

here, and know not how to escape, for to leave without permission will be to own that I have cause for fearing I am detained in the light of a prisoner."

Now thinking of Sir Reginald, then of those she loved at St. Germans, and a weary feeling at her heart on account of the Queen's enquiries respecting Ashton, coupled with surprise at not having been summoned to attend her, she became full of apprehension of coming evil. She knew how tyrannical the sway of Mary had been, since she had plucked the crown from her father's brow to place it on her own; that there was not a warm spot in her cold, selfish heart, save for her Dutch husband; that she had trodden underfoot every tender emotion, where the dearest ties were concerned, so that small mercy would be granted to herself should the queen surmise that she had in any way mixed herself up with this new rising.

One after another the hours sped slowly on. She had dismissed her maid, telling her she would dispense with her attendance; and, stirring the fire into a blaze, she threw herself on her knees, seeking to strengthen and fortify herself by prayer, and also by the remembrance of the courage and resignation of the saintly Mary Beatrice, when, suddenly, the dead silence of the night was broken by the sound of some soft substance thrown against the window.

She started, rose from her seat, and listened attentively, when the noise was again repeated, this time somewhat more loudly. Shading her lamp, she advanced with faltering steps to the window, and partially drawing aside the curtain, fancied she could discern the figure of a woman leaning against a tree in the garden beneath. A moment passed in breathless suspense, then she became aware she was recognized, and advancing from the friendly shadow of the tree, the person beneath raised her arm as if again about to attract attention. Cautiously and very gently, for Florence had recognized, by the pale moonbeams which fell on the white waste around, the form of Mrs. Ashton, she opened the casement, and with true, unerring aim, a small substance, soft, and round as a ball, was flung into her room, and the next moment she had hastily glided away amidst the shadow of the thicket of evergreens. Gently Florence closed the window, and drew her curtain, and afraid, for a few moments, to open the little packet, she fastened her door, waited still a few moments, in case she should be molested, and full of a deadly fear that her courageous visitor should have been watched.

Not a sound, however, broke the dead stillness of the night, and she proceeded to unfold the little parcel, which consisted of several rolls of wool, compressed together. At last, within the last roll, her eye fell on a small piece of paper. It had one word written on it, and that was "Danger."

Florence flung it into the fire, and crouching down by the dying embers, buried her face in her hands. Her worst apprehensions seemed about to be verified. She went to bed, but could not sleep, and when at last she sunk into slumber it was disturbed by frightful visions and distressing dreams, the reflection of her waking thoughts.

When the dawn of the winter morning broke at last, it found her with a raging headache, feverish, and utterly unable to rise. She had thought over several plans, and had cast them all aside as impracticable. The most feasible was to make a request to visit Sir Charles, but she feared being the means of drawing him into trouble, as she should inevitably do, did she obtain permission to visit him and fail to return.

Thus it was that the queen was told that indisposition confined Florence to her room.

Danger, in what form would it present itself? Incarceration, such as the queen's tender mercies had inflicted on her own uncle; torture such as Nevill Payne had undergone; or death itself, which this ungrateful daughter and her Dutch husband had unsparingly inflicted on the unfortunate Jacobites who had attempted to procure the restoration of the exiled James.

CHAPTER XV.

CHAILLOT—THE EXILES.

In a spacious apartment, with oaken wainscot and flooring, a few uncushioned chairs of the same wood, a long table, and case-ments buried in deep recesses in the wall, looking out on the wide expanse of country beyond, the leafless boughs of the trees covered with hoar frost, for it is mid-winter, two ladies are seated; one is still in the prime of life, the other is middle-aged. The youngest of these ladies is tall and elegant in form, her complexion is fair, her hair as black as the raven's wing, the arched eyebrows and long silken lashes that veiled the fine dark eyes were of the same hue, the contour of the face was of a delicate oval, the expression sweet and winning.

The companion of this lady is robed in the garb of a nun. She has not her charm of personal beauty, but the frank, open countenance is pleasing, her figure is upright as when thirty years since she made the vows that bound her to religion. She is the abbess of Chaillot, and the other lady is the beautiful and hapless ex-queen of England, Mary Beatrice, of Modena.

A great consolation in her very sorrowful life must have been her affectionate intercourse with the nuns of Chaillot.

"Is your majesty well assured that your information comes from a correct source?" asked the abbess, after a pause in their conversation. The calm resignation with which the queen generally bore her great trials had on this occasion given way to the indulgence of a burst of uncontrollable grief. "May we not hope," she continued, "that there may be some mistake in the assertion that your favorite, Florence, is really detained at the court of Mary?"

Alas, no; the news of my informant may be too well relied upon; there can be no doubt of that," was the reply.

"Our greatest grief arises from the fact that those most devoted to our interests are, through that devotion, visited with penalties, imprisonment, and death; but when I suffered Florence to leave me to

make a short visit to England, I certainly had not the faintest idea that she would ever approach the Court, but the misgiving we have received tells us that not only is she detained there, to all appearances merely as one of the queen's ladies, but that she, in fact, feels herself a kind of prisoner; whilst immediately after Ashton had sailed from London, with papers of the utmost importance for the king, the whole plot was discovered, it is suspected, through the instrumentality of the humble persons from whom he hired the vessel. These tidings, in fact, have reached us through my friend, Lady Bulkely, whose husband writes her that Ashton's wife has adopted some means to make my poor Florence aware that she is surrounded by danger; nay, she must herself be aware that should Mary's suspicions be excited, there is but one step from her presence, and that may be either to the Tower or the grave."

PATRICK SARSFIELD.

FROM A BIOGRAPHY.—BY JARLATH.

THE capture of King William's magnificent battering-train saved Limerick from destruction.

"If I had failed in this attempt," said Sarsfield, "I should have been off to France." As it was, he returned safely to his camp. When he entered the city the cannons boomed, the bells rang, and men shouted, and women laughed and cried by turns, and children danced, and there was such a carnival of joy as never before convulsed old Limerick, when it turned out to greet its deliverer after his taking of the guns.

William was not a man to be idle under his defeat. He set about at once to repair his losses, and to revenge himself on the town by a vigorous bombardment. Two of the guns which Sarsfield had captured were, on examination, found to be still serviceable. Two more were despatched from Waterford, while the small field-pieces which William retained were constructed into batteries. Shot and shell began to rain on Limerick without intermission. Sarsfield, at this juncture, ordered the women and children to leave the city. With one voice the women refused to desert their posts. Unanimously they declared their resolution to fight and die. They had worked like men in the construction of the defences, and they would fight like soldiers among them. The old crazy walls of Limerick trembled before the terrible shock, and at last breeches began to appear. On the 27th of August William made one last determined effort. Five hundred grenadiers received their signal for a charge at three o'clock in the afternoon. They fired their pieces, threw their grenades, and dashed into the town. A hand-to-hand street fight ensued. The grenadiers were driven back street by street until they reached the counter-scarp. They there made a desperate stand. Now was the pent-up rage and fury of the citizens poured upon them. Missiles showered upon them from the house-tops. Bricks and broken bottles and stones were hurled at them by the women. Four hours did this terrible death-struggle last. The broad swords of Sarsfield's horse were not absent from the fray. Dragoons had swept into the town, and flung themselves from their horses into the *mêlée*. "The crowning mercy" was to come. The air was rent by yells and screams of terror, which pierced through the deafening shock of a terrible explosion. In one moment a magnificent battalion of Bradenburghers were blown up into the sky. De Boisseleau had fired a mine on which they stood. The shadows of night were falling upon them when what were left of the besiegers, silent, sullen, and weary, slowly made their way back to their camp. Next morning King William determined to raise the siege, and as, humbled and defeated, he retired from Limerick, its old walls stood proud and defiant as ever.

A cry went up from those walls, a cry of regenerate hope, a cry of thanksgiving and of victory. It was caught up to the East and to the West, to the North and to the South, and it spread through all the land, and the hoarse murmurs of the waves seemed to echo its sound. Tyrconnell heard it, and it filled him with shame. He was moved to jealousy of the man who had saved Ireland when he had deserted her. As the viceroy of King James he nominated the council to whom he delegated his nominal powers—to one council the civil authority, and to the other the charge of military affairs. The Duke of Berwick was placed in chief command. Tyrconnell dared not leave out the name of Patrick Sarsfield; as it was, it was placed last on the list.

The remainder of the career of Sarsfield in Ireland may be summed up in a word. He was obscured by jealousy and incompetency. Tyrconnell almost ignored him, while by St. Ruth, the French general sent to command the Irish, he was doomed to a galling inactivity. It was not until Athlone had fallen and Aughrim had been lost, and the Irish hope again had been dispelled, that Sarsfield once more was called upon to lead a forlorn hope. Limerick again was the refuge of the remnants of a broken Irish army, and Limerick again was to undergo a siege.

The memory of the first siege was fresh in all minds. William remembered it, and had given to Ginckle, his general in command in Ireland, large powers to offer favorable terms in treating with the Irish. For some time a vigorous resistance was opposed to the besiegers, but at length a cessation of arms was followed by negotiations, which culminated in the celebrated treaty of Limerick, concerning which suffice it to say that, without having been, as some would fondly believe, a grand charter of Irish liberties, it was a compact highly honorable to Limerick and its brave defenders.

By the civil treaty a certain measure of religion was secured. By the military treaty the Irish soldiers were to have all the honors of war, to retain their arms, to march out with colors flying and drums beating; and, further, they were permitted to make choice whether they laid down their arms, entered the service of William, or exiled themselves to fight under the French. Such as chose to emigrate could go, regiments, companies, or parties.

It was an exciting moment for English and Irish officers when the men marched out. The banner of France waved on one side,