better than I could ever show you—could ever do myself. Whatever men may think of the path you have already chosen, no one can say you have not walked in it steadily to the end. Only walk in this way as steadily, Johnny,—only follow your heart as unflinchingly, when it points you to Him. I will do nothing night and day while I live, Johnny, but pray to Jesus that He may lead you to Himself."

The old familiar glamour that shed such a holy radiance on the woods and fields of Gidding, now, to Inglesant's senses, filled the little convent room. The light of heaven that entered the open window with the perfume of the hawthorn, was lost in the diviner radiance that shone from this girl's face into the depths of his being, and bathed the place where she was in light. His heart ceased to beat, and he lay, as in a trance, to behold the glory of God.

CHAPTER XIX.

Inglesant was present at the funeral in the cemetery of the convent, and caused a white marble cross to be set over the grave. He remained in his lodgings several days, melancholy and alone. His whole nature was shaken to the foundation, and life was made more holy and solemn to him than ever before. The burden of worldly matters became intolerable, and the coil that had been about his life so long grew more oppressive till it seemed to stifle his soul. He desired to listen to

the Divine Voice, but the voice seemed silent, or to speak only the language of worldly plans and schemes. He desired to live a life of holiness, but the only life that seemed possible to him was one of business and intrigue. What was this life of holiness that men ought to lead? Could it be followed in the world? Or must he retire to some monastic solitude to cultivate it; and was it certain that it would flourish even there? It seemed more and more impossible for him to find it; he was repulsed and turned back upon his worldly life at every attempt he made. He almost resolved to give up the Jesuit, and to seek some more spiritual guide. He remembered Cressy, who had become a Romanist, and a Benedictine monk of the Monastery at Douay, and was at that moment in Paris.

When Inglesant had been last in Oxford, the secession of Hugh Paulin Cressy, as he had been named at the font in Wakefield Church,—Serenus de Cressy, as he called himself in religion,—had created a painful and disturbed impression. A Fellow of Merton, the chaplain and friend of Lord Strafford, and afterwards of Lord Falkland, a quick and accurate disputant, a fine and persuasive preacher, a man of sweet and attractive nature, and of natural and acquired refinement,—he was one of the leaders of the highest thought and culture of the University. When it was known, therefore, that this man, so admired and beloved, had seceded to Popery, the interest and excitement were very great, and one of Archbishop Usher's friends writes to him in pathetic words of the loss of this bright ornament of the Church, and of the danger to others which his example might cause.

He was at present in Paris, where the conjuncture of religious affairs was very exciting. There was much in the discussions which were going on, singularly fitted to Inglesant's state of mind, and in some degree conducive to it. The Jesuits, both in Rome and Paris, were occupied, as they had been for several years, in that great controversy with the followers of Jansenius, which, a few years afterwards, culminated in those discussions and that condemnation in the Sorbonne so graphically described by Pascal. We have only to do with it as it affected Inglesant, and it is therefore not necessary to inquire what were the real reasons which caused the Jesuits to oppose the Jansenists. The point at which the controversy had arrived, when Inglesant was in Paris, was one which touched closely upon the topics most interesting to his heart. This was the doctrine of sufficient grace. The Jesuits, on this as in all other matters, had taken that side which is undoubtedly most pleasing to the frailty of the human heart,—an invariable policy, to which they owed their supremacy over the popular mind.

When the faithful came to the theologians to inquire what was the true state of human nature since its corruption, they received St. Augustine's answer, confirmed by St. Bernard and St. Thomas Aquinas, and finally adopted by the Jansenists,—"That human nature has no more sufficient grace than God is pleased

to bestow upon it, and that fresh efficacious grace must constantly be given by God, which grace God does not give to all, and without which no man can be saved." In opposition to this, the Jesuits, about the time of the Reformation, came forward with what was called a new doctrine,—that sufficient grace is given to all men, as men, but so far compliant with free-will that this latter makes the former efficacious or inefficacious at its choice, without any new supply from God. The Jansenists retorted that this doctrine rendered unnecessary the efficacious grace of Jesus Christ; but that this does not follow is plain, for this efficacious grace of God that is given to all men once for all, may be owing to the sacrifice of Christ. To many natures this universal gracious beneficent doctrine of all-pervading grace, which includes all mankind, was much more pleasing than the doctrine of the necessity of special grace, involving spiritual assumption in those who possess it or say they do, and bitter uncertainty and depression in humble, self-doubting, and thoughtful minds. It resembled also the doctrines of the Laudian School, in which Inglesant had been brought up. So attractive indeed was it, that the Benedictines were compelled to profess it, and to pretend to side with the Jesuits, while in reality hating their doctrine.

When Inglesant remembered Cressy, and remembered also that he belonged to the Benedictines, the polished and learned cultivators of the useful arts, and was told that Cressy had chosen this order that he might have leisure and books to prosecute his studies and his writings, he conceived great hope that from him he should learn the happy mean he was in search of, between the worldliness of the Jesuits on the one hand, and the narrow repulsiveness of the Mendicant orders and the Calvinists on the other. In this frame of mind he sought an interview with Cressy. The directions of the Jesuits and of the Laudian School seemed to Inglesant to have failed; to have associated himself with the Jansenists or Calvinists would have been distasteful to him, and almost impossible. He sought in the Benedictine monk that compromise which the heart of man is perpetually seeking between the things of this world and the things of God. But though for the time the influence of the training of his life was somewhat shaken, it was far from removed, and an event occurred which, even before he saw Cressy, reforged the chains upon him to some extent. One Sunday evening, the day before he was to meet Cressy, walking along the Rue St Martin from the Boulevard where he had lodgings, he turned into the Jesuits' Church just as the sermon had begun. The dim light found its way into the vast Church from the stained windows; a lamp burning before some shrine shone partially on the preacher, as he stood in the stone pulpit by a great pillar, in his white surplice and rich embroidered stole. He was a young man, thin and sad-looking, and spoke slowly, and with long pauses and intervals, but with an intense eagerness and pathos that went to every heart. The first words that Inglesant heard, as he reached the nearest unoccupied place,

were these:—

"Ah! if you adored a God crowned with roses and with pearls, it were a matter nothing strange; but to prostrate yourselves daily before a crucifix, charged with nails and thorns,—you living in such excess and superfluity in the flesh, dissolved in softness,—how can that be but cruel? Ah, think of that crucifix as you lie warm in silken curtains, perfumed with eau de naffe, as you sit at dainty feasts, as you ride forth in the sunshine in gallantry. He is cold and naked; He is alone; behind Him the sky is dreary and streaked with darkening clouds, for the night cometh—the night of God. His locks are wet with the driving rain; His hair is frozen with the sleet; His beauty is departed from Him; all men have left him—all men, and God also, and the holy angels hide their faces. He is crowned with thorns, but you with garlands; He wears nothing in His hands but piercing nails; you have rubies and diamonds on yours. Ah! will you tell me you can still be faithful though in brave array? I give that answer which Tertullian gave,—'I fear this neck snared with wreaths and ropes of pearls and emeralds. I fear the sword of persecution can find no entrance there.' No! hear you not the voice of the crucifix? Follow me. We are engaged to suffer by His sufferings as we look on Him. Suffering is our vow and profession. Love which cannot suffer is unworthy of the name of love."

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The next day, at the appointed hour, he went to the Benedictine Monastery, in the Rue de Varrennes, and sent in his name to Father de Cressy. He was shown, not into the visitors' room, but into a private parlour, where Cressy came to him immediately. Dressed in the habit of his order, with a lofty and refined expression, he was a striking and attractive man; differing from the Jesuit in that, though both were equally persuasive, the latter united more power of controlling others than the appearance of Cressy implied. He had known Inglesant slightly at Oxford, and greeted him with great cordiality.

"I am not surprised that you are come to me, Mr. Inglesant," he said, with a most winning gesture and smile; "De Guevera, who was himself both a courtier and a recluse, says that the penance of religious men was sweeter than the pleasures of courtiers. Has your experience brought you to the same conclusion?"

Inglesant thanked him for granting him an interview; and sitting down, he told him shortly the story of his life, and his early partiality for the mystical theology; of his wishes and attempts; of his desire to follow the Divine Master; and of his failures and discouragements, his studies, his Pagan sympathies; and how life and reality of every kind, and inquiry, and the truth of history, and philosophy, even while it sided with or supported religion, still seemed to hinder

and oppose the heavenly walk.

"I do not know, Mr. Inglesant," said De Cressy, "whether your case is easier or more difficult than that of those who usually come to me; I have many come to me; and they usually, one and all, come with the exact words of the blessed gospel on their lips, 'Sir, we would see Jesus.' And I look them in the face often, and wonder, and often find no words to speak. See Jesus, I often think, I do not doubt it! who would not wish to see Him who is the fulness of all perfection that the heart and intellect ever conceived, in whom all creation has its centre, all the troubles and sorrows of life have their cure, all the longings of carnal men their fruition? But why come to me? Is He not walking to and fro on the earth continually, in every act of charity and self-sacrifice that is done among men? Is He not offered daily on every altar, preached continually from every pulpit? Why come to me? Old men of sixty and seventy come to me with these very words, 'Sir, we would see Jesus.' If the course of sixty years, if the troubles and confusions of a long life, if He Himself has not revealed this Beatific Vision to them,—how can I? But with you it is very different. By your own story I know that you have seen Jesus; that you know Him as you know your dearest friend. This makes our discourse at first much the easier, for I need waste no words upon a matter to enlarge upon which to you would be an insult to your heart. But it makes it more difficult afterwards, when we come to ask how it is that, with this transcendental knowledge, you are still dissatisfied, and find life so difficult a path to tread. I make no apology for speaking plainly; such would be as much an insult to you as the other. You remind me of the rich oratories I have seen of some of our Court ladies, where everything is beautiful and costly, but where a classic statue of Apollo stands by the side of a crucifix, a Venus with Our Lady, a Cupid near St. Michael, and a pair of beads on Mercury's Caduceus.

"You are like the young man who came to Jesus, and whom Jesus loved, for you have great possessions. You have been taught all that men desire to know, and are accomplished in all that makes life delightful. You have the knowledge of the past, and know the reality of men's power, and wisdom, and beauty, which they possess of themselves, and did possess in the old classic times. You have culled of the tree of knowledge, and know good and evil; yea, the good that belongs to this world, and is part of it, and the strength and wisdom and beauty of the children of this world; yea, and the evil and ignorance and folly of the children of light. Let us grant—I am willing to grant—that Plato has a purer spiritual instinct than St. Paul. I will grant that Lucretius has the wisdom of this world with him; ay, and its alluring tongue. Paul did not desire spiritual insight; he wanted Jesus. You stand as a god free to choose. On the one hand, you have the delights of reason and of intellect, the beauty of that wonderful creation which God made, yet did not keep; the charms of Divine philosophy, and the entice-

ments of the poet's art: on the other side, Jesus. You know Him, and have seen Him. I need say no more of His perfections.

"I do not speak to you, as I might speak to others, of penalties and sufferings hereafter, in which, probably, you do not believe. Nor do I speak to you, as I might to others, of evidences that our faith is true, of proofs that hereafter we shall walk with Christ and the saints in glory. I am willing to grant you that it may be that we are mistaken; that in the life to come we may find we have been deceived; nay, that Jesus Himself is in a different station and position to what we preach. This is nothing to your purpose. To those who know Him as you know Him, and have seen Him as you have, better Jesus, beaten and defeated, than all the universe besides, triumphing and crowned. I offer to you nothing but the alternative which every man sooner or later must place before himself. Shall he turn a deaf ear to the voice of reason, and lay himself open only to the light of faith? or shall he let human wisdom and human philosophy break up this light, as through a glass, and please himself with the varied colours upon the path of life? Every man must choose; and having chosen, it is futile to lament and regret; he must abide by his choice, and by the different fruit it brings. You wish this life's wisdom, and to walk with Christ as well; and you are your own witness that it cannot be. The two cannot walk together, as you have found. To you, especially, this is the great test and trial that Christ expects of you to the very full. We of this religious order have given ourselves to learning, as you know; nay, in former years, to that Pagan learning which is so attractive to you, though of late years we devote ourselves to producing editions of the Fathers of the Church. But even this you must keep yourself from. To most men this study is no temptation; to you it is fatal. I put before you your life, with no false colouring, no tampering with the truth. Come with me to Douay; you shall enter our house according to the strictest rule; you shall engage in no study that is any delight or effort to the intellect: but you shall teach the smallest children in the schools, and visit the poorest people, and perform the duties of the household—and all for Christ. I promise you on the faith of a gentleman and a priest—I promise you, for I have no shade of doubt—that in this path you shall find the satisfaction of the heavenly walk; you shall walk with Jesus day by day, growing ever more and more like to Him; and your path, without the least fall or deviation, shall lead more and more into the light, until you come unto the perfect day; and on your death-bed—the deathbed of a saint—the vision of the smile of God shall sustain you, and Jesus Himself shall meet you at the gates of eternal life."

Every word that Cressy spoke went straight to Inglesant's conviction, and no single word jarred upon his taste. He implicitly believed that what the Benedictine offered him he should find. There was no doubt—could be no doubt—that it was by such choice as this that such men as Cressy gained for themselves a

power in the heavenly warfare, and not only attained to the heavenly walk themselves, but moved the earth to its foundations, and drew thousands into the ranks of Christ. He saw the choice before him fairly, as Cressy had said, and indeed it was not for the first time. Then his mind went back to his old master, and to that school where no such thing as this was required of him, and yet the heavenly light offered to him as freely as by this man. The sermon of the night before came into his mind again; surely, where such doctrine as that was preached, might he not find rest? It was true that his coming there, and his confession, closed his lips before Cressy; but might he not have been too hasty? Life was not yet over with him; perchance he might yet find what he sought in some other way. He saw the path of perfect self-denial open before him,—renunciation, not of pleasure, nor even of the world, but of himself, of his intellect, of his very life,—and distinctly of his free choice he refused it. This only may be said for him: he was convinced that every word the Benedictine had said to him was true,—that in the life he offered him he should follow and find the Lord; but he was not equally convinced that it was the will of Christ that he should accept this life, and should follow and find Him in this way, and in no other. Had he been as clear of this as of the truth of Cressy's words, then indeed would his turning away have been a clear denial of Jesus Christ; but it was the voice of Cressy that spoke to him, and not the voice of Christ; it came to him with a conviction and a power all but irresistible, but it failed to carry with it the absolute conviction of the heavenly call. How could it? The heavenly call itself must speak very loud before it silences and convinces the unwilling heart.

He rose from his seat before the monk, and looking sadly down upon him, he said,—

"I believe all that you say and all that you promise, and that the heavenly walk lies before me in the road that you have pointed out; but I cannot follow it—it is too strait. I return your kindness and your plainness with words equally plain; and while you think of me as lost and unworthy, it may be some well-earned satisfaction to you to remember that none ever spoke truer, or nobler, or kinder words to any man than you have spoken to me."

"I do not look on you as lost, Mr. Inglesant,—far from it," said Cressy, rising as he spoke; "I expect you will yet witness a good confession for Christ in the world and in the Court; but I believe you have had to-day a more excellent way shown you, which, but for the trammels of your birth and training, you might have had grace to walk in, for your own exceeding blessedness and the greater glory of the Lord Christ. I wish you every benediction of this life and of the next; and I shall remember you at the altar as a young man who came to Jesus, and whom Jesus loves."

Inglesant took his leave of him, and left the monastery. He came away

very sorrowful from Serenus de Cressy. Whether he also, at the same time, was turning away from Jesus Christ, who can tell?

The next day the Jesuit arrived in Paris.

CHAPTER XX.

Inglesant was much struck with the change in the Jesuit's appearance. He was worn and thin, and looked discouraged and depressed. He was evidently extremely pleased to see his pupil again, and his manner was affectionate and even respectful. He appeared shaken and nervous, and Inglesant fancied that he was rather shy of meeting him; but if so, it soon passed off under the influence of the cordial greeting with which he was received.

To Inglesant's inquiry as to where he had been, the Jesuit answered that it did not matter; he had succeeded very imperfectly in his mission, whatever it had been. He asked Inglesant whether he had met with Sir Kenelm Digby, or heard anything of him. In reply to which Inglesant told him the reports which he had heard concerning him.

"He is mad," said the Jesuit, "and he is not the less dangerous. He was sent to Rome by the Queen, where he made great mischief, and offended the Pope by his insolence. He has sided with the Parliament in England, and is engaged on a scheme to persuade Cromwell to recall the King, and seat him on the throne as an elective monarch. The Queen does not wish to break with him altogether, both because he has great influence with some powerful Catholics, and because, if nothing better can be done, she would perforce accept the elective monarchy for her son. But the scheme is chimerical, and will come to nothing. Cromwell intends the crown for himself. You see, Johnny," continued St. Clare with a smile, "all our plans have failed. The English Church is destroyed, and those Catholics who always opposed it are thought much of at Rome now, and carry all before them. I have not altered my opinion, however, and I shall die in the same. But we must wait. I do not wish to influence you any more, nor to involve you any longer in any schemes of mine, but the Queen wants you to go as an agent to Rome on her behalf; and it would be of great service to me, and to any plans which I may in future have, if I had such a friend and correspondent as yourself in that city. If you have no other plans, I do not see that you could do much better than go. You shall have such introductions to my friends there—cardinals and great men—

that you may live during your stay in the best company and luxury, and without expense. One of my friends is the Cardinal Renuccinni, brother of the Legate the Bishop of Fermo, whom you met in Ireland, and who, by the by, was much impressed with you. You cannot fail to make friends with many who will have it in their power to be of great use to you; and you may establish yourself in some lucrative post, either as a layman, or, if you choose to take orders, as a priest. You will believe me, also, when I say,—what I say to very few,—that I am under obligations to you which I can never repay, and nothing will give me greater pleasure than to see you rich and prosperous, and admired and powerful in the Roman Court. You have the qualities and the experience to command success. You will be backed by the whole power of my friends, with whom to make your fortune will be the work of an after-dinner's talk. You will see Italy, and delight yourself in the sight of all those places and antiquities of which we have so often talked; and with your cultivated and religious tastes you will enter, with the most perfect advantage, into that magic world of sight and sound which the churches and sacred services in Rome present to the devout. I cannot see that you can do better than go."

Inglesant sat looking at the Jesuit with a singular expression in his eyes, which the latter did not understand. Yes, surely it was a very different offer from that of Serenus de Cressy, yet Inglesant did not delay to answer from any indecision; from the moment the Jesuit began to speak he knew that he should go. But he took a kind of melancholy pleasure in contrasting the two paths, the two men, the different choice they offered him, and in reading a half sad, half sarcastic commentary on himself.

After a minute or two, he said,—

"I thank you much for your good-will and quite undeserved patronage. It is by far too good an offer to be refused, and I gladly accept it. You know, doubtless, what has happened to me, especially within these last few days, and that I have no friend left on earth save yourself; such a journey as that which you propose to me will, at the least, distract my thoughts from such a melancholy fate as mine."

"I knew of your brother's murder," said the Jesuit; "I have heard of the man before—one of those utterly lost and villanous natures which no country but Italy ever produced. Do you wish to seek him?"

Inglesant told him that one of his principal objects in staying in Paris was to seek his assistance for that purpose; and that he felt it a sacred duty, which he owed to his brother, that his murderer should not escape unpunished.

"I have no doubt I can learn where he is," said the other; "but I do not well see what you can do when you have found him, unless it happens to be in a place where you have powerful friends. It is true that he is so generally known and hated in Italy, that you might easily get help in punishing him should you meet

him there; but he is hardly likely to return to his native country, except for some powerful reason."

"If I can do nothing else," said Inglesant bitterly, "I can tell him who I am and shoot him dead, or run him through the body. He murdered my brother, just as he had come back to me—to me in prison and alone, and was a loving friend and brother to me, and would have been through life. Do you suppose that I should spare him, or that any moment will be so delightful to me as the one in which I see him bleed to death at my feet, as I saw my poor brother, struck by his hand, as he shall be by mine?"

The Jesuit looked at Inglesant with surprise. The terrible earnestness of his manner, and the unrelenting and grim pleasure he seemed to take at the prospect of revenge, seemed so inconsistent with the refined and religious tone of his ordinary character, approaching almost to weakness; but the next moment he thought, "Why should I wonder at it? The man who has gone through what he did without flinching must have a strength of purpose about him far other than some might think."

He said aloud,—

"Well, I doubt not I can find him; he is well known in France, in Spain, and in Italy, and if he goes to Germany he can be traced. But what was the other sad misfortune you spoke of?—something within the last few days, you said."

Inglesant had been looking fixedly before him since he had last spoken, with a steady blank expression, which, since his imprisonment, his face sometimes wore,—part of a certain wildness in his look which bespoke a mind ill at ease and a confused brain. He was following up his prey to the death.

He started at the Jesuit's question, and seemed to recollect with an effort; then he said,—

"Mary Collet died at the convent of the Nuns of the —— last week. I only found her out the night before;" and as he spoke, the contrast arose in his mind of the deathbed of the saint-like girl, and the Italian's bleeding body struck down by his revenge. The footsteps of the Saviour he had promised his friend to follow, surely could not lead him to such a scene as that. If this were the first-fruits of his refusal to follow Serenus de Cressy, surely he must also have turned his back on Christ Himself.

He covered his face with his hands, and the Jesuit saw that he wept. He supposed it was simply from grief at the death of his friend, and he was surprised at the strength of his attachment. Like others, he had thought Inglesant's love a rather cool and Platonic passion.

"I always thought him one of those nice and coy lovers," he said to himself, "who always observe some defect in the thing they love, which weakens their passion, and shows them that the reality is so much inferior to their idea, that

they easily desist from their enterprize, and vanish as if they had not so much intention to love as to vanish, and had more shame to have begun their courtship than purpose to continue it. He must be much shaken by his suffering and by his brother's death."

He waited a few moments, and then spoke to Inglesant about his health, of his brother's death, and of his imprisonment. He spoke to him of the late King, and of his distress at the necessity under which he lay of denying Inglesant's commission; and he said many other things calculated to cheer his friend and please his self-regard.

Inglesant listened to him not without pleasure, but he said little. An idea had taken possession of his mind, which he carried with him into Italy and for long afterwards. He was more than half convinced that, in rejecting Cressy's advice, he had turned his back on Christ; and he was the more confirmed in this belief because never had the image of the Italian, nor the desire of revenge, taken so strong a hold upon his imagination as now. It occurred to his excited imagination that Christ had deserted him, and the Fiend taken possession, and that the course and intention of the latter would be to lure him on, by such images, to some terrible and lonely place, where the Italian and he together should be involved in one common ghastly deed of crime, one common and eternal ruin. The sense of having had a great act of self-denial placed before him and having refused it, no doubt weighed down and blunted his conscience; and once placed, as he half thought, upon the downward path, nothing seemed before him but the gradual descent, adorned at first by some poor show of gaudy flowers, but ending speedily—for there was no self-delusion to such a nature as his, which had tasted of the heavenly food—in miserable and filthy mire, where, loathing himself and despised by others, nothing awaited him but eternal death. He answered the Jesuit almost mechanically, and on parting from him at night promised indifferently to accompany him on the morrow to an audience with the Queen.

END OF VOL. I.

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